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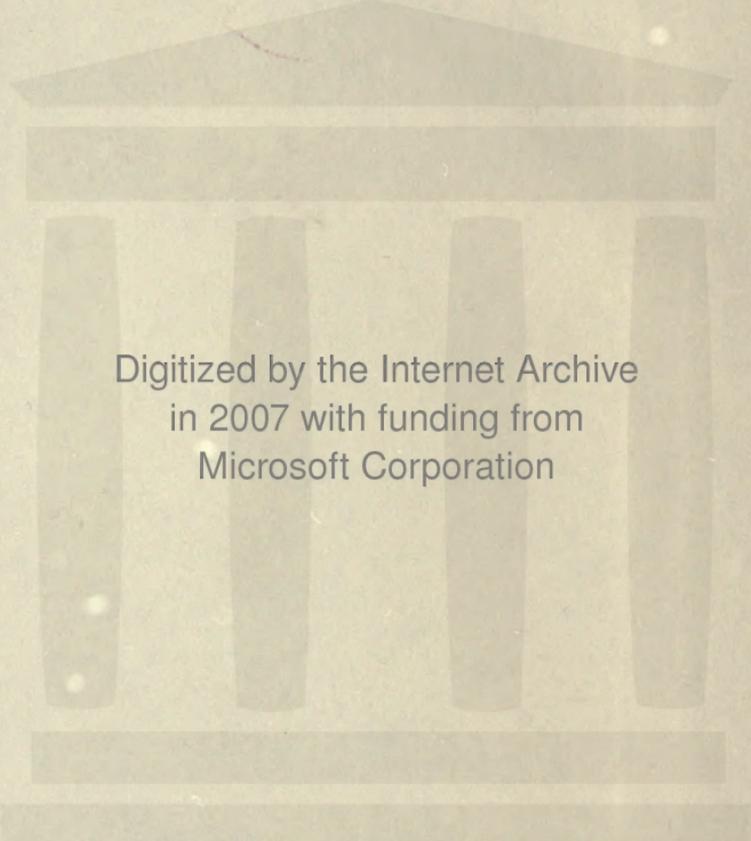
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WOMAN

AND

CRIME



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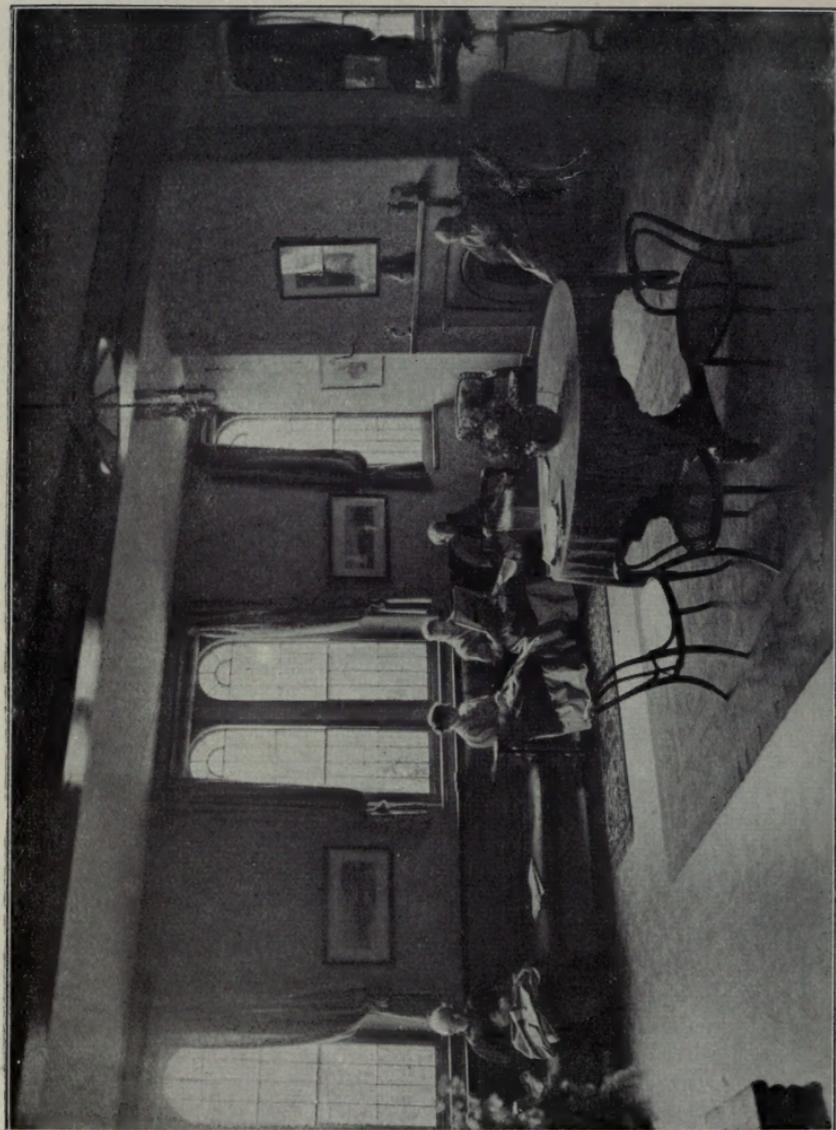
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AUTHOR OF

"THE POLICE ENCYCLOPÆDIA," "THE STORY
OF CRIME," "ORIENTAL CRIME."



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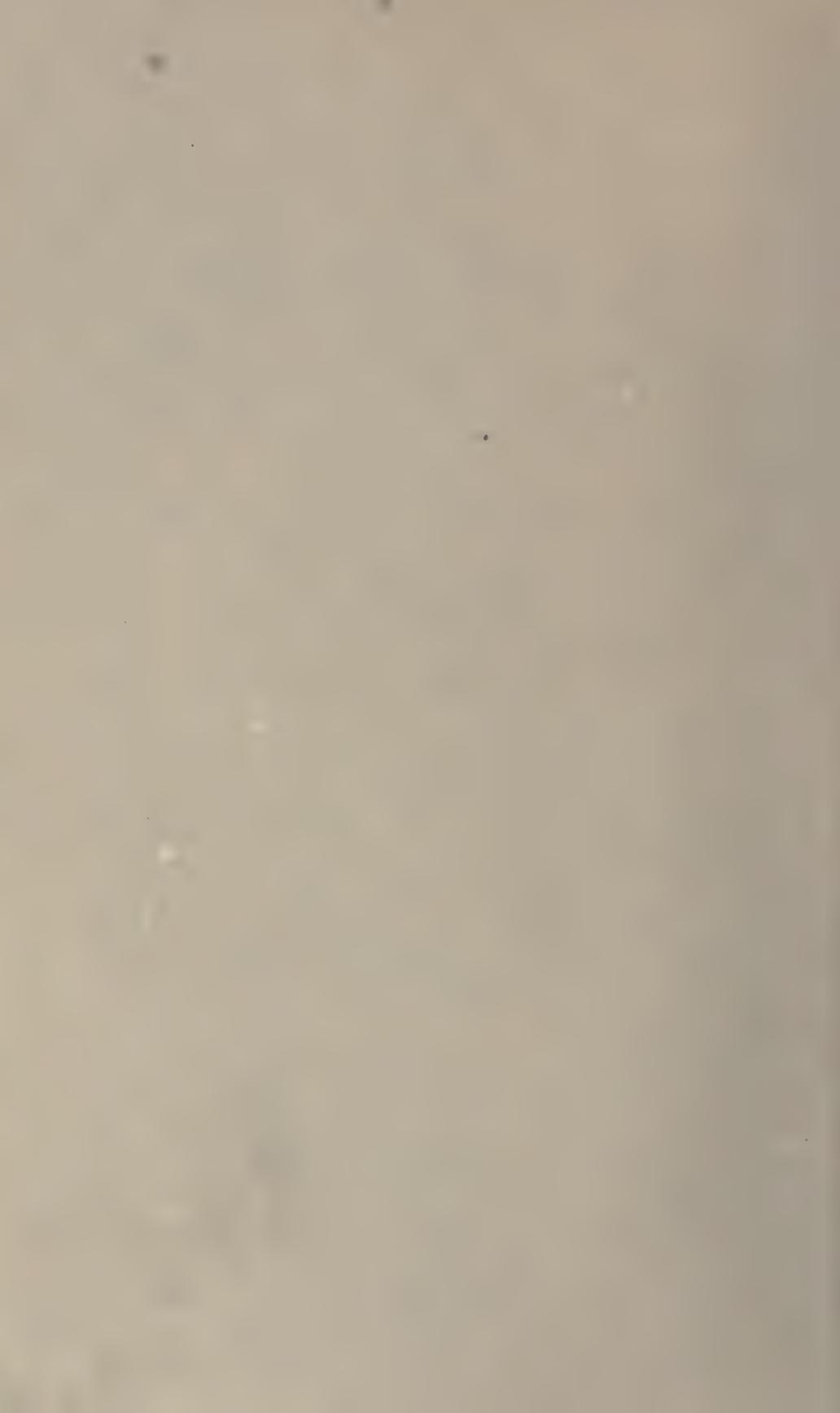
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PART I
WOMAN AS A CRIMINAL

indeed, are, in baseness, cunning, callousness, cruelty, and persistent criminality far worse than the worst male offender known to the law.

In the ensuing pages no effort of mine will be made to magnify or in any way unduly emphasise the enormity of those members of the "gentle sex" with whose crimes I shall deal; on the contrary, where possible, with due regard to truth and justice, I shall advance extenuating circumstances or make it clear that the wrongdoing in the female was an outcome of malevolent male influence. In fact, I shall consider cases in detail where female criminals commit their crimes in association with, and beneath the ascendancy of, male companions. Very properly the law makes merciful allowance in dealing with the female offender where it can be made apparent that she has been impelled to commit breaches of the law under masculine influence. She is either acquitted altogether, under such circumstances, or dealt with very leniently. Woman is pretty universally admitted to be "a mystery," and I am by no means presumptuous enough, or sanguine enough, to suppose that in the present volume I shall succeed in "solving" her. To accomplish that would indeed be an achievement to be justly proud of. I shall, however, venture to lay bare some of her curious and subtle characteristics as displayed in her criminal exploits, and endeavour to analyse and trace to their various sources her mysterious motives.

I think I may state, without fear of contradiction, that one of the most puzzling attributes of the female

character is her sometimes invincible, unreasoning, and self-sacrificing devotion to a most brutal ruffian of a man. This trait in the female character enters very extensively into her career as a criminal. What may be the source or mainspring of this ill-conceived and ardent attachment cannot be clearly ascertained. Probably she could not account for it herself. It is a case of Dr Fell reversed, and the reason of her devotion she "cannot tell." She will be riotously rebellious, persistently criminal, in gratification of this sentiment alone. Just as she, as a wife, will conceive a slavish and dog-like devotion to a brutal ruffian of a husband, so, as a mistress, she will pursue with equal canine servitude the criminal career followed by her lawless paramour. In the former case our various magistrates are sometimes brought to their wits' end to know what to do in such matters. Sometimes a woman, whose face has been beaten almost to a jelly by her burly brute of a husband in the dock, will plead ardently to the magistrate not to be "hard on him"; adding, perhaps, that he has always been a very good husband, and never lays hands upon her when he is sober. Which, perhaps, is not very often! This sort of marital advocacy altogether baffles male reasoning, and under the circumstances the magistrate usually considers it necessary to be cruel to be kind, and so, in spite of wifely intercession, to give the inhuman husband a spell of imprisonment. For that period at all events the unfortunate woman will be safe from the rough usage of her brutal partner.

In the case of the other devoted woman—the mistress of the male criminal—the law, as I have already pointed out, acts a merciful and benevolent part, and protects the woman, as it were, from the evil results of her own inexplicable attachment. How shall we interpret these curious self-sacrificing traits in woman? One can readily understand an unswerving and unwavering fidelity to some worthy object, but why to an unworthy object? One would have thought that an evil man would have appeared repugnant to the eye of a good woman, and that she would have avoided him as much as possible. There are of course evil women to whom evil men appeal. But then there are also good women to whom evil men appeal. Why? In addition to being a mystery, woman is also sometimes a contradiction. I repeat, how are we to interpret these hidden motives? I think we shall find some approach to an explanation, or a partial explanation, in the fact that a woman is governed by her emotions; a man by his reasoning powers. If a woman reasoned more, and felt less, she would not be a victim so often of her own whole-heartedness. She would less frequently become a victim of man. To me a thoroughly criminal woman is a most repugnant creature. Inasmuch as we shall presently make the acquaintance of many such women, it is in the way of preparing ourselves for an intelligent consideration of them that we now at the outset discuss female traits generally.

It has been somewhat frequently stated, but never

yet proved, that certain criminals were "born." It is one of those statements which it is so easy to make and so acquire a reputation for profound wisdom and penetration, because it cannot be proved and is very difficult of disproof. It is a statement that is "in the air." I have gone into this subject at considerable length in another work of mine, where I have ventured to contradict the theory *in toto*, and have advanced instances which in my humble judgment are hostile to it. Our present concern with the doctrine is only so far as it affects female criminals, who are, as a whole, as it is generally admitted, much worse than male criminals. If there is some malignant trait which male "habituals" have acquired at their birth, and which renders them so difficult of reclamation, then this must be truer of female "habituals," who are far more persistent and less curable than males. It is inconceivable in my estimation, and speaking generally, that any such malign influence is at work during the embryo stage—that, in short, the evil is wrought after birth by environment and associations. If a child is reared amidst evil surroundings it will naturally acquire an evil bent of mind, and the longer it is kept in such a moral, or immoral, atmosphere the more likely is it to become incurable. One would suppose though that a female child would less readily assimilate such moral malaria than a male child, in consequence of the natural and gentler characteristics of the sex. As a matter of fact, male criminals do very largely outnumber females, although it is fair to

suppose that quite as many female children are born into evil surroundings as male.

Although, however, as I have just stated, male criminals so largely outnumber females, there exist many more of the latter than appear in published statistics. That is to say, women are the cause of, directly or indirectly, a large amount of crime in men for which they receive no statistical credit. It is therefore one of the purposes of this book to make that clear. And it will be done through the medium of actual cases, which seems to me to be about the only way in which it can be done. They will be found, in my somewhat arbitrary division of the work, among the "aiders and abettors" of crime. I shall deal with each case separately, and endeavour to show how those women who have not come within the pale of the law are still, indirectly, concerned in the crimes committed by others. It does not necessarily follow that because a person has not been convicted of a crime that he is not criminal. There are heaps and heaps of people walking about at the present day who have never been convicted of a crime and yet who are simply steeped in crime. That is why the published figures concerning the number of female criminals are not reliable or representative of the amount of crime committed by members of the female sex.

There is another reason why statistics of criminals, both male and female, fall far short of representing the number of criminals in existence, and that is because they do not, cannot, include the criminals

who commit crimes which do not come within the scope of the law. And of these there are many. There are crimes committed for which the law provides no punishment far graver than many for which it does. I recall one by way of illustration. About thirty years ago a gentleman of exalted family induced a foolish and trusting barmaid to leave her situation for the purpose of living with him. He dazzled her with the liberality of his offer. He promised her—so the poor girl stated—an allowance of £20 a month. He took rooms in the West End, lived with her for the brief space of four days only, communicated a certain disease to her, and then deserted her. The allowance he promised her this “gentleman” failed to furnish. Finding herself thus afflicted, deserted, and disgraced, the poor deluded girl—she was only 22 years of age—committed suicide, after framing a scathing indictment against the author of her ruin in the shape of a letter, the pathos of which was so moving that it wrought the public to a pitch of wrath and fury. An attempt was made to lynch the scoundrel. And—most grievous part of all—the law could do nothing with him. He was universally execrated, and for a time his career was ruined. I say for a time, for doubtless he would probably live “it down,” as many another “gentleman” has done before, and probably will do again.

In this case the law, or law-makers, were culpable by omission. And the blameworthiness of legislators is the more heinous for the fact that, although the case quoted occurred so long ago, there is still

nothing to be found upon the Statute Book which provides for so grave an offence.

In addition to the female aiders and abettors of crime to whom I have made allusion, who have not actually committed an offence which is punishable by law, there are also other aiders and abettors who are amenable to the laws—women who work either in conjunction with other women, or in conjunction with men. And in both cases they may, although they are only indirectly concerned, still be the instigators of the crime punishable—in the one case as an older and more experienced woman urging a younger one to commit crime, in the proceeds of which she will share, or in the other by the exercise of sex influence for a similar end. Thus we have female influence over male criminals. And we must pause to consider this at some length, this question of female influence over men, because it is one which is important to our subject generally.

I have already briefly discussed the curious devotion which some women have for unworthy men. That is a female trait—a characteristic. But a far more important one is that of the absolute ascendancy which some women attain over men—or at all events over some men. It is important, because it has a good deal to do with the true estimation of the part which women play in crime generally. It is no exaggeration to say that, although some women commit crime while under the influence of men, as has already been pointed out, so also do some men commit crime while under the influence of women.

And nobody but those who study crimes closely, and have done so for a long time, know how extensively female influence is answerable for male crime. And this strange, subtle, and all-powerful domination of man by woman is just as inexplicable as the unreasoning attachment of woman for man. Neither seems to be capable of lucid explanation. There is some indefinable personal magnetism about certain women which seems to completely subjugate the will of certain men. Personally I feel quite convinced that some women wield hypnotic influence over men. And it is invariably a malign influence. And, curiously enough—so mysterious is life altogether—the best of good women do not possess nearly the same power over men that the evil-minded ones do. To be sure, all women exercise a certain influence over men, and a good woman has certain power over a man she devotes herself to, but yet it falls far short of the remarkable control which a bad woman seems to be able to exercise over a man to whom she appeals. I do not attempt to offer an explanation; I am content to record the undeniable fact. It has been stated that bad women are more interesting to men than good women. Myself, I think it is less a matter of interest than of influence.

Well, this female influence is answerable for a good deal of crime in men for which the women in question receive no credit statistically. Let me put a hypothetical case of what I mean by way of illustration. Suppose a woman, possessing such influence over a man, uses that influence to induce him to

commit theft or fraud for her own personal benefit, then she is a party to the crime, although she does not come within the pale of the law. But the man only will appear in statistics, the woman not at all, although she is indirectly guilty. Also a woman who lives with a man, and by her extravagance and demands upon his financial resources forces him into such a position that he is driven to commit theft is indirectly culpable and concerned in the man's offence. And this remark applies also to many married women who, by their reckless expenditure and self-indulgence, compel their husbands to resort to dishonest means to keep them supplied with funds. It is feeble and futile to argue that the woman may not possess a guilty knowledge. Such women invariably know full well what they are doing, but are quite callous of consequences. Indirectly, too, such women defraud tradesmen extensively, by incurring indebtedness which they have neither the means nor the intention of discharging. Such offences are unquestionably frauds, although the law provides no punishment for them. Here again, then, the law itself is culpable by omission. It provides for some forms of fraud, but not for this particular one, although it is a serious offence. And by that same omission it encourages to the commission of the offence, because an immunity from punishment is an inducement to commit crime.

Although we cannot exactly define the influence which women sometimes exercise over men, it is, however, pretty safe to say that it is of sexual origin.

That, combined with will-power. I have known some remarkable instances of this. I once knew a man who, although he had been married many years, was quite as infatuated and as much under his wife's control as any callow youth suffering with a first attack of calf-love. She treated him in a most abominable manner, yet it seemed that nothing she could do towards him, however cruel and humiliating, was capable of curing him of his curious canine devotion. Yet in business the man was most skilful and adroit. Regarding his wife's relations with other men he was most amazingly blind, for she was an adulteress of boldness and enterprise. She was, while refusing him the rights of a husband, constantly committing herself with another man resident beneath the same roof. In fact, she was doing it under his very nose, yet he seemed to fail to see it. I say *seemed*, because he appeared to entertain some suspicion in the matter, although he evidently lacked the requisite resolution to act upon it. He was, in fact, a man of very weak will-power, while his wife was just the reverse. And that is why I maintain that such women wield hypnotic power over their husbands, for hypnotism is but the ascendancy of a strong will over a weaker one. Weak-willed husbands are being thus hoodwinked and humbugged every day of our lives.

But, unquestionably, sexual attraction is at the base of such power. Because it is inconceivable that a woman who did not in the first instance sexually

appeal to a man could have any sort of influence over him at all. (I shall deal somewhat at length presently with the malady which I have named "sexual mania.") A man who is sexually drawn to a woman may be said to have already lost some of his will-power. And if he happens to be a man of weak will the woman will have very little difficulty in attaining complete control over him. And the woman may use such influence for either good or ill. Where the man is weak and overyielding I am afraid she wields it to his undoing, obeying that instinct for working mischief to the opposite sex which women would seem to have inherited from Mother Eve. A weak man seems to be an irresistible temptation to woman to deal contemptuously with him, just as one who treats her with scant consideration appears to inspire her unreasoning devotion. Doubtless a man often works his own discomfiture with a woman by his own behaviour. A man who loses both his self-control and consequently his self-respect is a poor sort of thing in the scale of humanity. It behoves every man to exercise the one and so retain the other. He will then also receive the respect of women. A woman has no respect for a fool of a man. And a man who yields utterly and completely to a woman is a fool. The man who cannot, or does not, control his carnal appetite becomes such an one. That is the basis of woman's domination of man. Self-control and self-respect depart in company. And if a man has no respect for himself, how can he expect a woman to have any for him? If the relations be-

tween the sexes were of a healthier character there would be less crime.

We have thus far dealt in an introductory manner with women who aid and abet crime in various ways. We shall presently see more plainly and lucidly how this works when we come to the handling of actual cases. But it should be pointed out that the aiders and abettors among female criminals, direct and indirect, form only a small proportion of the whole, most female criminals being what I have termed "organisers of crime." That is to say, they are, in addition to being the instigators, also the actual perpetrators of crime. And these may be further divided into those who work alone, those who work with other women, and those who work in conjunction with men. But in all cases they may be said to be the leading spirit in the criminal enterprise. It is not surprising to learn that most female criminals are organisers or ringleaders, for it is a familiar fact that when a woman abandons herself to anything in particular she not only does it in earnest but she invariably very extensively overdoes it. And this applies to well-nigh everything she puts her hand to. For instance, if she takes to drink she nearly always becomes an incurable dipsomaniac; if she takes to crime, in enormity she far outstrips the worst male criminal known to the records; if she conceives an aversion to a man, no matter how unreasonable it may be, nothing is too fantastically cruel that she can do towards him; if, on the contrary, she develops an affection for him, no matter how transparent a

fraud he may be, she will follow him to the ends of the earth, or the gallows' foot; and if she takes to reforming anything or anybody, she soon becomes an all-round nuisance, as witness the doings of the militant section of the Suffragettes. Would any male would-be reformers, however urgent the necessity for the reform might be, allow themselves to be guilty of such tiresome and contemptible monkey-tricks as those perpetrated from time to time by the above-mentioned females?

And to what must we attribute this thoroughness in the militant and rebellious woman? We have already stated that, as a reason for such extravagance in female conduct, she is controlled by her emotions. But that in itself is not sufficient to account for all her excursions into the regions of excess. Mere emotion will, of course, cause the afflicted ones to do unreasonable things, but at the same time it is possible to control the emotions and act rationally even under stress. For that purpose will-power is required. And that, I think, furnishes us with a clue to an elucidation. Speaking generally, women have less will-power than men, and therefore less self-control upon emergency. That is undoubtedly the reason so few, if any, female dipsomaniacs are ever thoroughly cured. A drunkard's cure lies mainly with himself, because it depends upon his strength of will to abstain altogether long enough for the habit to be overcome. And, lacking the necessary stability and firmness of purpose, that is where a woman drunkard fails to redeem herself.

But we must add another reason for female irresponsibility, and this is a lack of moral responsibility. In wrongdoing she knows neither limit nor degree. Her moral vision becomes obscured, and she rushes madly and blindly on. The reason of this is, she is not by nature trained or ordained to observe limits of that kind. In the well-ordered scheme of natural things man is the worker, the bread-winner, who fights the battle of life; woman is the dependent, looking to man for protection and nourishment. A dependent is less likely to acquire moral responsibility than a fighter. It is similar to the worker and the queen bees. Did anyone ever hear of queen bees going forth to gather honey? If they did they would probably become as great a nuisance as women do when they encroach upon or intrude into the sphere of man's natural industries. Therefore we may sum it up that the various forms of excess which are exhibited by woman when she departs from her natural, sober, and well-ordered life are due to lack of will-power, lack of moral consciousness, and superabundant emotion.

One of the most staggering and repugnant attributes to man exhibited by bad women is their perfectly fiendish cruelty. It is all the more startling by being displayed by one who is supposed to be gentle by nature. It is certainly a matter for meditation that the cruellest forms of crime are invariably committed by women. Some of them indeed are so terrible, both in conception and execution, as scarcely to be credited to human agency. And when one

reflects that sometimes the female miscreant has received scarcely any provocation, and possesses hardly any motive for the deed, one is all the more baffled and confounded. The only consolation, if one can call it so, to be derived from such incidents is the supposition that women of that kind are altogether abnormal and rare—comparatively speaking—that they are not, in fact, women in the ordinary acceptation of the word, and that something malign happened at their begetting which sets them quite apart from ordinary human beings.

The worst cases of secret poisoning to be found recorded have been perpetrated by women. Later, we shall consider many of these in detail. And when one comes to consider that this is far and away the cruellest crime of all, we have women raised to the very pinnacle of criminal exaltation. Strange it is, yet true, that we have women committing crimes from which men—even criminal men—would shrink with repugnance. And these, mark you, not crimes of impulse, but carefully and calmly planned, with a full and intelligent knowledge of the suffering to be inflicted, and steadfastly and adroitly carried out. Sometimes, too, not only with invincible cruelty, but also with superlative hypocrisy—inflicting unspeakable torture with one hand, and smoothing the brow of the sufferer with the other.

Then, again, we have the vitriol-throwers, who are also mostly women. Very few men have been convicted of vitriol-throwing, and those were of a comparatively venial character. It is a particularly

heinous and cowardly crime, and later we shall deal with some actual cases of the kind.

Among other cases we shall have to consider, in addition to the organisers and the aiders and abettors of crime, will be those where there has been an acquittal, because it sometimes happens that, even although a woman has been acquitted of a specific charge, her conduct in other respects may be open to question. The reader will also be invited, upon a consideration of all the facts in the case, to form his own opinion as to the correctness of the verdict.

CHAPTER II

PHYSICAL CONFORMATION AND CRIME

FOR some time it was held by certain persons, and doubtless still is by many, that there exists some connection between what are known as physical abnormalities and the criminal trait. The late Professor Lombroso and other so-called crime "scientists" took a good deal of trouble to make this appear true, but in the present chapter I propose to endeavour to show that it has no foundation in fact; that, in short, it is an utter fallacy.

In his work, "The Female Offender," Professor Lombroso declares that prostitutes have certain "pathological anomalies." He also says, "Fallen women . . . are distinguished from criminals by the following peculiarities: clinoid apophysis forming a canal; tumefied parietal prominences; median occipital fossa of double size; great occipital irregularity; narrow or receding forehead; abnormal nasal bones; spactal bone; prognathous jaw and alveolar prognathism; cranial sclerosis; a virile type of face; prominent cheek-bones."

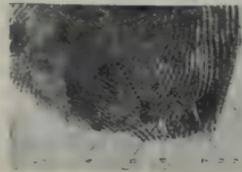
The above sounds quite portentous, but as a matter of fact there is very little in it. Happily long

Police

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Médus et

Annulées et



Empreinte A

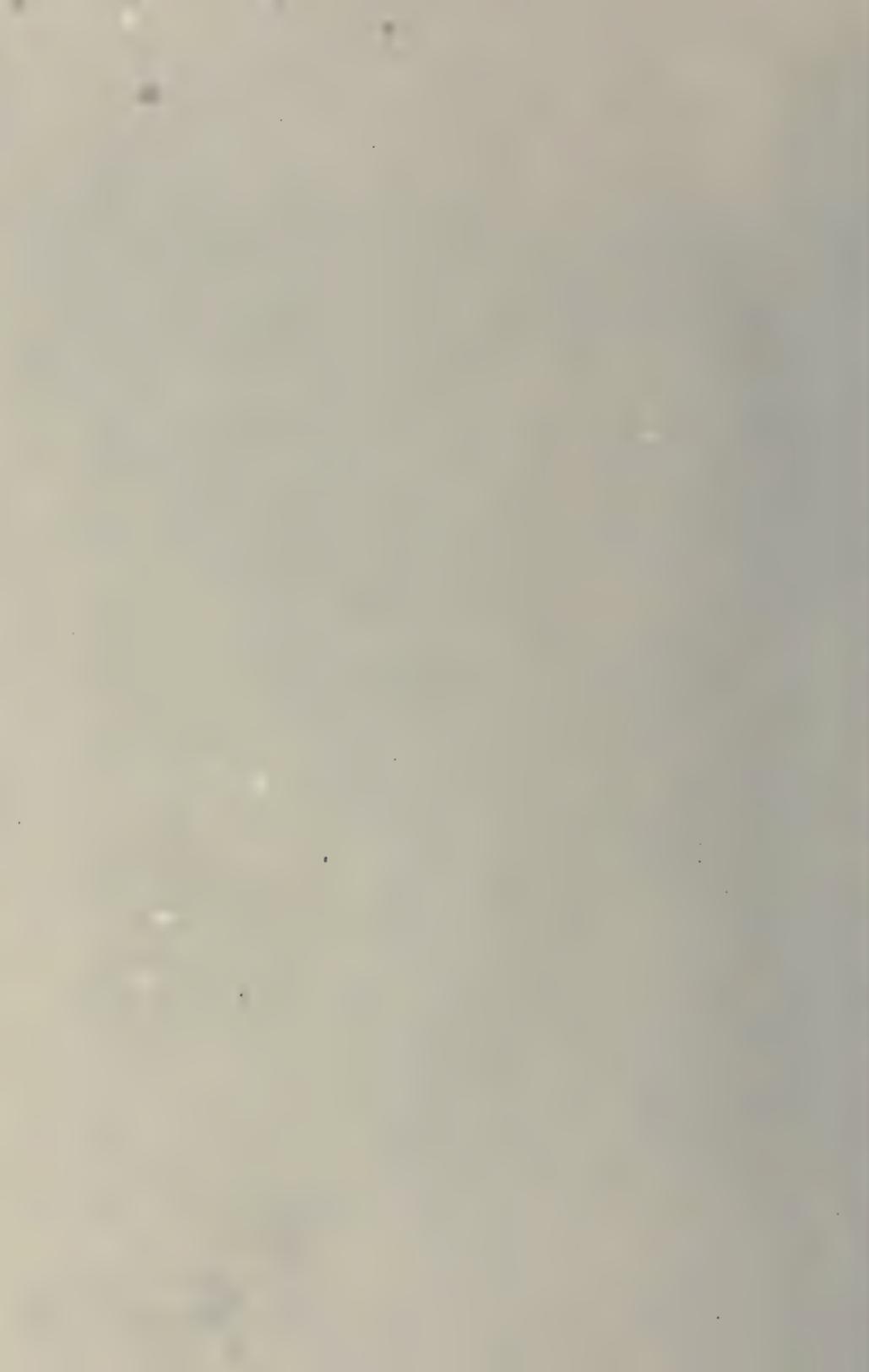
Empreinte B

Reproduction au grandeur d'Empreintes digitales relevées sur des fragments de glace de la vitrine fracturée.



(By Courtesy of M. Lépine.)

FINGER PRINTS (FRENCH POLICE).



words break no bones, although they may confuse the understanding. There are certain people who get credit for being "scientists" by adopting obscure methods of investigation and clothing their conclusions in linguistic fustian. The above might very well be translated into ordinary diurnal language as follows: "Certain cranial irregularities, which phrenologists call 'bumps'; receding forehead; large nose; prominent jaw and teeth; virile type of face and prominent cheek-bones." The plain reference to forehead, face, and cheek-bones shine out like precious gems in matrix. It will, therefore, at once be seen that such characteristics cannot be typical of prostitutes, for they may be found among all classes of women.

A Madame Tarnowsky, another of these "scientists," made a number of measurements among female criminals, which are given in the above work of Lombroso's. The lady discovered that 45 per cent. of infanticides were below the normal weight, and 29.6 per cent. of other murderesses were also below the normal weight, while 50 per cent. of infanticides and 44 per cent. of murderesses were below the normal height; 15 per cent. of prisoners were deficient in weight and 25 per cent. in height; 19 per cent. of prostitutes were deficient in weight and 28 per cent. in height; 21 per cent. of female thieves were deficient in weight and 14 per cent. in height.

The lady also made measurements of the span of the arms of a number of prostitutes, thieves, murderesses and "moral persons," and came to the

conclusion that "the span of the arms being consequently inferior among prostitutes and even criminals when compared to the stature, than among the moral poor, which result must be attributed to the greater development of limbs in women who work."

The foolishness of the above may easily be seen. When a woman stops growing her limbs cease lengthening. No amount of labour will induce them to become longer, although it will, of course, increase their muscular development.

We also learn on the same authority that the upper limbs of an illiterate working-woman of moral life measure 0.608, as against 0.597 in thieves and 0.583 in prostitutes. The circumference of the thorax is 82.2 in prostitutes, which differs little from that of moral women, although relatively to the height the difference is greater.

What rubbish! There is nothing definite whatever to be drawn from such figures; they are merely figures and nothing else. The whole thing is absolutely inconclusive.

The lady also tells us that the hand is longer in Russian prostitutes (right, 187; left, 184) than peasant women and homicides (right, 185; left, 184), and thieves (right, 178; left, 175). Thus we find the hands of thieves the shortest. This is peculiar, because one would have supposed that if anything was calculated to lengthen the hands it would be thieving. We are also told that the length of the middle finger, on the outside, has some relation to the breadth of the hand, and the length of the hand



(By Courtesy of M. Lépine.)

TOWN OF MUNICIPAL POLICE PARIS



(By Courtesy of M. Lépine.)



to the height. Measurements were also made of the circumference of the neck, thigh and leg of "normal women." It is not surprising to learn that some difficulty was experienced in getting subjects for these experiments. I should object myself—I would not have Madame measuring me. No such difficulties, however, were experienced among prostitutes.

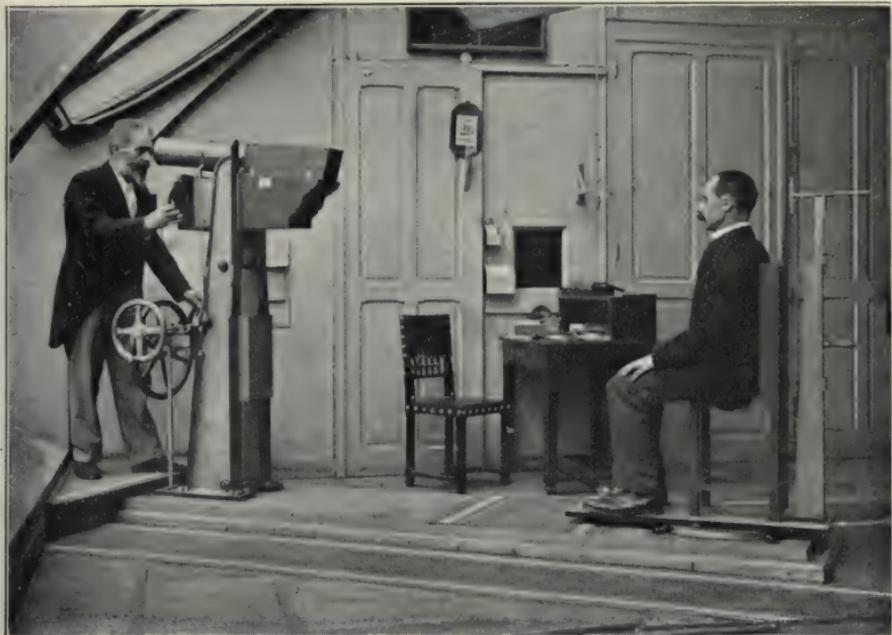
Another "scientist," Fornasari, obtained the following results: "Between the least circumference, over the ankle bones, and the largest, round the calf, there is a difference in Bolognese prostitutes of from 70 to 150, and in normal women of from 100 to 140—the median average for the first-named being 120, and for the last-named 100. Normals consequently have the calves least developed on an average, and prostitutes show the maxima and minima of development. Between the maximum measurement of the calves and that of the thighs the variation was from 120 to 240 in prostitutes of Bologna, and from 120 to 220 in normals—the serial mean being for the first-named 190, and for the second 150. The thighs of prostitutes are consequently bigger than normal women's in proportion to the calves. The foot in proportion is also shorter and narrower than in normals."

What a nice occupation for a man to be engaged in! And what nonsense it all is. As if we do not know that prostitutes are of all sizes and shapes, from the very thin to the very fat; and the lean sometimes become fat and the fat lean. I think that will do for

the legs; let us now see how the other extremity fares under the calipers of these "experts."

A man named Marro, yet another "scientist," made the following cranial measurements: "Horizontal circumference," "longitudinal curve," "transversal curve," "longitudinal diameter," and "transversal diameter," comparing those of prostitutes, peasant chaste women, educated chaste women, and thieves. From which measurements he deduced the following "probable cranial capacity," in the order given: 1452.3, 1465.3, 1466.8, and 1462.4. From which it will be seen there is little variation, so what does it indicate? We are told that prostitutes have "small cranial capacities." I doubt it. The largest cranial circumference, Marro tells us, is to be found in homicides (532); then come poisoners (who may also be homicides—517), infanticides (who are homicides—501), and thieves (494).

We also have such measurements as "antero-posterior diameter," "frontal diameter," "frontal height," "bizygomatic diameter," and "bimandibular diameter." We are also told by this eminent authority that dark eyes are not frequent among prostitutes and thieves, and that the hair of prostitutes and criminals is darker than that of normals; that criminal women of mature age have more wrinkles than others, and that baldness in female criminals is less common than with normals. We are further informed that among female criminals are to be found the following anomalies: Moles, hairiness, masseter muscles (this is a most mysterious "anomaly," because it is the



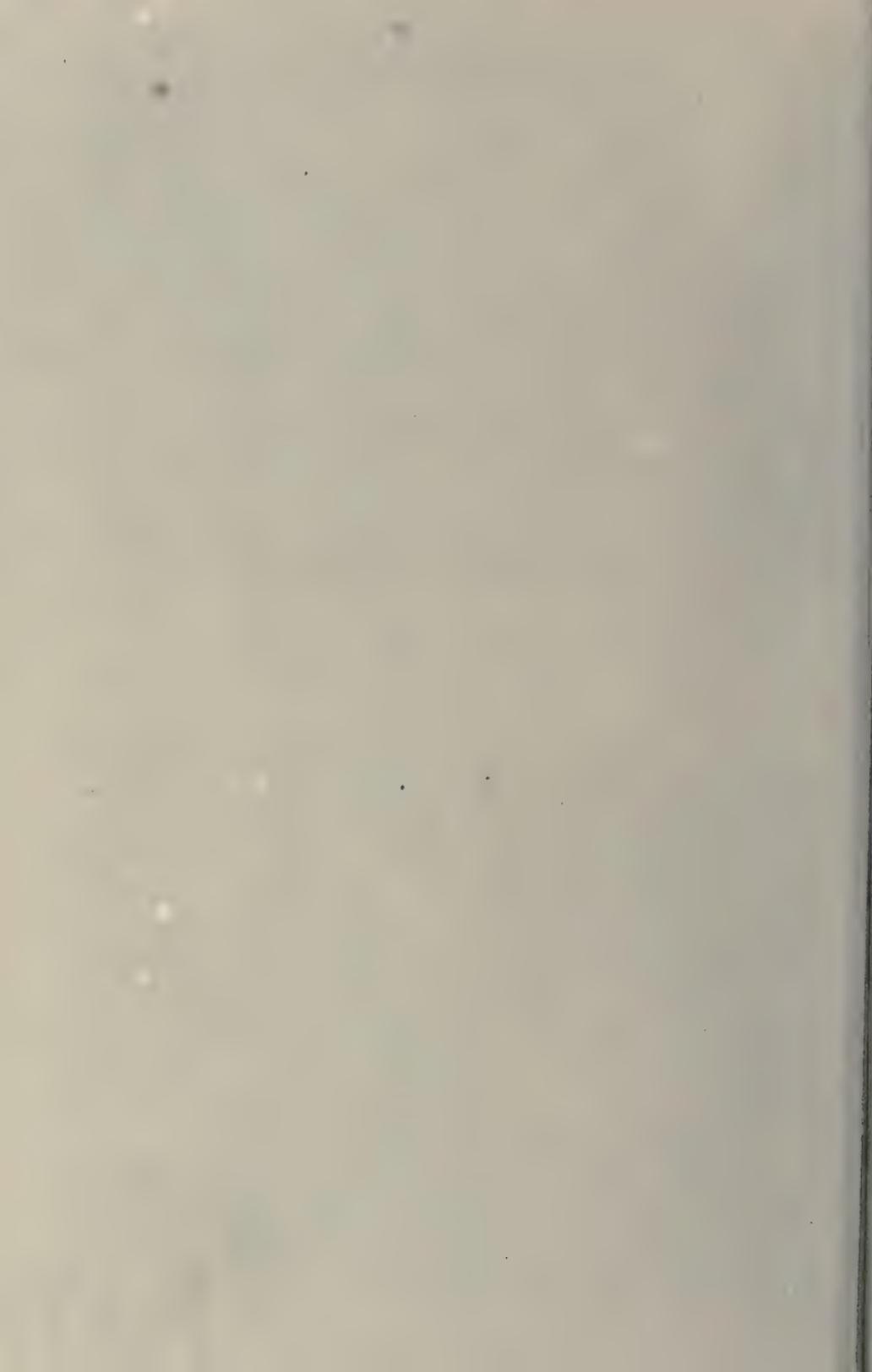
(By Courtesy of M. Lèpine.)

PHOTOGRAPHING A CRIMINAL (PARIS).



(By Courtesy of M. Lèpine.)

LOST PROPERTY OFFICE (PARIS).



masseter muscles which lift the lower jaw and enable us to close our mouths), prehensile foot (never heard of such a thing, except in a "side-show"), projecting ears (an "anomaly"!), strabismus (a squint), and anomalous teeth—which may mean anything or nothing. We are still further informed that "almost all anomalies occur more frequently in prostitutes than in female offenders." Is not a prostitute a "female offender"? We are also asked to believe that there is greater dullness in sense of touch among female criminals than normals, that their sense of smell is duller, and that they have a "delicacy of gustation." Those who know anything of criminals will be able to pronounce upon these conclusions.

When Lombroso tells, as he does, that insensibility to pain is a marked characteristic of criminals he is about as wrong as he can be. It is a well-known fact that the only way to appeal to the understanding of certain brutal criminals is through their own skins. It is pain in other people that they are insensible to. It was flogging that put down garrotting, and it is the prospect of a flogging that keeps certain ruffianly criminals from breaking into open rebellion in our various prisons at the present day. Lombroso's "discoveries" were always peculiar. He examined the skull of Charlotte Corday, who killed Marat, and he pronounced it a truly criminal type of skull. He was, however, fully contradicted by two others—Topinard and Benedict—who declared that it was an ordinary female skull. Of course it was, for Charlotte was not even an ordinary criminal. She was just an average

woman worked up to a pitch of fury by the brutal behaviour of an inhuman monster, which she rightly determined to kill. She was more in the way of being a benefactress than a criminal.

Lombroso thus summarises the above measurements and conclusions: "It must be confessed that these accumulated figures do not amount to much, but this result is only natural." Quite so, Professor. I agree with you there absolutely. I even go further and say they do not amount to anything. Anybody can go and do the same as Madame Tarnowsky, Fornasari and Marro did, if they care to do something foolish and indelicate, and have plenty of time to waste.

I induced M. Bertillon to send me a dozen sets of measurements of female criminals. Below is a list of the subjects:

- F.M. (32), living at home—convicted of theft
- B.M. (38), no regular occupation—theft and receiving
- H.A.A. (34), housewife—theft at the Louvre
- H.C. (34), no regular occupation—procuring abortion
- H.Y. (35), chambermaid—vagabondage
- D.H. (37), domestic servant—theft at Bon Marché
- D.L.M. (31), living at home—theft
- B.A. (34), dressmaker—theft
- B.L. (34), living at home—theft
- B.Y. (37), domestic servant—theft
- H.H. (35), no regular employment—theft
- E.L. (31), laundress—theft

The measurements were those of the waist, bust,

PHYSICAL CONFORMATION 27

head, arms, foot, middle finger, ear, height, etc. It would be tedious to reproduce all these, so I give a facsimile of one only of the cards (both sides):

N^o 160647 | Nom et prénoms : J. J.

Sur noms et pseudonymes : _____

Né le 13 Octobre 1854, à Solingen, cant. _____, dep. Allemagne

Fils de Jean et de Elonora Keller, profession ferme de charrue

Antécédents : J. C. Motif de la détention : Volabondage

Marques particulières et cicatrices.

I. _____ _____ _____ _____ II. _____ _____ _____ _____	III. _____ _____ _____ -IV. _____ _____ _____ V. _____ _____ VI. _____ _____
---	---

Main gauche

Arrière g.

Avant g.

Mains g.

Index g.

Pouce g.

I applied a test to a number of females other than criminals, and I obtained similar measurements to many of those contained on these cards. So that neither in the shape of so-called "anomalies" or measurements can physical conformation be an indication of criminal traits. The thing is as dead as

Queen Anne or the "science" of the handwriting expert. In a letter to me M. Bertillon says: "It is

Taille = 50.9	Tête	long. 17.7	Pied g. 22.8	Age app. =	Age déclaré 35	N° en 1854
Voûte		larg. 14.4	Médias g. 10.5	a. de cl. 5.4	Cheveux chaux	Barbe
Enverg. = 50		syg. =	Auric. g. 7.7	Oeil de l'iris g.	noir - marcl	Point F. = m - m
Buste = 125	Oreille dr. 5.7	Couée g. 40.4	Oeil de l'iris g.	par.	Mais dr.	Mais g.

Point de vue : 3 - - Réduction 1/7

Exposé à Paris, le 25. 9. 1892 par M. Dubhamel

Notes _____ Main droite _____

Pouce dr. Index dr. Médias dr. Annulaire dr. Auriculaire dr.

no longer held that physical conformation has anything to do with crime." The mystery is how such a fallacy ever came to be taken seriously.

CHAPTER III

“SEXUAL MANIA”—THE PROSTITUTE

WE are now about to discuss a subject which, although a delicate one, will not shock any but the prurient-minded. The lubricious can find food for their obscene appetites almost anywhere and in almost anything. They may even object to the sunbeam as being too obvious. But my remarks are not addressed to such undesirable individuals, but to the earnest student. There is a proper and an improper way of dealing with the subject. One can be vulgar over a lily and poetical over a parsnip. It is merely a question of frame of mind. “To the pure all things are pure.”

The question of sexual relationship must necessarily be included in any intelligent and comprehensive consideration of the subject of crime, inasmuch as it has a good deal to do with a certain phase of it. In this country we have always been inexcusably diffident—to use no stronger word—in dealing with a human weakness which is the mainspring of a large amount of wrongdoing. This is out of respect to the prurient and feeble-minded Mrs Grundy. We have never, as they have done on the Continent, recog-

nised the necessary evil of prostitution, with the result that it prevails in a much worse state than if we did. If we were more honest and fearless on the sex question many afflicted men and women who now languish in gaol would be tended in homes or asylums. Although fashioned in the image of God, we all have, more or less, the weaknesses of the flesh. And there can be nothing repugnant in anything that is natural. It is the unnatural which is repulsive and to be avoided.

I have canvassed for opinions on this subject among a number of medical men and those working in connection with wrongdoers, and I have come to the conclusion that even the medical profession itself has not yet realised the importance and significance of the matter in relation to the daily health and conduct of men and women. Those who seem to understand it most are those who have for many years been striving to reclaim wrongdoers—such, for instance, as Mr Holmes of the Howard Association and Mr Wheatley of the St Giles's Mission. Both these gentlemen will tell you that they are quite convinced that this malady, this cerebral abnormality has a great deal to do with a large percentage of crime. Mr Wheatley says that although some cases of "drunk and disorderly" among females are not attended with acts of immorality, many of them are. Mr Holmes testifies to the same effect. In fact, the drunkenness may be said to be the culminating stage of rebelliousness which is induced by the cerebral disorder. This has been proved to have been the case many times

through the medium of practical experience. I mean to say that women who have been convicted of such disorderly conduct have been taken in hand, kept in seclusion and away from the drink, while they were vigilantly watched. And much the same thing has occurred in each case. For a time they have behaved with perfect propriety, exhibiting no signs or traces of any undue exaltation, until at length they have betrayed symptoms of approaching excitability; finally and obviously, against their better judgment and desires, they have been compelled, by that strange though uncontrollable internal force, to break away and plunge into riotous conduct. And to prove that a craving for drink was not the impelling power they have quite candidly confessed to their guardian that their trouble was something quite apart from that.

The malady affects men and women in different ways, not always driving them to drink. Drink is only one of the effects. For instance, there was the case of a man who, although quite well-off, had a mania during the periods of such visitations for stealing pots of flowers from barrows. Again and again he was convicted of this offence and never of any other. He could, of course, well afford to pay for the plants, but his desire was always to steal them. Dr Charles Mercier, in his “Crime and Insanity,” says of this malady: “And in this way insanity contributes to the commission of crime; for the character of certain mental disorders is in this very exaggeration of desire. Some persons are assailed by most urgent desires,

which they abominate, repel and resist, to steal, to injure themselves or other people, to set things on fire, and to do other criminal acts. In a case at present under my care, a footman of most mild and gentle disposition, finds himself under a constant inclination to poison the soup, to put powdered glass in the viands, to stab his master, or his master's guests, at meals, to throw the children out of the window, and so forth. In other cases the mania is for stealing, but the motive of the act is not so much gain as the motive of the collector; for persons thus affected usually limit their thefts to one class of things. One will steal shoes, another spoons, another fans; and the value of the articles stolen has no relation of the needs of the thief, who will, in many cases, steal a thing that is of no value to him at all. The gratification is in the doing of the act, and when it is done the thing stolen is not valued or desired. It is often given away, or put away and never inspected again."

One medical man whom I consulted, and who called himself a physician, made the astounding statement to me that there was no real necessity for any man to have anything to do with women. There are, of course, both men and women whose natures are so continent that such remarks might apply to them—people compounded, as it were, of tea-leaves and sawdust. But to make such an assertion as a *general statement* is simply ridiculous. And the good man was not arguing from his own point of view, for he was a married man with several children. I do not suppose he procured the latter through the medium

of abstention, although he was an Irishman. This variation in the natures of men and women is answerable for many unhappy marriages. A certain lady, whom the world heard a great deal of some years ago, has put it on record in her private memoirs that she was, in this direction, a great disappointment to her husband. She further states that, physically, marriage is undoubtedly a great lottery, inasmuch as “it admits of no rehearsal.”

Another doctor I consulted readily admitted that there was a malady of the kind, which I have, rather uncouthly I fear, called “sexual mania.” He called it something else; gave it a name which contained about half the letters of the alphabet, but which we need not trouble ourselves about here. He was also prepared to prescribe certain drugs as a remedy for it. There is only one proper remedy, however, and that is Nature’s. Some doctors are honest and bold enough to recommend this, while others, such, for instance, as our above-mentioned physician, profess to think such a proceeding most improper. Why, they do not condescend to say. I do not think many people who are interested in the cure of crime can have any doubt as to the existence of this malady which causes so much of it. Mr Morrison, in “Crime and Its Causes,” says: “The actual percentage of criminals who suffer from mental disorders in the prisons of Europe is probably much greater than is generally supposed. At the present time a knowledge of insanity is no part of the ordinary medical curriculum.” And Dr Mercier, in “Sanity and

Insanity." says: "With respect to this malady the great majority of medical men are themselves in the position of laymen. They have not studied it. It was not included in their examinations." In short, we have yet to acknowledge the intimate connection which exists between nervous disorders and crime.

Let us now devote a little space to the consideration of the prostitute in relation to crime. Lombroso seems to have some doubt as to the relationship, for sometimes he brackets her with ordinary criminals and at others he makes a distinction between them. Personally I do not regard the prostitute as an ordinary criminal. Indirectly, she is the outcome of shortcomings in the social system. Directly, there are many causes for her being on the streets. But it is not true, as has been thoughtlessly said, that she is the victim of man's lust. That is a fallacy, an unwarrantable slander on the male sex, a little easy cant indulged in by ill-informed busybodies who are forever writing and talking about things which they have not previously taken the trouble to inquire into. There are, unfortunately, men who treat women infamously, but they are in a very small minority. No man worthy the name treats a woman with cruelty and treachery. I know for a fact that the police as a rule are very indulgent and considerate towards the women of the streets, except when their hands are forced by some whited sepulchre or bawdy woman on the prowl for cheap notoriety, when they are called upon and compelled to do their duty. But to hunt

such women from post to pillar is not prosecution but persecution.

Admitted that men are the lure and bait for women to become harlots, that they support them when they become so, yet they do not compel or drive them to it. The women themselves voluntarily adopt the calling. It may be stated, without fear of contradiction, that there exists nothing, absolutely nothing, which can compel a woman to adopt or resort to an immoral life. The very existence of baby-farms is proof of this. Prostitutes are sometimes called “fallen women.” What is a fallen woman? I take it literally to mean a woman who has fallen from a condition of chastity. That being so, the women of the pavement do not by any means adequately represent them, for there are heaps and heaps of women, both single and married, who have so fallen but who are not on the streets and are never likely to go there. And if the fact of a woman having an illegitimate child is not sufficient to compel her to go upon the streets, then it is quite clear that nothing else will, for that is the most serious thing that can happen to her.

Prostitutes are also sometimes referred to as “unfortunates.” Well, it is safe to say that the majority of them do not consider themselves unfortunate, except when they are taken up by the police or in hand by the “reformer.” They have no false notions of delicacy about their business, which they regard in a purely commercial light. It is well known that many of them accumulate money and eventually retire to some more legitimate occupation. They do not want

to be reformed; they would scorn to be reformed. In fact, there is precious little reforming done among them. This sort of social work is usually adopted by well-placed ladies who are hard put to know what to do with their leisure time and are in pressing need of a hobby. The perfect nonsense which is talked on the subject at the meetings which such people hold periodically would cause the judicious to grieve, if it did not make the very angels weep.

Women become prostitutes from various causes—some from a constitutional disinclination to work, others from love of ease and the wearing of fine raiment, others still who adopt the calling as an easy way of obtaining money with which to have a “good time”; many, however, through being afflicted with the malady which we have already discussed in this chapter. And this I shall proceed to prove by describing one or two cases of the kind which have come under my personal notice.

The first case, then, with which I was intimately associated, concerns a young woman whom we will call Nell Standish. When I first met her she was quite young, not more, I should think, than 16 or 17. But she looked many years older. She was, in fact, altogether abnormal. She was the daughter of highly respectable parents, who kept a baby-linen establishment in the West End. She was very pretty. She was also something else. We will say she was very ardent. Not to beat about the bush, she was common to nearly all her male acquaintances. Although still so young, she had already irretrievably “fallen.”

And in these liaisons she was always the leading spirit, being so impetuous and energetic in her wrongdoing as to take aback some of those who were the recipients of her “favours.”

Eventually a certain event happened, which need not be described here, but which came to the knowledge of her parents, who decided to have her put away while she was still under age. It fell out that she (the girl) overheard this conversation, and she was so alarmed at the prospect of being shut up that she popped on her hat and fled from the house by the back way. Naturally her parents were greatly shocked at her escape, and used every effort to discover her whereabouts. In this search I gave them my personal assistance. For weeks she was missing, when one day I encountered her in South London. I then learned from her what happened to her after her flight. It appears she went straight to the house where one of her male acquaintances lived. He was the son of people in rather good circumstances. By looking round the side of the house she was able to see him playing tennis on the lawn. He saw and came to her. Having learned from her the predicament she was in, he procured her a lodging for the night. She afterwards moved from here to the hardly respectable thoroughfare called Stamford Street, Blackfriars. Here she was living when I met her.

To my great regret, I found she had already adopted the calling of an “unfortunate.” Handsomely attired in evening dress, she was nightly leaving her lodging in Stamford Street in a cab,

accompanied by another woman of the class, more experienced and hardened than herself, for the Empire, the Alhambra, or the St James's Restaurant, known to the elect as "Jimmy's." I now used every possible effort to get her back to her parents. My position was a somewhat delicate one, not to say awkward. In the first place she had sworn me to secrecy concerning her address; in the next I was pledged to inform her parents the moment I should discover her whereabouts. In addition to this, I felt that I had not the heart to tell them the whole truth. Already her poor mother had moved me with her tears. So I temporised. I told them that I had met her, that I was going to meet her again, and that eventually I had no doubt I should succeed in obtaining her address.

In the meantime I informed the girl that I was in touch with her parents, using every possible effort of persuasion to induce her to return home. I described how her parents were suffering and how willing they would be to forgive her if she would but retrieve and return to them. Although she did not outright refuse, she did not make any effort to return. It was rather pathetic to observe how she clung to me as a kind of link between herself and a life she would willingly go back to had she the resolution and courage. I quite dreaded my interviews with her mother, her grief was so great.

Eventually Nell Standish moved to more comfortable rooms in the West-end, her companion going with her. The rooms were taken for her by the young

fellow who had befriended her on the night of her flight, and who was keeping her. Clearly he did not know the life she was leading, for soon after he arranged to marry her. It was she who told me of this, and I was very glad to hear it, for such a step as this I thought might save her. She was introduced to his friends, and the young fellow's mother, not unnaturally solicitous for the fate of her son, put some pertinent questions to his affianced, among other things expressing her hope that she, Nell, was thoroughly healthy. If the good lady had heard the tone in which this information was subsequently conveyed to me I do not think she would have been reassured.

The banns were duly published at a West-end church, and I consented to act as “best man.” Eventually the morning of the wedding arrived, and, arraying myself in festive garments, I wended my way to Nell's rooms. When I entered the house I was rather struck with the absence of any signs of an approaching wedding, and when the servant who admitted me looked askance at my garments, while the shadow of a smile flitted across her countenance, I began to “hae ma doots.” I mounted to the first floor, where the rooms were situated, and walked into the sitting-room. Here also there was an entire absence of preparations for imminent marriage. There was not even a crescent of confetti nor a grain of rice, not a hook nor eye nor strand of lace nor petal of flower! Nothing but the usual contents of the room. Her ladyship was reclining on a sofa,

reading a novel. I propose to give a portion of the dialogue which ensued, as it indicates her frame of mind.

As I entered the room Nell looked up and said:

"Hullo! Well, you have got yourself up! I've never seen you look so 'toney' before. A silk hat suits you. You look like—like—like a bank clerk!"

I gazed at her in amazement.

"What about the wedding?" I asked.

"Oh," she replied tersely, "it's off. He's backed out of it. I don't care. I don't want to get married."

I felt cross.

"And I've come all this way specially for it," I complained.

"What a shame!" she said sympathetically. "Poor old boy! Never mind. Sit down and have a chat. Do you like 'The Deemster'?" (The novel she was reading.)

And so the desultory conversation continued for some time, during which she hardly even alluded to the marriage which was "off."

No doubt the young fellow or his friends found out something at the last moment which stopped the ceremony. I believe she spoke her mind when she said she did not want to get married. Marriage brings with it certain limitations, which would not have been to her liking. Unfortunately I never could get her back to her home, although she was injudicious enough to consent to receive her parents at her lodging. Her mother fled from the place as from

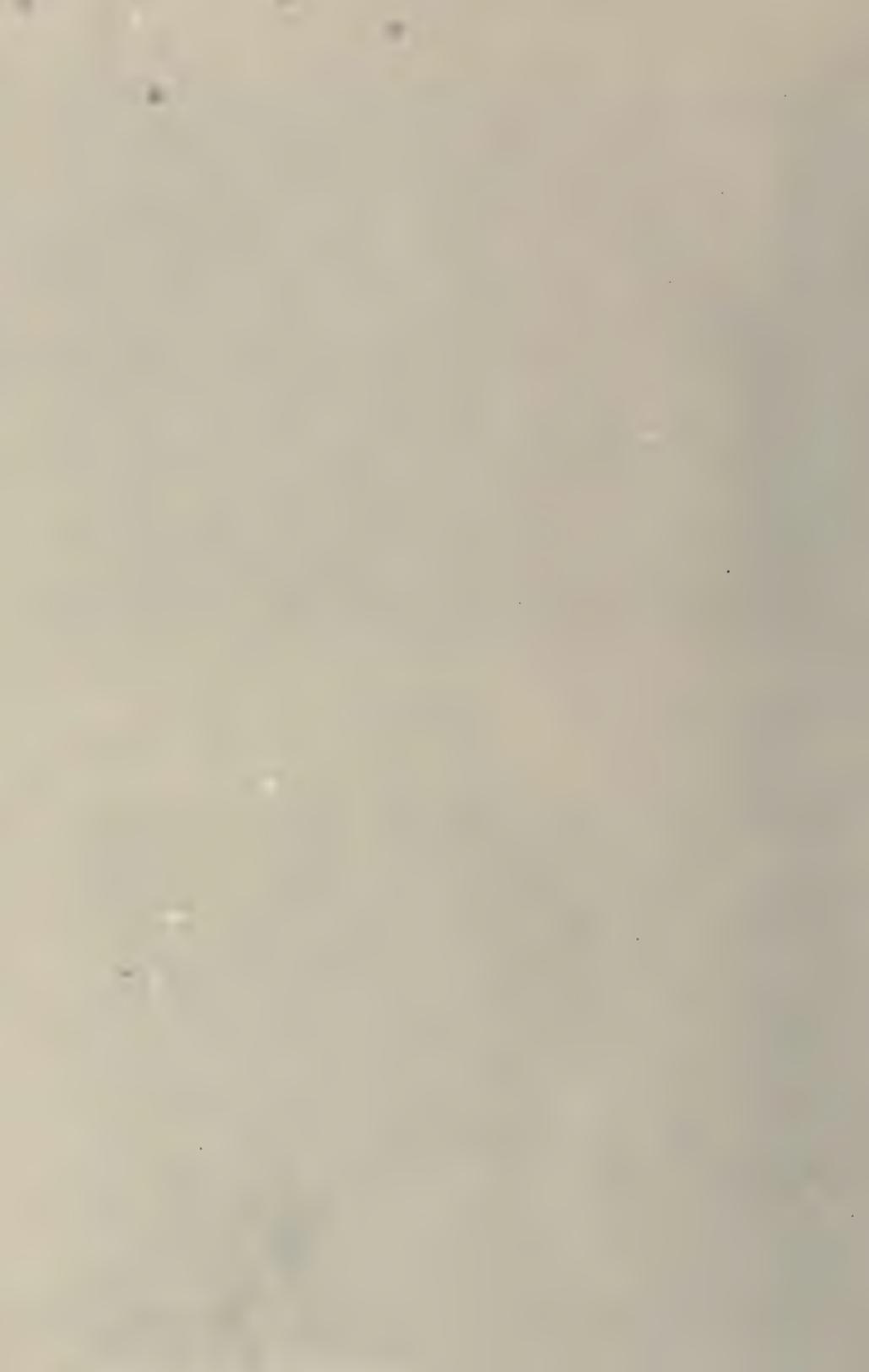


(By Courtesy of M. Lèpine.)

PRISON INFIRMARY, NANTERRE.



(By Courtesy of M. Lèpine.)



a lazar-house, and subsequently described to me, between paroxysms of weeping, the horror she experienced at finding herself at such a place. She regarded it as the crowning iniquity of her daughter to allow her to approach “that house.” She also described how she had had trouble with her daughter since the latter’s earliest years.

The air of callousness which the young woman exhibited did not conceal her true feelings. I remember one evening we sat together in her handsomely furnished sitting-room upon one of the many occasions when I endeavoured to effect a reconciliation between her and her parents. She fell into a reminiscent mood. It was cold, and we sat by the fire. Wistfully she recalled the days of her childhood, her mother’s loving care and the happy times she had had during the period of her innocence. Presently tears came to eyes that had not lately been accustomed to shed them. And as the tears came into her eyes a “lump” came into my throat. I felt that I was prepared to make almost any sacrifice if by so doing I could have placed her in her mother’s arms and so have saved her from the fate that awaited her. But it was not to be. In the fair body of that beautiful child, with her glorious golden hair, her soft, pensive eyes, her sweet girlish lips and complexion as delicate as an infant’s, there was implanted a malign influence, more powerful than parental persuasion, than energetic friendly counsel, that drove her headlong to social destruction, that dragged her down and down and down, against her better judgment and

finer instincts, down to the dregs and damnation. Who shall solve the hideous problem, who minister to the terrible malady?

Again I lost sight of her, and it was not till some time after that I again encountered her. I then met her in the West-end. Of course, she had a man with her. It was clear that she had sunk a stage or two lower on her inevitable journey downwards to the social ditch. The bloom was off her beauty, and there was indications that she was drinking not wisely but too well. She saw and recognised me, but I hurried on. It may have been cowardly on my part, but I could do her no good, and I wished to retain intact as far as possible the mental picture of her sweet face as it was before she "fell." That was the last I ever saw or heard of her. Poor Nell! I wonder how it has fared with thee! Are we destined to meet again in that state when the soul shall have given off its corruption and been released from the burden of the flesh? I trust so.

I ask, was the above truly unfortunate young woman a victim of man's lust?

I recall another case. In this instance the young woman left her home in the country to come upon the streets in London because, as she explained, her home was rendered unhappy by the conduct of her stepmother. That was scarcely an adequate reason, though, as there were other things she might have gone to. It happened that before she was wholly committed to the life, she fell in with a certain individual who took compassion on her. He took

rooms for her, paid her rent and gave her money, so that she should not have to go on the streets for a subsistence. He also advised her to return home, and subsequently she did so. Not long after, however, he met her again. She was back on the streets, and had now contracted a disfiguring disease. So she went the way of the unrighteous.

I again ask, was the above young woman a victim of man's lust?

One might go on enumerating such cases indefinitely. Civilisation and the “higher life” have produced prostitution, which is unknown among savage tribes. There is among the latter what civilisation calls unchastity, but those who are guilty of it are not conscious of doing any harm. Is it also too much to suppose that civilisation has also produced such unfortunate creatures as Nell Standish?

CHAPTER IV

POISONS

As the crime of poisoning is one which is mostly committed by women, it will not be out of place to devote a little space to the consideration of some of the principal poisons themselves.

The task of limiting the opportunities for obtaining lethal quantities of deadly agents by persons with homicidal tendencies has always been a difficult one with the authorities. It is quite impossible to prevent the purchase of poisons by such persons, the most that can be done is to put as many restrictions on their sale as possible. Thus all chemists keep what is known as a "poison book," which all persons purchasing certain poisons are called upon to sign. A witness is also required to be present, and the purchaser is likewise asked to furnish a reason for making the purchase. The latest legislation on the subject, which came into force in October, 1911, enacts that the following poisons should be sold in bottles which can be distinguished by touch from ordinary medicine bottles: Vitriol (sulphuric acid), nitric acid, hydrochloric acid (spirits of salts), and soluble salts of oxalic acid.

Most poisons are scheduled and divided into two classes, certain precautions and restrictions upon their sale being imposed respectively. The following form, issued by the Pharmaceutical Society, contains all the information that is obtainable on the subject:

POISONS AND PHARMACY ACT, 1908.

SCHEDULE OF POISONS.

It is unlawful to sell any poison in this Schedule unless the box, bottle, vessel, wrapper, or cover in which such poison is contained be distinctly labelled (1) with the name of the article, (2) with the word "Poison," and (3) with the name and address of the seller; it is also unlawful to sell any article in Part I. of the Schedule to any person unknown to the seller, unless introduced by a person known to both parties, and on every sale of such article the seller must before delivery enter, or cause to be entered, in the Poison Book (1) the date of sale, (2) the name and address of the purchaser, (3) the name and quantity of the article sold, and (4) the purpose for which it is required, these entries being attested by the signature of the purchaser and of his introducer, if any.

PART I

Aconite, Aconitine, and their preparations.

Alkaloids—all poisonous vegetable alkaloids not specifically named in this Schedule, and their salts, and all poisonous derivatives of vegetable alkaloids.

Arsenic, and its medicinal preparations.

Atropine, and its salts, and their preparations.

Belladonna, and all preparations or admixtures (except belladonna plaisters) containing 0.1 or more per cent. of belladonna alkaloids.

Cantharides, and its poisonous derivatives.

Coca, any preparation or admixture of, containing 1 or more per cent. of coca alkaloids.

Corrosive Sublimate.

Cyanide of Potassium, and all poisonous cyanides and their preparations.

Emetic Tartar, and all preparations or admixtures containing 1 or more per cent. of emetic tartar.

Ergot of Rye, and preparations of ergots.

Nux Vomica, and all preparations or admixtures containing 0.2 or more per cent. of strychnine.

Opium, and all preparations or admixtures containing 1 or more per cent. of morphine.

Picrotoxin.

Prussic Acid, and all preparations or admixtures containing 0.1 or more per cent. of prussic acid.

Savin, and its oil, and all preparations or admixtures containing savin or its oil.

NOTE.—It is unlawful to sell arsenic (including arsenious acid, arsenites, arsenic acid, arsenates, and all other colourless preparations of arsenic), unless in addition to the requirements of the Pharmacy Act, 1868, the following provisions of the Arsenic Act be observed:—

1. That the poison if colourless be mixed with at least one-sixteenth its weight of soot or indigo, unless sold in a quantity of not less than ten pounds and for a purpose (*not* for use in agriculture) for which such admixture would render it unfit.

2. That the person to whom the poison is sold or delivered be of mature age.

3. That the occupation, as well as the name and address, of the purchaser be entered in a book kept for that purpose.

4. That when the purchaser is not known to the seller, and is introduced by some person known to both, this person shall be present as a witness to the transaction, and shall enter his name and address in a book kept for that purpose, as set forth below:

Day of Sale.	Name and Surname of Purchaser.	Purchaser's Place of Abode.		Condition or Occupation	Quantity of Arsenic Sold.	Purpose for which Required.
1 Sept., 1851.	John Thomas.	Hendon	Elm Farm	Farm Labourer.	5 lbs.	To steep Wheat.

(Purchaser's signature.)

JOHN THOMAS.

(Witness.)

JAMES STONE.

(Seller's signature.)

GEORGE WOOD.

Or, if the purchaser cannot write, seller to put here the words "cannot write."

Grove Farm, Hendon.

PART II

All Preparations or Admixtures which are not included in Part I. of this Schedule, and contain a poison within the meaning of the Pharmacy Acts, except preparations

or admixtures the exclusion of which from this Schedule is indicated by the words therein relating to carbolic acid, chloroform, and coca, and except such substances as come within the provisions of Section 5 of this Act, e.g., Sulphuric Acid, Nitric Acid, Hydrochloric Acid, and Soluble Salts of Oxalic Acid, which must, however, be distinctly labelled with the name of the substance and the word "Poisonous," and with the name and address of the seller.

NOTE.—Special importance attaches to the above paragraph, as the effect of it is to include in Part II. many preparations and admixtures which are not specifically named in the Schedule, and even preparations and admixtures of non-scheduled vegetable drugs—such as Calabar bean, colchicum, conium-gelsemium, hyoscyamus, lobelia, stavesacre, stramonium, etc.—which contain poisonous alkaloids.

Almonds, Essential Oil of (unless deprived of prussic acid).

Antimonial Wine.

Cantharides, tincture and all vesicating liquid preparations or admixtures of.

Carbolic Acid, and liquid preparations of carbolic acid and its homologues, containing more than 3 per cent. of those substances, except preparations for use as sheep wash or for any other purpose in connection with agriculture or horticulture, contained in a closed vessel distinctly labelled with the word "Poisonous," the name and address of the seller, and a notice of the special purposes for which the preparations are intended.

Chloral Hydrate.

Chloroform, and all preparations or admixtures containing more than 20 per cent. of chloroform.

Coca, any preparation or admixture of, containing more than 0.1 per cent. but less than 1 per cent. of coca alkaloids.

Digitalis.

Mercuric Iodide.

Mercuric Sulphocyanide.

Oxalic Acid.

Poppies, all preparations of, excepting red poppy petals and syrup of red poppies (*Papaver rhæas*).

Precipitate, Red, and all oxides of mercury.

Precipitate, White.

Strophanthus.

Sulphonal.

POISON REGULATIONS.

The following regulations for the keeping, dispensing, and selling of poisons have been prescribed by the Pharmaceutical Society with the consent of the Privy Council.

1. That in the keeping of poisons each bottle, vessel, box, or package containing a poison be labelled with the name of the article, and also with some distinctive mark indicating that it contains poison.

2. Also that in the keeping of poisons, each poison be kept on one or other of the following systems, viz :

(a) In a bottle or vessel tied over, capped, locked, or otherwise secured in a manner different from that in which bottles or vessels containing ordinary articles are secured in the same warehouse, shop, or dispensary; or

(b) In a bottle or vessel rendered distinguishable by touch from the bottles or vessels in which ordinary articles are kept in the same warehouse, shop, or dispensary; or

(c) In a bottle, vessel, box, or package kept in a room or cupboard set apart for dangerous articles.

3. That in the dispensing and selling of poisons all liniments, embrocations, lotions, and liquid disinfectants containing poison be sent out in bottles rendered distinguishable by touch from ordinary medicine bottles, and that there also be affixed to each such bottle (in addition to the name of the article, and to any particular instructions for its use) a label giving notice that the contents of the bottle are not to be taken internally.

SPECIAL PRECAUTIONS.

With a view to the prevention of accidents, the Pharmaceutical Society strongly recommends all Pharmacists to adopt special precautions when dealing with the following articles :—Acetanilide, Amyl Nitrite, Antipyrine (Phenazone), Butyl-Chloral Hydrate, Cannabis Indica and its Preparations, Elaterium, Phenacetin, and Vermin Killers containing free Phosphorus. The sale of such articles as Adrenine, Lead Plaster and Salts, Phosphorus and Preparations containing it in the free state, Poisonous Glucosides and Preparations containing such, Potassium Bichromate, Strong Solution of Ammonia, Synthetic Cocaine-Substitutes, Zinc Salts, etc. also demands special precautions.

The principal poisons consist of vegetable and mineral products and derivatives, many of the former being procured from plants which grow wild in fields and gardens. In India the poison which is most frequently used by homicides and thieves is that of

“dhatura,” which is easily obtainable from a plant that grows profusely by the wayside. In England one of the most deadly poisons, and one which was used by the notorious Dr Lamson, is aconite, which is derived from the plant known as monk’s-hood. It has a deep blue flower, the form of which resembles a monk’s-hood—hence the name. Its root is very like horseradish in shape, for which it has been known to have been eaten, with, of course, fatal results. It is an acrid poison, which causes a burning sensation to the tongue, accompanied by great salivation. The principal symptoms are vomiting and intense abdominal pains.

Strychnine is the active principle of nux vomica, which is the seed of an East Indian tree. It is an alkaloid occurring in crystals, intensely bitter, colourless and inodorous. The symptoms closely resemble those of tetanus. There is convulsive movement of the muscles, with intense pain, the attacks remitting. Consciousness remains throughout, the patient expiring from exhaustion or asphyxia. In most cases of poisoning the first remedy is an emetic. In the case of strychnine-poisoning, chloroform also should be administered; likewise, what is known as an “antagonist,” which in the case of strychnine is considered to be bromide of potassium.

The beautiful Foxglove renders the deadly poison digitalis. All parts of the plant are poisonous, although the seeds contain the strongest form of the poison. It grows wild in nearly every county, although no animals, not even goats, will browse

upon it. It is used for medicinal purposes, although none but skilful and practised hands should be allowed to administer it. The vegetable remedies recommended by "wise old women" for all kinds of maladies should be carefully avoided. There is a case on record of one such woman herself taking the juice of the Foxglove to relieve a swelling of the limbs, and she died twelve days after. One of the symptoms of poisoning by digitalis is an enlargement of the pupil of the eye.

The poison atropine is procured from the perennial herb the Deadly Nightshade. This plant grows to a height of three or four feet, has a purplish-blue blossom and shining black berries. All parts of it are poisonous, although the root is most so. The berries are sweet, and many children have been killed or made ill by eating them. One of the symptoms of poisoning by this plant is also a dilatation of the pupil of the eye. Another is a great dryness of the throat; there is also dryness of the skin, visual hallucinations, a rapid pulse, sometimes a scarlet rush upon the skin, and delirium. The drug belladonna is also prepared from this plant. It is a good deal used to apply to ladies' eyes, to which it imparts a brilliance. Hence the name: *Bella donna* (fair lady).

The poison colchicum is derived from the Meadow-Saffron, a plant which grows in the meadows of many parts of England. It has rose-coloured flowers, not unlike those of the crocus. It is an autumn flower. Both men and children have been poisoned by it, children usually by chewing the

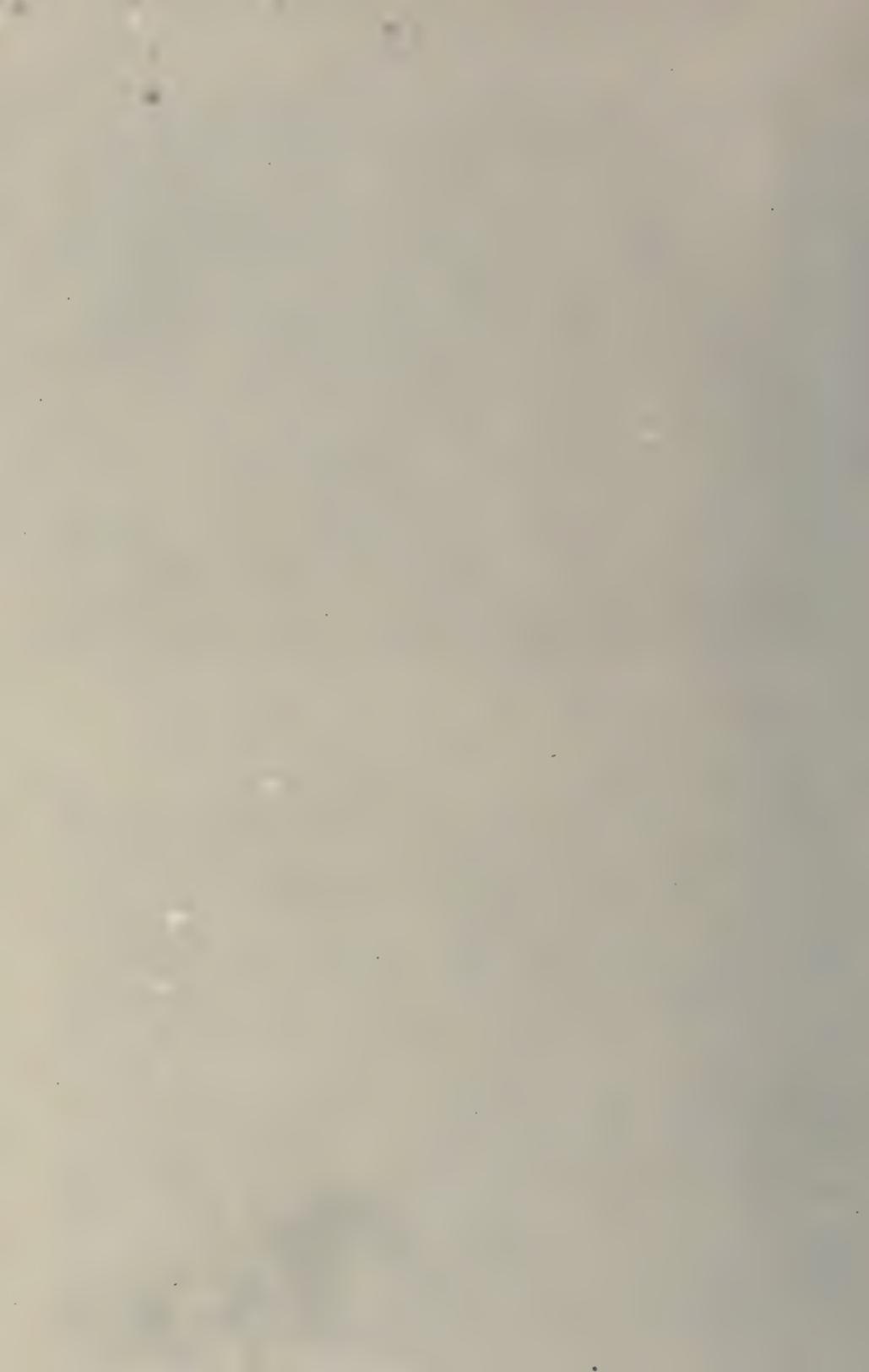


(By Courtesy of M. Lèpine.)

NURSERY OR CRÈCHE ATTACHED TO NANTERRE PRISON.



(By Courtesy of M. Lèpine.)



petals and eating the young seeds. Animals have also been poisoned by it. It has a bulb-like root, and all parts are poisonous. It has a nauseous odour. The poison colchicum is an irritant, causing vomiting, purging, pain and collapse. Colchicum has also an active principle called colchicin, which is much stronger than the poison itself.

The biennial Hemlock (*conium maculatum*) is a poisonous plant, which grows from three to six feet. It has a smooth, spotted stem, and is to be found in hedges and waste places. It produces a kind of paralysis, killing in much the same way as curara. It is believed that the death of Socrates was caused by Hemlock.

The Henbane renders the poison hyoscyamus, which was used by Crippen. It is an annual of the Nightshade family, to be found growing in waste grounds. It is about a foot in height, is hairy and sticky, with large, deeply indented leaves, the blossom being yellowish with violet-tinted veins. It has an unpleasant, "unctuous" odour, and is poisonous in all its parts, the most active principle, however, being found in the seeds. It has a thick root, which has been eaten in mistake for a parsnip. No animals will as a rule touch it. The poison produces stupefaction, and kills in a similar manner to atropine.

Prussic acid, although obtained from cyanide of potassium and iron, and known as "Prussian blue," is also found in bitter almonds and the cherry laurel (*prunus laurocerasus*). As is generally known, it is

a very deadly poison, perhaps one of the most deadly. It is said that it can be made strong enough to kill a man by the smell only, and it is believed that the Swedish chemist, Scheele, met his death in some such way. It is very pungent in odour and volatile in nature. It produces almost instant insensibility. Its action is to impede the respiration and produce a form of epilepsy or apoplexy. The victim is pale and cyanotic, the eyeballs glistening. There are also sometimes tetanic convulsions in the final phase. The remedies are to empty the stomach and administer salts of iron; also, cold affusion and artificial respiration should be persistently employed.

Prussic acid may also be found in apple pips, and in this connection a curious thing happened in the well-known Slough poisoning case. A man named Tawell was convicted of poisoning, by means of prussic acid, his mistress, who lived at Slough. Before committing the deed he had sent her some apples, several of which she had eaten. In her stomach were found some apple pips, the defence being that the acid which killed was introduced into the stomach through the medium of these pips. Very ingenious up to a point and then very silly. It would have required many more pips than were found in the deceased's stomach to have rendered a fatal dose of poison, and then only by means of chemical treatment.

Opium, from which morphia is obtained, is derived from the White Poppy, which is distinct

from other poppies by having a smooth stem and foliage. The symptoms of poisoning by opium are, first, transient mental excitement, then coma, deep, profound sleep, stertorous breathing, pupils of eyes contracted to pin-points, a cold and clammy skin, low and laboured pulse, with gradually declining respiration. The victim becomes completely insensible, his muscular relaxation being very great. The treatment is to wash out the stomach with a solution of permanganate of potash, which has the effect of oxidising the alkaloid, and so causing the poison to lose a good deal of its lethal properties. The next is to keep the patient awake by giving him a douche, walking him about, flicking him with a towel and so on. Tea and coffee should also be administered as stimulants. Also small doses of atropine, which is an "antagonist," or a counter-irritant.

Arsenic is a mineral poison, a soft, grey-coloured metal. There is also white arsenic. It is a very important poison, which has been used frequently by the homicide and the would-be homicide. It is very difficult to dissolve, even in boiling water. It is peculiar in its action, there usually being an interval between administration and the initial symptoms. The duration of this interval depends upon the state of the stomach and the way in which the poison is given. If it were given neat, as it were, on an empty stomach, the action would be quick. It would be slower according to the amount of food contained in the stomach or taken with the poison. The interval has varied from eight minutes to as long as nine

hours. Arsenic is a caustic, and sets up intense irritation in the stomach. As in the cases of other poisons, there is vomiting, sometimes of bloody material; there are also burning pains and intense thirst, purging and cramps in the legs, and extreme feebleness. It eventually sets up gastro-enteritis, of which the victim expires. In fact, I make bold to say that many a poisoner who has used arsenic has escaped the consequences of his or her deed by the death being ascribed to gastro-enteritis, as others who have employed prussic acid have escaped through death being attributed to "sudden heart failure," that loose formula which so many doctors make use of.

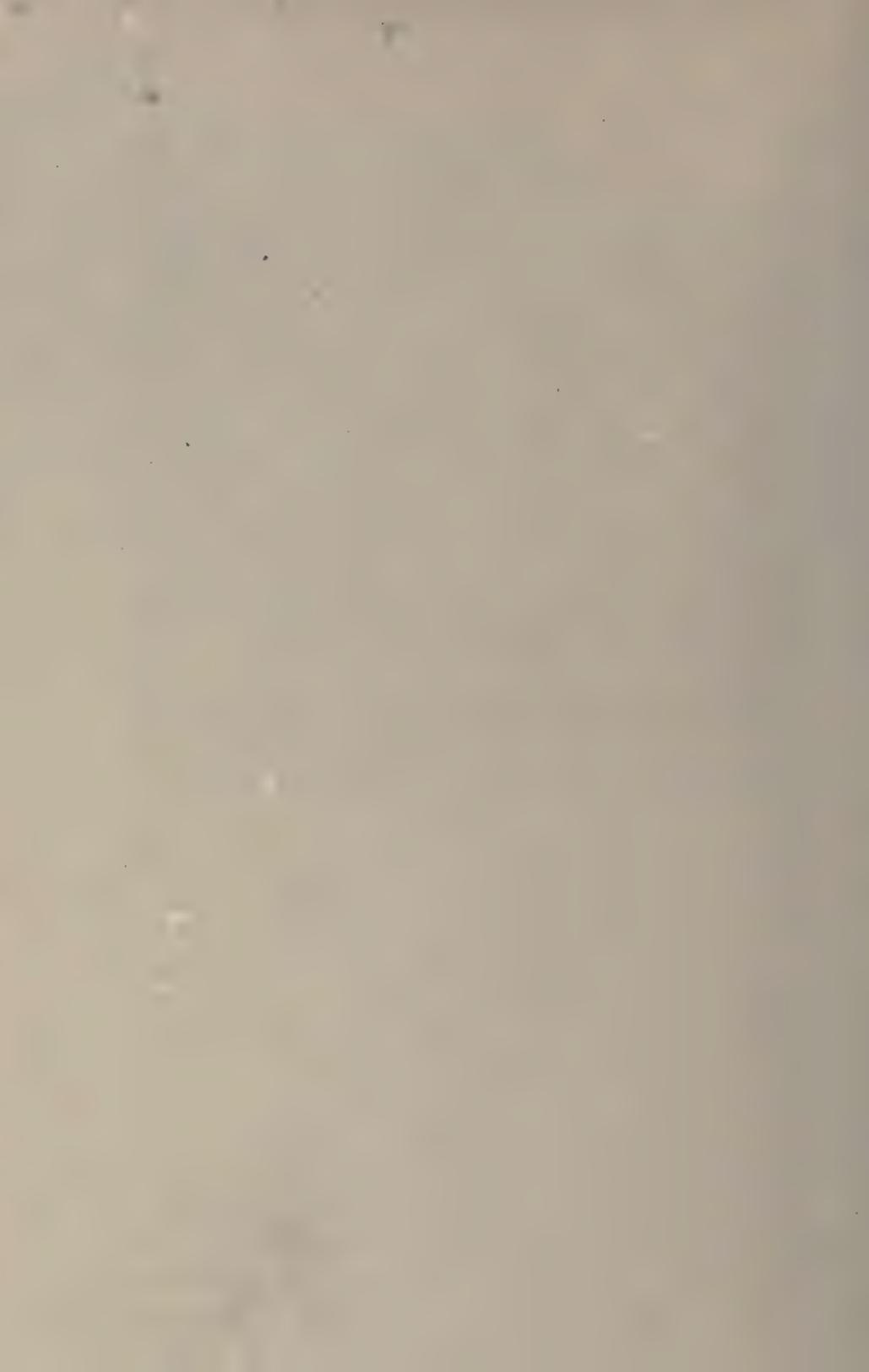
Towards the end there are also delirium, coma and convulsions. Sometimes jaundice also appears. There is also diarrhœa. The treatment is to empty the stomach and administer demulcents. A very good antidote is said to be the hydrated sesquioxide of iron, freshly made by mixing the liquor ferri perchlor, with solution of ammonia, and collecting the precipitate and giving it suspended in water.

Antimony is a mineral poison, a brittle, bluish-white metal of flaky, crystalline texture. Its effects are similar to those of arsenic, except that it also greatly depresses the heart, so that the victim suffers, among other things, with extreme despondency. It is usually administered in the form of tartar-emetic and is soluble in water. Antimony is a strong emetic, and if an over-dose be administered the whole might be expelled by vomiting.

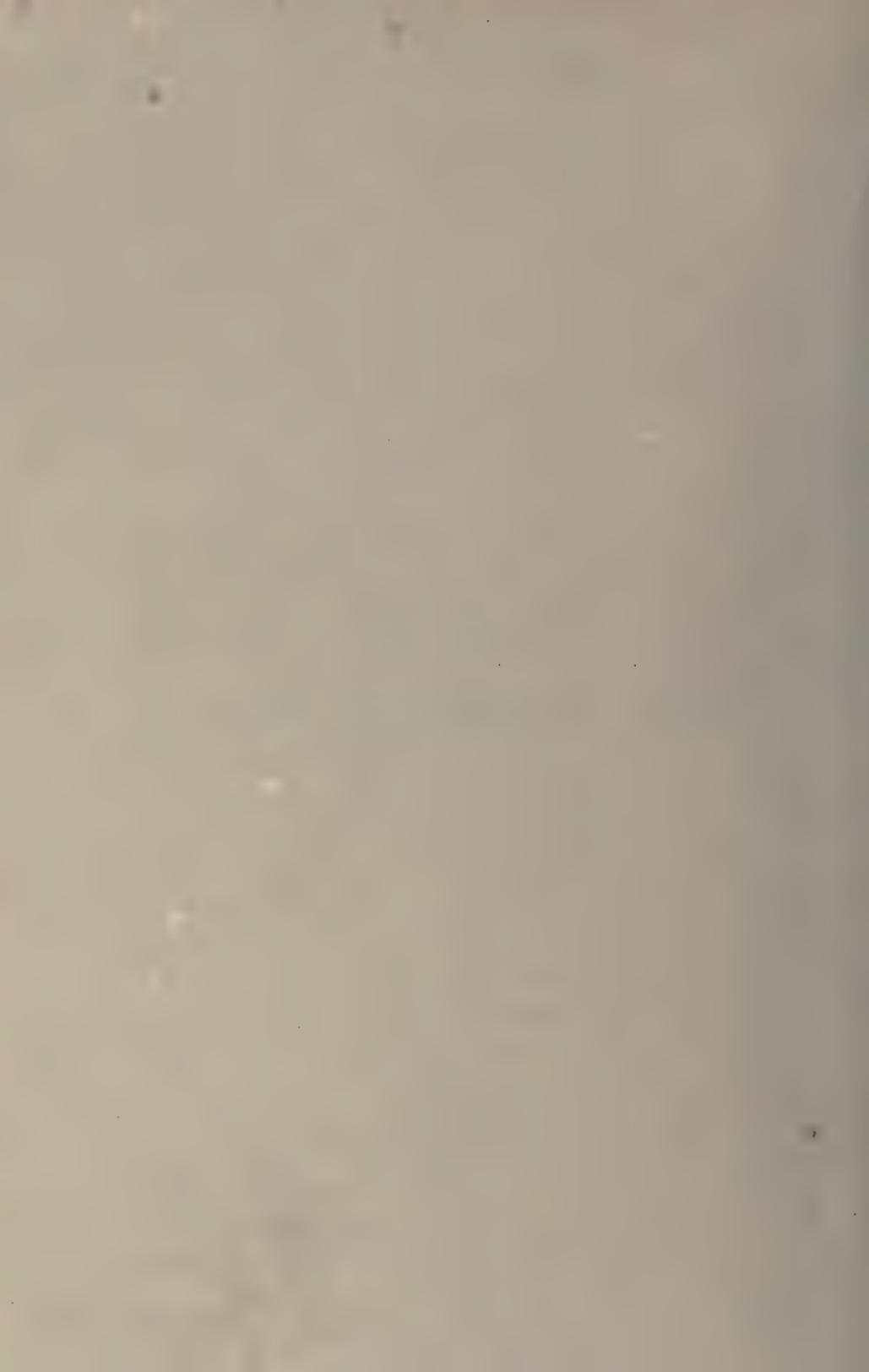
Chloroform, which is a compound of chlorine, carbon and hydrogen, is a colourless, volatile liquid, having a sweet taste. It is sometimes used by homicides, as in the Scotch case of Eugène Chantrelle. Its effects are somewhat similar to those of prussic acid, producing speedy insensibility and impeding the respiration. Sometimes the victim has delirium and rambles in an absurd fashion. The treatment is by stimulants. The first thing to do is to give the tongue a sharp tug forward and the next to employ artificial respiration.

There are, of course, many other poisons, but I think we have dealt with most of the principal ones, both vegetable and mineral.

Many of the above poisons are used freely and extensively in both art and commerce, which makes the restriction of their sale so very difficult a matter.



PART II
THE ORGANISERS OF CRIME



CHAPTER V

THE POISONERS

WE shall now proceed to consider in detail some cases of notorious female criminals. For the sake of convenient handling and lucidity of treatment, I have thought it advisable to group the cases under the heads of the different crimes of which the women were convicted. I shall first deal with poisoners, as being the most serious form of crime committed by women. Afterwards, I shall deal with cases where murder has been committed by other means. Then will come the "financial victimisers," as I term them—that is to say, female criminals who have perpetrated financial frauds. And so on. As is my invariable custom in dealing with cases, I shall present the facts in narrative form, dropping in comments where I consider them appropriate or called for.

The first case I shall deal with is that of the notorious Christina Edmunds:—

On the day of March 28, 1871, a lady called upon a Mr Garrett, a chemist, of Brighton, and purchased some toilet requisites. The chemist knew the lady well by sight, having served her on many previous occasions, but he did not know her name. Having

made the purchases of toilet articles the lady then requested Mr Garrett to supply her with some strychnine to kill cats. To this request Mr Garrett demurred, but the lady pressed him to oblige her, explaining that she had a garden, and the cats gave her a great deal of trouble by raking up the seeds. She also explained that although married she had no children, and that therefore there would be no danger, and that the poison would not go out of her or her husband's hands. Mr Garrett was at length persuaded to supply the lady with ten grains of strychnine, but before doing so he said his customer must produce a witness. This she volunteered to do, went out, and shortly after returned with a lady named Mrs Stone. The customer gave her own name as Mrs Wood, of Hill Side, Kingston, Surrey.

The strychnine was supplied, an entry made in the poison book, and signed both by Mrs Stone and Mrs Wood. Shortly after she (Mrs Wood) was back at Mr Garrett's shop, when she stated that she had used the poison and thrown the paper away. On April 15 following she came again to Mr Garrett's shop, declared that the poison had not acted, and that she required some more, this time, she explained, to kill a dog. She was accordingly supplied with another ten grains, and signed the poison book. On June 8 a boy walked into Mr Garrett's shop bringing with him a paper, which was supposed to be signed by Messrs Glaisyer & Kemp, chemists, of Brighton, and asking to be sup-

plied with a quarter of an ounce of strychnine. Mr Garrett scribbled a note on the back, and returned it to the boy, who went away. In about half-an-hour he returned with a letter containing two shillings and sixpence, was served with a drachm of strychnine in a bottle and given some change, with which he departed.

We must now go back a little. Shortly before the occurrence above related, a boy named Adam May, age 11, saw a lady in Portland Street, Brighton, who asked him to go an errand for her. He consented, and she then directed him to go to a confectioner's shop kept by a man named Maynard, and there purchase for her sixpennyworth of chocolate creams, at the same time handing him some money. The boy went off to get the chocolates, while the lady waited for him at the end of the street. He came back shortly after with the chocolates in a paper bag, which he handed to the lady, who, looking into the bag, remarked that he had brought the wrong ones. With this she walked off. Some time after this the boy again met the same lady at the top of King Street, and she again asked him if he would go an errand for her, and again he consented to do so. She thereupon gave him a note and told him to take it to the shop of Mr Garrett, the chemist, and bring back an answer. The boy did so, returning shortly after with a parcel, which appeared to contain a book, and which he handed to the lady. She then gave him some coppers—fourpence-halfpenny—and walked away with the parcel. Subsequently Adam

May saw the same lady a third time, in King Street, when she gave him some sweets called "bullseyes."

During this same period, extending to about three months, this same lady induced two other boys to make mysterious purchases of chocolates at the shop of Mr Maynard, some of which were returned as being unsuitable. Upon these occasions Mr Maynard noticed that some of the chocolates were broken, and these he threw into the broken stock. Soon after rumours reached him as to the chocolates making people ill, and among others who complained was the lady who had sent boys to purchase the sweetmeat for her. She complained that there was something wrong with the chocolates, making allusions to their being poisoned, and declaring she would have them analysed. To this Mr Maynard responded that he wished she would do so, and heard no more about the matter for some time, not, in fact, till his attention to it was renewed by a tragic occurrence.

In June, 1871, there was staying at Brighton a Mr C. D. Miller, a relation of his named Barker, and a son of the latter, a small boy of four, named Sydney Barker. On the 12th of the month Mr Millar purchased some chocolate creams at the shop of Mr Maynard for the little boy, Sydney. The boy ate one, and about ten minutes after he began to cry, his limbs became stiff, and in about twenty minutes he died in convulsions. Up to the moment of eating the chocolate he had been in good health. Mr Millar also ate some, and about ten minutes after he became dizzy in the eyes, there was a coppery

taste in his throat, and his limbs became stiff. He tried to arouse himself, but could not; afterwards he got a little better, but subsequently the symptoms returned. Eventually he recovered. When the boy was taken ill Mr Millar sent for a doctor, but before the latter could arrive the boy was dead. The creams were tested, were noticed to have a coppery flavour, and were thrown away.

Dr Richard Rugg, who saw the deceased boy, became suspicious of the chocolates, and some more were purchased at the same place and handed to Inspector Gibbs. They were chemically examined by Dr Henry Letheby, who found strychnine in them, altogether a quarter of a grain—sufficient to kill an adult. A sixteenth of a grain would be sufficient to kill a child. An inquest was held, also a chemical analysis, strychnine being found in the stomach of the deceased child. The inquest was adjourned, and at the second hearing the lady who had made the purchases of chocolates at Maynard's, and had complained of their quality, voluntarily came forward and offered herself as a witness. She stated that she had made purchases of chocolates at the shop in question, that she had tasted them and found them to have a coppery flavour, that they burned the throat, and that she had complained about it to Maynard. In the meantime the father of the dead child received an anonymous letter relating to the chocolates, and Inspector Gibbs wrote to the lady who had volunteered evidence at the inquest, to which he duly re-

ceived a reply. This letter he compared with the anonymous epistle, and became satisfied that the two were in the same handwriting. In her letter to Inspector Gibbs the lady stated that she made her last purchase of chocolates at Maynard's on March 8, and that they had been analysed by a Mr Schwitzer. This the police knew to be false, for the purchases made for her by the different boys were subsequent to this. Mr Maynard directed one of the boys to follow another who had just made a purchase of chocolates, and he saw him deliver them to the lady in question. This decided the police on a course of action, and they proceeded to the house of the lady in question, and there arrested, not "Mrs Wood," of "Hill Side, Kingston, Surrey," but Miss Christina Edmunds, who had been living in Brighton for several years.

But what was the object of this mysterious and elaborately-planned crime, which miscarried so tragically for the poor little fellow, Sydney Barker? For it may at once be stated that this boy's death was no part of the murderous plan of Christina Edmunds. Miss Edmunds, who was in easy circumstances, had, as I have already stated, been living for some years in Brighton, and had always been regarded as a respectable woman. She had formed the acquaintance of a Dr and Mrs Beard, the former having attended her in his professional capacity. Miss Edmunds would appear to have entertained a regard for Dr Beard rather more cordial than that of mere Platonic friendship, but found it

rather difficult to possess herself of the doctor's undivided attentions while Mrs Beard remained alive. And, in keeping with most criminals, regarding obstacles to the accomplishment of desired ends removable, proceeded to act accordingly. In December of 1870 Christina Edmunds was at the house of Dr Beard, when she gave Mrs Beard, apparently in the spirit of friendship, a chocolate cream. The doctor's wife accepted it in good faith, placed it in her mouth, but, fortunately for her, noticing that it had an unpleasant taste, quickly spat it out again. Although the lady received no injury, the incident would appear to have quickly aroused the suspicions of her husband—it may be that he possessed cogent reasons, other than this incident, for entertaining misgivings concerning Christina Edmunds' intentions—and openly charged Miss Edmunds with attempting to poison his wife.

This apparently considerably alarmed Miss Edmunds, and, although no poison was traced to her possession, circumstances remained in a decidedly unpleasant shape for her. With this situation before us the subsequent actions of Christina Edmunds appear more scrutable than they were before. Her object was to divert suspicion from herself, and so by doctoring the chocolates purchased at Maynard's with strychnine it might, in the light of complaints which were pretty sure to arise in consequence, be borne in upon the mind of Dr Beard that he had unjustly suspected her. Certainly a desperate, not to say wild, unscrupulous, and highly

perilous scheme. But, as we shall see presently, Christina Edmunds was no ordinary criminal.

She was tried at the Central Criminal Court on the 15th of January, 1872, before Mr Baron Martin. Serjeant Ballantyne and Mr Straight appeared for the prosecution, and Serjeant Parry, Mr Worsley, and Mr Poland for the defence. It was known as the "Brighton Poisoning Case," and attracted a good deal of notice. In the course of the evidence it was proved that the prisoner had sent a boy to Mr Garrett's shop with a note purporting to come from the coroner who held the inquest on the body of Sydney Barker, asking him to hand over his poison book. This was the parcel for fetching which the boy received fourpence-halfpenny. When Mr Garrett received the book back again several leaves were missing. The coroner knew nothing about this letter. Mrs Stone, who witnessed the first purchase of strychnine, was a milliner in Brighton, and she testified that the prisoner came into her shop, said she had neuralgia in the face, purchased a "fall," and then asked her, Mrs Stone, if she would do her a favour by signing a book at Mr Garrett's, as she wished to purchase some poison for stuffing birds, she and her husband being naturalists and living at Kingston. The firm of Glaisyer & Kemp also denied all knowledge of the note asking for some strychnine, which was undoubtedly written by the prisoner.

The defence was based upon a theory of insanity, and it is difficult to see what other defence could

have been put forward. The prisoner's mother, Mrs A. Christina Edmunds, was placed in the box, and caused a painful scene by weeping, as did also the prisoner. According to her mother's evidence, Christina Edmunds came of a family of degenerates, for her father died in the Peckham Asylum in 1847, and a brother, Arthur Burn Edmunds, died in the Earlswood Asylum in 1866; other members of the family were also subject to epileptic fits and hysteria, including the prisoner. The Rev. J. H. Cole, chaplain of Lewes Gaol, and who had had the prisoner under observation, remarked her "peculiar formation and movement of the eye," her "unnatural calmness and exceeding levity," her "extraordinary laugh," and her sudden transition from "tears to laughter." In short, he considered she was of unsound mind. Dr Woods, of St Luke's Hospital, had also seen her, and she had stated to him, "I would rather be convicted than brought in insane." Evidence was also given by Drs Robertson and Maudsley.

In spite of these medical opinions, however, the jury found Christina Edmunds guilty, and made no reference to insanity. Upon being asked if she had anything to say, she replied in a low voice: "I wish to be tried on the other charges brought against me, and I want my whole connection with Dr Beard gone into. I am sure Serjeant Ballantyne will go on with the case. It is owing to the treatment I have received from Dr Beard that I have been brought into this trouble." No response was made to this, and,

looking wildly round the court, and in response to the gaoler's "Come on!" she disappeared below.

This case is curiously reminiscent of the Oriental poisoner, for the poisoning of sweetmeats by criminals is a common practice in the East.

As might have been expected, Christina Edmunds was afterwards reprieved, and consigned to Broadmoor, to be confined there "during Her Majesty's pleasure." She died a few years ago.

I class the above as a case of "sexual mania," for Edmunds had undoubtedly conceived an ungovernable passion for Dr Beard, her subsequent extravagant behaviour being the outcome of cerebral disorder.

The next case for our consideration is that of the pronounced degenerate, Mary Ansell:—

In the year 1899 a Miss Mary Ansell was in the service of a Mr Maloney, who resided in Great Coram Street, London. Her sister, Caroline Ansell, a young woman of weak intellect, was an inmate of the Leavesden Asylum, Watford. Mary had insured her sister's life for £22 10s., and if death occurred within three months from the time the policy was issued Mary Ansell would have been entitled to quarter benefit, if within six months to half benefit. In the beginning of the year Mary Ansell made three or four purchases of phosphorus paste in the neighbourhood of Great Coram Street, and each bottle contained sufficient poison to kill three adults. She was not instructed by her mistress to make these purchases, and when she made them she told the shopkeeper that she required the poison to kill rats.

On February 22 a parcel of tea and sugar arrived at Leavesden Asylum, addressed to Caroline Ansell, and it was clear that it came from her sister, Mary Ansell. The provisions were accepted in good faith, and subsequently Caroline partook of some of the tea, when she complained of its bitter taste. Two days later Caroline received a letter signed "Harriett Parish," conveying the intelligence that her parents had died. This was false, and it was believed that the letter had been written by Mary Ansell. The letter was handed over to the father of the sisters Ansell, who wrote back telling his daughter of the parents' indignation that anyone should have been so cruel as to tell such a falsehood. At the beginning of March Mary Ansell bought more phosphorus paste, and on March 9 Caroline received a cake done up in brown paper. She cut the cake and ate a portion of it, dividing the rest among her companions. All who partook of the cake were taken ill, and Caroline, who probably ate more than any of the others, subsequently died. The authorities at the asylum became suspicious, and obtained the permission of the father of the deceased inmate to hold a post-mortem examination. When this became known, Dr Case, the medical superintendent of Leavesden Asylum, received the following letter:—

1 Tankerton Street, St Pancras.

DEAR SIR,—FOR why do you want a post-mortem examination on the body after she had been under

your care for years? We decline to give you the authority to hold one.—I remain, yours,

MRS ANSELL.

This letter, it was maintained, was written by Mary Ansell. Shortly after the death Mary Ansell wrote to a Mr Cooper, the agent who had effected the insurance on Caroline Ansell's life, asking him what she should do in order to obtain the money payable on the policy. Dr Blair, assistant medical officer of Leavesden Asylum, made an analysis of some of the remains of deceased, and found that she had died from phosphorus poisoning. Drs Scott and Stevenson made similar tests with similar results. The accumulation of so many suspicious circumstances led to the arrest of Mary Ansell, who was charged with the murder of her sister by administering phosphorus poison in a piece of cake. When arrested she told the sergeant of police that she had not written to Caroline for some time as they were not good friends. She also informed Superintendent Wood that she intended to ask a number of questions at the inquest, and these questions were stated to be as follows: "Why was we not sent for to see my sister before she was dead, so we could have had a word with her about who sent the cake? When the nurse was supposed to have examined the cake why did she not make further examination and see what it contained? When friends are sent for to come and see a dead inmate, either in life or death, is it a rule when the attendant takes you to the

place where the body is for him to shut the door in your face? When Caroline Ansell was placed in the infirmary was it for sickness or poison? If they had any idea she was suffering from a complaint, why did they not send for the friends in time, and this trouble would not have happened?" The questions are given as they were prepared by the prisoner.

When Mary Ansell was charged she said, "I am as innocent a girl as ever was born." She was to have been married at Easter, but the ceremony was postponed until Whitsuntide on account of her sweetheart's financial inability to enter upon the business of housekeeping.

Mary Ansell, age 22, was tried for the murder of her sister Caroline at the Hertford Assizes in June, 1899, before Mr Justice Mathew. Mr J. P. Rawlinson, Q.C., appeared for the prosecution, and Mr Clark Hall for the prisoner. The prisoner, in a firm voice, pleaded "Not guilty, my lord." In due course she went into the witness-box, where she exhibited a demeanour of callousness. She emphatically denied writing the "Parish" letter, but admitted writing the "Mrs Ansell" letter, which she explained was dictated by her father. She also denied writing the address on the parcel containing the poisoned cake. Of course there was the handwriting expert, who testified that both the "Parish" letter and the address on the parcel were written by the prisoner. I think we may accept this evidence as correct, not because it was testified to by a handwriting expert,

but in spite of that fact. There are other and more cogent reasons why the authorship of all these documents must be attributed to the unhappy young prisoner.

Questioned as to why she made the purchases of phosphorus, the prisoner replied: "For my own protection against them (the rats), as I was frightened of them." She was then questioned about the statement which she made to a police-officer concerning her being bad friends with her sister, but this she denied, saying, "Two better sisters never lived together; so help me, God." She also stated that she had informed her mistress that she had insured her sister's life. She denied sending any parcels to Leavesden Asylum, asserting that she had sent nothing since Christmas, when she sent her sister a card, but admitted sending the letter to Cooper. Asked as to how she disposed of the phosphorus in order to kill the rats she replied that she spread it on a sack in the kitchen, but that it killed no rats. She further stated, in answer to questions, that she threw both the policy and premium book on the fire by accident. Asked why she insured her sister, she replied because Cooper had pressed her so much, and because she wanted to give her sister a good funeral, and bring her body to London to be buried near other deceased members of the family. But it being pointed out to her she had not filled up the form for the body to be sent from the asylum to London she observed that the people were "peculiar at the asylum, and seemed to want to keep

the body." She admitted that the young man she was engaged to was not well enough off to marry, and that they were waiting until he was. It was pointed out to her that she had made no claim, and that she had allowed the body to be buried by the asylum authorities, whereupon she declared that "they seemed determined to keep her."

At length the jury retired to consider their verdict, and having been away half an hour, returned with the information that they were unable to agree. The judge then asked, "Do you want any point in the evidence made clear to you?" To which the foreman merely replied, "My lord, may we have some refreshments?" At this the judge said angrily, "Go back and stay there till you come to a decision one way or the other!" Again the jury retired, and returned in two hours and three-quarters. The prisoner was brought back to the dock, when she looked anxiously at the jury, and then relapsed into sullen indifference. The verdict was "Guilty," and the judge proceeded to address the unhappy prisoner as follows: "Prisoner at the bar, it was impossible for a jury of reasonable and conscientious men to return any other verdict than this. It has been shown to their satisfaction that you deliberately took the life of your sister, an afflicted woman, who had never been a burden to you, and who had a peculiar claim on your affection. You were moved to this terrible crime for the sake of a small sum of money which you would receive on the policy of insurance. Never in my experience has so terrible a crime been

committed for a motive so utterly inadequate. It is no part of my duty to add to the misery of your position. Your time on earth is short. Let that time be employed in seeking mercy where alone mercy can be found. I have only to pass upon you the sentence of the law—That you be taken hence to the place whence you came, and thence to a place of public execution * where you shall be hanged by the neck until you are dead, and your body buried within the precincts of the prison. And may the Lord have mercy upon your soul!”

It is not often that I dwell upon the hideous wording of the old-time death sentence, but I do so upon this occasion in order to emphasise the horror of one of the most sanguinary judicial murders to be found in the annals of crime. That Mary Ansell was a mental degenerate, not legally or morally answerable for her actions, who with a grain of intelligence can fail to see! Why, her very utterances and writings stamp her in unmistakable letters as an illiterate, incoherent, hopeless pervert. I dare assert that there are many inmates of Broadmoor at the present time far saner than ever Mary Ansell was. Yet the ruthless law must have its unholy revenge, and in spite of the many efforts that were made to obtain a reprieve, the bloody business was duly consummated. Well might one of the Crown officials, who figured in the trial, refer to her as “poor Mary Ansell,” for surely no prisoner who ever stood in the dock charged with a grave crime

* There are no places of public execution now.—AUTHOR.

was ever so devoid of friends, ever so relentlessly marked down for unreasoning judicial vengeance!

At the conclusion of the death sentence, and ere the chaplain had time to utter the concluding word "Amen!" piercing shrieks resounded through the court, proceeding from the mother of the hapless prisoner, who was in hysterics in the corridor. In response, the prisoner gave a piercing wail, and as she was hurried from the dock she cried aloud, "Mother! Mother! Mother!" Many of those in court were in tears.

A petition for reprieve was prepared, supported by medical opinions, and the prisoner was hopeful to the last. She sent the beads she was wearing round her neck to a lady at Upper Tulse Hill, and, grim coincidence! they arrived about eight o'clock on the morning of her execution. She also wrote a letter to the lady, worded as follows:—"I hope and trust all of you are in good health. I myself is as well as can be expect by this time. I can't think of any news now, so please excuse short letter." In due course the Home Secretary signified his inability to "see cause" why the law should not take its course (O, blind and unmerciful!), and the execution was accordingly proceeded with. On the morning of the execution the prisoner was in a collapsed condition; she sobbed and moaned, "Oh, my God in heaven!" and "Lord have mercy on my soul!" and died a victim to English criminal law.*

* The Criminal Court of Appeal had not then been established.

Mary Ansell was executed at St Albans, July 19, 1899, and huge crowds gathered in the vicinity of the prison at the hour of the execution.

It is such cases as this that force upon one the conviction that there exists one law for the rich and another for the poor. It is more than probable that had Mary Ansell been moving in a higher circle of society she would have been consigned to Broadmoor, there to be carefully tended, and looked after by her well-placed relations.* It was fatal to Mary Ansell that she was poor.

It is appropriate that our next case should be the much-debated one of Florence Maybrick:—

In the year 1889 there lived at a villa called Battlecrease, in the suburbs of Liverpool, a cotton merchant named James Maybrick, his wife, Florence, and their two young children. The Maybricks had been married eight years, and the husband was many years older than his wife. Mrs Maybrick was the daughter of a deceased merchant in the Southern States of America, and her marriage to the Liverpool cotton merchant was a somewhat romantic affair, although it would seem not to have been altogether to the liking of some of Mr Maybrick's friends. Mrs Maybrick was a refined and intelligent woman, having been educated in Germany and France.

Shortly prior to the date in question serious differences had arisen between husband and wife in connection with a man named Brierly, who was a friend

* Compare with case of Christina Edmunds, p. 59

of Maybrick's and had visited and dined at Battlecrease. Mrs Maybrick would also seem to have entertained some suspicions concerning her husband. Disputes were pretty frequent, and at least upon one occasion Maybrick appeared to have used violence towards his wife. These differences culminated in a "scene" one day at the Aintree races, where the Maybricks were well known among the visitors. The man Brierly was also present, and it was doubtless his presence which caused Maybrick to openly and publicly reproach his wife. The latter was so stung with the indignity which she considered she had unwarrantably been subjected to that she became infuriated, and was heard by a lady friend to threaten her husband with dire consequences. Not long after this unpleasant incident happened—to be precise, on the 27th of April, 1889—Mr Maybrick fell ill, and continued to grow worse until May 11, when he died. But before this the brothers of Mr Maybrick, Edward and Michael, had been summoned from London, and very soon entertained doubts and suspicions concerning the nature and origin of Mr Maybrick's illness. These suspicions were directed against the wife, who had so far been acting as nurse to her husband, being most assiduous in her ministrations to him. As a consequence of these suspicions she was deposed from this position, and professional nurses were installed in the sick room, wherein the wife was not allowed to be by herself nor to administer anything to the patient.

On the eve of Mr Maybrick's death, when, indeed,

he was *in extremis*, and nearing the end of a prolonged and painful illness, his wife handed a letter to one of the maids, telling her to post it. The superscription was written in pencil, and it was addressed to the man Brierly. The maid afterwards stated that one of the children who accompanied her dropped the letter in the mud while they were on their way to the post, and that the envelope in consequence being so dirty she opened the letter with the view to placing it in another and a clean envelope. Thus becoming acquainted with the nature of its contents, however, she deemed it advisable, instead of posting it, to hand it over to one of Mr Maybrick's brothers, which she accordingly did. The letter, which was also in pencil, ran as follows:—

“DEAREST,—Your letter under cover to John K—— came to hand just after I had written to you on Monday. I did not expect to hear from you so soon, and had delayed in giving him the necessary instructions. Since my return I have been nursing M—— day and night. *He is sick unto death!* The doctors held a consultation yesterday, and now all depends upon how long his strength will hold out! Both my brothers-in-law are here, and we are terribly anxious. I cannot answer your letter fully to-day, my darling, but relieve your mind of all fear of discovery now and for the future. M—— has been delirious since Sunday, and I know now that he is *perfectly ignorant of everything*, even as to *the name of the street*, and also *that he has*

not been making any inquiries whatever. The tale he told me was a pure fabrication, and only intended to frighten the truth out of me. In fact, he believes my statement, although he will not *admit it*. You need not, therefore, go abroad on this account, dearest, but in any case please *don't leave England until I have seen you once again*. You must feel that those two letters of mine were written under circumstances which must ever excuse their injustice in your eyes. Do you suppose I should act as I am doing if I really felt and meant what I inferred there? If you wish to write to me about anything do so *now*, as the letters pass through my hands at present. Excuse this scrawl, my own darling, but I dare not leave the room for a moment, and I do not know when I shall be able to write to you again. In haste,
Yours ever, FLORIE."

This letter was in reply to one she had received from Brierly, according to the contents of which he would seem to have worked himself into a condition of funk, for he intimated his intention of leaving England. It is not surprising that this letter lent the utmost significance to the suspicions which were already aroused in the minds of those within the walls of that fateful house. Nor is it surprising to learn that shortly after James Maybrick's death his widow found herself a prisoner, suspected of encompassing her husband's death. She was, in fact, eventually charged with wilfully murdering him, by the administration of arsenic. A search of the house revealed

sundry deposits of poison ; also she had been seen to put something into a bottle of Valentine's meat juice, which was intended for the patient, and which was subsequently found to be poison. She was known to have purchased from two different chemists large quantities of fly-papers, and these were afterwards seen by a servant soaking in a basin of water. She was known to have been to London with the man Brierly, with whom she stayed at an hotel as his wife.

As is nearly always the case in such criminal trials, the medical evidence differed, some doctors declaring that the deceased died from arsenical poisoning, and others stating that they did not think so. As is well known, in the end the prisoner was convicted and sentenced to death, the sentence being afterwards commuted to penal servitude for life, and that after serving fifteen years she was released and went to America.

It is pretty safe to say that no criminal trial of modern times has aroused such a storm of controversy as did that of Mrs Maybrick. That was, of course, mainly on account of the social position of the prisoner, her youth and refinement, the prejudice which was imported into the case, and the disagreement of the medical witnesses. People took sides, some believing her innocent and clamouring for her release, others on the contrary being convinced of her guilt and demanding that the law should be allowed to take its course. And there is no doubt that these conflicting opinions are still entertained by many people at the present day. There are still



EXTERIOR OF MORGUE, PARIS.



(By Courtesy of M. Lèpine.)
INTERIOR OF MORGUE, PARIS.



people who believe in Mrs Maybrick's innocence, as there are people who still believe in her guilt. I would that I could place myself on the side of the former, but, alas! after a close scrutiny into the facts of the case I find it impossible to do so. And I shall now give my reasons for believing in the guilt of Mrs Maybrick.

It was advanced against the judge who tried the case, the late Mr Justice Stephen, that he took a too metaphysical view of the crime. Now, if there is a crime of any kind that calls for the analytical mind of the metaphysician it is certainly that of the secret poisoner. This also applies particularly to the Maybrick case. Here the law had to deal with a woman of refinement, intellect, subtlety and determination, whose smallest act had to be closely considered. Let us take the admitted facts of the case and see how far they are capable of an innocent construction.

That there existed, then, at the time of the occurrence painfully constrained relations between the deceased man and his wife was proved and not disputed. It was also proved that Mr Maybrick, in the heat of a dispute with his wife concerning the man Brierly, had given his wife a black eye; he had also publicly abused her on the racecourse, when she was heard to threaten him with dire consequences. It was likewise proved that she was actually carrying on a guilty relationship with the man Brierly, with whom, as has already been stated, she had stopped in London.

Shortly after the quarrel at Aintree we find Mrs

Maybrick purchasing fly-papers from two different chemists. In each case she gave, volunteered, a silly and false reason for purchasing them. Bear in mind that she was not *asked* what she wanted them for. The only innocent purpose for which one would purchase fly-papers is, of course, with which to catch flies. Mrs Maybrick made the remark that the flies were becoming troublesome. It was then early in the year and there were no flies about. But why, if she wanted them for an innocent purpose, did she go to *two* chemists, instead of purchasing them all at the same shop? I suggest that it is obvious that the purchase of a large number of fly-papers at one place might have aroused suspicion, so the purchase was divided into two. As there were no flies about, what did Mrs Maybrick really want these papers for? It was stated that she wanted them in order to extract the arsenic which they contained to use as a face-wash. She did, indeed, put them into soak in a basin, covering the latter with a cloth. A servant, becoming inquisitive, lifted the cloth and saw what was inside. After this the papers mysteriously disappeared, and nobody seems to have known what became of them, except, of course, Mrs Maybrick herself. It was further explained on her behalf that she had some years ago been given a recipe for a face-wash, of which arsenic formed one of the constituents, by a schoolfellow of hers, but that she had mislaid it. Hence her purchase of the fly-papers. But are we seriously to believe that a woman in Mrs Maybrick's position would take all this trouble with

the fly-papers when she could have walked into any chemist's shop and asked for a face-wash to include arsenic? Chemists frequently make up such face-washes for ladies, and it would have been quite an ordinary thing for her to have made such a purchase. There need have been no secrecy about it. Nor would there have been anything discreditable about it.

It has been maintained by the champions of Mrs Maybrick's alleged innocence that her husband having been an arsenic-eater for years, and a man generally given to "dosing" himself, he must have died from the effects of this evil habit. A few moments' reflection will serve to demonstrate the utter fallacy of this reasoning. A man who for years has been addicted to such habits would probably be immune from the evil effects of even large doses of such poisons! Would it not be very curious if, after years of such indulgence with impunity, the poisons should suddenly take a fatal effect? But does not the possession of such knowledge, the knowledge of a man's having for years been a poison-taker, suggest that it might be used as a screen by a subtle individual who had designs on the life of that man?

I have questioned many persons intimately associated with this case, including the late Mr McConnell, who was second to Mr Addison for the prosecution. During a quiet chat on old times which I one evening had with him at his house, the famous case cropped up, and he showed me several photographs of Mr Maybrick and his wife which he had kept. I took

this opportunity of putting a point-blank question to him, of asking him for his own personal opinion about the guilt or innocence of Mrs Maybrick, and his prompt and emphatic reply was, "Guilty, without a doubt!" Of course it would be a much pleasanter task for one to be able to strenuously defend the woman and make out a case of innocence, but facts, ugly but indisputable, forbid it. Only blind chivalry could adopt such an attitude towards one so obviously guilty. When it was first announced, after her release, that Mrs Maybrick was to write an account of her life, I believed that at last many of the dark doubts with which this case was beset would be dispelled. Here was an opportunity, thought I, for Mrs Maybrick to tell us the whole plain, unvarnished truth, and I devoted myself to perusing her own account of the tragic business with avidity. But I was doomed to dreadful disappointment. I read on to the very end, but the expected information was not forthcoming. The doubts were still there; the book left the case where it formerly stood. That was convincing.

The attitude of the late Lord Russell in connection with this case has been persistently misrepresented by the champions of Mrs Maybrick, who have stated again and again that he went to his grave firmly believing in, and asserting, her innocence. Lord Russell, of course, did nothing of the kind. What he did state and maintain was that she had not had a fair trial, and had not been properly convicted, which is quite another matter. With this I quite agree.

After conviction many persons signed petitions for the reprieve of Mrs Maybrick, not because they believed she was innocent, but because they thought, as did Lord Russell, that she had not been fairly tried. I did so myself.*

* In Mrs Maybrick's book, already referred to—"My Fifteen Lost Years"—a statement on the case by the late Lord Russell is quoted, which begins thus: "I will make no public statement of what my personal belief is as to Mrs Maybrick's guilt or innocence. . . ." But, after all, mere expressions of opinion, even on the part of counsel engaged in the case, cannot carry anything like the same weight as plain indisputable matters of fact. Mrs Maybrick in her book failed to enlighten us as to why she made *two* purchases of fly-papers, why she volunteered a stupid and false reason for making the purchases, why, after a servant had seen them soaking in a basin, they suddenly disappeared, and what afterwards became of them. It is admitted in the book—much of it is written by somebody else on behalf of Mrs Maybrick, who contributes only a few lines in parenthesis to this particular question—that the fly-paper incident is one of the vital features of the case, as of course it is. Therefore the fact that it is left by the person chiefly concerned in the vague condition I have described, speaks for itself in no uncertain voice.

There is also another peculiar feature about this book which, although I do not wish to labour an argument about it, I feel it incumbent upon me to draw attention to it. Mrs Maybrick describes her arrest while she still lay prostrate on a bed in her own house, where she had been since shortly before her husband died. We are given to understand that just before that tragic event occurred she, Mrs Maybrick, collapsed into unconsciousness, and so remained, with brief intervals of sensibility, until the formal arrest referred to. It appeared that several gentlemen entered the room wherein she lay, one of whom advanced to the bed and said: "Mrs Maybrick, I am superintendent of police, and I am about to say something to you. After I have said what I intend to say, if you reply be careful how you reply, because whatever you say may be used as evidence against you. Mrs Maybrick, you are in custody on suspicion of causing the death of your late husband, James Maybrick, on the eleventh instant."

I presume the above is correctly given by Mrs Maybrick. At

I have been reproached because I wrote on a previous occasion what I considered to be the truth

all events it is the kind of statement which is invariably made by the police under such circumstances. Mrs Maybrick then goes on—in this book she is supposed to be recalling her thoughts and sensations at the time—"Was I going mad? Did I hear myself accused of *poisoning my husband?*" The italics are mine, and I have made use of them because if the reader again refers to the speech made by the superintendent of police, he will see that that official made no reference whatever to the manner of death. I repeat that if the incident is correctly described, Mrs Maybrick's comment on her arrest is peculiar.

Another circumstance which is invariably advanced in defence of Mrs Maybrick by her supporters is the fact that, had she used arsenic obtained from fly-papers the fibres from the latter would have been found, and that no such fibres were found, which in itself forms convincing evidence of her innocence. This raises an interesting point, and I feel that I am bound to deal with it. It is generally known among those who take an interest in criminology that criminals do occasionally copy one another's methods, as witness the Crossman and Devereaux "trunk" cases. A few years prior to the Maybrick case there occurred at Liverpool—please note the place—the case of two women, named respectively Flannagan and Higgins. These two women were convicted of poisoning children for the purpose of obtaining their insurance money. The poison they used was arsenic, which they obtained by soaking fly-papers in water. In the bottles they had used was a sediment, in which were found a number of fibres. It was through this discovery that the prosecution were able to determine how the prisoners had obtained the poison which they used. Is it therefore too wild a supposition to entertain that somebody else, being cognisant of the particulars of the Liverpool case, and contemplating a somewhat similar crime, would adopt the precaution of getting rid of the fibres by a process of filtration? Such a process—which is by no means a profound secret—would certainly be within the knowledge, or would suggest itself, to a person of education, intelligence, and resource. It would not, of course, occur to such women as Flannagan and Higgins, who were of a very low class, ignorant and illiterate. But a well-educated, well-read person would certainly remove the evidence which proved so fatal to the others.

about Mrs Maybrick while she was in prison, which I had visited, and I was told that I was wanting in gallantry. Whatever can an author be expected to have to do with gallantry when writing of the terrible crime of the secret poisoner? One cannot admit sentiment into a record of facts. Nor is one answerable for the facts themselves which one records. One thing is certain, had Mrs Maybrick been a poor, illiterate woman, instead of an educated "well-placed" one, she would have been dust long years ago, as is the poor, afflicted Mary Ansell. Mercy by all means for those who deserve it, but justice mete out to those to whom it is due. Sometimes to be sickly sentimental to one is to be unjust to others. One of the most satisfactory features of this case is the fact that the authorities of this country were not moved by the flood of violent invective which poured over here from the United States, especially issuing from the female scribes and champions of Mrs Maybrick's "cause."

CHAPTER VI

THE POISONERS—*continued*

STUDENTS of crime will remember the sinister career of that arch-criminal, Mary Ann Cotton. We have now to deal with another female poisoner of a similar kind, although of different nationality—to wit, Gesina Margaretha Gottfried, a German. Nationality does not apparently make any difference in the degree of guilt of such female criminals, for the records contain the names of four women—Mary Ann Cotton, Catharine Wilson, Madame Gottfried and Marie Jeanneret—two being English, one French, and the other German, all of whose careers, for consummate cruelty, superlative callousness and hypocrisy, and long-continued immunity from detection, are strikingly similar. I have yet to deal with two of these cases, and we will now turn our attention to that of Madame Gottfried.

Gesina Gottfried, then, so far as one can ascertain, came of parents who had lived irreproachable lives. The story of her sinister career may be said to have begun when, while still quite young, she was married to a man named Miltenberg. In addition to being young, she was also, so it was said, extremely

attractive. The marriage, which her fond parents at first thought a good thing for her, turned out a dismal failure. Miltenberg developed into a habitual drunkard, and even something worse. It was clear that his wife never entertained any real affection for him, so that he eventually became merely an obnoxious obstacle to her. To be sure, subsequent events proved that the woman was altogether devoid of natural affection and moral sense, so that, under all the circumstances, the way she behaved towards her first husband is not at all surprising.

Gesina determined to be rid of her convivial and inconvenient spouse. It so happened that a weapon was ready to her hand. It appeared that her mother was in the habit of purchasing white arsenic from the druggist with which to poison mice. Gesina caught her husband in his cups and dropped a pinch of the powder in his beer. Thus she procured her release. No suspicion was aroused as to the cause of his death, which does not surprise one when it is taken into consideration how limited was the knowledge of the symptoms of poisoning at that period (1815), and the fact that the victim had already drunk himself into a state of mental and physical infirmity, which it was confidently believed by most people who knew him would shortly terminate in death. Thus nobody was surprised when he did die, even though his death was sudden. And in this connection I may perhaps be allowed to intervene in the narrative to express my confident opinion that many importunate persons are so disposed of at the present day. The successful

poisoner is he, or she, who doses the victim while the latter is really ill, so that the death causes little or no surprise. The doctor who was in attendance, who may in his own mind entertain some vague doubts about the death, but who will probably keep such doubts to himself, will ascribe the death to a sudden "relapse" or "heart failure"—the latter that vague cause of sudden death which so frequently figures on death certificates. Of course, all deaths are, *per se*, due to heart failure. But the doctors invariably associate it with another cause, and so give the "primary cause," which is the illness itself, and the "secondary cause," which is that which immediately causes death. The loophole here for secret poisoning is obvious. By way of illustration: Suppose a person died from, say, pneumonia. The causes given on the certificate would probably be, primary, pneumonia, and secondary, exhaustion supervening on the disease, or "heart failure." I knew a case of a man who was said by a doctor to have been *suddenly* attacked by *asthma*, and who described his surprisingly swift death as due to "heart failure." My firm conviction is that for every case of secret poisoning which comes to light there are, at a modest computation, at least a score of which we hear nothing, and for which nobody is arrested.

But to return to our interesting subject, Gesina Gottfried.

Had the wife of Miltenberg, then, committed no other crime than the one we have just described, one might have been able to view her act in the light of

leniency. Although one might not exactly approve of such a means of seeking release from undesirable matrimonial encumbrances, it could have been said in partial mitigation that her provocation was great, and that, although she sinned, she was also sinned against. Unfortunately that privilege is denied us, for the murder of Miltenberg was but the first step of his wife upon a career which, for sheer horror, has scarcely been equalled in the annals of crime.

It appeared that at the time of the death of her husband, Frau Miltenberg had already become the mistress of a friend of theirs, a man named Gottfried. When she had contrived her own widowhood she requested Gottfried to marry her. But to this contemplated union Gesina's parents raised a firm objection. Now, Gesina was not in the habit of allowing obstacles, either animate or inanimate, to stand in her way. So she decided that her parents, with their objections, must be "removed." She therefore "gave them something," and they both died shortly after, unsuspectingly blessing their precious offspring with their last breath!

That obstacle removed, there arose another. By Miltenberg, deceased, Gesina had had two children, which survived. Gottfried advanced the existence of these children as an insurmountable obstacle to their union, inasmuch as he considered his means insufficient to support all four. So Gesina resolved to remove this obstacle also. She accordingly gave the poor children "something," and they quickly followed their grandparents to the grave. Their

inhuman mother followed them to their last resting-place—weeping bitterly.

Was ever such portentous criminal as this? Still young, she stood between two generations, between those who gave her life and those to whom she gave life—and she slew them both! And her motive? Presumably it was the desire to be married to Gottfried. But was there really any sincerity in this sentiment, or was it merely a means to some other end? We shall presently see. Gottfried now found himself on the brink of a precipice. In spite of the fact that all obstacles were now removed, he still held back from the contemplated alliance. It is not to be wondered at, for he must have entertained some doubts about the deaths of Gesina's relations, which had followed so rapidly upon each other, in spite of the medical testimony as to the deaths having been caused by "inflammation of the bowels." However, Gesina made up her mind that Gottfried should not escape her, and the means she adopted to that end were characteristic of her fiendish nature.

She had now become an adept in the administration of her white powder, knowing precisely how much to give in order to bring about sudden death, how much to cause a lingering death, and how much that should create illness without causing death. She therefore conceived the idea of bending Gottfried to her purpose by dosing him in such a manner that eventually his will and strength would be so impaired that he would become enslaved. She succeeded only too well. Gottfried, after a lingering illness, died. But

not before he had surrendered himself and all he possessed into the hands of his slayer. In his depressed condition he entertained the notion that he had done Gesina an injustice, so agreed to the marriage, which was duly performed upon what proved to be his death-bed.

I have not the space at my disposal in which to chronicle in detail the many murders committed in the ensuing years by this monstrous and uncanny creature. Suffice it that we make passing reference to a few of them. It is never certain how many victims the secret poisoner has made. Madame Gottfried, then, poisoned her brother, a dissipated soldier, whose habits, she declared, "disgusted her." She also poisoned a worthy man who sought her hand in marriage, but whom she did not like. She subjected him to similar treatment to that she meted out to Gottfried, with the result that her luckless wooer left her a small fortune. She owed an old friend at Hamburg a sum of money, which she deemed it inconvenient to pay, so she discharged the debt by giving her creditor "something." Many of her victims she killed out of sheer wantonness, as she herself subsequently confessed.

We now move on to that period which saw the unmasking of this colossal criminal. In the year 1825, then, we find her in possession of a house in the Pelzerstrasse, Bremen, upon which she had raised a mortgage. Having been unable to keep up the payments, the mortgagor had foreclosed, and sold the house to a man named Rumpf, a master wheelwright.

The house, like most German houses, was constructed to accommodate several families, so Rumf, although he installed himself and family in the place, allowed Madame Gottfried, for whom he conceived a sincere sympathy, to remain upon easy terms. Women of the stamp of Madame Gottfried seem endowed with the power of blinding those about them to obvious defects in themselves. Rumf, for instance, in spite of the ominous warnings of a friend, took Gottfried into his confidence and his household. In short, she became his housekeeper. Rumf had a wife and several children. The former was near another confinement, and shortly after gave birth to a son. A few days later she died suddenly. All the children followed in more or less quick succession. Rumf himself, always a strong man, fell ill with a mysterious complaint. He could not retain food, and daily grew weaker.

And now the end of the career of this terrible woman was fast drawing near. Rumf kept pigs, and one day he had one of them killed and a portion of the meat cooked. To his surprise and gratification he found it did not disagree with him. He thereupon had a portion of sparerib cut off and put away for future use. Subsequently, going to the cupboard to examine it, he noticed that one side of it was covered with a white powder. He remembered that he had seen a similar white powder on a salad he had eaten, and in the form of a sediment in some soup he had had, both of which had made him ill. At last he would seem to have become suspicious, although,

as yet, not of Madame Gottfried. He wrapped the meat in a piece of paper and carried it off to the police. As a result of tests which were applied the powder was proved to be white arsenic. Thereupon an examining magistrate visited the house in Pelzerstrasse, where an interrogation of the inmates led to the arrest of Madame Gottfried. This was on March 5, 1828.

Gottfried's imprisonment brought about a curious change in her personal appearance. Before her arrest she had appeared buxom, with still traces of youthful freshness in her face. When she entered the dock she was seen to be a haggard old woman, "almost a skeleton." It transpired that she had been extensively "made up." She was found to be wearing thirteen corsets, her face had been whitened with pearl powder and touched up with rouge. Also, her teeth were false. It was but appropriate, though, that she should be physically as well as morally hideous.

She subsequently made confession, in which she admitted having poisoned thirty people, fifteen of whom perished. The judge who tried her gave it as his opinion that the figure was rather under than over the true number. Having been kept some time in prison after conviction, she was at last handed over to the headsman. She went to the scaffold like an innocent victim of the French Revolution might have done, apparently buoyed up with an invincible dignity and courage. As a matter of fact her firmness and imperturbability was the outcome of neither senti-

ment, but of that ignoble, base, and monstrous vanity, the gratification of which had been the motive-power of her execrable, criminal career.

We shall next deal with the case of Marie Jeanneret.

In the year 1866 this young woman, who came of a highly respectable family, was staying with a young female friend named Berthet at the Pension Beraud—a kind of lodging-house—at Vevey, on the lake of Geneva. In this case we have not ignorance to account for crime, for Marie was well educated; nor was she in actual need of money, for her parents, who were both dead, had left her a modest competency. In person she was attractive, with a pale but comely face, black hair, and large dark eyes. She had also a soft voice and a winning manner, which had deceived many a victim to his or her complete undoing. It may here be remarked in passing that some of the worst women known to the annals of crime have had the demure manner and the winning way. They have used their gifts of nature as a screen behind which to mature their nefarious plans, and with which to lull their intended victims into a condition of false security. It is quite a mistake to suppose that although crime itself is ugly, those who commit it are themselves also ugly. As a certain gentleman, who has had a very long experience in dealing with criminals, remarked to me one day, while discussing this same topic: “I have met criminals who have been as handsome as Apollo.” And one may add, also as beautiful as Venus.

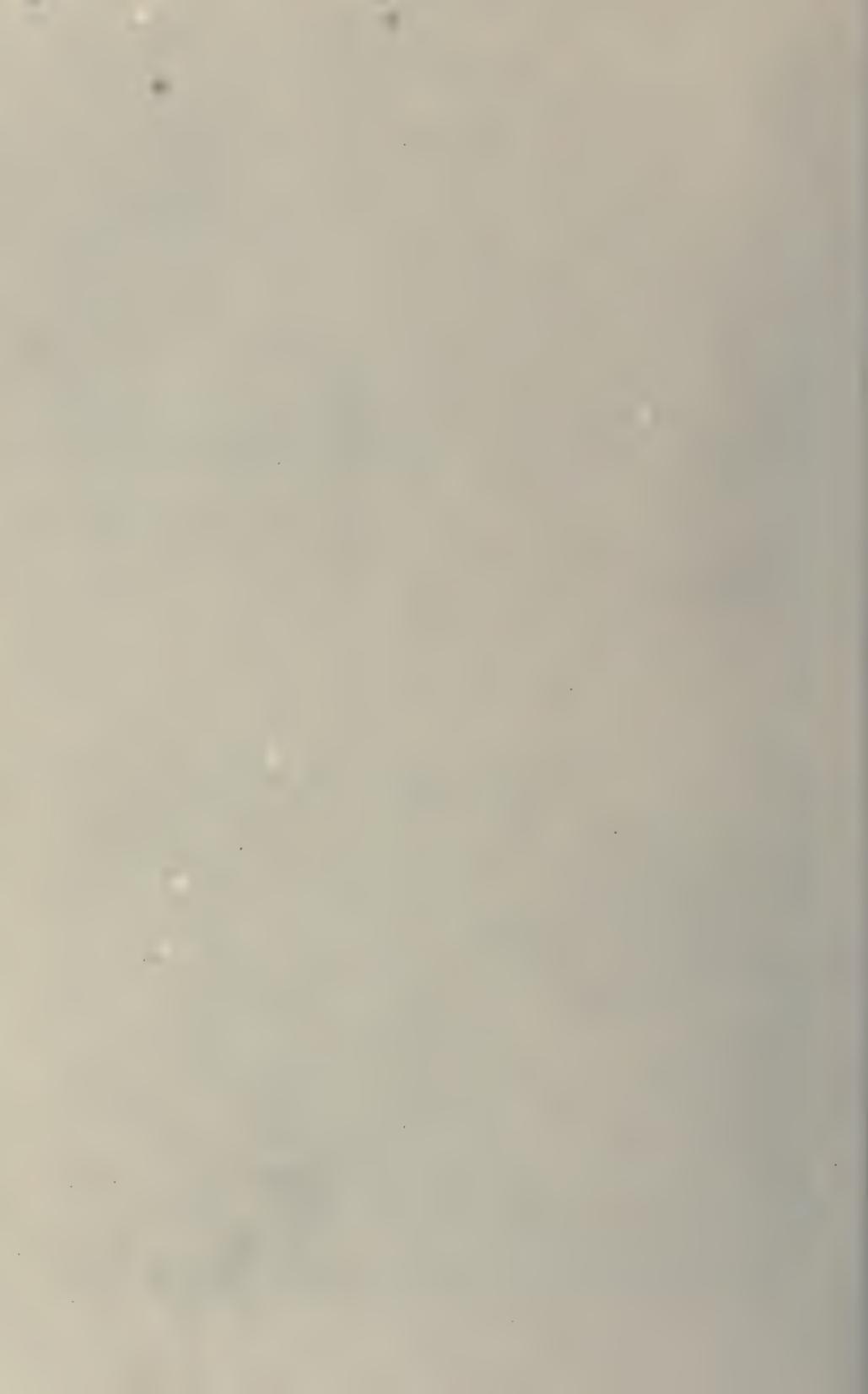


(By Courtesy of M. Lèpine.)
CYCLE POLICE, PARIS.



(By Courtesy of M. Lèpine.)
A LECTURE ON PHYSICAL CONFORMATION (PARIS).

(See page 22.)



Well, in addition to the personal attractions I have enumerated above, Marie Jeanneret was also apparently devout, being a regular attendant at church. She was therefore looked upon by all who knew her as being of irreproachable character. She was also of a studious nature, and by dint of studying medical books closely had acquired a certain knowledge of medicine. The manner in which she employed that knowledge we shall presently see. She was constantly complaining of her own maladies, but they were mostly imaginary, or greatly exaggerated. In spite of her winning manner, she was exceedingly morbid and contemptibly vain.

Mademoiselle Berthet was a native of Nyon. One day after dinner Marie proposed a walk, to which her companion agreed. But before setting out Mademoiselle, complaining of thirst, asked for a glass of water. Marie, however, offered to mix her some wine and *eau sucrée*, which, she stated, would at the same time quench her thirst and aid digestion. It was prepared, and Mademoiselle drank it. The two then went out. They had not gone far, however, when Mademoiselle Berthet was taken ill. At Clarens Marie gave her a little cognac and Mademoiselle Berthet became better. When they got back Marie prepared another draught, the ingredients of which she obtained from a small medicine chest which she always kept by her. Almost directly after Mademoiselle Berthet had drunk this she fell back on the sofa in a semi-unconscious condition. She was so ill, in fact, that the proprietress of the

establishment, Madame Beraud, telegraphed to M. Berthet at Nyon, who on the following day came and took his daughter away. That probably saved her life. The doctor who attended her, Dr Lambassy, ascribed the symptoms to belladonna poisoning. But it never occurred to anyone concerned that the poison had been administered by Marie intentionally. They all thought she had given it in mistake. That erroneous supposition cost a good many lives!

Soon after Jeanneret left Vevey for Locle, her native place. This sinister young woman now prepared to gratify what she declared had been the chief ambition of her life, namely, to become a professional nurse! She entered the Lausanne School for Nurses in order to qualify. The manager, M. Reynaud, was not predisposed towards her—there was “something” in her character he did not like. He did not consider she would make a good nurse. There were others who were fated to entertain a similar opinion. While at the School she went out to nurse a number of people at their own homes, among them a Madame Chabloz, whom she “dosed” with belladonna. She also dealt similarly with the children. All were taken ill, but, it is satisfactory to know, none of them died. No suspicions, however, were aroused, and the comely young poisoner went her triumphant way.

While at the Lausanne School, Jeanneret became acquainted with a Madame Juvet, who, with two other ladies named respectively Madame Vaucher and Mademoiselle Farsat, proposed to start a kind of

private convalescent home or hospital. Jeanneret promptly offered her services, and as she expressed her willingness to work for only board, lodging and washing, her offer was accepted. Being duly installed, she set about getting rid of Madame Vaucher and Mademoiselle Farsat, which she did by contriving a bitter quarrel between the ladies, in consequence of which the two retired from the partnership and left the house. In the light of subsequent events these two ladies must have thanked their lucky stars in having been allowed to depart from that fatal house with their lives.

The convalescent home soon became a house of death. Madame Juvet had two children, named respectively Julie and Emile. All three were soon taken ill, the illness in each case being similar, and accompanied with violent pains and vomiting. The children were taken ill after eating some of nurse's bon-bons. Fortunately for the little boy, he was taken away the next day, and so escaped with his life. The other two, mother and daughter, died. Also three other inmates of the establishment died under similar circumstances, namely, an old woman named Hahn, an aged spinster named Gay, and a third, also a spinster, named Junot.

This put an end to the "convalescent home."

There now remained only M. Juvet, two servants, and—Marie Jeanneret, "the nurse." But the amazing part of it was that nobody, not even the doctors, entertained any suspicions. Or if the latter did they kept their suspicions to themselves. The nurse's

horrible occupation was for the time being gone. So she went into lodgings, simulated illness, and so "lay low" for a bit. And then a friend of hers, a female friend, who regarded her as "an efficient nurse and a sincere Christian"! recommended her to apply for a situation at the Baths of Divonne, a hydropathic establishment at the foot of the Jura, about eight miles from Geneva. In fact the friend accompanied Jeanneret to the establishment in order to recommend her. The proprietor and director of the Baths was a Dr Paul Vidart, and the two women were received by his wife, Madame Vidart. And now the first breath of suspicion arose against this unspeakable criminal. During conversation between the three women, and after reference had been made to the deaths at the "convalescent home," Jeanneret made use of the following words: "But there are some beautiful moments in death, dear madame."

It may be that the beauty of death did not altogether appeal to Madame Vidart, or there may have been something in the manner of the youthful poisoner which appeared significant to her, for instead of engaging her she temporised by promising to write to her. She then communicated with her brother, Dr Binet, asking for advice under the circumstances. His reply was: "Don't have anything to do with her; all her patients die." So the nurse was not engaged—luckily for the inmates of the hydropathic establishment at the foot of the Jura.

In spite of the fact that Jeanneret's sinister repute was becoming generally known, she still continued to

be engaged to nurse invalids, so invincible is the credulity, so complete the blindness of poor humanity. Making due allowance for the creature's extensive powers of deception and dissimulation, the time that elapsed between her initial essay in the art of secret poisoning, as made upon her own familiar friend, Mademoiselle Berthet, and her subsequent arrest, is quite amazing. One wonders why Madame Vidart, or her brother, Dr Binet, entertaining such grave suspicions as they did, did not convey or communicate those suspicions to the authorities. It is the duty of every individual member of a community to perform the offices of a police official, should circumstances demand it, in the defence of life and property. The neglect and apathy of people in this connection makes possible such prolonged and destructive criminal careers as that of Marie Jeanneret. This criticism applies particularly to medical men, whose seeming obtuseness in cases of poisoning is seemingly capable of only two explanations: Either they are really blind and dull-witted, or they are culpably indifferent. Upon one occasion Jeanneret declared that doctors were "all fools," and certainly the behaviour of those with whom she came in contact would seem to justify her low estimate of them.

Well, it was so decreed that several more lives were yet to be sacrificed ere the hands of justice should be laid upon the arch-poisoner. Having disposed of a M. Gros, a retired schoolmaster, and his widowed daughter, Madame Bouvier, Jeanneret went to live at the Pension de Sarzaus, where she became

acquainted with a Mademoiselle Fritzergues. The latter, having partaken of some lemonade prepared by Jeanneret, was taken seriously ill. A doctor was called in, who, recognising the symptoms of belladonna poisoning, ordered her removal to the cantonal hospital. And now at last there came upon the scene a doctor who entertained grave suspicions, and who had the courage of his convictions. This was Dr Rabin, one of the house physicians. He had heard of Jeanneret before, so he sat down and wrote out a statement of the case, which he sent to the Procureur-Général. This of course was what ought to have been done before. The Procureur-Général promptly had Jeanneret arrested, and thus put an end to her career.

A long inquiry followed, into the details of which I have not the space to go. Suffice it that she was charged with attempting the lives of nine persons, seven of whom had died. Three experts were appointed to examine into her mental condition, and they unanimously came to the conclusion that she was sane. The poisons she used were atropia, morphine, and antimony. Atropia is obtained from belladonna, or the "deadly Nightshade," and morphine from opium. Antimony is a mineral.

As a result of her trial, Marie Jeanneret was convicted of murdering six persons. But—amazing to relate !—the jury having found "extenuating circumstances," the severest sentence the Court could pronounce upon her was one of twenty years' imprisonment. I never entertained a very high

opinion of the wisdom, impartiality, and mental lucidity of juries in general, but the jury that tried Jeanneret hold the record, so far as my knowledge goes, for what one can only characterise as inexcusable imbecility. There can be no doubt that, where a prisoner happens to be a good-looking and attractive female, the jury trying her are partially blinded by their lascivious admiration of her. I have again and again seen justice suffer in this way. I have heard ex-jurymen indulge in the most lude talk about such a prisoner, which made one disgusted to listen to. I have also heard male members of the public present in court giving expression to the most ardent admiration of good-looking female prisoners, who were guilty of the most atrocious crimes, who were, in fact, among the vilest women who ever wore a skirt and took a life, among the "gentlest" creatures who ever cut a throat. It is impossible for some men to view women, however abandoned and abominable, except through the glasses of lascivious desire. And it is but just that some of them should come to grief thereby.

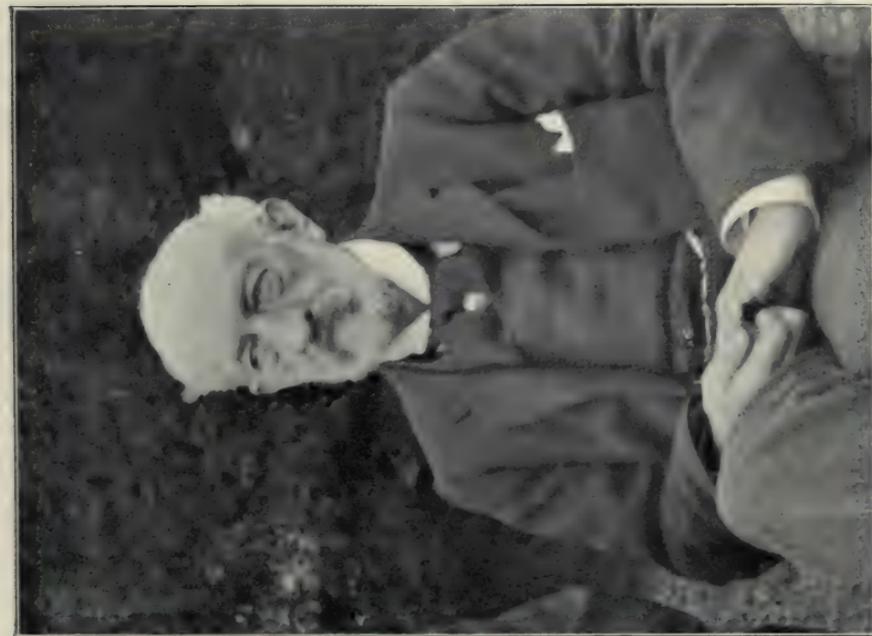
The Jeanneret jury failed in a most distinguished manner in doing their duty in accordance with their oaths; they stamped themselves for all time as being among the most feeble and fatuous individuals who ever sat in a jury box. It is not surprising that soon after this trial capital punishment was altogether abolished in the canton. To be sure they could not very well execute anybody after extenuating the deeds of such a human atrocity as Jeanneret.

Yet, in spite of the decision arrived at by the

three experts in mental diseases, I am inclined to think that this modern Brinvilliers was not altogether sane. And for this reason: Her manifold and awful crimes were committed, not with merely an inadequate motive, but without any motive at all. In fact she was a loser by some of the crimes she committed, for she lost a good and comfortable situation and gained nothing. Therefore we are thrown back upon the only alternative supposition, and that is, that she killed for the mere lust of killing, which is a condition of mind scarcely to be regarded as normal. And if a person is not normal-minded he must in a degree be insane.

Although Jeanneret escaped capital punishment, the authorities had made up their minds that she should never be released any more. If she had served her full term, they intended to charge her with other murders, as there were, alas! plenty in abeyance. However, she saved them the trouble by dying in prison, which desirable event took place in the year 1884.

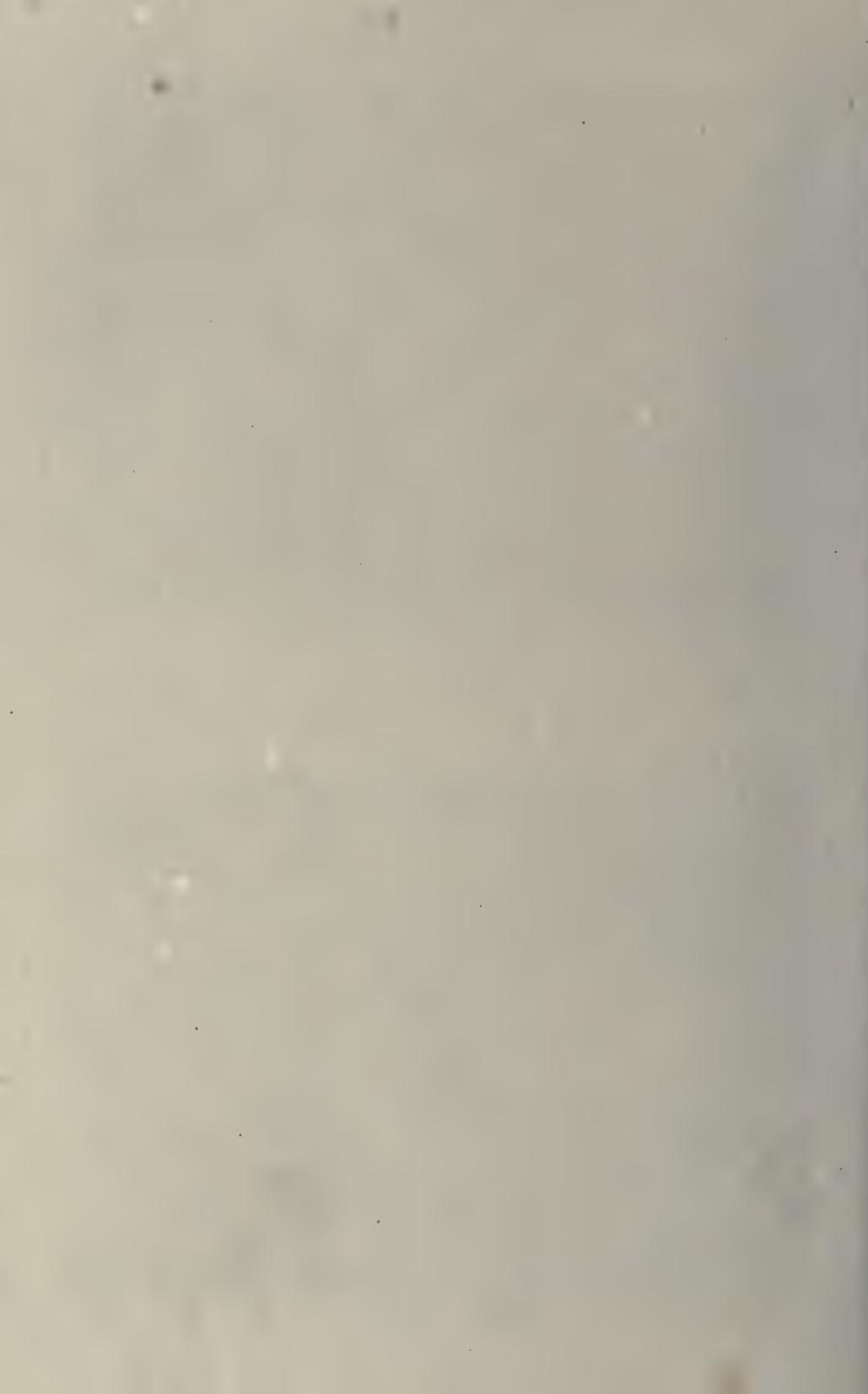
We have now to deal with a case which, in many of its details, bears a striking resemblance to the Maybrick case. It is also worthy of note that it occurred some years after the conviction of Mrs Maybrick. I refer to the case of Mrs Edith May Carew. In these two murders we have the following parallel facts: Both women occupied a good social position, both were many years younger than their husbands, both were involved in an affair with another man, both made use of arsenic, and both were condemned



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Préfet of Police, Paris



to death and subsequently had the sentence commuted to penal servitude for life. Also, both were confined in the same prison—Aylesbury—where, it is said, they became very friendly.

The following are the facts of the Carew case:—

Mrs Carew was the daughter of John Albert Porch, Mayor of Glastonbury. At a ball at Bridport she met the gentleman who subsequently became her husband: Mr W. R. H. Carew, son of Major Carew of Exmouth. The acquaintance thus made soon ripened into a close attachment, for in three months' time the two were married. This fateful event took place in May, 1889. At that time the gentleman was thirty-five years of age and the lady twenty-one. The ceremony was made the occasion for local rejoicing. Shortly after the marriage Mr and Mrs Carew left England for Japan, where the former intended to try his fortune.

The Carews took up their residence on the Bluff, Yokohama—the fashionable European quarter of Japan, much patronised by English and American society. They lived in good style, and Mrs Carew became a very popular hostess. For some years everything would seem to have gone smoothly and well with the Carews, the people of Glastonbury being periodically regaled with accounts of their doings and prosperity. Although she was so far away, they still took a keen interest in the life of the charming daughter of their Mayor. In the year 1894 Mrs Carew paid a visit to the home of her parents, when Glastonbury gave her a most hearty and flattering

reception. For days people talked of little but the Carews, discussed scarcely anything but things Japanese. They also decorated the town with Japanese and English flags, and went about wearing Japanese caps and kimonos—so popular in Glastonbury was the young married daughter of the Mayor—the young woman who was fated soon to acquire an ugly and sinister repute of world-wide extension.

Well, Mrs Carew returned to Japan, carrying with her the good wishes, heartily bestowed, of the people of Glastonbury. In about two years from that date Glastonbury may be said to have been staggered by the news that the young lady for whom they entertained so much admiration and affection was in custody in Japan, charged with the murder of her husband. That was the brief but fateful message which a cablegram from Yokohama contained. The following are the circumstances which led up to this startling event:—

About the middle of October, 1896, Mr Carew fell suddenly and mysteriously ill. A Dr Wheeler, who was practically a friend of the family, was called in, and he diagnosed the malady as that of diseased liver. And for such he treated him. But Mr Carew did not get better. The Carews had in their service as nursery governess a Miss Jacobs, who was a Londoner. On October 21st Mrs Carew sent this young woman to a native chemist to purchase a rather large amount of arsenic and sugar of lead. While making this purchase, Miss Jacobs was surprised,

and considerably alarmed, by being informed by the chemist that this was the third supply of deadly poison which had been procured by Mrs Carew. He also remarked that she seemed to require a great deal of poison. (Apparently there are not the same restrictions over the sale of poisons in Japan as there are in this country.)

Miss Jacobs became so nervous and apprehensive for her own safety that she confided the matter to a nurse, informing her that she felt it to be her duty to impart the information volunteered by the chemist to Dr Wheeler, which she accordingly did. Dr Wheeler promptly had his patient removed to the Naval Hospital. It was, however, too late, for Carew died there on the 22nd. The same night Mrs Carew made the following statement to the doctor:—
“There is one thing I would like to tell you which I suppose I ought to have told you before. Mr Carew asked me if I would get him a small bottle of arsenic. He also wanted some sugar of lead.”

I here interrupt the narrative in order to call the reader's attention to another curious resemblance between this and the Maybrick case. It will be remembered by those who are acquainted with the details of the latter case, that poison was found in a bottle of Valentine's meat juice—I did not refer to this incident when I dealt with the case at length—which Mrs Maybrick admitted having put there, but, as she explained from the dock, at the request of her deceased husband. The reader will notice the

resemblance between this statement and that volunteered by Mrs Carew to Dr Wheeler.

Well, in consequence of the communication made to him by Mrs Carew, coupled with the fact that he was convinced that Carew had died from arsenical poisoning, Dr Wheeler referred the matter to the coroner. An inquest was held, at which the evidence was conflicting. On the one hand we have Dr Wheeler expressing his confident opinion that Carew died from arsenical poisoning and not from the effects of a diseased liver. On the other it was asserted with equal insistence that the deceased man was afflicted with a diseased liver, and that he occasionally took doses of arsenic for relief. (Yet another striking resemblance to the Maybrick case.) But the coroner pointed out that Carew took only small doses, that he took those with great care, and that it was highly improbable that he would have taken a lethal dose. As a result of the inquiry the jury brought in an "open" verdict, to the effect that Mr Carew had died from arsenical poisoning, but by whom the poison was administered there was not sufficient evidence to show.

It now resolved itself into a matter for police investigation. As a result of police inquiries therefore Mrs Carew was arrested and charged with the crime. The trial, which lasted three weeks, began on January 5th. During its run many curious things happened which deserve to be characterised as "sensational." For instance, the governess, Miss Jacobs, already referred to, was arrested as being guiltily concerned

in the murder. Mrs Carew, in her defence, also declared that she, Miss Jacobs, was in truth a Miss Annie Luke, that some years previously she and the late Mr Carew had been on intimate relations, that prior to his death her husband had expressed a desire to see Miss Luke in order to "make amends" to her, and that a letter had been discovered among the dead man's papers signed "Annie."

It was further stated by the defence that a mysterious female, known by the initials "A. L.," and who was dressed in black and closely veiled, had twice called upon Mrs Carew. Upon the first occasion she left a card with the initials "M. I." and "A. L." on it, and bearing the date 1888. Upon the occasion of the second visit of this mysterious individual, which was said to have been made while Mr Carew was ill, she requested to be shown his bedroom. The prisoner was defended by Mr Lowder, and he produced several letters which he stated had emanated from the elusive "A. L." One of them was worded as follows:—

"Dead men tell no tales—no, nor dead women either, for I am going to join him. Do you know what waiting means for eight long, weary years? I have watched and waited—watched till I knew he would grow tired of her, that silly little fool, and then I came to him. What is the result? We, between us, electrify Japan. By the time you get this I shall be well on my way to join him, my twin soul.

"I have bamboozled (1) the chemist, (2) the doctor,

and last, but not least, that fool his wife, and I am now going to join him, my twin soul."

The writer of the above does not furnish any clue as to when, where, or under what circumstances she intended to join her "twin soul." The extravagant, penny-novelette wording of it is very suggestive.

Up to this stage Mr Lowder had created a decidedly favourable effect by his eloquent insistence that the prosecution had not removed the ground for reasonably supposing that the death was caused inadvertently by an overdose of arsenic, and that they had failed to show any motive. But soon after this the case for the defence collapsed in a remarkable manner. First, then, Miss Jacobs, for whom much sympathy was felt, and against whom not the smallest amount of reasonable evidence could be adduced, was released. The next striking incident, and which altogether did for the defence, occurred in connection with a letter. The prosecution put in a letter signed "A. L. Price," which had been written to the British Minister, complaining of the summing-up of the coroner. This letter mysteriously disappeared and was not seen again until the day before the trial closed, namely, on January 29th, when it was found concealed in a sleeve of the prisoner's dress. The fact that she was able to obtain possession of it is evidence of the loose way the prosecution was conducted. Upon this discovery being made known Mr Lowder retired from the case. The letter in question was proved to be in the handwriting of the prisoner. This was vital, because it will be seen that the

initials of the signature, "A. L. Price," are the same as those of the mysterious "Annie Luke." This made it pretty evident that the prisoner had also written the "Luke" letters, and that Annie Luke herself was nothing more than a figment of her own imagination. So that Mrs Carew was not only convicted of killing her husband, but she also did not hesitate to defame his memory.

Now for the motive. It was proved that Mrs Carew had conceived a warm affection for a Mr Dickinson, and the prosecution put in letters, couched in the most affectionate terms, which had passed between the two, and in some of which Dickinson was urging Mrs Carew to obtain a divorce. Mr Dickinson in this case shaped much better than did the man Brierly in the Maybrick case. Dickinson went into the witness-box and admitted the authenticity of the letters in question. He also defended his own behaviour—and successfully I maintain—by stating that the prisoner had deceived him by inducing him to believe that her husband was very cruel to her, and that he systematically ill-treated her. That was why, he declared, he urged her to obtain a divorce. As a matter of fact it was made abundantly clear that Carew was a most kind and indulgent husband, and was universally held in high esteem. It is no new thing, unfortunately, for a kind and indulgent husband to be treated cruelly by his wife. He gives her bread and she returns him a stone.

The trial was held in the Consular Court, and after

a retirement of thirty-five minutes the jury returned a unanimous verdict of "Guilty." Mrs Carew was thereupon sentenced to death, the British Ambassador subsequently commuting the sentence to penal servitude for life. As there was no women's convict prison in Japan the prisoner was transferred to Aylesbury, where she remained thirteen years, when she was released.

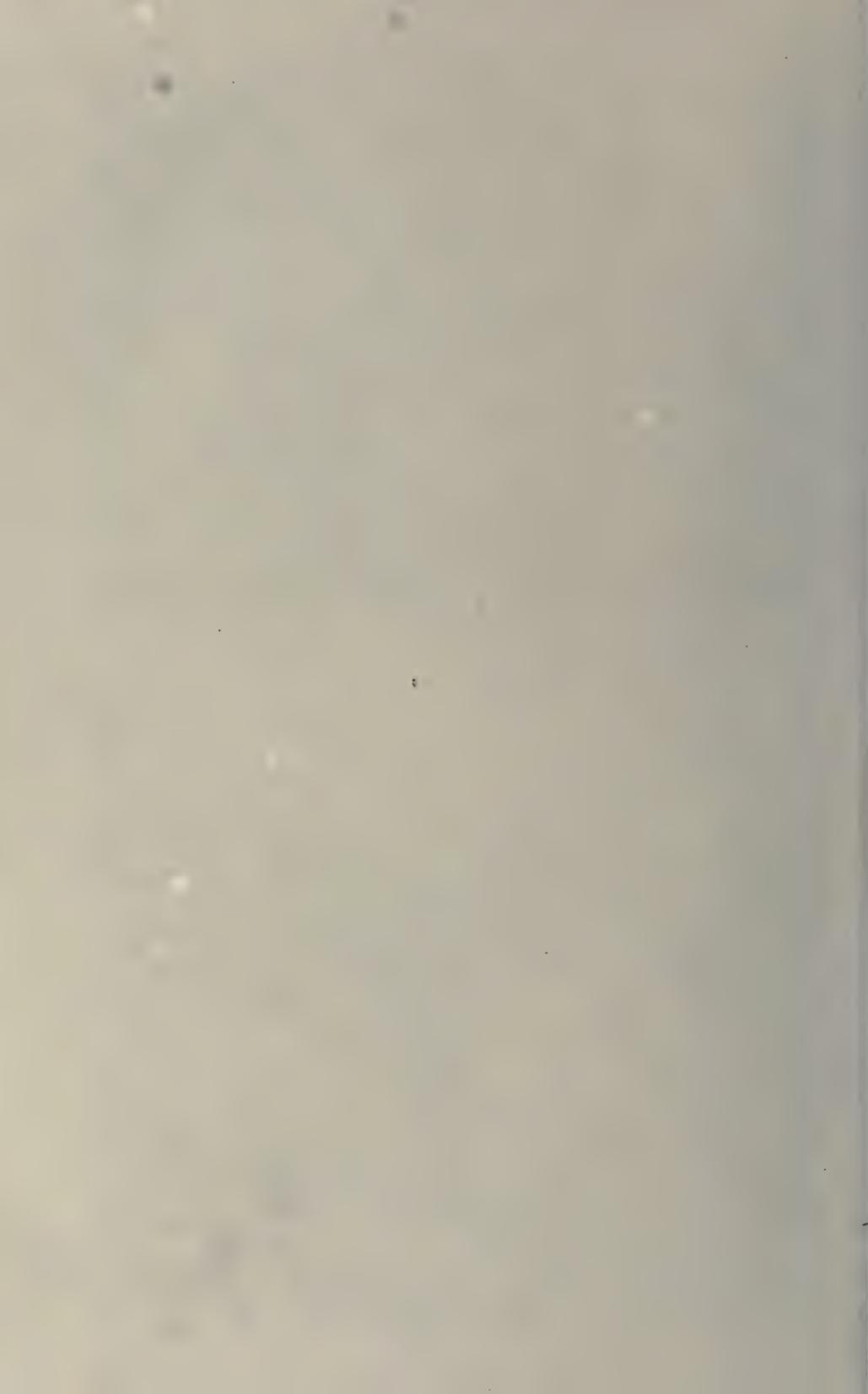
In all these cases of serious crimes committed by well-placed women we find similar characteristics. We find they have invariably been living idle and useless lives, with no healthy occupation to keep their minds engrossed, with nothing to do in fact but to gratify their own appetites. Mere self-indulgence is a fruitful source of evil-doing. It were well for such women that they should be reduced to earning their daily bread. "They toil not, neither do they spin," and they have ever a ready ear for the voice of the tempter, and a heart that pulses only for self-gratification.



THE ALTAR, AYLESBURY FEMALE CONVICT PRISON.



"FIRST AID" AMONG FEMALE PRISONERS (INDIA).



CHAPTER VII

THE POISONERS—*continued*

ALTHOUGH, in the next case we have to consider, the woman involved was associated with a man, I place it among the organisers of crime inasmuch as the woman was clearly the leading spirit in the commission of the crime, bringing her baneful influence to bear upon the man, and so converting him into a ready confederate. In these crimes committed jointly by a man and a woman, where the motive is a sensual one, it is the custom, apparently in deference to time-honoured chivalry, to regard the man as the instigator of the crime, and the woman as acting under his influence. In many such cases, however, the very reverse is the true state of things, the woman, in gratification of her own sensual desires, having infected the man through the medium of the influence she exercises over him. The case we are about to deal with is such a one.

The sinister young woman who played the leading part in the terrible story we are about to unfold was named Jeanne Daniloff. She was a Russian and an orphan, whose father had never acknowledged her, and whose mother died at an early age while a

political exile from Russia. Thus it will be seen that Jeanne's early years were anything but propitious. She was taken in hand by her grandmother, who kept a boarding-house at Nice. In 1884, at the comparatively tender age of sixteen, Jeanne quitted Nice for Paris in company with a single gentleman, with whom she lived for about six months, thus early exhibiting the possession of that abnormal and morbid sensuality which was subsequently to lead to such dire consequences. Her grandmother, however, entertained such deep affection for her that she was induced to overlook this little departure from the narrow path of chastity, and took her back to the boarding-house at Nice.

In that same year, while at a ball in the town, she met a Lieutenant Weiss, who incontinently, and to his subsequent great discomfiture, fell in love with her. His affection or infatuation was indeed of such a precipitate character that he almost there and then offered her marriage. Jeanne Daniloff was undoubtedly one of those abnormally sensual women who seem to cast such a glamour over the opposite sex. However, the mother of Lieutenant Weiss, fond and wise woman, flatly refused to consent to the proposed union. It is not surprising to learn that this opposition did but add zest to the unruly passion of Lieutenant Weiss, fed already as it was by the very presence of its object. In 1884, it so fell out, Weiss was promoted to a captaincy and drafted to Oran, Algiers. He took with him Jeanne as his mistress. Things remained thus till 1886, when

Weiss resigned his military position, and accepted a civil appointment in the Algerian service. At the same time he at length contrived to obtain his mother's consent to his marriage with Jeanne, which accordingly took place. In the following year, 1887, Madame Weiss gave birth to a son, and two years later, in 1889, a daughter was born to her.

In the last-named year M. and Madame Weiss took up their residence at Ain-Fezza, near Oran. So far Madame Weiss would appear to have led an irreproachable life as a wife and a mother, displaying much piety and assiduity in her devotions as became one who had been brought up in the Lutheran faith. In personal appearance Jeanne was attractive, although, it was maintained, not actually pretty. She had very fine eyes and well-defined eyebrows; in fact, her eyes were said to be of the "fatal" kind. It is generally admitted that the power of the human eye is great, and in women of the type of Jeanne Daniloff it doubtless constitutes a dangerous weapon. In this same year of 1889 there came to Ain-Fezza an accomplished young engineer named Felix Roques, who was working on the West Algerian railways. He was fated to meet Madame Weiss and find himself within the spell and under the magical influence of those "fatal" eyes. For him Jeanne Weiss conceived an overmastering passion—he "appealed to her" with a vengeance—and in a very short time all the morbid sensuality which was innate in this latent degenerate rushed forth with torrential force.

Jeanne Weiss, brushing aside her Lutheran piety with her duties as wife and mother, abandoned herself unrestrainedly to the cultivation and gratification of her unholy passion. Into the impetuous stream of her irresistible desire she had soon drawn M. Roques, who fell from his high estate never to rise again. In an amazingly short space of time he became completely infected with her horrible enthusiasm, henceforth readily playing the part of an odious adulterer and cowardly dastard. When M. Roques, a complete slave to the desire for reciprocity she inspired in him, asked for a secret meeting, she replied, "I don't wish to take on myself the responsibility of a decision; you know that, if we once begin to love, it will be no light thing to me. I shall lead you far, perhaps further than you think." In this she was abundantly right. So she put it to the decision of a tossed coin. If the coin came down head, she would, she declared, be his; if, on the other hand, it came down a tail, there must be nothing between them. Fancy a woman putting her chastity, the happiness of her home, the honour of her husband, and the welfare of her children, to the toss of a coin! And what a feeble device. The coin came down head, but if it had been the reverse would this estimable lady have abandoned her adulterous intentions? I doubt it. I should, in fact, be quite prepared to hear that she had used a double-headed coin. One can very well judge as to the class of woman Madame Weiss was by that one little incident.

Promptly Jeanne Weiss became the mistress of M. Roques. She was so enthusiastic about it that she had engraved upon a ring the date of the first illicit connection between them—November 13, 1889. She also writes him ardent letters, which she signs, "your wife, Jeanne." M. Weiss became suspicious, and adopted, poor man, several pathetic devices to win back his erring wife. To please her, as she complained of the dullness of Algiers, he sent her to Nice. This was in March, 1890. M. Roques also returned to France about the same time. In the following August Madame Weiss gave birth to a girl, the father of which was M. Roques. Her husband had joined her in July. In September M. and Madame Weiss returned with their children to Algiers. M. Roques had gone to Madrid.

M. Weiss having become somewhat of an obstacle to the continuance of the odious liaison, Madame Weiss and her paramour were discussing the best means of "removing" him. It was at length decided that Madame should poison him with arsenic. Much of the correspondence which passed between the two—Madame Weiss and M. Roques—has been preserved to posterity, and to the psychologist affords interesting reading. To sensitive people it would doubtless be simply sickening. At the outset Madame entertains misgivings as to what she is about to do. In one letter, for instance, she says, "I am beset with sad and depressing thoughts. What I am about to do is very ugly." It was indeed ugly! Further on she says, "I will give all my love

to my children, *to yours first of all.*" A positive outrage on maternity! In another letter, written at a time when the two are discussing the poison to be used, she says, "I prefer Fowler's solution (Fowler's solution of arsenic) to begin with. It is agreed, Felix, you shall be obeyed. Have I ever hesitated before anything except the desertion of my children? Crimes against the law don't trouble me at all. It is only crimes against Nature that revolt me. I am a worshipper of Nature." The wording at the beginning of this precious epistle sounds as though the various courses of a contemplated meal were being discussed, instead of the preparations for the perpetration of a horrible murder. Apparently crimes against the law did not trouble Madame Weiss, but a worshipper of Nature—— Faugh!

The next effusion is interesting as a sidelight on this terrible creature's character:—

"I have been playing the *Danse Macabre* as a duet. My nerves must be affected, for it produced a gloomy effect upon me; I thought of death and of *those who are about to die*. Can it be that this feeling will return to me?

"I have read "Cruelle Enigme," the story of a sensual and an intellectual love inspired at the same time in the same women by two different men. I don't see any very great enigma in that! . . . I think that five-sixths of the infidelities of people are to be explained in this way, and it is quite simple and natural." Then she launches into a detailed description of how she is arranging for the furnishing of their home,

after they have "got rid" of the inconvenient husband. The letter concludes: "It is so sweet to think that I am working for our nest."

The poisoning of M. Weiss had not yet begun, and the following was the next outburst of madam's:—

"Oh, Felix, love me, for the hideousness of my task glares at me. I want to close my heart and my soul and my eyes; I want to banish the recollection of what *he* has done for me, for I worship you. I feel such a current of complete intimacy between you and me, that words seem unnecessary; we read each other's thoughts as in an open book. To arrest this current would be to arrest my life. I may shudder at what I am doing, after it is done, but go back I cannot. Comfort and sustain me, help me to get over the inevitable moments of depression, bind me under your yoke. Make me drunk with your caresses, for therein lies your only power. I will be yours, whatever happens; so long as you give me your orders, I will carry them out. But it seems to me I am doing wrong. I love you terribly."

Yes, it seems to me also that she was doing *wrong*. In fact, one might go further and say, with a distinguished poet: "Seems?—nay, it is." And the love was certainly terrible.

In another letter she says: "What I dread above all is the awful time after the catastrophe; the priests, the mourning, the tears and condolences, and, worst of all, the doctors!" So it is not the death itself which is troubling her so much as the fuss that is likely to

be made afterwards! One can understand her objecting to the presence of the doctors.

At the beginning of October, 1890, M. Weiss fell ill, exhibiting all the symptoms of arsenical poisoning. As is invariably the case in these dreadful affairs, the wife was most assiduous in her attentions to him, the while she was dosing every article of food she gave him with Fowler's solution. M. Weiss continued to grow steadily worse, in spite of—or, as we know, in consequence of—the attentions of his wife, and in the face of the industrious ministrations of the doctor. This fact aroused the suspicions of M. de Guerry, M. Weiss's secretary, who communicated them to the doctor. The latter confirmed them. Then a curious thing happened. The post-mistress at Ain-Fezza was favouring the correspondence between Madame Weiss and M. Roques in Madrid, although at the same time she was gossiping about it to the wife of M. de Guerry. On October 9th Madame Weiss posted an important letter to M. Roques, and the fact was conveyed to M. de Guerry by his wife. Thereupon M. de Guerry went to the post office, saw the letter lying on the counter, quietly slipped it into his pocket and took it home. There he opened it and found the following:—

“ You may as well know what a fearful time I am going through at this moment, in what a nightmare I live.

“ Monsieur has been in bed four days, and the best half of my stock is used up. He fights it,

fights it by his sheer vitality and instinct of self-preservation, so that he seems to absorb emetics and never drains a cup or a glass to its dregs. The doctor, who came yesterday, could find no disease. 'He's a madman, a hypochondriac,' he said. 'Since he seems to want to be sick, give him some ipecacuanha, and don't worry; there's nothing seriously the matter with him.'

"The constant sickness obliges me to administer the remedy in very small doses. I can't go beyond twenty drops without bringing on vomiting. Yesterday, from five in the morning to four in the afternoon, I have done nothing but empty basins, clean sheets, wash his face, and hold him down in the bed during his paroxysms of sickness. At night, when I have got away for a moment, I have put my head on Mdlle. Castaing's shoulder" (the postmistress) "and sobbed like a child. I am afraid, afraid that I haven't got enough of the remedy left and that I shan't be able to bring it off. Couldn't you send me some by parcel post to the railway station of Ain-Fezza? Can't you send four or five pairs of children's socks with the bill? I'll take care to get rid of the wrapper. Hide the bottle carefully.

"I am getting thinner every day. I don't look well, and I am afraid that when I see you, I shan't please you. Did you get the photograph?"

"Forgive my handwriting, but I am horribly nervous. I adore you."

The above is perhaps one of the most terrible

letters ever penned by a wife and a mother. The letter which figured in the Maybrick case was bad enough, but the above is infinitely worse. It is unspeakably horrible, and the writer appears to be rapidly graduating for the Tenth Circle of Hades.

As in the Maybrick case, the discovery of this letter quickly led to the arrest of the writer. For M. Weiss it was providential, for it saved his life. M. de Guerry at once placed the letter in the hands of the Procureur de la République, who, upon October 10th, paid a visit to the house at Ain-Fezza. Being shown the letter, Madame Weiss admitted writing it, admitted that she had been the lover of M. Roques, but made a feeble effort to defend herself by stating that she had merely been pretending to poison her husband. But this would scarcely hold good when, upon a search of the house being made, a large quantity of Fowler's solution, prussic acid, and corrosive sublimate was found. A mere pretension could hardly require such aids as these. Thus finding herself in a hopeless position, Madame Weiss attempted suicide by taking a dose of corrosive sublimate. In this, however, she failed, as she survived the attempt after a painful illness of six months' duration. Instructions were sent to the police at Madrid for the arrest of M. Roques, but upon October 20th he contrived to elude justice by blowing his brains out. Perhaps the best thing he could have done under the circumstances.

Thus we find retribution swiftly overtaking these two despicable sensual would-be homicides.

Madame Weiss was allowed to take her infant daughter to prison with her, where it subsequently died. During the interval between her arrest and trial, a period of about seven months, she wrote an autobiography, in which she strove to fasten the blame for the whole tragic business upon M. Roques. This was rather a cowardly proceeding, as the man, bad as he was, was still not alive to defend himself. But her responsibilities were greater, and her guilt was therefore the heavier. She was also clearly the leading spirit and the ready implement in the plot. She also subtly endeavoured to make out that her gravely-wronged husband had forgiven her. She wrote:—

“My husband, by his behaviour towards me, has made me appreciate a thousand times more poignantly the wrong I have done him; instead of leaving me to my punishment, he has surrounded me with proofs of his pity. Yes, he has pitied me, for he knows that the woman I have become in this last year was not the woman who for five years made him a happy home.”

Now, under all the circumstances, this was calculated to put M. Weiss in an odious light. It would make him out as playing the part of a poor, silly, sucking-dove of a husband, and as exhibiting a foolish way of showing his appreciation of his good fortune in having his life spared to him. As a matter of fact it was merely the invention of a still designing woman. At the subsequent trial, and when M. Weiss had concluded his evidence, he turned to the jury and made the following statement: “I

desire, gentlemen, to make to you the following declaration. I speak that I may reply to certain calumnies that have appeared in the press. I have never forgiven Jeanne Daniloff. I do not, and I never will, forgive her. Henceforth she is nothing to me. Whatever her fate, I stay near my children. I only wish never to hear her name again."

These words were received with applause in court. The sincerity of the declaration of M. Weiss is emphasised by the fact that he referred to her by her maiden name only.

Upon the death of the offspring of her adultery, Madame Weiss would appear to have become distracted, for she wrote:—

" Good-bye to life!

" Whether I open a vein,

" Or hang myself.

" Or drown myself,

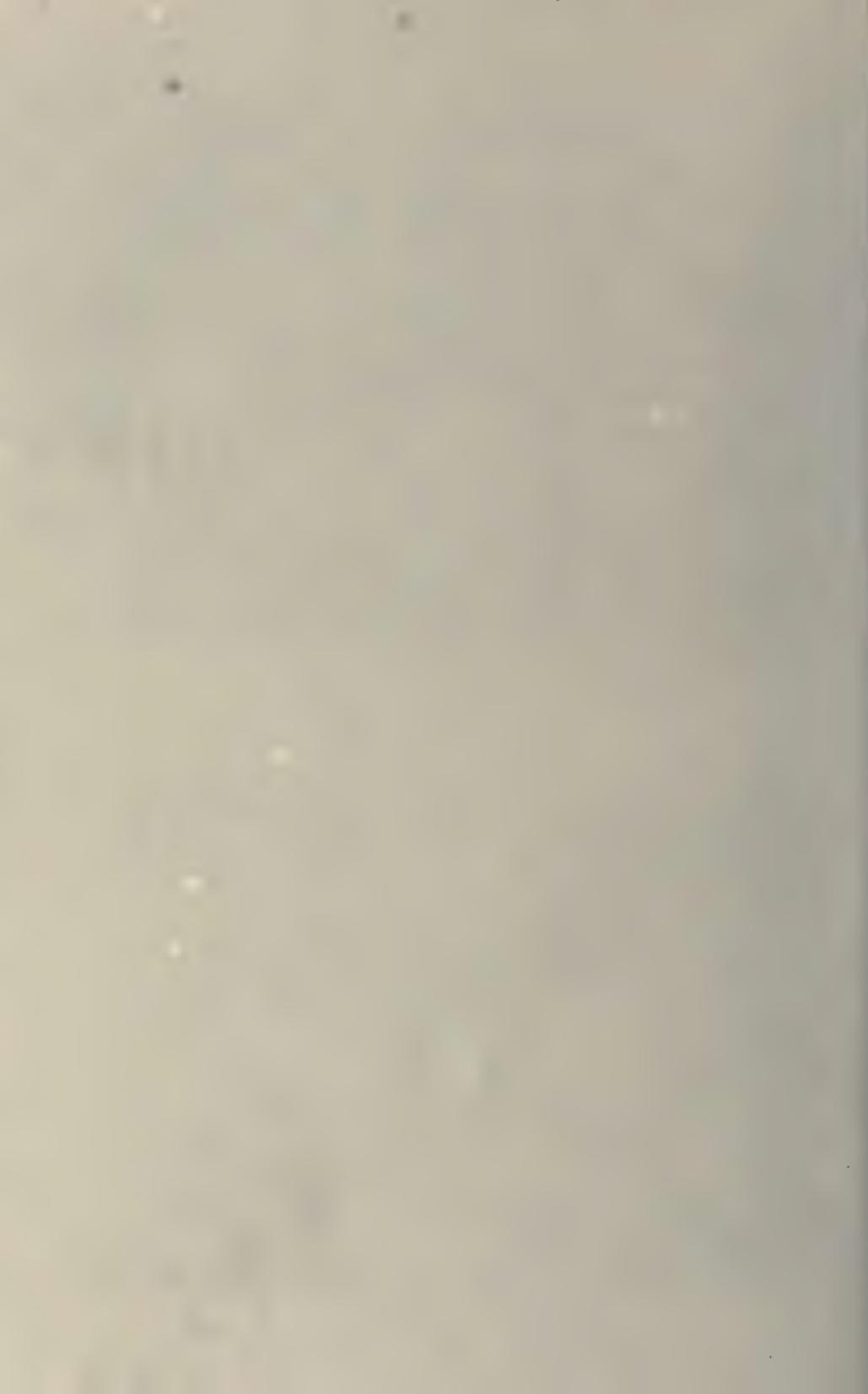
" Or throw myself under a train, I will get there sure enough, even though all the Saints of Paradise were there to bar the way. And they will not be there, rest assured!"

I think not, Madame. More probably all the fiends of hell will be there to hasten rather than retard your progress!

In writing of her determination to take her own life, Madame Weiss advanced as a kind of justification that for her to remain alive in prison a convicted criminal would be an everlasting disgrace to her children. Formerly, however, she had said in a letter to her paramour, when things were not going



TYPES OF FEMALE CRIMINALS (INDIA).



very well with them, that the existence of the children constituted an insurmountable obstacle to suicide. This is the old form of "special pleading" on the part of one who has been found out. What was before an obstacle now becomes a justification. As a matter of fact Madame Weiss did subsequently take her own life, but not by any of the means mentioned above.

After M. Weiss made his speech to the jury, which I have already quoted, the prisoner was seen to raise her handkerchief to her mouth and bite it, as though she were giving expression to her rage at her husband thus casting her off. In the hem of her handkerchief she had concealed a fatal dose of strychnine. At about four in the morning following her conviction, she put this handkerchief to her mouth, and then asked the wardress in attendance for a glass of water. This was handed to her, and with the water she washed down the fatal dose of strychnine which she had taken from the handkerchief. Although an emetic was administered, she subsequently died in great agony.

I have dwelt at considerable length on this case, as I regard it as one of considerable importance to a consideration of the subject of the female criminal. Also many of the characteristics of it are to be found in other cases of crimes committed by women. I regard Madame Weiss as embodying well-nigh all the attributes of the thorough-paced female criminal, as standing at the very pinnacle-point of female enormity. The jury who convicted her granted her ex-

tenuating circumstances. One searches in vain for any justification for this leniency. Of the fatuity and infantile complacency of juries there is no end. If Madame Weiss, instead of being young and attractive, had been some repulsive old hag, that jury would have failed to discover any grounds for leniency. I suggest that female offenders of this kind should be tried by a jury of women, whose mental vision would remain unimpaired by the personal appearance of the prisoner.

Madame Weiss was given the heaviest sentence possible under the circumstances, namely, twenty years' imprisonment. But, as events so turned out, the sentence mattered little, for as we have seen, Madame revised it herself. Certainly the children of Madame Weiss were better without such a mother as her.

In many respects this case is a very striking one, but in none more so than in the manner that death fell upon nearly all those chiefly concerned. The two wrongdoers, and the offspring of the intrigue, were all wiped out. The man who was so grossly wronged on the other hand, had his life preserved to him. It is not often that such tragedies have so just an ending. The true adjustment is invariably left to a Higher Power.

It was almost inevitable, under the circumstances, that the mental condition of Madame Weiss should be called in question. During the trial, therefore, a Dr Lacronique, who was well acquainted with the prisoner, expressed his opinion of her mental condition in the following words: "Jeanne Daniloff is,

from the intellectual point of view, a woman of unbalanced mind. In addition to this, her nervous system is highly impressionable and excitable. She yields easily to hypnotic suggestion. But her mental condition is sound; she acts with full consciousness of what she is doing; she is responsible."

In short, she was sane.

Madame Weiss was one of those morbid and vicious-minded women who are made "heroines" in so-called "psychological" plays and bawdy novels. Such women are shallow-minded, insincere in everything but evil, holding a distempered and distorted view of life, and regarding members of the opposite sex as a kind of natural prey. In short, human vampires, whose only interest in life is the gratification of their own lascivious desires:—

"A fool there was who made his prayer
(Even as you and I)
To a rag and a bone and a hank of hair,
We called her the 'woman who did not care.'
The fool, he called her his 'lady fair.'
(Even as you and I)."

I am afraid they abound in our midst, and are made worse than they would otherwise be by man's sickly pandering to their petty vanity and unwholesome self-esteem, for which they, the men, occasionally pay a heavy price by arousing into destructive activity the capacity for mischief that ever lies latent in such female degenerates. Their easiest prey they find among men of leisure and means, men who are a counterpart of themselves in so far as being habituated to self-indulgence goes; men whose only out-

look on womanhood is through the glasses of sexual intercourse, whose interest in a woman ceases when their carnal appetite is satisfied or surfeited. It is, however, but just that they should occasionally suffer for their own grossness, and no right-minded person would be anxious to raise a voice on their behalf. Unfortunately, as we have seen in the Weiss case, by their surrendering to the lust of such women they sometimes are instrumental in visiting unmerited wrong upon innocent persons, for whom there is scarcely any adequate redress. We know there exist many men who may be found ready to sympathise with such women as Madame Weiss, and contend that she was the victim of M. Roques. No doubt the jurymen who tried her were men of that class. All such men are not necessarily lascivious-minded, but they must to a certain degree be feeble-minded, with an unreasoning, slavish kind of devotion to the female sex. Nothing can be more foolish and misleading than to suppose that because it happens to be a woman standing in the dock that it is therefore a case for lenient treatment. Many a male criminal has been far more deserving of leniency, which he has not received, than female criminals who have. It seems exceedingly difficult, if not altogether impossible, for some, many, men to lift themselves above what one may term the sickly sentimental view of women. Mere sentiment has been the cause of more injustice and unmerited suffering than crime itself. A man's view of women should be a healthy one. If this were so there would be fewer female criminals.

The next case we have to deal with is one which bears a striking resemblance to the Carew and the Maybrick cases. It occurred in France. Thus we have this class of crime, almost identical in their principal salient features, being committed in countries so widely asunder as England, Japan and France. But human nature is human nature all the world over, and the causes of crime are attributable to the individual rather than the climate. In the Weiss case it was said that, somewhat in mitigation of guilt, that the climate of Algiers was calculated to engender crimes of passion. It was a rather feeble argument, however, as we have similar crimes of passion committed, as I have already pointed out, in other countries where the climate cannot be said to be a contributory factor.

The case now under consideration occurred at Marseilles in the year 1903. It was known at the time as the "French Maybrick Case." The victim in this case was a Captain Georges Massot, an employé of the Messageries Maritimes. He was a man who came of a good family, and was many years older than his wife. The latter, formerly Alice Martorell, was a young woman with a "past"; in fact her record was so bad that Massot's friends strongly opposed the union. However, the woman's influence over him being so strong, he paid no heed to these warnings, and so went blindly to his doom. In all these crimes of passion we see the same sexual ascendancy of the woman over the man, which seems to blind the latter to the most obvious signs of danger.

And so Georges Massot married Alice Martorell, and in due course two children were born to them. In October, 1903, the Massots were living at the Villa Toutes-Aures, Marseilles. Shortly after returning from a voyage M. Massot was taken suddenly and mysteriously ill. He was attended by his wife, and on the 23rd he died. The doctor attributed his death to "enteritis." So he was buried in the usual way, his widow going weeping to his sepulchre. But it so fell out that a female servant in the employ of the Massots, named Lucie Clap, became suspicious of the cause of her master's death. These suspicions were soon after confirmed in a startling manner. Lucie discovered the torn fragments of a letter which had been written by her mistress, and by putting the pieces together she found that it was addressed to a young man named Edouard Hubac, a medical student and the son of one of the vice-presidents of the Civil Tribunal of Marseilles. The letter also contained conclusive evidence that M. Massot had been done to death by his wife, and that Hubac was her paramour.

Lucie Clap thereupon confided in a neighbour named Madame Dhost, who, strangely enough, had herself entertained suspicions concerning the death of Massot, as she had seen Madame Massot and Hubac repeatedly together in the neighbourhood. So the matter was placed before the authorities, and on December 3rd, 1903, Madame Massot and Hubac were arrested and charged with the murder of M. Massot. The body of the latter was exhumed, and

as the result of an analysis which was held it was found that death was caused by the administration of the corrosive poison, bi-chloride of mercury. Other letters came to light, through the medium of which it was made abundantly clear that this was among the most odious and cold-blooded murders of the kind.

In Madame Massot we have another of those morbid, sinister, callous, morally atrophied, and phenomenally sensual females, who must arouse in the breast of every decent and healthy-minded man nothing but a feeling of repugnance and detestation. Married to a man who kept her in comfort, and treated her with every respect and consideration, the mother of two young children, she abandoned herself to the most debasing and profligate conduct. It appeared that Hubac was the successor of another paramour of Madame Massot's, who had tired of her and so passed her on, as it were, to his young friend. It would also appear that M. Massot had become suspicious of his wife and was contemplating instituting divorce proceedings, which furnished an additional motive for the crime. As such wretched creatures usually do under such circumstances, Madame Massot professed sincere love for her children, but the genuineness of this may be gauged by the fact that, in consequence of an injudicious utterance made by one of them in connection with their father's death, the fond mother, it transpired, contemplated sending it to join that parent.

While in prison both Madame Massot and Hubac took to writing many letters. As these, under the

procedure of French law, had to be investigated, the trial in consequence being delayed many months. In fact it did not take place till more than a year after, namely, in December, 1904. Many of Madame Massot's letters were written to her mother, in some of which she sought to put the blame upon the shoulders of her confederate. Even in this detail criminal history repeats itself in a striking manner. In one of the letters she said: "Pestered by my lover to do so, I let him believe that I had administered poison to my husband. I never did more than pretend." But this statement, unfortunately for the lady, was contradicted in an unpleasant manner by the tracing to her possession of large quantities of poison, and the finding in her husband's body the presence of such poison. In another letter, however, she confesses her guilt, although the motive she advances for committing the crime does but emphasise the sheer hypocritical phase of her horrible character: "It was because I did not wish to be separated from my children by the threatened divorce that in a moment of passion and of folly I decided on this atrocious deed. It was in the excess of my maternal love that I conceived this crime."

As has already been pointed out, she contemplated murdering one of those same innocents. May all children be spared such "maternal love" as that of Madame Massot.

The trial was eventually held at the Aix Assize Court, and culminated in a verdict of "Guilty" against both prisoners. But again we have a stupid

jury allowing "extenuating circumstances," the foreman explaining that they did so in order to avoid the necessity of passing the death sentence. He candidly confessed that they saw no other grounds for adding such a rider to their verdict. Thus they failed in their duty in a feeble-minded way, because their duty was to return a verdict of "Guilty" or "Not guilty" according to the evidence, and not concern themselves about the death sentence. To extend leniency, under any plea whatever, to such criminals as Madame Massot is but to bring the law into contempt, to put a slight upon justice and create a bad impression with the community at large. It is not for a jury to decide about capital punishment, or to allow prejudice concerning it to influence their judgment. Many a miscarriage of justice has been brought about by this means, and guilty persons allowed to go free for the sake of upholding an opinion. It is for others to decide about capital punishment, and while such is the law it is the duty of a jury to observe it.

The part considered by the authorities to have been played by the man in the Massot crime may be estimated by the respective sentences passed upon the two. Thus, Madame Massot was sentenced to penal servitude for life, and Hubac to fifteen years' hard labour. I do not complain that Madame Massot's punishment was not severe enough—it was much heavier than that of death—but I still think that it is mischievous that verdicts in such cases as this should be in any way associated with "extenuating circumstances" or any form of leniency.

CHAPTER VIII

MURDERS OF VIOLENCE

WE now have to consider some cases of murder, where death has been caused by means other than that of poison. The first case we shall deal with is that of the notorious Maria Manning.

In the year 1849 there lived at 3 Miniver Place, Bermondsey, a Mr and Mrs Manning. The latter, whose maiden name was De Roux, was a Swiss, and before her marriage she had been employed as lady's-maid to Lady Blantyre, a daughter of the Duchess of Sutherland. Herself, it is said, of somewhat attractive appearance, and, outwardly, of refinement, it is somewhat of a mystery how she came to marry a man like Manning—a coarse, unwieldy, actually repulsive-looking man, who had formerly been a guard on the Great Western Railway. It was an odd match, but doubtless an explanation may be found in the fact that Maria Manning was an extremely sensual woman, and with such women personal appearance and refinement in their marital partners are subordinated to other considerations.

After their marriage the Mannings kept an inn at Taunton, a business which apparently proved a

failure, for they subsequently removed to Bermondsey. Before her marriage Mrs Manning had been wooed by a man named Patrick O'Connor, a man of means and a gauger employed at the London Docks. So loose were the morals of this woman that, although married to Manning, she also extended to O'Connor the privileges of a husband. And the worst feature of this odious liaison was the fact that it was known to and countenanced by Manning, who was among the most degraded of mankind. O'Connor lived at Greenwood Street, Mile End, where Mrs Manning was a frequent and familiar visitor. In fact she practically had the run of O'Connor's rooms, having access to the place even in his absence. O'Connor was also a somewhat frequent visitor at Miniver Place, and it was upon the occasion of one of the latter visits that the crime in question was committed.

Mrs Manning's familiarity with the worldly affairs of her paramour doubtless suggested to her the commission of the crime, for in addition to being sensual, she was also avaricious and selfish. She was likewise clearly the leading spirit and the guiding mind in the carrying out of the crime, for her husband, although a complacent and unconscionable reprobate, was unquestionably subservient to the will of his resolute and unscrupulous spouse. Admitted the man was a ready confederate, he still played but a secondary part in the grim business. Mrs Manning was the "organizer."

The murder determined upon, the preparations for

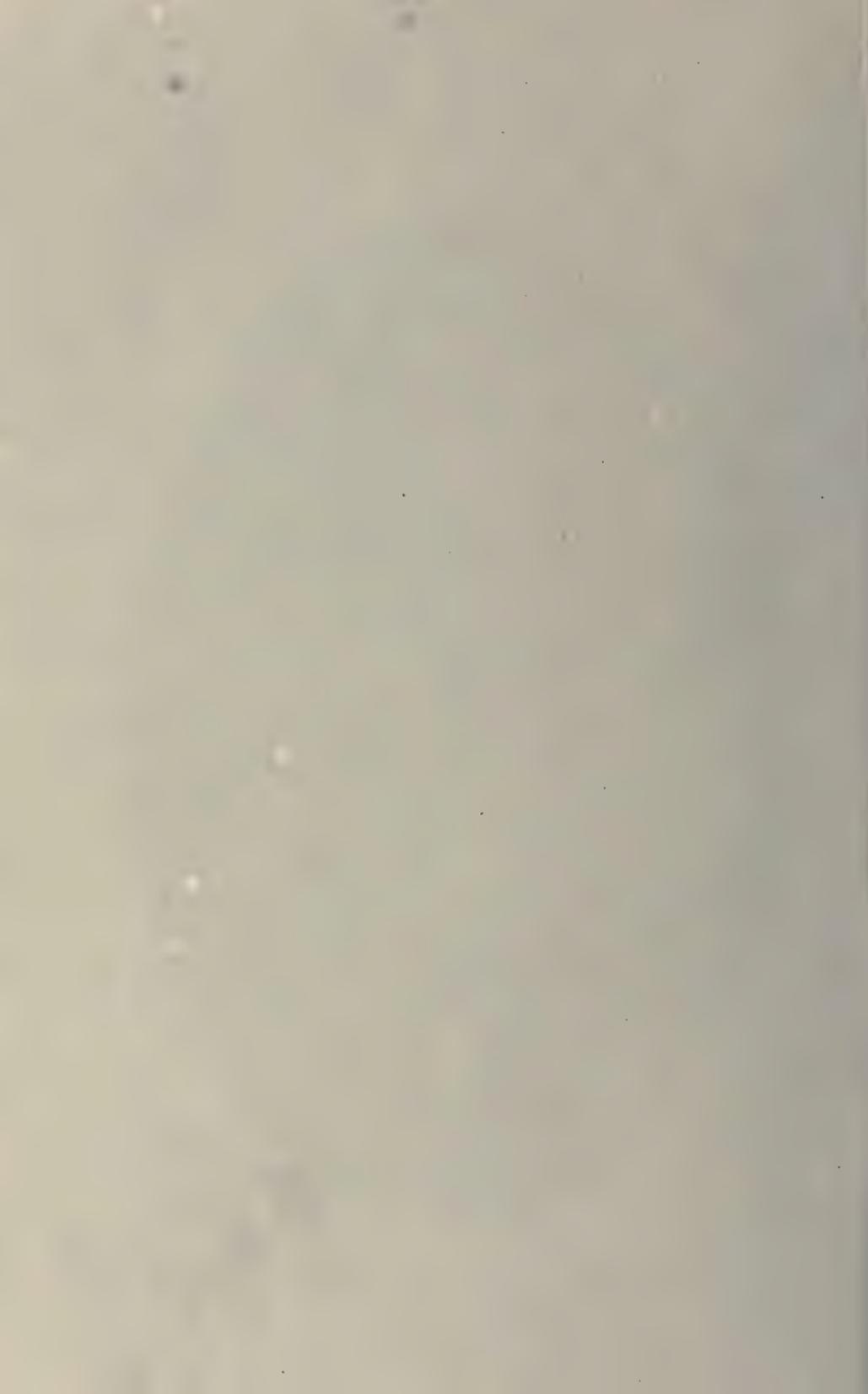
carrying it out were made with business-like celerity. A bushel of lime, a crowbar, and a strong shovel having been procured, the following note was despatched to the hapless gauger: "Wednesday morning. Dear O'Connor—We shall be happy to see you to dine with us to-day, at half-past five.—Yours affectionately, Maria Manning." Perhaps one of the grimmest invitations to a meal ever sent through the post! The mere penning of this note stamps Maria Manning as a criminal of a superlative order. This was on August 9th. Vital events now followed one another in swift succession. The gauger responded to the invitation. About five o'clock that afternoon he was seen and spoken to near London Bridge, and about a quarter of an hour later he was seen in Weston Street, Bermondsey. He was not again seen alive except by the inmates of 3 Miniver Place.

On the following day, the 10th, Mrs Manning called at Greenwood Street and inquired for O'Connor, and remained at the house some time, apparently waiting for him. Then she left. The next day, the 11th, she called again, and again remained some time in O'Connor's rooms. Upon this occasion she took away with her some valuable papers belonging to O'Connor. The same day Manning realised on some of the papers with a stockbroker. O'Connor's absence from business was now causing some alarm, and a friend of his, being aware of his friendship with the Mannings, called twice at Miniver Place and



(Photo: Tussaud and Sons.)

MRS. MARIA MANNING.



inquired for O'Connor. Upon each occasion he was received by Mrs Manning, who declared that she had not seen the gauger since the 8th. These visits doubtless made the Mannings somewhat uneasy. On the morning of the 13th Manning sold his furniture to a dealer named Bainbridge for £13, and although the furniture was not to be removed till the following day, Manning arranged to stay in Bainbridge's house that night. He was evidently getting "nervy." About five o'clock that afternoon Manning went to Miniver Place, but found the house deserted—his wife had already taken to flight, having gone away in a cab with her luggage. Incidentally she had taken with her nearly all the plunder. Shortly after Manning himself disappeared.

On the 17th the police gained access to the house in Miniver Place and made a diligent search of it. Noticing that the flagged pavement in the kitchen had recently been disturbed, they had the stones raised, when they came upon the body of the missing gauger. He had been shot through the head, which had also been badly fractured. The weapons used were probably an air gun and the crowbar already referred to. My impression is that he was first shot by Mrs Manning while she was in the act of caressing him, but this not proving fatal she set her husband to finish him with the crowbar. She then, as we have seen, possessed herself of the dead man's property.

On August 21st Mrs Manning was apprehended at Edinburgh, and in her box were found a large sum of money in notes and gold, which she had obtained

by selling some of O'Connor's securities. Also a good deal of scrip, belonging to the deceased man, was found in her possession. Manning was taken on the 27th at Jersey. Both were brought to London and tried at the Old Bailey, before Mr Justice Cresswell. Mrs Manning was defended by Serjeant Ballantine, and Manning by Serjeant Wilkins. Each endeavoured to fix guilt upon the other, but neither defence prevailed, both eventually being sentenced to death. They were publicly executed on November 13th, outside Horsemonger Lane Gaol.

During the trial Mrs Manning preserved a calm and composed demeanour, but directly after conviction she burst forth into a violent denunciation of all concerned. She declared that she was treated less like a Christian than a wild beast. She was certainly more the latter than the former. She wound up her tirade with "Base, shameful England!" casting some of the rue from the ledge of the dock into the well of the court. However, England did not seem exactly crestfallen at her denunciation, but rather felt relieved at her passing hence. Her composure and demure manner was undoubtedly assumed for the purpose of creating a favourable impression with the jury, knowing, as most women do, that an appearance of weakness and gentleness invariably appeals to the opposite sex. And with shallow-minded juries guilt has repeatedly triumphed in this way. A similar subterfuge was resorted to by another notorious criminal, Mrs Chard Williams, at a later

date and in the same dock, but, as in the case of Mrs Manning, it happily failed. I shall deal with the trial of Mrs Williams, at which I was present, in another place, when dealing with the "baby farmers."

In the next case we have again to consider a crime committed jointly by a man and a woman, and to judge as to the part played in it by the woman. I refer to the case of Mrs Goold, to what was known as the Monte Carlo "trunk crime." Let us first pass in review the various facts which constitute the story of the crime:—

Early on the morning of August 5th, 1907, a man and a woman alighted from a first-class carriage of the Monte Carlo express at Marseilles station. The man was carrying a large kit-bag, and calling a porter he requested the latter to remove a large trunk from the luggage-van and despatch it to Charing Cross, London. The man, knowing very little French, had some difficulty in making himself understood, so the services of an interpreter were procured and the matter satisfactorily arranged with the goods office clerk, who was named Pons. The man and his female companion then made their way to the Hôtel du Louvre de la Paix, where they gave their name as "Javasaah," and their nationality as English. The name, however, was a peculiar one for English people to bear.

The goods clerk went to the baggage-room for the purpose of attending to the business of forwarding the trunk, but when he got near the latter he was struck with the unpleasant odour which emanated

from it. He also noticed, on looking close at it, that a red liquid was oozing out from beneath the lid. Thus becoming suspicious that all was not right, he went to the Hôtel du Louvre and asked for an explanation. The latter was readily forthcoming, the travellers declaring that the trunk was filled with poultry, which accounted for the appearance of the blood. Pons, however, was not satisfied with the explanation, so he communicated his suspicions to the chief of the railway police. The latter advised Pons to return to the hotel and inform the travellers that the Customs would not allow the trunk to be forwarded without an examination first being made of the contents. Pons accordingly returned to the hotel, where he encountered the man and woman on the steps, the man carrying the kit-bag, and on the point of going out. They appeared to be somewhat disturbed, but Pons induced them to accompany him, Pons, in a cab to the station. On the way they unsuccessfully endeavoured to bribe both Pons and the driver to let them get away. Evidently something serious was amiss.

Arrived at the station the trunk was at once opened, when the contents were found to consist of the trunk and two arms of a woman! In the kit-bag which the man was carrying were found the head and legs. When questioned the man said he was a British subject, and that his wife was a French woman named Marie Giraudin. They both expressed themselves astonished at the contents of the trunk, and declared they knew nothing about the crime. They were lodged in prison, and being separately questioned

gave contradictory accounts of the affair. The woman stated that the body was that of a visitor, to her house, who had been killed by her sweetheart, and that they were merely disposing of the remains. She described how the crime was committed, and how the body was dealt with, which did not agree with the man's version in any one particular. It was clearly enough a mere invention.

Subsequent investigations brought the whole truth to light, revealing one of the ugliest stories of crime to be found anywhere recorded. It appeared that the prisoners were a Mr and Mrs Goold, who for some months had been living at the Villa Menesimy, Monte Carlo. The body found was that of a Madame Emma Erika Levin, a Swedish woman aged thirty-seven, the widow of a merchant of Stockholm. She also had been staying at Monte Carlo. She was a woman who was fond of and who possessed a large quantity of valuable jewellery. She had also lent the Goolds, with whom she had become on friendly terms, £40, for the repayment of which she was at the time of the crime pressing. These two factors—Madame Levin's possession of the jewellery and the outstanding debt of £40—were mainly those which led to the commission of the deed. To these two factors, however, must be added the fact that at the time the Goolds were in an impecunious condition. The motive for the crime was therefore clearly that of robbery. The Goolds were in the act of flying from the scene of the crime when they were providentially tripped up at Marseilles.

The crime was committed at the Goolds' house on Sunday, August 6th. At the time the Goolds had staying with them a niece, a young woman aged 24, named Girodin. She was absent from the Villa Menesimy on the day of the crime, with which she was in no way connected. On the Sunday afternoon in question, then, the Goolds had invited Madame Levin to take tea with them at five o'clock. It is a significant fact that Madame Levin was not keen on accepting this invitation, but as she was anxious to get back her £40, so that she might leave Monte Carlo, she was thus unfortunately induced to go. The Villa Menesimy was a large building, which was let out in flats, the flat occupied by the Goolds being on the first floor. Beneath this was the office of the concierge, or housekeeper. About 5.30 on the Sunday in question a young woman who was acting as servant to the concierge heard the noise of a scuffle on the floor above. Listening, she heard feeble cries, and a stifled voice say, "Let me go." Naturally curious, she ran upstairs and listened at the door of the flat, but hearing nothing further and supposing that it was merely a domestic squabble, she returned downstairs again.

When, later, Mlle. Girodin returned she was told by her aunt that her uncle had been taken suddenly ill, and that he had been spitting blood. She also said they would have to go to Marseilles to see a medical man. It was intended at first to go on the following morning, but the journey was afterwards postponed till the Monday night, in consequence, as

Mrs Goold said, of the heat. Eventually, as we know, they went by a night express, taking the trunk and kit-bag containing the remains of their victim with them, and leaving Mlle. Girodin by herself at the flat. When the police came to search the flat they soon discovered evidence of the crime in the shape of splashes of blood, torn garments, and a dagger. Madame Levin, it was clear, had first been stunned by being hit over the head with a blunt instrument, and then finished off by being stabbed with the dagger found. She had been struck many times, two wounds penetrating to the heart. The body had then been dismembered and disembowelled in the bathroom, and packed in the trunk and kit-bag. Much of Madame Levin's jewellery was found in the possession of the Goolds.

In brief, that is the history of this revolting crime, which in many respects bears a striking resemblance to the Devereaux and Crossman crimes committed in this country. I have not the space in which to recount in detail the lives of the Goolds, which had been both varied and adventurous. The man undoubtedly came of a good Irish family, and was known as "Sir" Vere Goold, a title to which he had no legal right. He would appear to have been a victim to the drug habit, in addition to being a copious absorber of spirituous liquors. It is also quite clear that he was subservient to the will of his determined and unscrupulous wife.

Mrs Goold has been described as "an adventuress of great energy," and as having "complete authority

over her weak husband." I think this may be taken as a fairly accurate description of the relationship existing between them. There can be no sort of doubt that she was the instigator and the actual perpetrator of the murder of Madame Levin, making her husband an assistant and a confederate. When she was examined after being taken into custody she was found to have a number of formidable bruises about the body, the presence of which she sought to explain by saying that she had fallen from a cab. This was clearly false, for the bulk of the bruises could not have been so caused. Mrs Goold was a French woman, formerly a Marie Girodin, and Goold appeared to have been her third husband. She was first married to a young fellow at St Marcellin, against the wishes of her parents. She left home shortly after. Her subsequent career amply justified the description of her as "an adventuress of great energy." She travelled a great deal, held many situations, and engaged in a variety of enterprises. Her first husband unhappily—or should we say happily?—died, but under what circumstances does not appear to have been made clear. Her second husband was a Captain Wilkinson, whom, as in the case of her first husband, she married in spite of opposition. It was, in fact, the way of this woman to do things in spite of opposition, in fulfilling the primary purpose of her life of self-gratification.

Three years later Wilkinson died, but again under what circumstances does not appear to have been known. About this time she was in such an impe-

curious state that she was forced to sell her jewels, with the proceeds of which she started a dressmaking business in London. It was at this stage of her career that she met Goold, and marriage now having become a kind of habit with her, she married him. I do not put it that he married her, because that would not be exactly accurate. She married him. With her third partner—the third only so far as we know—she resumed her predatory peregrinations, going from place to place, acquiring money by devious ways—getting money, honestly if it was convenient, but getting it—until at length she descended upon Monte Carlo. It seems highly probable that she went there on acquisitiveness bent, and not with any intention of making money by legitimate means. She became a confirmed gambler, and a frequent visitor to the Casino. Her husband would appear not to have been a gambler, for he was many times seen waiting outside the Casino while his wife was inside “plunging.” He also, it was stated, not infrequently spent nocturnal vigils at the Villa Menesimy while his “energetic” spouse was wooing fortune at the tables.

Mrs Goold was not fated to “break the bank”; in fact her luck on the whole would appear to have been rather bad, a circumstance which doubtless precipitated the murder of the unfortunate Madame Levin. Finding herself in low water, Mrs Goold set about replenishing her coffers, as was the custom of her life, no matter what the results might be to others. In fact her motto might have been “Damn the consequences.” It is a detail that the consequences were

eventually destined to damn her. To such women as Mrs Goold a husband is a very convenient article to have about the house, because he can be made use of as a kind of screen to hide much that is discreditable in their lives. They thus acquire an outward appearance of respectability, which serves to lull suspicion.

Well, the Goolds were eventually sent back to Monte Carlo to stand their trial, they having in the meantime both made stupid and false confessions which deceived nobody. They were in the end both convicted, and it is evidence as to which was the instigator and prime mover in the crime that the woman was sentenced to death and the man to penal servitude for life. The sentence on the woman was subsequently commuted to penal servitude for life.

What became of the luckless young woman, Mlle. Girodin? This poor girl, being deprived of her guardians, was compelled to seek a situation. M. Savard, the examining magistrate who conducted the investigation into the crime, felt so much pity for her that he took her into his service. But the shock of the terrible business had such an effect upon her health that she fell into a decline, which necessitated her removal to the Monaco Hospital, where she soon after died. Thus we find this young woman, possessed of considerable personal beauty, upon the threshold of what might have been a bright and happy life, pressed into the grave beneath a weight of woe at the early age of 27, as a result of another's crime.

Alas, for the innocent!

The Goolds were removed to the French penal prison at Cayenne. In July, 1908, Mrs Goold contracted typhoid fever, of which she died. In September, 1909, Goold committed suicide. Thus, as in the Weiss case, we have nearly all the dramatis personæ wiped out.

In Gabrielle Bompard and the man Eyraud we have a criminal couple similar to the Goolds, with the woman taking the lead and the man acting the part of confederate. Eyraud was Bompard's paramour, and between them they planned the murder of a bailiff named Gouffé, who was also a recipient of Bompard's "favours." The behaviour of this woman during the commission of the crime ranks in my mind as a record of callousness. The preparations for the crime were somewhat elaborate. In a house to which the victim was to be lured a kind of gallows was erected and concealed behind some curtains. There was a rope or cord attached, with a loop already at the end. Bompard brought Gouffé, who was an old man, to the house in question, where Eyraud was already concealed behind the curtains. Near the latter was a sofa, and upon this sat Bompard and her companion. The infatuated old process-server proceeded to make love to Gabrielle, who fondled him in return. And as she fondled him she gradually drew him nearer to the curtains. They, of course, had their backs to the latter. Unseen by Gouffé, Bompard got hold of the noose, which was thrust through the curtains, and as the old man appealed to her for a kiss she slipped the noose over his head, and assisted her confederate to

hoist him aloft. They both then stood and watched the old man's dying struggles.

When the old man was dead they packed the body in a trunk, which they left at a railway station. They then escaped to America. The motive of the crime was robbery. The body having been discovered and clues obtained, the police went in pursuit, eventually taking both in America. They were tried in Paris, the defence set up by the woman being that she was acting under the hypnotic influence of Eyraud. However, under all the circumstances, it was scarcely likely that such a defence should succeed, albeit Bompard made a pretence of being afraid to look at the male prisoner during the course of the trial. Both were convicted, the man being sentenced to death and the woman to penal servitude for life—a distinction which was hardly justified by the facts. Possibly the hypnotic theory had something to do with it. Eyraud was duly executed, although this time he was not called upon to erect the gallows. Bompard, having served a number of years in penal servitude, was eventually released from the Clermont prison. She afterwards wrote her "Confessions," which doubtless formed interesting reading, although they may not necessarily have been truthful.

CHAPTER IX

MURDERS OF VIOLENCE—*continued*

FOR our next case we shall go to Italy and make the acquaintance of two more or less distinguished female criminals, named respectively the Countess Bonmartini and Rosina Bonetti. But first let us briefly review the details of the tragedy with which they were associated, one as the instigator of it and the other as one of the actual perpetrators.

On September 2nd, 1902, then, the neighbours of a house on the Via Mazzini, Bologna, complained to the local police of an unpleasant odour which emanated from an apartment occupied by a Count Bonmartini. They said that it "poisoned the staircase of the house." Accordingly the police effected an entrance to the apartment in question, and were somewhat disturbed at what they beheld. Upon entering the bedroom they observed the body of a man upon the floor, which was in an advanced stage of decomposition. Upon an examination of it being made it was seen that a very desperate and blood-thirsty murder had been committed, for the body bore a large number of ugly wounds, one of which had severed the carotid artery, and another had pierced

the heart. The other wounds were distributed over the breast, arms, face, and the back of the neck, in which there were no fewer than fifteen deep stabs. It was clear that the wounds had been caused by a long, thin instrument, evidently a dagger. The body was identified as that of Count Bonmartini.

That there had been a desperate struggle was made apparent by the condition in which the room was. The furniture, for instance, was overturned, empty jewel cases lay about, and the victim's pocket-book, minus its contents, was lying open on a chair. The Count's watch-chain had also been forcibly torn from his waistcoat. It would appear, therefore, that robbery had been the motive for the crime. An empty champagne bottle and two glasses made it clear that the dead man had unsuspectingly entertained in friendly intercourse his murderer before being dispatched. A peculiar discovery was that of some elegant female underclothing, which lay upon the bed. I say peculiar, because it was carefully laid upon the bed. The fact that it was in no way disturbed, in spite of the otherwise abundant evidence of a fierce struggle having taken place, was also singular. It was likewise vital to the elucidation of the mystery, because the underwear was obviously placed where it was found *after* the commission of the crime. It was therefore deposited there in order to create an erroneous impression as to the identity of the murderer or murderers. The cunning of this device may be appreciated when it is known that the late Count Bonmartini was in the habit of associating

somewhat intimately with certain ladies of ease and elegance whose moral characters were not of such pristine excellence as their wardrobes.

But cunning as the device was it was easily seen through. If you associate this underlinen with the empty pocket-book, the empty jewel-case, and the missing watch-chain, the only inference to be drawn therefrom is that the murder was committed for the purpose of robbery by a lady of the class described, who had been received in his room by the Count; by her and a possible confederate. But this does not fit in with the nature and number of the wounds. If merely robbery had been the object of the murder, why was the body so mutilated? The fact that there were so many and such serious wounds points clearly to the fact that revenge and not robbery had been the motive of the crime. That being so, the underlinen, the empty pocket-book, the empty jewel-case, and the missing watch-chain are all connected one with the other as details of a ruse which was adopted to divert suspicion. Who, then, was the murderer, or were the murderers?

Upon the wall of the room was the bloody imprint of a woman's hand. I do not know whether the police of Italy had then adopted the finger-print system, but if so this blood-mark should have been an invaluable clue to them. Did it come there by accident, or was it impressed there designedly to further strengthen the impression it was sought to create that the murder had been committed by a certain class of female? In the light of subsequent

discoveries I am inclined to favour the latter theory. There were also found two towels soaked in blood. The police, curiously enough, adopted the theory that the murder had indeed been committed by a woman of the kind referred to, and for whom they made elaborate search. They also interrogated well-nigh every woman of doubtful character in Bologna. They, in addition, photographed the imprint of the bloodstained hand, copies of which they sent all over Italy. But all these efforts proved futile, and the murderer or murderers remained at large.

On September 11th—that is to say, nine days after the murder—the truth suddenly came to light in a most dramatic manner. Early on that morning there walked, or staggered, into the office of the magistrate entrusted with the investigation of the case, an elderly man, who was pale, haggard and dishevelled. This was Professor Murri. In a state of agitation he informed the magistrate that the murder of Bonmartini had been committed by his, Professor Murri's, own son, Tullio Murri! At first the police would not believe him, but soon afterwards it became only too painfully evident that he was speaking the truth. It appeared that Tullio Murri, who was a barrister, committed the murder, with the assistance of his mistress, Rosina Bonetti, who was in the service of his sister, the Countess, to revenge what he considered to be the ill-treatment of his wife by the Count. The developments which ensued were remarkable.

It appeared that Count Bonmartini and his wife



(Photo: Tussaud and Sons.)

CATHERINE WEBSTER, EXECUTED FOR THE MURDER OF HER
MISTRESS AT RICHMOND.



were an ill-matched couple. She was a woman of intelligence, keen-witted, and with an adroit mind; in addition to which, as events proved, she was also both unscrupulous and lascivious. She was the daughter of the well-known Professor Murri. The Count was, on the contrary, although a man of ancient and distinguished lineage and of great wealth, not blessed with a superabundance of mental pabulum. He shone in no intellectual sense. He possessed very limited capacity for acquiring and retaining knowledge. The Murris in consequence, and intellectually, regarded and treated him with contempt; the Count reciprocated this sentiment in a social sense. The Murris were avowed Radicals, the Count was an old-fashioned Tory. Thus in time a strong mutual aversion arose between them, which culminated in the tragedy under notice.

While still a girl the Countess Bonmartini, then Linda Murri, had for a companion a pupil of her father's named Secchi, a young fellow who subsequently developed a most odious character. Young as she then was she conceived something of a passion for Secchi, which, her parents becoming aware of, led to Secchi being dismissed from the place and forbidden the house. Later the girl met Count Bonmartini, who fell in love with her, the two subsequently being married. In course of time two children were born to them, and the Countess would appear to have been all that a wife and mother should be. But she failed to stand the test of time, and eventually there appeared the rift within the lute.

There were frequent quarrels, and the two became estranged.

Among the Countess's acquaintances was a notorious Marchioness, whose relations with the opposite sex had been, and still were, vicarious and fervid. Among her "friends" was Secchi, who had by this time become a full-blown doctor—Dr Carlo Secchi. Incidentally, he had also become a most obnoxious and detestable adulterer, morally among the most degraded of mankind. The Countess knew of these circumstances, yet she went to the house of the Marchioness. Not to labour this part of the narrative, suffice it to say that the Countess Linda became the ready mistress of the odious Secchi. When a woman falls she falls precipitately, usually never to rise again. This was the Countess Linda's fall, the first step in the wreckage of, not only her own life, but that of many others.

The next step was that of murder. The Count had evidently become objectionable to her, as she had apparently become to him. He was also somewhat of an obstacle to the carrying on of her liaison with her "early love." So she decided in her own mind that he must be "removed." She set about it in a very cunning way. She evidently lacked the courage to do the business herself, so she inspired others to accomplish it. She very artfully exclaimed, in the presence of her brother Tullio, whom she knew entertained very lively feelings of animosity towards her husband, "My God! Would that someone would rid me of the soft-brained bigot!"

Her brother thereupon consented to render her that service.

Tullio took counsel with Secchi, and it was at first decided to carry out the murder by means of poison. Certain objections to this having arisen, however, they next endeavoured to induce another doctor, a Dr Naldi, to commit the murder with a dagger, Naldi's reward being "anything he could find in the place." But Naldi would appear to have been unable to overcome his scruples or his fears, and probably had no hand in the murder. True, he was arrested, but he was afterwards released and appeared at the subsequent trial as a witness. Tullio would then appear to have decided to commit the murder himself, with the assistance of his mistress, Rosina Bonetti. The value of the latter as a confederate may be gauged by the fact that the Count had already cast acquisitive eyes on her.

A few days before the murder the Count decided to send his wife to Switzerland. He was to accompany her there, afterwards returning to Bologna. She contrived, however, to spend a day or two at Venice, the object of which was made clear when it was known that she there had a private consultation with Tullio and Rosina Bonetti. It was known when the Count would return to Bologna, and the day before Tullio and Bonetti obtained access to his flat, and there awaited him. I think it is fairly easy to reconstruct the actual murder. Tullio, armed with the dagger, lay in hiding. Bonetti made her presence known to the Count, with whom she

engaged in suggestive dalliance. While she thus held him unconscious of his peril, Tullio crept from his hiding-place and fell upon the Count unawares. Physically the latter was more than a match for Tullio, so the murderer must have come up behind the Count and attacked him, a circumstance which is confirmed by the many wounds which were found at the back of the neck. Thus the Count was taken at a disadvantage. Yet in spite of this he clearly made good fight for his life, struggling until he fell from loss of blood. It is also quite possible that Bonetti was likewise armed with a dagger, and that she attacked him simultaneously in the front, which would account for the wounds on the breast.

All the lot were arrested, the Countess, Bonetti, Tullio and Secchi, Tullio being taken in Switzerland, whither he had fled. After two years' preparation, the trial took place at Turin. All were convicted and sentenced to various terms of penal servitude.

What raises the story from what one might call muddy melodrama to the heights of tragedy is the confession of Professor Murri, which savours of the stoic heroism of a Roman father sacrificing his own son. In a voice quivering with emotion he said, "Seek no further for the assassin of Count Bonmartini, for I have come to tell you his name. It is my son Tullio." But how did he come to know who did it? Did Tullio confess to him, or did he arrive at that conclusion himself through the medium of surrounding circumstances?

In the next case it is again our pleasing task to admit full mitigating circumstances. We have not this time to deal with a repugnant and portentous criminal, but one who, though grievously sinning, was gravely sinned against. I refer to the case of Emma, or "Kitty," Byron, who was convicted at the Old Bailey of the murder of Arthur Reginald Baker by stabbing him with a clasp-knife.

It appeared that Miss Byron had been living with Baker, who was a kind of hanger-on at the Stock Exchange. He was a man of very indifferent character. He was married, and his wife had already served him with a citation of divorce, Miss Byron being named as co-respondent. Baker had behaved very cruelly towards Miss Byron, who, however, in spite of this and woman-like, entertained invincible affection for him. They had had frequent and bitter quarrels, so frequent and so bitter, in fact, that their landlady had been forced to give them notice to quit. Their strained relations culminated in Baker deserting Miss Byron, and on Monday, November 10th, the former left their lodgings with the expressed intention of not returning again. He went straight to the Stock Exchange and Miss Byron followed soon after. She had no intention of allowing him to depart in this manner. On her way she entered a cutler's shop and purchased a formidable clasp-knife. She subsequently entered the post-office in Lombard Court, where she scribbled a note to Baker, requesting him to come to her as she wished to speak to him "particularly." This she sent to the Exchange by

messenger. There can be no question as to her intention, for she held the clasp-knife open in her muff. She had also fortified herself with brandy. In response to the note Baker came to her, and the two stood for a few minutes talking in Lombard Court. They were seen there by several persons. What transpired at that interview nobody but their two selves knew. One was dead and could not speak, nor could the other speak, for at that time the Act allowing a prisoner to give evidence in his own defence was not passed. Thus it was never known what passed between them. But evidently something the man said provoked the woman to a pitch of fury, for she suddenly fell upon him and stabbed him to the heart. He collapsed to the ground and expired almost immediately. She then stooped down and kissed him.

She was tried at the Old Bailey on December 17th following. The judge was Mr Justice Darling, Mr Charles Mathews (now Sir Charles Mathews, the Public Prosecutor) appeared for the prosecution, and Mr H. F. Dickens, K.C., for the defence. She was eventually convicted and sentenced to death, the jury, practically at the direction of the judge, adding a recommendation of mercy to their verdict. I was present during the hearing. The case was remarkable for the eloquent and impassioned appeal on behalf of the prisoner made by Mr Dickens, which deeply moved everyone who heard it. It was a positive triumph of forensic eloquence. The case was also remarkable for the extreme mental anguish

exhibited by the prisoner. Her face was livid, the pallor being somewhat accentuated by contrast with her raven-black hair. Her mouth was agape and her whole body was trembling from head to foot. It was as though she was writhing under some painful physical operation. And it endured throughout the whole hearing. I had never before, nor have I since, witnessed such terrible suffering in the dock. Now and again her counsel cast a commiserating glance towards her, and was obviously much moved.

The death sentence was afterwards commuted to one of penal servitude for life. Having served six years at Aylesbury, she was released and became an inmate of Lady Henry Somerset's industrial colony at Reigate, Surrey.

These crimes of passion committed by women are invariably the outcome of vicarious relations with the opposite sex. I am afraid, however, it will not profit us much to moralise thereon. It is, though, worthy of note that the victims are invariably aiders and abettors in the crime, as it were, by the provocation they offer to the assailant.

We shall cross to America for our next case. The people of the United States are noted for "tall talk" and "big things" generally, and it must be admitted that few countries have produced such a colossal criminal as Mrs Belle Gunness, known as the "American Delilah." True, she was a Norwegian, but she had been resident in the States most of her life and was an American subject.

Mrs Gunness simply made murder her trade, and

despatched her victims with the readiness and regularity of a machine. She is described as a big, coarse woman, of repulsive appearance, although this may have been somewhat of an exaggeration, for she must have possessed some sort of attractions for men. She had been married twice and had three children, one of the latter apparently being an adopted child. Both her husbands she had murdered for their insurance money. One she poisoned and the other she killed by causing a heavy weight to fall upon his head. She then took up her residence at a farm at La Porte, Indiana, which subsequently came to be known as "Murder Farm." Her method was to advertise for a husband in a matrimonial paper, stipulating that he must be possessed of certain means. She then induced the applicants to come to the farm, bringing money with them, when she promptly murdered them and buried their bodies in the grounds.

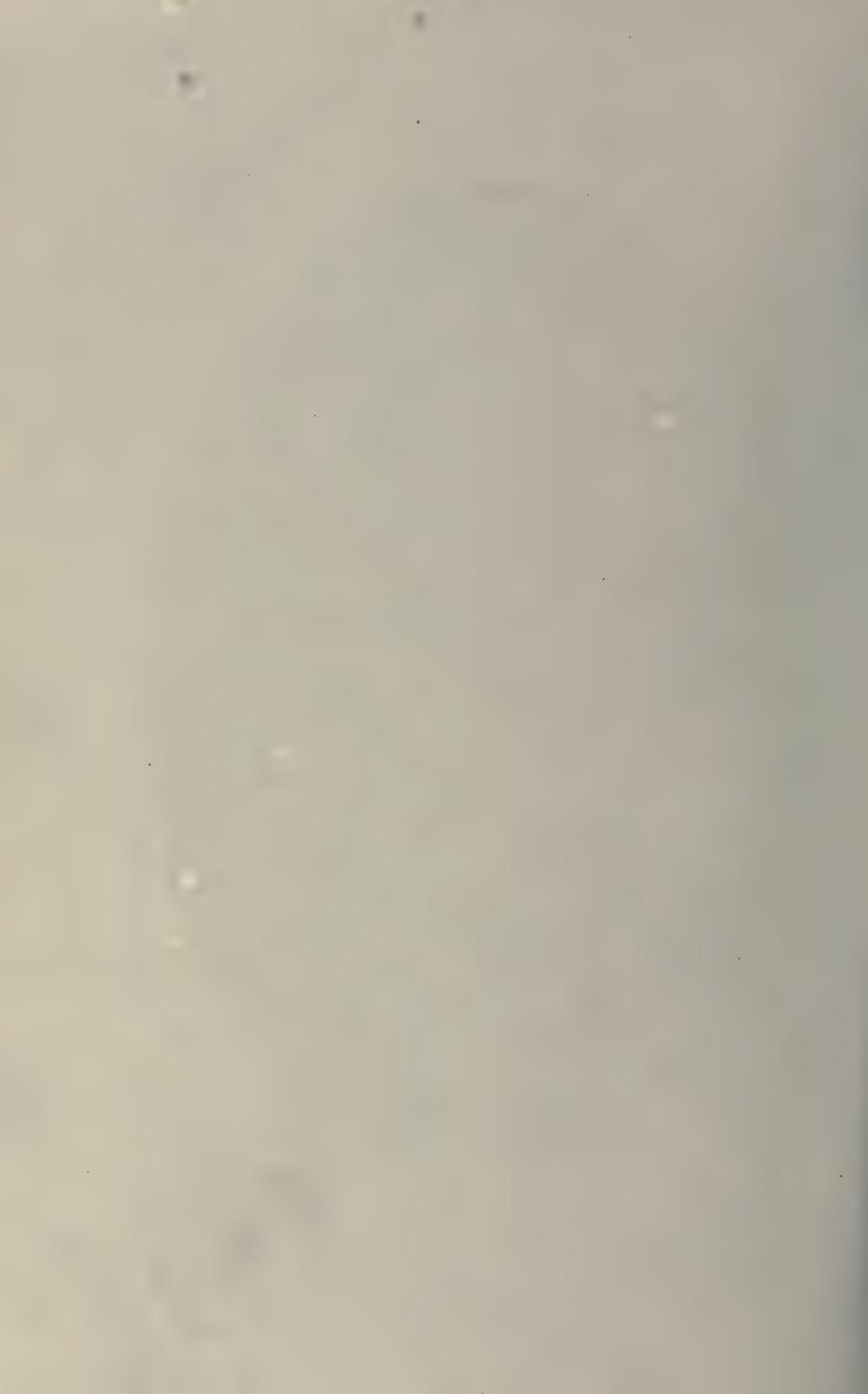
Her letters were perfect masterpieces of hypocrisy and dissimulation. I extract the following from one of them:

"There are seventy-five acres of land and also all kinds of crops, apples, plums and currants. All this is pretty near paid for. I am alone with three small children. The smallest is a little boy of 2, the largest are girls, all frisky and well. I lost my husband by an accident five years ago, and since then I have tried to get along as well as I could with what help I could hire. I am getting tired of this, and found it not well to trust others with so much.



(Photo: Tussaud and Sons.)

MADAME DUMOLLARD, ASSOCIATED WITH HER HUSBAND IN THE
COMMISSION OF INNUMERABLE MURDERS OF SERVANT GIRLS
OUTSIDE PARIS.



It is too much for me to look after things, and things are not as I want them. Anyway, my idea is to take a partner to whom I can trust everything. As we have no acquaintances ourselves, I have decided that every applicant I have considered favourably must make a satisfactory deposit of cash or security. I think that is the best way to keep away grafters, who are always looking for opportunities. Now, if you think you are able in some way to put up 1000 dollars in cash we can talk matters over personally. If you cannot, it is worth while to consider. I would not care for you as a hired man, as I am tired of that, and need a little rest in my home and near my children. With friendly regards,

“ MRS P. S. GUNNESS.”

At the beginning of May, 1908, the farm at La Porte was burned down, the supposed bodies of Mrs Gunness and her three children being found in the ruins. Shortly after a man named Ray Lamphere, who had been employed at the farm as a labourer, and who was supposed to have a guilty knowledge of the murders committed there, was arrested and charged with having set fire to the farm. The news of the fire reaching the ears of a Mr Asle Heldgren, he reported to the authorities that his brother, Andrew Heldgren, had gone to the farm and never been seen again. Asle had written to Mrs Gunness on the subject of his brother's disappearance, and in reply received the following letter:

“ DEAR, GOOD BROTHER OF THE BEST FRIEND I HAVE IN THE WORLD,—It is with tears flooding my

eyes and a heart overburdened with grief that I write you about your dear brother, my sweet-heart. He has gone from here. I know not where. As I think of him my heart bleeds. May God bless him, wherever he may be. I loved him tenderly. From the first time I saw him I knew that he was the man I loved. He came here and was in my home for oh! such a short time. All was pleasant between us, and the last words I had with him were those of love. I could scarcely restrain myself from throwing my arms about his neck every time I saw him. He was the best man in the world. Where he has gone I don't know. As I lay awake at nights thinking of him I wonder where he is and if he is safe. I would do anything in the world to find him. He left my house seemingly happy, and since that time in January I have not seen him. I will go to the end of the world to find him. I love him and will help you. Sell off everything he owns, get together as much of your own money as you can, and come here. During the first part of May we will then go and seek him. Bring the money, all in cash. It will be easier to handle it this way. Oh, my dear, good brother-in-law, what a happy reunion we will have when we find my own Andrew! I will fly to his arms and never, oh, no, never be separated from him again. Do not neglect to bring the money in cash. I will be ready to go when you arrive.—Yours, in great sorrow,

“MRS BELLE GUNNESS.”

When the horrible creature wrote the above she had already murdered the man and buried his body in her grounds! It will be seen that she was then

endeavouring to induce his brother to come to the farm to meet with a similar fate. The woman was like some ravening, mediæval monster. Fortunately, before Asle Heldgren could make up his mind whether or no to accept the invitation came the news of the fire. As a result of the communication made to them by Heldgren, the police proceeded to dig the grounds of the farm, when in a very short time they disinterred many bodies, some of which were identified as those of men who had been "missing." In most cases the heads had been fractured and the bodies buried in lime. The body of Andrew Heldgren was among the first few found. The letter written by the atrocious female which lured him to his death was as follows:

"TO THE DEAREST FRIEND IN THE WORLD,—No woman in this world is happier than I am. I know you are now to come to me and be my own. I can tell from your letters that you are the man I want. It does not take me long to tell when I like a person, and you I like better than anybody in the world. The King will be no happier than you when you get here. As for the Queen, her joy will be small compared with mine. I think how we will enjoy each other's company. You are the dearest man in the whole world. We will be all alone with each other. Can you conceive anything nicer? You will love my farm, sweetheart. In all La Porte county there are none that will compare with it. (This was true, fortunately for the county of La Porte.) It is on a nice green slope, near two lakes. The breeze is fine, and it is very beautiful here. All my neighbours

are kind and lovable. You will love them I know, sweetheart. Andrew, I think of you constantly. When I hear your name mentioned, and this is generally when one of the dear children speaks of you or I hear myself humming it to the words of an old love-song, it is beautiful music to my ears. My heart beats in wild rapture for you, my Andrew. I love you. Come prepared to stay here for ever. When you find what a nice farming country this is you will not leave for the world. It will suit you and me. With many kisses,

“MRS BELLE GUNNESS.”

In a letter to another man appeared the following significant passage: “When people come to visit me they never want to go away again. Next July will be a fine time for you to come to La Porte, and you will never want to go away again.”

In the following November Lamphere was convicted and sentenced to an indeterminate period of imprisonment, ranging from one to twenty-one years'. He probably fired the farm by way of revenge, after having had some dispute with Gunness.

It is doubtful if any age or nation ever produced a more callous, portentous, more prodigious criminal than Mrs Belle Gunness. The very magnitude of her crimes prompts one to question her sanity. If she were not insane, however, then she was a vile outrage on femininity—a monstrous distortion of human nature.

As a pronounced type of human vampire the Countess Tarnovski occupies a permanent place in

criminal annals. As usually happens with such women, she was possessed of certain personal attractions and a subtle influence over men which seemed to render them helpless in her hands. The crime which brought her career to the fore was committed in September, 1907, and consisted of the murder of a Russian Count named Kamarovsky at Venice by a young fellow named Naumoff. Countess Maria Nikolyeffna Tarnovski was a woman of twenty-eight, descended from an Irish family, and a native of Kieff. She had been divorced from her husband, who had killed in a duel the man whom the Countess had committed herself with. The Countess then took up with the Count Kamarovsky referred to above, who was a colonel in the Russian army and a man of considerable wealth.

In addition to Kamarovsky the Countess had other lovers. One was a Moscow solicitor named Prilukoff, who had defrauded some of his clients on her behalf, and another the young fellow Naumoff, already mentioned, who came of a good family, and who was madly in love with the Countess. The latter had promised to marry him and contrived to make him jealous of Kamarovsky, whom she represented as an obstacle to their union. She did this for an ulterior purpose. She had induced the Count to insure his life for £20,000 and hand the policy over to her. She then plotted his assassination so that she might recover the money in addition to getting possession of his fortune, he having made a will in her favour.

She had also promised to marry Prilukoff, and endeavoured to get him to murder the Count, but the Moscow solicitor would seem to have funk'd the task, much as he was infatuated with the woman. She succeeded with Naumoff, however, who, arming himself with a loaded revolver, made his way to the Count's house and shot the latter while he was in bed. In order to make it appear that she had had no hand in the crime, the Countess communicated with the police, warning them that Naumoff, who, she said, had a grudge against the Count, had expressed his intention of committing the murder, and informing them the time he intended to be at the Count's house. The result was that two police officers stationed themselves outside the house for the purpose of taking the murderer. They did, in fact, arrest a man they saw coming from the house, but he turned out to be the wrong man, Naumoff having effected his escape by another means. It was proved that Prilukoff was a confederate with the Countess in arranging the murder of the Count. All three were taken, the men both making confessions. All three were convicted and duly punished.

The Countess Tarnovski's case furnishes an illustration of to what lengths an evil-disposed woman may carry the influence of her sex. Every man who came under her influence became as clay in the hands of the potter. They were prepared to render any service she might demand of them. One cannot resist the conclusion that such women derive their power over men from a hypnotic source.

In June, 1907, occurred the shooting of Edward Guerin, the man who escaped from Devil's Island, by a criminal named Charles Smith, a crime which it was proved had been instigated by that very dangerous woman, May Vivienne Churchill, otherwise known as "Chicago May." Although no murder took place in this instance, Guerin being fortunately only wounded in the foot, murder was unquestionably intended. Also the woman, May, it was made clear, had in the past caused deaths to men in the course of her criminal career. Thus I deal with the case in this place.

It appeared that the woman Churchill had formerly been closely associated with Guerin, who, however, had since "washed his hands" of her. By way of revenge she had reported him as a convict escaped from the French penal settlement, as a result of which Guerin was arrested and held for extradition. He was confined at Brixton Prison for over a year, where he met the man Smith. Smith was afterwards released and got in touch with Churchill, whom he would appear to have informed that Guerin, should he regain his liberty, meditated reprisals towards her in return for her treachery in betraying him. Guerin was soon afterwards released, he having won the case against his extradition in the High Court. This fact must have decided Churchill, always a resolute and unscrupulous woman, to take the bull by the horns and attack Guerin first. So she enlisted the services of Smith to do the shooting. Accordingly, on the night of June 16th, Churchill and Smith went in

search of Guerin. Smith was armed with a loaded revolver, and Churchill carried a formidable knife. While they were driving along in a hansom cab they saw Guerin near the Tube station, Bernard Street, Bloomsbury. They pulled the cab up, jumped out, and Smith fired five shots at Guerin, one only, as we have seen, taking effect. Both were taken.

They were tried at the Old Bailey on July 25th before Mr Justice Darling. Guerin, in the witness box, declared that he had had no intention of molesting Churchill, nor did he say anything of the kind to Smith. He further said that it was in consequence of the treachery of Churchill that he had in the first instance been sent to Devil's Island. Both being convicted, Smith was sentenced to penal servitude for life, and Churchill to fifteen years' penal servitude. Upon hearing his sentence, Smith burst forth into a volley of violent oaths and curses, directed towards the judge. Churchill, however, received her sentence apparently unmoved. It were well if neither ever came out of prison again.

The woman Churchill was a thorough-paced criminal of a very dangerous type. Again we find the female criminal with an attractive exterior and with considerable influence over men. Churchill used her influence in a most dastardly manner. She had been in the habit of getting men into compromising positions and then blackmailing them. As a consequence many of her victims were known to

have committed suicide. She was one of the most notorious women in London and Paris. She was even dangerous to her own criminal class, for she was treacherous to a degree. She was born in Ireland—Ireland, by the way, has given us many notorious female criminals—but married an American and became an American subject. When you have a combination of Ireland and America in a female criminal, you may be sure that you have something fiendish to deal with. Churchill, or “Chicago May,” had been many times convicted and sentenced to prison before she appeared in company with Smith at the Old Bailey. No doubt her latest sentence will effectually spoil her personal appearance and thus deprive her of her most dangerous weapon as a criminal.

In Paris they have a class of female criminals who, young and possessed of good looks, place themselves at the head of a gang of “Apaches,” the members of which they direct and assist in carrying out murderous assaults for the purpose of robbery. One of these Amazons bore the fanciful title of “Casque d’Or,” which was conferred upon her in recognition of the beauty and luxuriance of her reddish, golden hair. Another, named Chiffonette, also bore the title of “La Reine de La Courtille.” She was the terror of that place. She was a tall, strong young woman of twenty-three, extremely cunning and of ferocious courage. In 1908 a very pretty young girl of eighteen named Palmyre Quignon, nicknamed Pépé, became head of the Belleville Apaches. She suc-

ceeded Chiffonette, who had gone for a lengthy stay at the St Lazare prison, where she had been sent for killing another female Apache known as Andrea, but whose real name was Louise Bonami. It appeared that Chiffonette's "man," an Apache named or known as Dédé, had been betrayed to the police by somebody and sent away. Chiffonette suspected Andrea of being the one who informed the police. One morning about three o'clock Chiffonette, in company with a number of other girls of her own class, was strolling down the Faubourg du Temple, when she caught sight of Andrea coming towards her. Instantly she rushed upon her and a fight ensued. Fighting desperately the two girls rolled over in the road. Presently there came a shriek, and then a pause. Chiffonette rose to her feet, but Andrea never moved. She had been stabbed to the heart with a stiletto. Chiffonette went into hiding, but the police found her, and subsequently, as already stated, she was sent to St Lazare.

The girl Quignon, or Pépé, was taken a fancy to by what she herself would term an "aristo," or aristocrat, who wanted to marry her. She appeared to have lived with him for a couple of months, during which she spent a large sum of money, then grew tired of her "aristo" and returned to her old haunts.

It was thought that the abolition of capital punishment led to an increase of murderous violence on the part of the Apaches, in consequence of which it was revived. But there was no proof

that capital punishment decreased such crime to any extent.

We frequently find crime among women intimately associated with vicarious sexual relationship, sometimes even the immediate outcome of it. This is not often the case with male criminals, except in cases of motiveless crime, or where the crime has a very feeble motive, such as those I have already dealt with in a former chapter. Adultery had a good deal to do with the crime of Madame Giriat, who contrived the murder of her mistress, Mlle. Eugénie Fougère. The latter lady was rather dubiously described as a "professional beauty." She had been an actress, was possessed of a good deal of valuable jewellery, and was living in style at Aix-les-Bains. She had a maid and a companion, the latter being the Madame Giriat already mentioned. One day in September, on the 21st, 1902, Mlle. Fougère and her maid were found strangled in the house at Aix-les-Bains. The companion, Madame Giriat, was bound and gagged, but was otherwise uninjured. Mlle. Fougère's jewellery was missing. It was clear somebody had effected an entry into the house and committed the crime, but who that somebody was remained a mystery for some months.

Suspicion, however, was at length directed towards the companion, Madame Giriat, who was "shadowed" by the police. She was afterwards summoned to appear before the Chief of Police at Paris, when she was subjected to a severe interrogatory. Having fenced with her examiners for about

three hours, she broke down and made a confession. She said that the crime had been committed by her lover, a man named Bassot, who had, she further stated, planned and carried it out himself for the purpose of obtaining possession of her mistress's jewellery. But subsequent events proved that this was not altogether true. Madame Gariat, finding herself in a desperate position, doubtless made this confession in an attempt to save herself, not hesitating, as such women rarely do, in sacrificing others for that purpose. It transpired that in addition to Henri Bassot, a man named César Ladermann was also concerned in the crime. In fact, it was Ladermann who was supposed to have actually committed the murders. He was known as "The Costeau," which had reference to his exceptional strength and swaggering and aggressive manner. He was the son of a tailor, and was living at Lyons. Bassot having been arrested, the police went to Lyons for the purpose of also arresting Ladermann, but the latter evaded them by blowing his brains out.

Bassot, the paramour of Madame Gariat, was an ex-convict who had been convicted of coining. He had also been a kind of music-hall comedian, in which capacity he had travelled about a good deal. He was an unscrupulous adventurer and a most audacious rogue. The crime was doubtless planned by him and Madame Gariat, Ladermann being hired to carry out the murders. On the night of September 20 Madame Gariat left the scullery window open,

through which Ladermann got into the house. Gariat stated that, having done this, she retired to her bedroom and fell asleep. Fell asleep, knowing that murder was soon to be committed in that house! She further stated that she was awakened later by Ladermann, who told her that he had already "settled" the mistress and the maid, and that she, Gariat, must now submit to be gagged and bound, so as to avert suspicion. He then proceeded to bind and gag her.

This statement of Madame Gariat's does not ring true. It is highly probable that she actually assisted in the murders themselves. She was altogether a most callous and abandoned woman, and when she was taken to the house at Aix-les-Bains for the purpose of "reconstructing" the crime, in accordance with French criminal law, she indulged in the most disgusting levity. While in the bedroom where Mlle. Fougère was murdered she jumped upon the bed and kicked the pillows about, at the same time exclaiming, "Only to think that poor Eugénie was strangled on these pillows!" While the grim ceremony was in progress, Madame Gariat displayed such an intimate knowledge of all that happened in the room on the night of the murder as to make it plain the part she played in the deed itself. There are not many male criminals who could have behaved as Madame Gariat did during an ordeal which has shaken the stoicism of the most callous of men. Even the redoubtable Ladermann destroyed himself at the approach of the police

officers as we have seen. But Gariat, a member of the "weaker sex," retains her imperturbability and invincible callousness to the end. Such indifference is characteristic of most female criminals, which they display in the dock under circumstances which have caused men to completely collapse.

This self-possession and calmness of demeanour is often misinterpreted by those who have not sufficient knowledge of the criminal. By such persons it is taken as indicating the presence of the sedative knowledge of innocence, which enables the person in the dock to regard the proceedings with becoming composure. It takes but a slight knowledge of human nature to show how fallacious such a deduction is. The ordeal of the dock is a very severe one, and requires considerable nerve to undergo with any degree of tranquillity. A man who has had the nerve to commit a grave crime would also have the nerve to stand his trial with fortitude. But an innocent man placed in such a position would be so shaken at the peril of it that he would find it impossible to be calm and collected. Most criminals have strong nerves and are used to facing danger, and they therefore do not look on the ordeal of the dock with any degree of fear or misgiving. And, as I have already pointed out, the female criminal is even more indifferent and callous under such circumstances than the male criminal. Madame Gariat's callousness stamped her as a well-equipped criminal and as being an active participant in the murder of Mlle. Fougère.

Both she and her paramour were, in fact, convicted and duly punished.

Hysteria in women has often led to the commission of crime. Under its influence they have become morbid-minded and highly imaginative of unpleasant things.

CHAPTER X

THE BABY-FARMERS

ONE of the most amazing things about certain forms of female crime is the complete absence in the criminals of the maternal instinct. This, which is so powerful among animals, seems to find no place in the breasts of such women, in spite of the fact that many have offspring of their own. It is altogether a baffling mystery. It applies particularly to the class of criminals known as "baby-farmers." Baby-farming also involves the important social question of the illegitimate child. As I write, the Home Secretary has reprieved the woman Mary Ann Nash, who was condemned to death for the murder of her little son. The case was known as the "Wilts Well Mystery." Nash was a domestic servant, and the child she was convicted of murdering was illegitimate. In June, 1907, she went away with the child, which was never seen again alive. On April 23rd, 1908, the body of the little boy was found in a well at Burbage, about two miles from the cottage where Nash had been with her child. An inquest was held and an "open" verdict returned. Early in the present year, 1911, however,

somebody addressed an anonymous letter to the police, suggesting that the body found in the well was that of Nash's missing child, and that she had murdered it. Accordingly the police made inquiries, as a result of which they arrested Nash and charged her with having murdered her child and cast the body in the well at Burbage.

In addition to the fact that no suspicion was entertained towards Nash until the police received information from so untrustworthy a source as an anonymous communication, there were several very grave doubts in the case. For instance, it was never proved how the child whose body was found in the well came by his death, whether, indeed, he was murdered at all. There was also considerable discrepancy between the respective ages of Nash's missing child and that of the child whose body was found in the well. The strongest circumstances against Nash were the facts that when questioned she had told a lie as to what she did with her child when she went away with it, and that the child has never since been seen. What has become of it? It seems incredible that if it were still alive and in the keeping of somebody it would not have been produced to save the mother from the gallows. With the widespread publicity the case has been given, whoever had the child must have become aware of the perilous position in which Nash stood. The latter's explanation was that while out with her child she fell asleep by the roadside, and that when she awoke again her child was gone, the inference being that somebody had kid-

napped it. This, of course, might have been so, and the child might afterwards have died a natural death, or even have been killed by somebody else.

The motive ascribed to the prisoner by the prosecution was that she had killed the child to free herself of the expense of its keep. She had already entrusted it to several baby-farmers, whom, of course, she had to pay for its maintenance. It was to get rid of this expense and what was in itself an obstacle and an incumbrance to her, the prosecution asserted, that she committed the murder. If there were no illegitimate children there would be no baby-farmers, and in considering one we must also consider the other. The fate of most of the former is indeed pitiable in the extreme. Disowned by their natural parents, cast among strangers, buffeted from pillar to post, always in the way and not wanted, neglected in every conceivable manner, oftentimes brutally murdered by their inhuman guardians, they cry aloud for the interference of the State. Are they to continue to plead in vain? Is it not time that the law interceded on their behalf? It is only now and again that attention is called to the hapless fate of the child who is "not wanted," when a case like the "Wilts Well Mystery" occurs or a baby-farmer is brought to justice. But the torture and slaughter of the innocents is going on all the time. Quite recently a case came under my notice which led me to make inquiries. It appeared that a little girl about five or six had been left on the hands of a certain lady by its mother, who had not provided for it in any way

whatever. She had got rid of the child by means of a trick or ruse. She was supposed to be coming back for it, but she never returned, nor made any sort of inquiry about it afterwards. The only clothes the child had were those she stood up in, and they were both poor and unclean. It appeared the child had had many "homes" during its brief life, being left in custody of various baby-farmers. As the mother invariably after a time failed to keep up the very meagre payments promised, the child was turned away by one foster mother after another. The one who had charge of her prior to her being planted on the lady in question detained all her clothes except those she was wearing as a set-off, or a partial set-off, to the money owing for her keep.

This poor mite, begotten in adultery and vicariously reared on "short commons," was afflicted in various ways. She had an impediment in her speech, and her sight was so bad that she had to wear strong glasses; she had previously had an operation performed, which was necessary in order to prevent her going blind. She was miserably thin, and had an aspect as of one careworn, which in a child so young was poignantly pathetic. As I have said, her devoted mother never even made an indirect inquiry concerning her, which is not surprising when one learns that she upon one occasion said to the lady with whom she left the child that she wished the "little beast would die." All efforts to trace the whereabouts of the mother proved fruitless, so the lady who had her in charge, not being in a position

to support the child without assistance, was compelled to pass her on to the parochial authorities. So once more the poor child was "moved on," given into the custody of officials who dealt with her in a business-like way, which took the form of unkindness to one of such tender years and so haplessly helpless. She was thrust through a doorway and told to go "in there." In there were many other small children in like pitiful case, the place being a kind of "receiving house" for human sheep who are lost indeed. Alas, for the innocents!

It appeared that the mother of the above child had had three or four such offspring by the same father, all of whom had been hustled away in the same manner. They were all the results of illicit intercourse. She had destroyed others in embryo. Being asked what became of a certain child of hers, she replied, "Oh, I got rid of that"—how, was left to the imagination. Once or twice she induced a miscarriage, and so in that manner "got rid of it." The father was himself a married man with legitimate offspring. The mother was a single woman. The only defence the woman can have, if indeed defence be admissible, is the fact that her paramour barely provided for her and her children. She had, of course, laid herself open to a charge of child desertion, and it would be the business of the parochial authorities to find and prosecute her. The law, however, does not provide for the punishment of the man, who certainly should be made to share any penalty visited upon the woman.

But the whole subject of illicit intercourse and the disposal of illegitimate offspring—"love children," as they are derisively called—ought to be taken in hand seriously by the authorities and some much-needed legislation introduced to deal with what is a greivous state of things. Among other steps some means should be devised of penalising the fathers. The man who gets a woman into such trouble and then deserts her is among the most despicable of mankind, and ought to be punished as a criminal. His act does, in fact, frequently lead to crime. He should, therefore, be brought within the scope of the Statute Book.

There recently appeared in a daily newspaper an article written by an able author and inspired by the Wilts case. The writer, however, fell into the error of confusing two distinct subjects. While denouncing the treatment of illegitimate children, he connected it with prostitution. As a matter of fact the children who are "farmed" out are not as a rule the offspring of harlots, but usually of women who are regarded by those about them as perfectly "straight." It is, in fact, frequently to keep up this appearance of virtuous respectability that they get rid of their offspring. Prostitutes do not, as a rule, have children. There are to be sure plenty of married prostitutes who have children, whom they keep at home and treat thoroughly well. And there are some who have illegitimate children, which they also keep at home and treat well, mercifully preserving them in ignorance, of course, of their own discreditable calling. Again, there are those who send their

children away to a school. The clients of the baby-farmer however are invariably single women who are supposed to be virtuous, or married women who have had a child or children by a man other than their husbands.

Let us now consider the circumstances of a few cases of baby-farming. The first we shall deal with is that of the notorious Mrs Dyer.

In April, 1896, some men working on a barge on the Thames fished a brown-paper parcel from the water, which upon opening they found to contain the dead body of an infant. It had been strangled with a bootlace. The parcel had been weighted with a brick, but the men on the barge had disturbed the parcel with their poles, causing it to rise to the surface. When the brown paper itself came to be examined there was found written upon it the name of Mrs Dyer, with an address at Reading. Criminals sometimes do incredibly stupid things, but there has scarcely been anything so stupid as the wrapping of this baby's body in a piece of paper on which was written the name and address of the murderess! One wonders what the woman can have been thinking of at the time. She must somehow or other have failed to see the writing, for it is incredible that she used the paper knowing the writing to be thereon. She may have done the parcel up in a bad light and in haste, and so have overlooked the presence of the writing. However it came about, though, did not matter; fortunately for the ends of justice and the lives of children, the writing was there.

The police promptly went to the address at Reading, where they found Mrs Dyer, who turned out to be a woman who took in "nurse children." Evidently the police were not satisfied with what transpired on their visit, for they made further inquiries. They also kept observation on Mrs Dyer's house. They went further and searched the house, when they found a large quantity of baby-clothing, also a number of pawn tickets for baby-clothing. During the search a piece of paper was found on which was written an address at Mayo Road, Willesden. Upon going there the police found that a daughter of Mrs Dyer lived there with her husband.

On April 10th, while the police were dragging the Thames in the vicinity of where the brown-paper parcel was found, they fished up a carpet bag, which was tied round with a cord. When it came to be opened it was found to contain two dead infants and a brick. (It will be seen that the parcel and the bag were both weighted in a similar manner.) It was clear from these discoveries that the murder of infants on a somewhat extensive scale had been perpetrated by somebody. The police therefore arrested Amelia Elizabeth Dyer as that "somebody," and the husband of her daughter, who lived at Mayo Road, Willesden, as an accessory after the fact.

The chief witness against Mrs Dyer was her married daughter already referred to, who gave very important evidence. In fact, had it not been for her testimony the prosecution would have had some difficulty in completing their case. The evidence

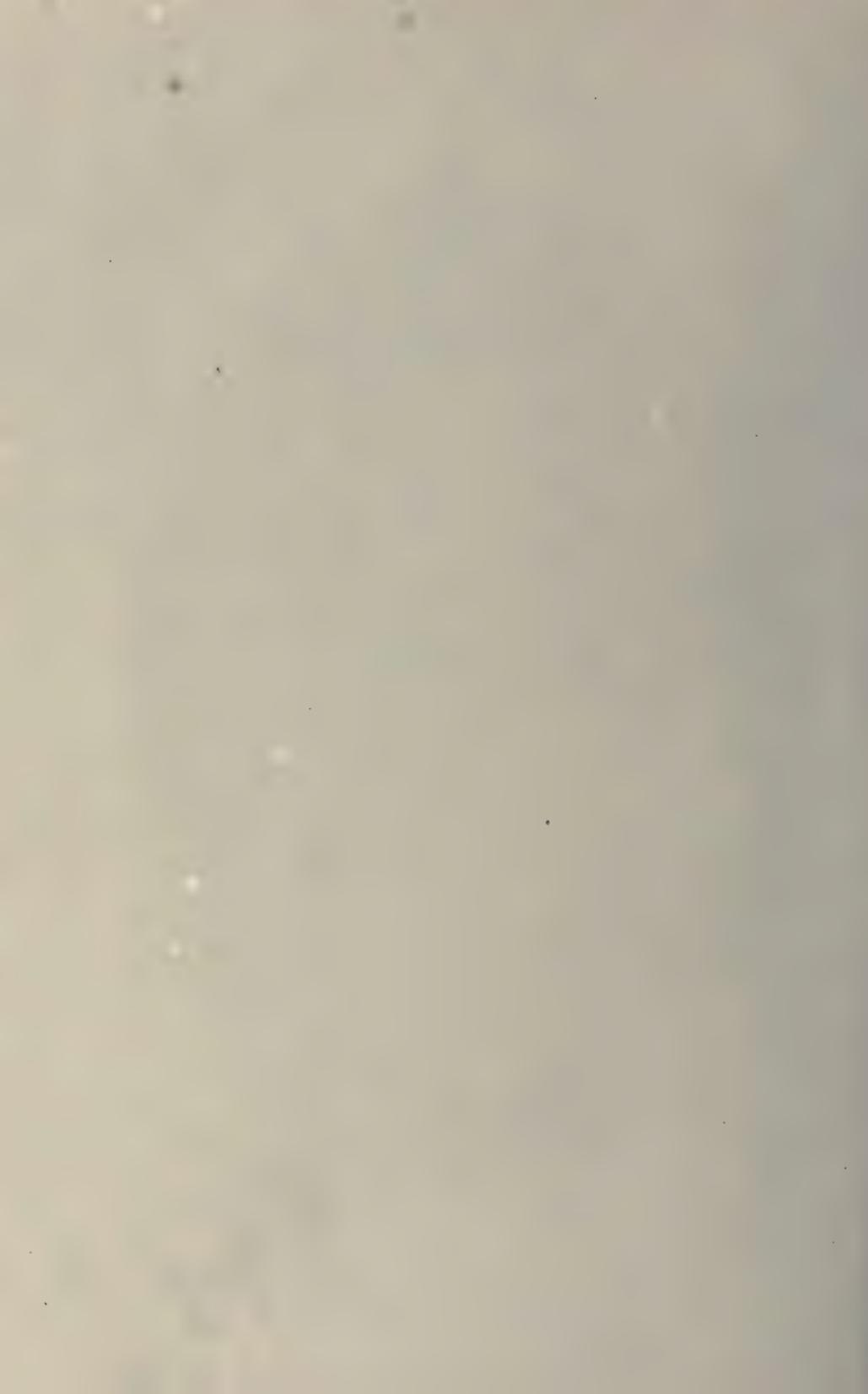
she gave was as follows: On March 31st, 1896, Mrs Dyer received from its mother at Cheltenham a baby named Doris Marmon, aged ten months. It appeared that Mrs Dyer had got into communication with the mother in the name of "Harding." One of her letters to the mother was as follows: "Dear Madam,—In reference to your letter of adopting a child, I beg to say I shall be glad to have a little baby girl, one I can bring up as my own—a child with me would have a good home and a mother's love and care. We belong to the Church of England." In another letter she said: "There is an orchard opposite our front door. You will say it was healthy and pleasant. I think Doris is a very pretty name. I am sure she ought to be a pretty child."

A few hours after receiving Doris she murdered it by strangulation, and deposited the body in a carpet bag. She then wrote to the mother: "My dear little girl is a traveller, and no mistake. She was so good, and did not mind the journey a bit. A long letter next time." The circumstances under which Doris Marmon was done to death were as follows: She took the child with her to her daughter's house at Willesden. Her daughter who opened the door to her, noticing she had a child with her, asked her to come in. But Mrs Dyer replied: "No; I'm holding the baby for someone who is coming on behind." The daughter then went to the back of the house, leaving her mother on the doorstep. The latter was also carrying a carpet bag.



(Photo: Tussaud and Sons.)

MRS. DYER.



When the daughter returned her mother was in the sitting-room putting the carpet bag under the sofa. There was no baby visible now, Mrs Dyer explaining that the person she referred to had come up and taken it away. The child in question was in fact, then, a corpse, and had been deposited in the carpet bag! The clothes of Doris Marmon Mrs Dyer handed to her daughter, who also had a "nurse child," named Harold, which she had received for a lump sum of money.

On the following day, April 1st, Mrs Dyer and her daughter, taking Harold with them, went to Paddington station, where they met a woman who handed over a thirteen-months'-old child, named Harry Simmonds. She also paid Mrs Dyer the sum of £5. Mrs Dyer and her daughter then returned to Mayo Road, carrying the thirteen-months-old addition to their "stock." At six o'clock the daughter went in to her bedroom and put Harold to bed, leaving her mother in the sitting-room with the boy Simmonds. On their way home the child had been somewhat troublesome, crying a good deal. But soon after returning to the house in Mayo Road, and while the daughter was in her bedroom, the little boy suddenly became quiet. When the daughter went into the sitting-room she noticed that the boy was lying quite still upon the couch, covered over with a shawl. Mrs Dyer furnished the explanation that he was asleep and was not to be disturbed. Her daughter's husband was also present.

The next morning the little boy Simmonds was

nowhere to be seen. But there was a parcel under the head of the couch. Having had her breakfast, Mrs Dyer went to the back of the house and picked up a brick, which she deposited under the couch. That same evening Mrs Dyer had arranged to return to Reading, and requested her daughter and son-in-law to accompany her as far as Paddington. Her daughter accordingly went into the bedroom to dress herself, leaving her mother in the sitting-room, where there was a carpet bag, a parcel, and a brick. When the daughter returned to the sitting-room she noticed that the carpet bag was now tightly packed, so full, indeed, was it that it would not close at the top, so a piece of brown paper had been placed inside. The bag was also tied round with a piece of cord. There was now neither parcel nor brick. All three then made their way to Paddington.

The daughter, according to her evidence, inquired about the little boy Simmonds, and was told by her mother that it was "all right." And with that vague explanation she was satisfied. Mrs Dyer departed for Reading and her daughter and husband returned to Mayo Road. The daughter then noticed that her work-box had been opened and a skein of tape taken away. About ten minutes to eleven that night an engineer employed at Reading Prison passed a woman under a railway arch. She was coming from the direction of the river. He recognised her as Mrs Dyer. Subsequently, as already related, the bag was fished out of the river, the two bodies it contained

being those of Doris Marmon and Harry Simmonds. Tied tightly round the throat of each was a piece of tape, which were portions of the skein missing from the work-box at Mayo Road.

It was never known precisely how many children this hideous female murdered, but other bodies were subsequently found in the river by the police. Also in the garden of a house once occupied by Mrs Dyer were found the remains of children. She had been carrying on the horrible business for some considerable time, and obtained possession of the children through the medium of advertisements offering a comfortable home and a "mother's care" to such offspring. In this way she had received various sums of money, ranging from £5 to as much as £50 and £80. At the very outset, and shortly after her arrest, she voluntarily exonerated her daughter and son-in-law from all blame and guilty knowledge. This was, however, before she was aware that her daughter was to appear as a witness. One may say, however, that it seems very singular that the disappearance of little Harry Simmonds, the parcel and the brick at the same time that the bag assumed such a plethoric aspect did not arouse in the minds of the daughter and her husband some grave suspicion.

Mrs Dyer was convicted, sentenced to death and executed. Her son-in-law was acquitted. During the trial Mrs Dyer, who was a heavy, obese woman, sat imperturbably and lugubriously in the dock, taking scarcely an intelligent interest in the proceedings. The defence was based on a plea of insanity,

and it transpired that she had on several occasions been an inmate of a lunatic asylum. But these were only transient attacks, and during the time she was carrying on her gruesome occupation of baby-farming-cum-murder, her sanity was amply demonstrated by her business-like methods. There was nothing whatever in these transactions to indicate the presence in her of the smallest degree of mental instability. She was a curious compound of merciless and callous cruelty and religious fervour. In regard to the latter she was a canting hypocrite. While in the condemned cell she wrote the following verse on a sheet of paper:

By nature, Lord, I know with grief
I am a poor fallen leaf
Shrivelled and dry, near unto death.
Driven by sin, as with a breath.
But if by Grace I am made new,
Washed in the blood of Jesus, too,
Like to a lily I shall stand
Spotless and pure at His right hand.

It was signed "Mother." It seems positively revolting as emanating from a bloodthirsty creature who murdered with amazing assiduity poor, defenceless little children for mere money. It was not until she was laid by the heels and was awaiting a well-merited doom that she entertained the notion that she was likely to become "spotless" as a "lily." One can scarcely place much confidence in the possibility of such a wondrous bleaching process. It was certainly true that she was "near unto death," but it was hardly correct to say that she was as

yet "shrivelled and dry." Although the woman was not absolutely insane, one derives some consolation from the conviction that she was not precisely normal, and that she had a "kink" in her mental structure. While the police were carrying on their investigations into her manifold crimes, and in their own adroit way "finding things out," she gave expression to a child-like wonder at their success, and came to the conclusion that they must be "very clever." It may be that she was merely assuming this mental feebleness to create the impression of insanity, for she was an adept at dissimulation and one of the greatest hypocrites that ever lived. When she fell through the trap at the end of the rope which now hangs in the "Black Museum" at Scotland Yard, the world was well rid of one of the most colossal petticoated atrocities that ever blackened the fair fame of womanhood.

We now pass to the case of the baby-farmers Annie Walters and Amelia Sach, the former aged 54 and described as a nurse, and the latter 29 and also described as a nurse. They were placed on trial at the Old Bailey on January 15th, 1903, before Mr Justice Darling, Mr Charles Mathews (now Sir Charles Mathews, the present Public Prosecutor), and Mr A. H. Bodkin appearing for the prosecution, Mr Guy Stephenson appearing in defence of Walters, and Mr Leycester for Sach.

It appeared that in the month of November, 1902, Sach occupied a house called "Claymore House," in Hertford Road, East Finchley, where she carried on

the business of a certified midwife and nurse, the place being described as a "private nursing home." The house was subsequently pointed out to me by the chief usher at the Old Bailey, the late Mr Field, who then lived in the same neighbourhood. Sach was in the habit of inserting the following advertisement in the newspapers: "Accouchement, before and during skilled nursing; home comforts; baby can remain." The prisoners had been known to one another for some considerable time. In August, 1902, an unmarried woman named Galley went to Claymore House and arranged with Mrs Sach to stay there. She was to pay £3 3s. a week for a fortnight, and £1 1s. a week during the remainder of the time she was in the house.

At the end of September accordingly Galley went into residence at Claymore House. At that time there were several others there. Before Galley's child was born Mrs Sach asked her whether she would like it adopted, as she, Sach, knew some people without children of their own who would be willing to adopt any from her house. Galley asked how much it would cost, and Sach told her £30 or £35. Galley said that was too much, whereupon Sach said she she would see if the people would not take less. Later she told Galley that it could be done for £25, and to this Galley agreed. On the morning of Saturday, November 15th, Miss Galley gave birth to a boy. Sach immediately took it out of the room, and its mother never saw it again. On the same day the father of the child called and paid Sach £25 in bank

notes. These notes were afterwards traced, and it was found that the money had been divided between Sach and Walters, which made it clear that Sach had no intention of giving the child over to anybody to adopt.

The child was born at eight, and at eleven Sach sent a telegram to Walters at 11 Danbury Street, Islington, worded as follows: "Come to-night, eight; same place." That same evening Walters left her lodgings at 6.30, and three hours later she returned with a newly-born child. She told the landlady that it was a girl, but the latter found that it was a boy. Walters explained that it was going to be adopted by the wife of a coastguardsman at Kensington, who was to give the mother £10, of which she, Walters, was to receive 10s. On November 12th Walters brought home another child from Claymore House. She then sent out for a bottle of chlorodyne, two drops of which would be sufficient to kill a baby. Two or three days after Galley's child had been brought home by Walters it died. She, Walters, said it died in bed beside her. But there can be no doubt that she killed it by administering chlorodyne to it.

Curiously enough, Walters lodged in the house of a police constable, who had become suspicious of her actions and movements. We have from time to time recorded egregiously foolish things done by criminals. It seems difficult to understand why Walters allowed herself to live and carry on her criminal trade in the house of one whose business it

was to be suspicious of people. One looks in vain for an elucidation of this mystery. One can merely record the fact that Walters did that very stupid thing and so practically assisted in her own detection. About nine o'clock on the morning after the child died, Walters left the house carrying the dead body with her. She was followed to South Kensington Railway Station, where she was taken into custody and charged with murdering the child. Shortly after Inspector Kidd went to Claymore House, where he arrested Mrs Sach. When charged she said: "I don't know Mrs Walters, and I have never given her any babies. I take in ladies to be confined; there is one in my house at present. She was confined on Saturday with a baby girl. It is with its mother now." Inspector Kidd then asked to see the baby, but Mrs Sach said the mother was too ill to allow of it. A doctor was then sent for, when Mrs Sach admitted that the child had been taken away. She further said: "Do you mean to say that this person (meaning Walters) has been making away with babies? Do you really mean to say that these babies are dead—that she has killed them?" She also at length admitted: "I know the woman, as she has worked for me, but I never gave her any babies."

Walters also made a number of statements, among other things admitting that she put two drops of chlorodyne in the child's milk as it was so cross. But she stoutly denied having killed it. She, however, admitted having been a "foolish woman," and said that she intended to wander about until it was dark

and then do away with herself. A post-mortem examination was held on the body of Galley's child, which it was proved had died from asphyxia brought about by some preparation of morphia, which is one of the principal constituents of chlorodyne. Another case which was proved against the prisoners was that concerning the child of a woman named Pardoe. The mother paid Mrs Sach £30 to have it adopted, Mrs Sach representing that it was to be taken by some persons in a good station in life. As a matter of fact the money it was proved was devoted to Mrs Sach's own personal uses. The baby was disposed of in a manner similar to that of Galley's. A telegram was sent to Walters, who took the child away to Danbury Street. A couple of days after Walters took the child out with her and entered a coffee-room with it. One of the waitresses remarked that the child looked dead, when Walters said: "I have just brought it from the hospital, where it has been under an operation. It is chloroform that you see it under, and it will probably recover in an hour or two."

Walters then left, returning to Danbury Street at eight o'clock the same night in a state of intoxication, and minus the child, which she stated she had handed over to the person who had agreed to adopt it. This sort of thing had been going on for a considerable period, during which Sach and Walters had been in constant communication with one another, frequently visiting one another, and dealing with the children born at Claymore House. It was proved that Mrs Sach had conceived these crimes, which Mrs Walters

had carried out; that the former was the "head" and the latter the "hands" in the black business.

The two women presented an odd appearance in the dock, being as dissimilar in every respect as could be imagined. Walters was a short, plebeian, stubby, plain-faced woman, shabbily attired, while Sach was tall, fashionably dressed, very attractive, and carrying herself with an air of refinement. Their very personal appearance clearly indicated which was the "head" and which the "hands," which the conceiver and which the executant. Mrs Sach presented the appearance of having just returned from the theatre, with a fashionable cloak thrown over her shoulders. Mrs Walters looked as though her occupation in life was "charing." The respective demeanour also of the women was quite distinct. Mrs Sach was evidently acutely feeling her perilous position, her face denoting considerable mental suffering. Walters on the contrary maintained a stolid, almost indifferent aspect towards the proceedings; she occasionally scribbled something on a slip of paper and passed it to her counsel. Once or twice she smiled faintly at something that was said in court. The look on the face of Mrs Sach was one of deep dejection mingled with almost uncontrollable agitation. Every now and again her face twitched and quivered.

I am a poor hand at witnessing human suffering of any kind, particularly in the case of a woman, and I am bound to say, in spite of the detestable and brutal character of the crimes attributed to Mrs Sach, and of which she was in due course convicted, I could not

help feeling somewhat sorry for her. Odious as the crimes themselves were, they were not so brutal as those committed by Mrs Dyer. The children were taken away newly-born and "dosed" when but a few days old, when there could have been scarcely any physical suffering. But this does not, of course, lessen the gravity of the crimes generally and as against the State. The peculiar part about Mrs Sach's conduct was the fact that she herself had children of which she was extremely fond. This sort of contradiction in human nature is altogether very puzzling. Such persons seem to be possessed of a double nature or personality, one being brutal and the other affectionate. And it seems that the one nature is not concerned or affected by what the other nature does.

Both women were convicted and sentenced to death. Curiously enough, during the period intervening between condemnation and execution the demeanour of the two women would seem to have become reversed. For Mrs Sach maintained an unbroken composure, while Mrs Walters broke out into protestations of innocence and declared that she had been "betrayed" by Mrs Sach. She also wrote many letters, and as these indicated the state of her mind and threw sidelights on to her character generally, I reproduce two of them:—

"Holloway, January 26, 1903.

"DEAR——,—I received your kind letter with a broken heart. I have been here since November,

and never received any letters or visits till last week. You know my unhappy fate. You know it was not given to kill the dear, but, dear, I am not afraid to go. I shall meet my old darling; don't think, dear, he is forgotten. He is ever present with me; I am only longing to see him. (She probably is here referring to her deceased husband.)

"I have got permission to see you and Sarah. One had better come one day and the other the other day, not but what I should like to see you all. I asked to see my two nieces. I will tell you when I see you what good you all could have done me before the trial. I cannot write any more, as I am feeling very geadey (giddy, I suppose) and down. You won't know me.

"Don't bring any of the children, dear, and you must not bring any thing whatever. Love to all of you. Kiss to all the dear children.

"You wonder why I have taken the name of Walters. I did not want to disgrace our dear's own name. Love to you all.—I remain, your broken-hearted aunt,

"ANNIE WALTERS."

"Holloway, January 30, 1903.

"DEAR——,—It is with a sad heart I answer your welcome letter. I am not feeling well to-day, and, dear, it's awful to be in here, although everyone is kindness itself, and the chaplain is such a dear, good man; he sees me every day. I long for the time to come to see him.

"Know, dear, I thank you for all you did for me, and tell dear C. and B. how I thank them for their kind offer to come and see me. I feel it would be

too much. I am not as strong and healthy as they last saw me. It was a great strain to see you both and part from you the other day. I wish it had been otherwise; but God wills it so, bless His holy name.

“I was very sorry to hear of Mary H.’s death. She has only gone first. It would have been better if the dear baby had gone first with her, but God will find a dear loving friend for her little James. God bless them all; I know she is at rest. She was always a good girl.

“No, dear children, I am not afraid to die; I am only longing for the time to be at rest. I have nothing on my mind to trouble me. I shall miss you and all the dear ones on the last day. He has said though my sins be as scarlet they shall be as white as snow. Dear, rest assured Almer and Charley, I have no fear. Jesus is the way, the truth, and life. Let not your hearts be troubled. Dear Almer, I have nothing on my conscience only this dear baby I gave the two drops of stuff to. I did not give it to hurt it. It was an awful moment when I turned in bed and it was dead.

“That I have told the Chaplain. As for doing any other I have not. My blessed Lord knows that I am talking right. I have made my peace, and long to be at rest. If it will ease your mind, dear, I am going to take the Sacrament on—I do not know where it is—on Sunday, or after. But, my dear, once more good-bye till we meet again.

“I am longing to see my dear ones. My dear husband is ever near. I can say the same as he did when he went; he said, ‘My darling, I long to be at rest.’

“I have sent this, dear ones, to you all. Love

and kisses to the little lambs. Love to you too, and love to C. and B. You can answer this if you like. I remain—good-bye, broken-hearted—

“ANNIE WALTERS.”

The influence of the Chaplain may be traced in the above. There is over-much of religion in it of a somewhat turgid kind, reminiscent of Mrs Dyer. Her reference to the murdered baby and the chlorodyne is peculiar. It illustrates the singular frame of mind into which the woman had got. She denies that she killed the child, although its death is on her mind. She also states that this is the only thing which is troubling her, in spite of the fact that ample evidence had been produced of her having despatched several other infants. There may have been many, there probably were, for the business had been going on for some time. She was either making a feeble attempt to deceive others, or she had developed so peculiar a condition of mind that she was deceiving herself.

Both women were executed on the morning of February 3, 1903. It was the first double execution of women in the United Kingdom since March 3, 1884, and the first execution to take place at Holloway. The officials at the prison were hoping that the women would be reprieved, for they looked forward with dread and misgiving to the grim business. However, it was deemed advisable to allow the law to take its course, and so the double execution accordingly took place.

I recall the trial of another notorious baby-farmer, namely, that of Mrs Chard Williams. It occupied the court of the Old Bailey for two days. It did not attract much attention at the time as it occurred during the first stages of the war in South Africa, by which it was dwarfed in importance. During the first day of the trial news of the relief of Kimberley arrived and caused some excitement in court. Mrs Williams' husband was also charged with her. The case was interesting from the respective personalities of the two prisoners. Mrs Williams was a slim, small-featured, pale-faced woman, some years younger than her husband. The latter was a well-educated man, M.A., I believe, of Cambridge, and socially and intellectually considerably above his wife. It was said that he was a near relation of the late Judge Williams. It was made quite clear that he was completely under the control of his wife. This became apparent as they sat in the dock. Mrs Williams, although looking so modest and demure, was in fact a woman of invincible will-power and irresistible resolution. She was also extremely callous and cruel. This was indicated by her thin and firmly-compressed lips. She sat facing the jury, whom it was obvious she had set herself the task of favourably impressing. She had designedly assumed an air of demureness and inoffensiveness for that purpose. She had so placed her chair in the dock as to bring her face to face with the jurymen, because in the ordinary course of things a prisoner faces the bench, the dock being at right-angles to the jury-box.

Mrs Williams was one of those women who exercise great influence over men, and who are thoroughly alive to the extent of their power. As she had ruled her husband through the medium of this same influence, so she set herself to win over the jury by similar means. I shall presently deal with a case of another woman of the kind who did actually succeed in so winning over a jury and securing her acquittal in face of the most convincing evidence of her guilt. A woman may use such influence for good or evil: when she uses it for the latter it is disastrous for the man. A woman of such force of character may be either a blessing or a curse. She is never likely to do anything by halves—she is thorough in whatever she does. Mrs Williams, instead of being a brutal baby-slayer, might very well have been an indomitable saint and benefactress—she had the requisite force of character. A certain prominent female philanthropist, who for years has been engaged in good work, and who is endowed with this same force of character, one day confessed to me that when young she had a most rebellious nature, and that it was quite possible for her then to have launched into a life of evil. The fact that her work has been done among men, upon whom she has brought her influence to bear, shows how fortunate it was that she did not take the wrong turning.

But to return to Mrs Williams.

She occupied this same position throughout the trial, scarcely budging from it. She was perfectly composed, or, rather, appeared to be, but now and

again one got a subtle hint of the inward struggle which was in progress. Now and again she would raise her handkerchief to her clammy lips and wipe them. Occasionally she sighed wearily. But always she kept her caressing and appealing eyes upon the jury-box, her glance travelling from man to man, up and down the box. From my point of vantage I was able to watch her very closely without being seen by her. So that she was unaware of the espionage. By which means I have from time to time obtained good impressions of many criminals. Williams sat almost with his back to the jury, and facing his wife, towards whom he continually directed glances of dog-like devotion. The latter seemed to be scarcely conscious of these attentions, or accepted them as a matter of course. He spoke to her several times, but she either replied briefly or not at all. She was engrossed with her task with the jury. He had a few slips of paper in his hand, on which he occasionally made notes. But all through the trial she sat in that same position, her hands in her lap, scarcely moving, and heeding little else but the jury, upon whom her whole attention was concentrated. She was playing her last card with the jury, upon which she placed her sole reliance. If that failed her she knew she was doomed. It was moving to watch her as the case progressed, to see the alternations of hope, fear, depression, and doubt, which she with all her stoicism was unable to quite prevent being depicted upon her countenance.

The two were charged with the murder of a child

named Jones, which the female prisoner received as a "nurse child." The mother was a general servant. Mrs Williams was then living at Battersea. The body was found in the Thames, tied up in a piece of paper. It was made clear by medical evidence that the child had been killed by being taken by the feet and its head dashed against a wall. The body was then practically "trussed" like a fowl—it was so described in court—done up in paper and dropped in the Thames. A "dummy" copy of the body was made and produced in court. Mrs Williams and her husband afterwards left Battersea and went to live in the north of London. The mother of the child would appear to have become suspicious and gone to view the body, which, by a peculiar mark on the abdomen, she was able to identify as hers. The police then went to Battersea and found that the baby-farmer and her husband had disappeared. A reward was promptly offered for their apprehension.

Again we have to record an injudicious act being performed by a criminal and leading to her arrest. The hue-and-cry which was out after Williams and his wife would appear to have been too much for the latter's mental equilibrium. Whether she became possessed with fear, or endeavoured to anticipate her defence, cannot be said, but she foolishly wrote a letter to the police in defence of the "wanted" persons, and making use of the significant words, "innocent people have been hanged before now." This letter put the police on her track, and she and her husband were soon after taken.

An important piece of evidence was the finding in the house at Battersea which had been occupied by Mrs Williams and her husband of some cord identical with that found on the body. There were also some peculiar knots known as a "fisherman's bend" in the cord on the body, and the same kind of knots in the cord found in the house. There was likewise the fact that the child Jones, which its mother had handed over to Mrs Williams, had disappeared and had not since been seen or heard of. There was in addition the peculiarity on the stomach of the corpse which was known to be present on the stomach of the child Jones. In the end Mrs Williams was convicted and her husband acquitted. It was made manifest that Williams had had no part in the actual murder, that he probably knew nothing of how the children were disposed of, that he had upon occasions protected the children and tended them in the absence of his wife. He was, however, afterwards re-arrested and charged with a minor offence, of some kind of fraud, convicted and sentenced to imprisonment.

The true character of Mrs Williams asserted itself after she was convicted and when she knew that dissimulation would no longer avail her. When she was brought back to the dock to hear the verdict she was looking extremely pallid and was much agitated. The verdict having been given, she was asked whether she had anything to say. She was so agitated, however, that she was unable to speak. The sentence was then pronounced. She was again asked whether she wished to say anything, and

having by a supreme effort obtained partial control over herself, she said in a studied voice of bravado, "Thank you, my lord." As this was scarcely the kind of thing she was being offered an opportunity to say, she was for the third time asked if she had anything more to say, and in a voice that was now subdued almost to a whisper she replied in the negative. She was then conducted from the dock, being closely attended by several wardresses. As she was descending the steps she suddenly struck out at the attendants, at the same time shrieking out, "Let me alone, or it'll be the worse for you!" It was the savage side of her nature asserting itself.

Mrs Williams was duly executed, and her body committed to a rude sepulchre beneath the flagstones of "Dead Man's Walk," as the burial place at old Newgate was known as. Her final resting-place was indicated by the one letter "W" engraved upon the wall facing it.

In spite of the fact that her conduct must have been known in all its enormity to her husband, it does not seem to have shaken the latter's affection for her. I heard afterwards that he was terribly upset at her fate, and could in no way be resigned to the loss of her. After his release from prison, I was told, he went about in a dazed manner scarcely realising his bereavement. The worthiest of wives could hardly inspire a more steadfast devotion than this.

The miserable fate which most "nurse children" meet with was made clear by a case which came to

light in November, 1908. It appears that the child in question was taken by its mother to a woman at Broadstairs in August of that year. The next day the child was passed on to a woman who had a "home" at Ramsgate. That is a kind of "sub-letting" system. Suppose, for instance, A receives a child for, say, £10. She may then pass it on to B, who takes it for £3 or £4, the balance being clear profit to A, who also gets rid of the child. B may pass the child on to C, who may take it for still less, B thus making a profit and getting rid of the child. During such transactions the treatment received by the child is not likely to be very beneficial to it; in fact it usually gets into such a deplorable state that death puts a period to its sufferings.

Well, in the above-mentioned case, the child having been installed in the Ramsgate "home," remained there only a few days, when it was removed to a "Farm" at Ongar, near Epping. The child, a girl of two years, remained there until the "Farm" was broken up, when on October 25th she, with several other children, passed into the possession of the wife of a "farm foreman." On the 7th of the ensuing month she was taken to the Queen's Hospital, where the poor child was found to be dirty, undersized, and wasted. There were also abscesses on arms and legs, and it shortly after died from blood-poisoning as a result of the abscesses. In the opinion of the resident medical officer the condition of the child was brought about by improper treatment and neglect. The mother never saw the child

again after she parted with it at Broadstairs. It transpired at the inquest that in addition to the above foster mothers, the child had had yet another at Hemel Hempstead, who, it was stated, had grossly neglected it. It was also proved that the "Farm" at Ongar had no drains, and was therefore in a very insanitary condition. The Ramsgate Home was licensed by the Isle of Thanet Union for twenty-five children under five years of age. But this place also was in an insanitary condition in consequence of the presence of a disused cesspool. Many of the children were down with enteric fever, and six died in six weeks. In consequence of this state of things the survivors were scattered. As a result of the inquiry several persons were blamed by the jury, although nobody appears to have been held legally culpable.

Another form of cruelty to children for which women are mainly answerable, is where they are taken into the service of, or adopted by, private families. Such waifs are occasionally treated very brutally, and now and again cases of the kind come into court. Not infrequently such families are those of clergymen. In January, 1909, a case of the kind was heard at the Dolgelly Assizes. A vicar and his wife were charged with cruelty towards a girl aged ten. It appeared that the child was the daughter of a charwoman who had done work for the defendants, the female of whom had asked that the child might remain with them as a companion to their daughter. To this the mother agreed. Subsequently the child was treated with great cruelty, being beaten, kept

short of food, and made to sleep on a mattress in the attic.

About the same time there was another case at Long Ashton, near Bristol, where a rector and his wife were charged with ill-treating an orphan boy whom they had in their service. He was made to do all the menial work of the house, was kept short of food, occasionally given bad food, and was repeatedly severely beaten with a stick by the woman. Both were fined.

There is yet another form of cruelty to children on the part of women which is altogether inexplicable. That is the ill-treatment of their own offspring. In this connection we recall the case of Mrs Penruddock. For a woman and a mother to be cruel to any child is an unnatural proceeding, but for a mother to be cruel to her own children constitutes a positive outrage on nature. One must suppose that there must be something wrong with such women, that the maternal instinct must be dormant in them. But we know that when women take to being cruel they are so to a superlative degree. In the subsequent chapter we shall deal with a phase of their cruelty which holds the record for inflicting suffering, namely, that of vitriol-throwing.

CHAPTER XI

THE VITRIOL-THROWERS

THE act of throwing vitriol may very well be bracketed with secret and slow poisoning as an example of extreme cruelty in women. Vitriol-throwing is rarely resorted to by men, being almost exclusively confined to females. The latter as we have already pointed out are also largely in the majority among poisoners. It is just as inexplicable as is the inhumanity of women towards little children, and why such savagery should find a home in the bosoms of those who are universally supposed to be inspired by instincts of sympathy and tenderness it is fruitless to try and discover. But it makes one thing quite clear, namely, that the orthodox opinions held by most men concerning women are not strictly accurate.

I recall the case of the Frenchwoman, Madame Emilie Foucault, who was indicted at the Old Bailey for throwing upon Andre Jacques Delombre a corrosive fluid, with intent to disfigure him or do him grievous bodily harm. I have already given an account of this case in another work of mine,* but

*"The Story of Crime," T. Werner Laurie.

think it as well to include it here, as in many respects it is a remarkable case of its kind.

Sir Charles Mathews, who conducted the prosecution, referred to it as a "drama," and drama of a most sensational kind it certainly was. The story that preceded the act for which the woman was indicted might very well have been fiction written by a novelist in the habit of turning out "risky" works. The prisoner and the prosecutor first became acquainted in the year 1898, the man then being seventeen years of age and the woman twenty. They met in the streets, and their acquaintance at first was merely of a casual kind. But it was soon to become more cordial, for the woman was very pretty and the young man susceptible. Their respective social positions were widely asunder, he being the son of an ex-Cabinet Minister of France, and she the daughter of a tradesman. This difference in caste was destined in due course to lead to a tragedy.

In March, 1899, the prisoner married her first husband, a man named Foucault, who died in January, 1901. Directly after this marriage took place an improper intimacy began between Madame Foucault and the young fellow, Delombre. It endured through Foucault's life and survived his death. In May of 1903 Madame Foucault married again, this time a literary man in a good position. But she still continued the improper intimacy with Delombre. The husband soon became suspicious, discovered how matters stood, at once sued for and

obtained a divorce. The divorced wife intermittently continued the intimacy with Delombre. It is quite clear that she now entertained the notion and formed the resolution that the young fellow should marry her. He would seem to have still been somewhat infatuated with her and to be willing to become her lawful husband. But here the social disparity between them became an obstacle, and Delombre's parents would not entertain the proposed alliance. This opposition enraged Madame Foucault, who armed herself with a loaded revolver and threatened to shoot the young man's parents. His mother was most firmly opposed to the match, and upon her death-bed she made her son promise that he would not marry the woman.

In the course of 1906 Madame Foucault fell in the family way, and subsequently she asked Delombre if he would acknowledge the child. This he refused to do, in consequence of which some unpleasant scenes ensued. Upon one occasion Delombre forcibly took a loaded revolver from her. Apparently in consequence of the annoyance she gave him, Delombre decided in October, 1906, to come to England. He did so, taking up his residence in Lindley Road, Tottenham, where he pursued his studies. He was an agricultural engineer, and held a degree of the University of Paris. On November 17th, Madame Foucault followed Delombre to England, bringing with her a loaded revolver, a box of cartridges, and a large bottle of sulphuric acid, or vitriol. The latter she had had

coloured to the hue of coffee. The reason for this will appear presently. Having discovered where Delombre was lodging, she went there and asked him for an explanation. That was a Saturday evening, and it was arranged that the interview should be postponed till the next day, a lodging for the night being found for Madame Foucault. The next day she said to a friend of Delombre's who lodged near him: "I am expecting a child in January, and Delombre has abandoned me. After I have had an explanation I will return to Paris and make as much scandal as possible. I will have birth cards printed, and send them to his friends." (In France birth cards are sent round as marriage cards are sent round in this country.) At the Old Bailey Delombre stoutly denied that the child referred to was his, and that he was not the "only one."

Later in the day Delombre went with Madame Foucault to a hotel in the City, where he engaged a room in the name of Foucault. They had dinner there in the public room, afterwards retiring to the room they had engaged, where they would be by themselves. While seated at the dinner-table Delombre asked Madame Foucault what explanation she required, and the lady replied that she would wait for it until they had retired to their room. In the light of subsequent events this was significant. Well, when the woman found herself alone with her companion she said, "The explanation I have to ask you is this: Either you shall marry me or you must kill yourself, if you are not a coward, or I will kill

you." That was the first time, said Delombre, that she had made any mention of marriage. He replied "Marry! No; never. Why, you don't love me. You hate me, and I don't love you." Then the woman said, "I shan't be troublesome. We shan't live together, but I want my child to bear your name." He replied "No." Madame, who all through this was perfectly calm, said "Then you must kill yourself, or I will kill you." It is difficult to understand why she should wish him to die, or how his death could benefit her in any way. But the fact that she was so calm through it all proves that it was mere idle talk and that she was temporising. It is a pity that he did not do the same thing. A man, however, is never equal to a woman in cunning and dissimulation.

It seems clear, however, that Delombre had become apprehensive, for he suggested that they should go for a walk. At the same time he went to the bed and took up his coat, which he proceeded to put on. Foolishly he turned his back upon her for a few moments. When he turned to her again she walked up to him and deliberately threw a cup of vitriol in his face. The premeditation was made apparent by the fact that she had contrived, unseen by her companion, to lock the door. He discovered this when, writhing in agony, he endeavoured to quit the room. His cries brought assistance, and he was conveyed to the hospital. The woman was taken into custody and while in prison awaiting trial she gave birth to a child.

Delombre permanently lost the sight of one eye

and was otherwise disfigured for life. Most outrages committed by women are cowardly, and this one was particularly so. It was sheer vindictiveness, and no amount of provocation could mitigate its enormity. Her defence was that she intended to commit suicide in his presence, and that the vitriol and revolver were for that purpose. She further stated in the witness-box that it was while in the act of drinking the vitriol herself that Delombre, while endeavouring to prevent her, splashed the vitriol over himself. This rather feeble contention could scarcely hold good in the face of the fact that the vitriol had been *thrown* or *dashed* at the prosecutor, as shown by the nature of the injuries. The prosecutor declared that her original intention was that he should drink the acid, and that is why she had it made the colour of coffee. Her explanation of this discolouration was that it was caused by being poured into the bottle through a pewter funnel, and that it was the action of the latter on the acid that caused it to change colour. As a matter of fact pewter would not do anything of the kind, so that falls to the ground. The prosecutor explained that her intention was to cause him to drink the acid by "ringing the changes" on the cups. After they had had dinner he asked her if she would have coffee, and she declined. He, however, had a cup, and this evidently upset her arrangement, for her idea was to have the coffee upstairs, when she would have effected the change. She did in fact alter her mind when she got upstairs and had a cup brought up. And this served a purpose, although not the

one originally intended. Having emptied the cup of coffee she substituted vitriol, which looked like coffee. So that she was able to get to close quarters with Delombre without arousing his suspicion as to the nature of the contents of the cup. If the vitriol had in any way failed she unquestionably intended to make use of the revolver.

The above facts would appear to be pretty conclusive evidence of guilt, and there can be no doubt that the jury would have returned a verdict of "Guilty" had it not been for the introduction into the case by counsel for the defence of a number of letters which had been written to the prisoner from time to time by the prosecutor. These put the latter in a very odious light and seriously prejudiced the case for the prosecution. The letters were allowed to be read by the judge, although when counsel for the prosecution attempted to read some which had been sent by the prisoner to the prosecutor his lordship put his veto on it. He should of course have put his veto on the others, as they had nothing to do with the charge before the court, most of them having been written years before the visit to the City hotel took place.

The case occupied four days. The prisoner, a dark young woman of strikingly handsome appearance and neatly attired, was one of those females whom I have already referred to as possessing force of character and invincible will-power. The latter in combination with her personal attractions was destined to be destructive to men. Her complexion

was pale, and she had what the French call the "fatal eyes." They were in fact very remarkable eyes, very dark and wonderfully expressive. They had a velvety softness, and at times could be most alluring. She also contrived to get into them a remarkable number of varied expressions. When it was her purpose to enlist sympathy her eyes were irresistibly soft and caressing. But now and again when the lady was heckled in cross-examination, there flashed from her eyes something resembling forked lightning, which gave one an uncomfortable notion of what she was capable. I have already referred to a case where a female prisoner succeeded in winning over a jury. I then referred to Madame Foucault, who, in spite of the conclusive evidence I have detailed above, was acquitted. This I attribute to her personal influence on the jury, combined with the reading of the letters mentioned. It was a verdict, not of justice based on fact, but of sympathy in the face of truth. The conduct of both prior to the events of November 18th at the City hotel was deserving of measureless reprobation, and the letters should not have aroused sympathy for either. What can be said for a woman who readily gives herself over to a paramour immediately after she has been wedded to another? Can she be "wronged" in any way? Delombre worked her no mischief; those whom he wronged were the husbands. There can be no doubt that the first marriage was entered into so that the husband might be utilised as a safeguard to the intrigue. I suppose

a husband could hardly be put to a worse purpose than this, or a marriage contracted under more odious conditions. And nobody who saw the two young people in the flesh can doubt that the woman was the leading spirit in the intrigue, and that she influenced Delombre by her "fatal eyes" and her other attractions as she influenced the jury at her trial. A woman who cares twopence for her chastity does not give way with the readiness with which Madame Foucault did.

Just as I have already described how Mrs Chard Williams set herself to seduce the jury from the straight line of their duty by directing her gaze full at them and keeping it so throughout the hearing, so did Madame Foucault, and with more success. She directed her "fatal eyes" towards the jurymen, each one of whom she took in turn, lavishing upon them the most bewitching and ravishing glances. I sat beneath the jury-box and quite close to the dock. I closely watched her, and upon one occasion she, noticing my scrutiny and thinking perhaps that I might be an official and worth including, she turned her gaze full upon me and favoured me with a most entrancing optical caress. I felt a trifle "shivery" over it, like one might feel while being grinned at by a tigress, and was not sorry to avert my eyes. After her acquittal she stated to an interviewer that at a certain stage of the proceedings she knew she had so many of the jury on her side. There can be no doubt that she did. Women like Madame Foucault know the weak points of men like they know

their A. B. C. When counsel was describing the injuries of Delombre she appeared to be moved, but that it was humbug was proved by the fact that after the verdict was returned she pointed down triumphantly at the injured man and jeered at him. No doubt that what the man himself had told her, namely, that she hated him, was true. She subsequently endeavoured to fix the paternity of her child upon him, and a summons was served at the place in London where he had been staying. He had, however, gone back to Paris, but in spite of this fact an order was made against him by a magistrate. It seems a very easy matter to get a bastardy order against a man. In this case the magistrate took the bare word of the solicitor that the summons was duly served, when as a matter of fact it was not. Delombre took the matter to the High Court, where the judges set the order aside.

Vitriol-throwing is altogether a most ugly crime, for it is always committed in a spirit of extreme vindictiveness. Sometimes, too, it is done to avenge a wholly imaginary wrong, as in the case of the woman who, ironically enough, was named Mabel Truelove. The crime was committed in May, 1908. The woman Truelove was a habitual criminal, who had previously been confined in Reading gaol. She had conceived a great hatred of the matron, Miss Elizabeth Rogerson, who, she declared, had treated her harshly and cruelly. As a matter of fact Miss Rogerson was a most humane woman and had always dealt leniently with Truelove. However,

the latter determined to do the matron a mischief, and she accomplished it in a truly fiendish manner. On a Sunday evening, while Miss Rogerson sat in St James's Roman Catholic Church with a friend named Mrs Emily Cushan, Truelove came down the church and seated herself beside Miss Rogerson. In her teeth she was holding a shawl. She said to Miss Rogerson, "Well, how are you?" To which Miss Rogerson replied, "Oh, all right." Truelove then drew a large cup of vitriol from under her shawl and flung the contents in the face of Miss Rogerson.

Miss Rogerson called out "Vitriol!" and fell in a faint. She was unable to see, and after she had been attended to by a nurse and a doctor she was conveyed to the Royal Berks Hospital. She was very seriously injured, being likely to lose the sight of one eye. Her friend, Mrs Cushan, was also seriously injured, the acid having splashed on to her. Also Truelove herself was very badly burnt, for the liquid also splashed back on her, which was a recoil of her vengeance peculiarly appropriate. If all vitriol-throwers also injured themselves in this manner, there might be less of the dastardly crime committed. When Truelove appeared in the dock of the Reading Police Court next morning her face presented a most repulsive appearance, the features being quite unrecognisable. Her lips were distended, her eyes invisible, and her cheeks scarred and wounded. She had to be assisted into the dock, and was hardly able to remain seated on the form.

Would that all would-be vitriol-throwers could have witnessed this spectacle! She was remanded and afterwards removed to that prison upon the matron of which she had committed such a gross outrage.

The prisoner had had a most remarkable career. She came of a family which was said to be well-connected and respected. She was an accomplished pianist, and some years ago had been a teacher of music. She was a pupil teacher at a Board School, but failing to pass a certain examination her scholastic career came to an end. She would then appear to have gone into service, acting as governess to several well-known families, but her temper was of such a violent character that nobody would keep her very long, and so she was constantly going from situation to situation. Her friends also gradually tired of assisting her, and so she sank lower and lower. Eventually she found herself without a roof—"on the road"—in which condition she remained some years, sleeping in various places, such, for instance, as doss-houses, churchyards, outhouses, or any place where she could find shelter. During this period she committed innumerable offences, prisons being among the places wherein she periodically slept. She resorted to all kinds of tricks to evade the police, on one occasion exchanging her dress for male garb while in a railway carriage. But as she left her own clothes behind, the police were enabled to soon get upon her track.

During her career she had been in several prisons of which Miss Rogerson had been matron, including

that at Reading. Two years prior to the outrage at Reading, Truelove committed an assault on Miss Rogerson, for which she was bound over for six months. She then said to Detective-Sergeant Clarke, "The time won't be long passing; I will leave the town and have something ready for her (meaning Miss Rogerson) when I come back." After she had committed the assault on Miss Rogerson at Reading, she said, "I don't care what I have to put up with myself; I have got my revenge, and revenge is sweet." When asked by Detective-Sergeant Clarke where she obtained the vitriol, she said, "Never mind; I know where to get it, and how to use it. I did not get it here. I should like to serve one or two more like it. I did not intend to hurt the other woman (Mrs Cushan). It serves her right though, if she mixes up with a — like that." She was known in nearly every prison in the country, having been convicted no fewer than 127 times for various offences. In whatever prison she was located she created disturbances and put fear into the minds of the wardresses. She had followed wardresses about, molesting and threatening them, sometimes to throw vitriol over them. In consequence the wardresses went in fear of her. A wardress named Pemberdy told how on one occasion she saw Truelove carrying a jug without a handle, and that she told her, Miss Pemberdy, that she would like to spoil her face. Upon one occasion, while following Miss Rogerson and Miss Pemberdy, she said to the former, "You have played your ace, and

it is my turn to play trumps now." She had also waited for days outside Reading Prison, in consequence of which the wardresses had remained indoors rather than go out and be insulted.

Another wardress named Miss Bingham wrote from Hull Prison to say that Truelove had followed her to church and waited outside until the service was over. Subsequently discovering that her home was at Lancaster, she gave a great deal of annoyance by calling at the house of her parents and waiting outside. She afterwards sent a postcard to Miss Bingham at the address of her relatives, worded, "I am coming. — (Signed) Jack the Ripper." Upon two occasions she had been sentenced to imprisonment for assaulting female officials. During the hearing of her case at the Berkshire Assizes the prisoner continually interrupted the proceedings. When reference was being made to Miss Rogerson's injuries, and counsel was describing the condition of "one of the lady's eyes," the prisoner interrupted with, "You don't call that thing a lady, do you?" It was inevitable that an effort would be made to establish a theory of insanity, and certainly the extravagance and pertinacity of her wrongdoing would seem to suggest that she was not altogether in her right mind. However, her counsel, Mr Nash, was proceeding to say that she had been suffering from delusions for two years, when she interposed with, "You are no doctor. It's no use proving that I am mad, because I am not. I never suffered from delusions." The jury having found her guilty, the

judge, Mr Justice Darling, sentenced her to five years' penal servitude.

Whether sane or insane, one thing is quite clear, Mabel Truelove has never been dealt with properly by the law. She ought never to have been allowed to carry on her career for so long a time, to have been constantly committing offences and continually going in and out of prison. She ought to have been dealt with more severely long ago. She is a fit subject for an indeterminate sentence. It is clear that it is dangerous for such a woman to be at large, and during the whole of her career she has never once exhibited any intention or desire to reform. She was most persistent and determined in her wrongdoing from first to last. Probably her lawlessness and rebellious behaviour generally is traceable to her early years, when she may have been without any restraining influence. Over-indulgent parents may be the source of as much mischief to their offspring as negligent ones. The seeds which are sown in childhood's days bear fruit years hence. The ironically-named Mabel Truelove seems to be a pretty hopeless case.

About the same time another case of vitriol-throwing occurred at Hull, where a middle-aged woman named Selina Spencer threw acid over three persons, namely, Annie Roberts, a widow, Eliza Precious, her married daughter, and a little girl named Lily Dunelly. It appeared that Spencer had had a business transaction with Mrs Roberts and had called her a rogue. In consequence of this Spencer was ejected from the Alexandra Hotel. A

few minutes later Mrs Roberts and her daughter left the hotel. They had not gone far, however, when they became aware that Spencer was following them. Eventually the latter came up with them and dashed the contents of a bottle in the face of Mrs Roberts, at the same time exclaiming "Take that!" Upon Mrs Precious interfering she also was served in the same way, being so badly burned that she lost the sight of one eye. Some of the acid also splashed on to the little girl. Spencer was then overpowered and prevented doing any further mischief. When taken into custody she had the effrontery to deny the charge, in spite of the evidence of eye-witnesses and the fact that her own hands were burned by the acid. She was duly convicted and punished.

A case which bore a striking resemblance to that of Madame Foucault, already dealt with, occurred at the end of April, 1907. It was generally believed in fact that the woman in this case had been reading the newspaper reports of the Foucault case, and had practically copied the Frenchwoman's methods. And the fact that the latter was acquitted doubtless acted as a strong incentive to her to venture on a similar course of conduct.

The woman's name was Lilian Sarah Woodcock. She was 27 years of age and was tried at the Old Bailey. She was charged with throwing a corrosive fluid—hydrochloric acid—over Mr John James Avery, a photographer, of Sandringham Road, Dalston. It appeared that she had been employed as manageress at a shop kept by a son of Mr Avery, in

the East India Dock Road. The relations between Miss Woodcock and her employer, as admitted by the latter in the witness-box, were rather more cordial than those of master and servant. Mr Avery, senior, was the freeholder of the premises in East India Dock Road. Miss Woodcock claimed the premises as her own, as she said they had been given to her by Mr Avery's son. The latter, however, stoutly denied this. Well, the woman went so far as to obtain an injunction in the High Court to restrain Mr Avery, senior, from entering the place. However, other proceedings followed, and the injunction was at length quashed.

On the afternoon of the same day Woodcock called at the house of Mr Avery, senior, and asked to see the latter. Mr Avery accordingly came to the door, but thinking it unwise to discuss matters with his visitor was about to close the door when the woman exclaimed, "Take that!" Although he saw nothing he felt a burning sensation about the face. He was removed to the German Hospital, where it was found that the acid had entered both eyes and burnt the right side of the forehead and the right cheek.

The defence put forward by the woman was that she had intended committing suicide, and that in knocking the vessel containing the acid from her hand Mr Avery received some of the contents on his face. It will be remembered that that was precisely the story told by Madame Foucault. In this case it was just as feeble as it was in that of the

Frenchwoman, for the wall at the back of where Mr Avery stood was marked with the acid, which made it clear that the latter was thrown. Fortunately Mr Avery's sight was not affected, although the acid used is of a very corrosive nature, and if not promptly attended to will destroy sight.

Fortunately in this case there were no letters, and the woman was convicted and sentenced to a year's imprisonment.

I have thus given the particulars of a few representative cases of vitriol-throwing, a crime almost exclusively committed by women. It is a crime of vindictiveness alone, expressed by the invariable cry of "Take that!" and represents woman in one of her most repugnant aspects.

CHAPTER XII

THE FINANCIAL DEFRAUDERS

THE financial frauds either actually perpetrated or unsuccessfully attempted by women are both colossal and varied. In the commission of such crimes women are extensively aided by the natural influence of their sex. In this direction they are able to carry out schemes well-nigh impossible to men. A woman merely by her sex inspires confidence at once. A man who would readily trust a woman might be very sceptical with a man under similar circumstances. He would also subsequently be less inclined to doubt a woman's than a man's *bonâ fides*. Chivalry is not by any means dead nowadays, in spite of what mutinous women may say to the contrary. It would be better, perhaps, if men were upon occasions a little less deferential to women and less willing to be deceived by them. It would also be better if men forbade themselves surrendering so meekly as they occasionally do to the mere sensual attractions of women, when such attractions are held out to them as an anæsthetic to their common sense.

At the same time there can be no doubt that certain women wield as as I have before pointed out, hypnotic influence over men, subduing the will of the latter to such an extent that they are able to manipulate them at their own sovereign pleasure. Yet in spite of that fact a man must voluntarily allow himself in the first instance to be attracted by the woman, because it is a well-known fact in hypnotics that in order that the influence may be successfully applied the subject must be a willing one. On the contrary, however, if the will of the subject is raised in hostile attitude the hypnotist will fail in his purpose. Therefore the woman possessing hypnotic influence over men must first attract the latter to her by her person before she can bring her hypnotic influence to bear. And that is not difficult, because her person is a natural attraction. But a man ought to have sufficient intuition to know when such attraction is being held out for a good or for an evil purpose.

Although I maintain generally that criminals are "made" and not "born," I am quite prepared to admit that there are exceptions to the rule. And one of the most remarkable exceptions to be found upon the records is that of Madame Humbert, whose case I shall now briefly recall. Madame Humbert told one of the greatest lies that ever was believed by human beings. Many suffered in consequence, including herself and her own kith and kin. The success of a lie depends not so much on what it consists of as the way in which it is told. If it is well and *truly* told it will probably be taken for granted, human credulity

being so invincible and widespread. The latter fact is amply proved by the continued success of the confidence trick. Madame Humbert's achievement consisted of the confidence trick on a colossal scale. The failure of a lie in the telling is due to the prickings of conscience of the liar. The reason why Madame Humbert was so successful with her lie was because she was totally devoid of conscience. In addition to which she possessed irresistible personal influence over men. I have never met the "divine Therese," but I have no doubt that she exhibited that singularly subtle fascination which is characteristic of most female criminals in the "higher grades" of wrong-doing. Also I have no doubt she had the "fatal eyes." A good deal of her success may likewise be attributed to the fact that she carried on her operations in a country where the men are imbued with a kind of knock-kneed and addle-headed deference to the female sex, where the "eternal feminine" is the eternal consideration. Wherever you find women thus in ascendancy you will find them also in rebellion.

I have said that Madame Humbert is an exception to the rule that criminals are "made" and not "born," and in order to make this clear I shall go back to the days and circumstances prior to her birth. About sixty years ago, then, there came to a remote village in the south of France, where the peasantry were mostly ignorant and superstitious, a shabby old man, who obtained employment as sacristan at the parish church. In addition to this he also

established himself as a kind of magician at Aussonne—the name of the village in question—playing upon the credulity of the simple-minded inhabitants, and among other things professing to be able, through the medium of spells and incantations, to drive the blight from the vine or secure the affections to women of the men of their choice. The old charlatan also put in circulation in a subtle manner that he was well related and would one day inherit wealth. He altered his story somewhat, at one time hinting that he was the unacknowledged son of a titled lady of wealth, and at another gave it out that he was the son of a Portuguese priest of great wealth.

Quite near him there lived a poor farmer named Capella, whose wife was the mistress of the village usurer, Père Duluc. By him the farmer's wife had three girls, to whom it was believed Duluc would leave his money. One of the girls married the old sacristan, whose name was Daurignac. Duluc, however, left his wealth to somebody else. To Daurignac and his wife, who lived a hand-to-mouth existence, there was eventually born a girl. She was christened Thérèse, and was subsequently known to the world as Madame Humbert. So that it will be seen that Madame Humbert's birth was most sinister, and her eventual career of crime but the natural development of the traits inherited from her charlatan father.

It is not at all surprising to hear that as a child she was both a liar and a thief. At the yet early age of seventeen she took the first practical step on

her career of crime. She victimised the tradesmen of Toulouse by obtaining much expensive clothing and many costly ornaments on the strength of a story to the effect that she was about to be married to the son of a wealthy shipowner, who of course, was then some distance off. As a consequence her father was sold up and her family reduced to penury. The success of this transaction—the ruin of her family was a mere detail, and doubtless worried her not at all—encouraged her to enter into others of a more profitable kind still. There happened to be living near Toulouse a family of the name of Humbert, M. Gustave Humbert being a poor professor of law, a man of irreproachable character, a Republican, and a very learned man. When the Empire fell he was elected to the Chamber of Deputies, made one of the seventy-five Life Senators, and eventually rose to be Minister of Justice.

The Humberts had a son, Frédéric Humbert, who was away studying for the Bar. At the age of nineteen he returned home and came under the notice of Thérèse Daurignac. The latter evidently made up her mind to secure him as a husband, and in spite of the fact that she was herself a mere peasant girl, ignorant and coarse, she succeeded in winning over the boy's mother by telling her a story of a mythical fortune, which she said was to come to her and which would help Frédéric in his law career. On the very day of the marriage the lie was discovered, but too late, for the ceremony had already been performed. Thérèse had conquered,

and was now allied to a family of repute and consideration. She rudely swept aside all obstacles in her path, did this female Napoleon of crime. When she secured young Humbert she was already looking well ahead, and knew how useful he would be to her.

Madame Humbert, with her distinguished lieutenant, now marched on Paris, which she intended to make the scene of her greatest victories. Inasmuch as her father-in-law's name was one to conjure with, she made free use of it. Her first victim in the capital was a neighbour named Madame Delattre, whose confidence she secured, and whom she defrauded of a sum of money in connection with some shares. She next launched into a course of reckless borrowing, which enabled her to live in a most luxurious manner. It at length became necessary, however, that she should furnish some sort of justification for her extensive financial transactions, and so it came about that vague rumours began to float about concerning a vast sum of money which was somehow to come to Madame Humbert. It was first whispered that the money had been left her by a Portuguese gentleman, who had been taken ill in the street, and whom she had succoured. It will be remembered that Portugal was the country her father had mentioned in connection with one of his Munchausen yarns.

Subsequently the vague personality of the beneficent stranger was changed, first becoming an Englishman and afterwards an American. At this stage more precise details were forthcoming, and the

American was said to be a millionaire named Robert Henry Crawford. But instead of being taken ill in the street, it was now rumoured that the poor old gentleman had been sorely stricken in a train. Fortunately Thérèse was present in the carriage and saved his life. What exactly was the matter with the gentleman, and *how* the lady saved his life, did not transpire. However, whatever happened, the gentleman's gratitude was very deep indeed, for he left her no less a sum than £4,000,000. Not a bad "tip" for a service rendered in a railway train! To be sure it is a well-known fact that American millionaires are in the habit of giving away their millions in a reckless manner; it is a weakness of theirs. It is really amazing that such a feeble and foolish story should ever have gained general credence. But that it did is yet another instance of the incurable credulity of human nature.

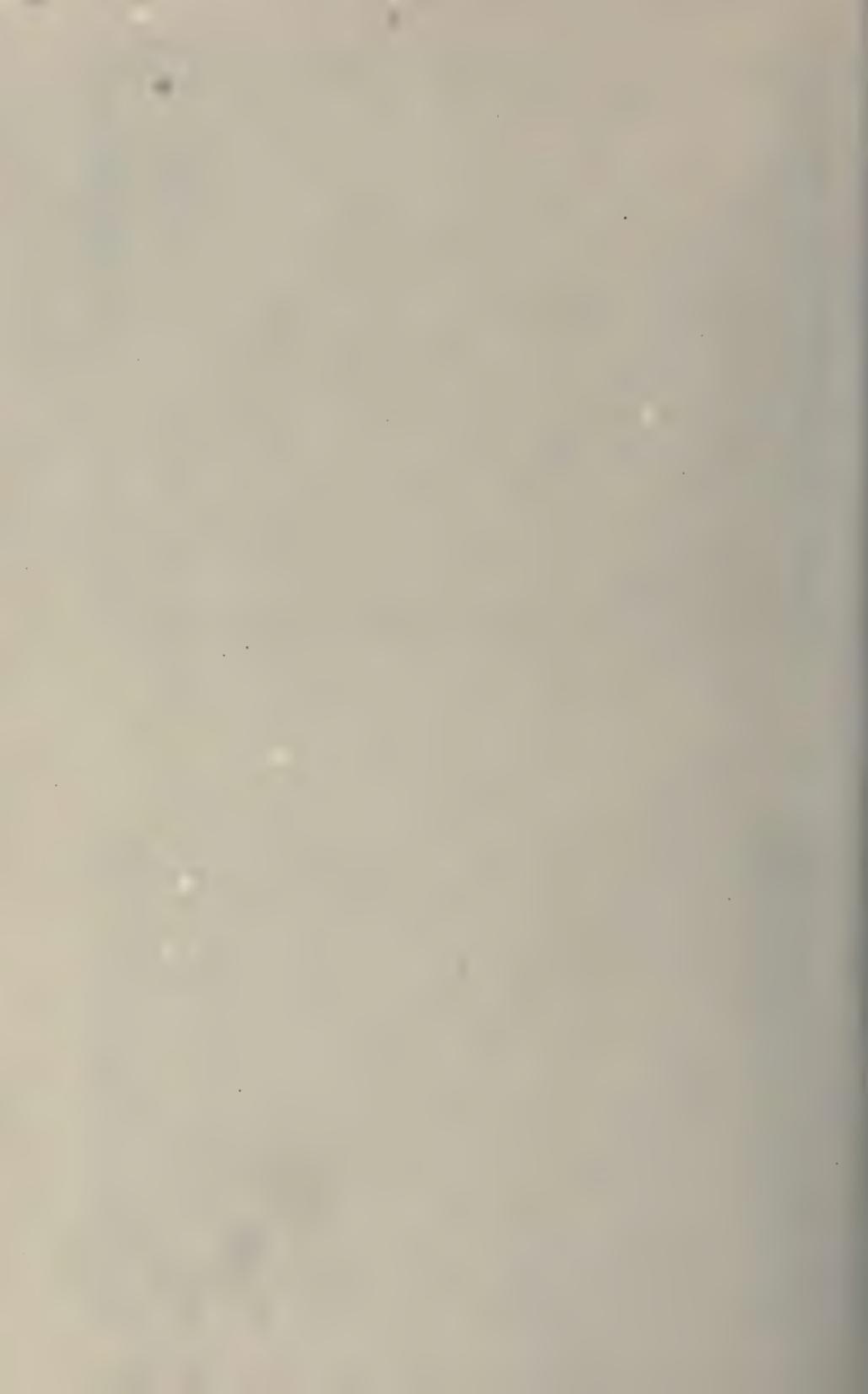
In order to "stiffen" the story, as it were, it was delicately hinted that Madame's benefactor had at one time been a "friend" of Madame's mother. Eventually it was rumoured that the gentleman had died at Nice. Evidently he must have died of enlargement of the heart. This story having been worked for all it was worth, it became necessary that further developments should take place, so, hey, presto! enter two more Crawfords, named respectively Henry and Robert. These two individuals produced a will, which was said to have been made the same day as the will leaving Madame the £4,000,000, and which bequest it upset somewhat,

Sewing Machine
 for sale
 at
 10/6
 per
 dozen
 in
 the
 factory
 at
 Lydd
 Kent

DISGUISED HANDWRITING OF FEMALE TRADE SWINDLER.

Phantasia
 Mrs
 will be
 obliged if Mr. Wheeler
 will send her the White
 Mullin Machine, Spoke,
 price 10/6 as above in the
 factory. 12 in collect & 2 in
 price

DISGUISED HANDWRITING OF FEMALE TRADE SWINDLER.



purporting to leave a third to Marie Daignac, sister to Thérèse, and reducing the latter's inheritance to a paltry £11,000 a year. This led to legal proceedings being instituted, which enabled Madame to continue borrowing "until the action was concluded." By this time Madame Humbert had got a goodly array of creditors about her, but they all believed her fabulous story and were content to wait.

Thence ensued what was perhaps one of the most remarkable actions-at-law ever fought, in which the law itself played scarcely a creditable part. The action was fought by imaginary suitors (the Crawfords) and without an original document of any kind being produced. The law simply took the suitors for granted, and the word of Madame as gospel, as conveyed through the medium of her fraudulent solicitor. So that a considerable portion of the plunder went into the pockets of the lawyers—no new thing in the world's history. The first thing agreed to by the suitors was that the securities representing the £4,000,000 should be deposited in an iron safe, and there kept sealed up until the action had been decided. By this time Madame had entered into possession of a splendid mansion in the Avenue de la Grand Armée, and therein was fitted the safe containing the "securities," the safe being locked and double-locked and covered with important-looking seals. The mansion had been purchased from a Count, who was going abroad—purchased but never paid for. The mansion Madame filled with costly art treasures and price-

less furniture, "developing" in other ways by having an expensive box at the Opera and a castle on the Seine, the Chateau of the Living Waters, where the cream of Parisian society was received. Among Madame's guests were senators, judges, the greatest officers of the Republic, even two Presidents of France.

The confidence now reposed in Madame Humbert was complete and widespread, and she continued to borrow freely and obtain credit from bankers, Jewish financiers, jewellers and furnishers, her indebtedness to whom at length reached the enormous sum of four million pounds! To such a height of mendacity had the little peasant of Gascony mounted with her Lie! All kinds of devices had been resorted to in order to stave off the inevitable exposure and gain time. Madame had a "dummy" telephone fixed up and carried on conversations in the presence of others with "M. le President," or "M. le Cardinal," which never went beyond the transmitter. It also seemed that the legal proceedings, the action "Crawford *versus* Humbert," was to be another "Jarndyce and Jarndyce." All the while the great iron safe stood locked and sealed in the mansion of the Avenue de la Grand Armée, containing the "treasure" over which the legal war was waging. In consequence of the delay some of the creditors committed suicide out of sheer despair.

But now Madame Napoleon was fast approaching her "Waterloo." At last the Courts made an order for the safe to be opened. Maitre Du Buit,

Madame's lawyer, all unsuspecting, cordially agreed, yea, even welcomed the order, as it would put an end to the vexatious litigation and place his fair client, as he thought, in a position that should be beyond further dispute. But Madame herself knew that it would be quite otherwise with her, and on the evening prior to the day on which the safe was to be opened, she, accompanied by her relations, took a little trip. The party consisted of herself, her husband, Mlle. Marie Daurignac, her sister, M. Romain Daurignac and M. Emile Daurignac, her brothers, and Mlle. Eve Humbert, her daughter. Having thanked her lawyer, and furnished herself with money and jewels, Madame and her confederate brood and her innocent daughter disappeared from the scene of her triumphs. Duly the safe was opened and the "treasure" revealed—a few envelopes and a metal button!

The iridescent bubble was burst! Paris may be said to have gasped, and there was much weeping and wailing and bitter cursing. Of course the police at once went in search of the fugitives, but many months were to pass ere Justice should come by her own. It was not until December, 1902, that the whole party were taken at Madrid, at a flat, 33 Calle Ferraz, where they had been living all the time. The reason they had contrived to retain their liberty so long was considered to be in consequence of their having arrived in Madrid during the King's Coronation, their visit being unnoticed as there were many foreigners then in the place. It appeared that

Detective-Inspector Caro at length became suspicious of the occupants of the flat in Calle Ferraz, in consequence of which he made inquiries and had the place watched. Finally the Chief of the Spanish Detective Department went to the flat under the pretence that he wished to learn English and made some inquiries of the portress. Whereupon the latter said, "Oh ! they are not English, but French. And very reserved they are, too ; they never receive any visits. One of them, a tall girl—Eve, they call her—is unwell."

This decided the police, warrants at once being issued and handed to Inspector Caro to execute. The arrests were made at one o'clock in the morning, the house being surrounded by police and gendarmes. Caro rang loudly at the bell and called out in Spanish, "Open, in the name of the law." The police at the back saw a stout lady—Madame's good living had made her obese—come to a window and draw up the blind. But on observing the presence of the officers she suddenly drew down the blind again. No doubt she was meditating escape by the back way, but the police had made too sure of her for that. They were all trapped. About twenty minutes afterwards a door was opened by Romain Daurignac, who said, "I am the man you want." But he soon found that he was only one of those who were wanted, for all were taken into custody. In due course they were returned to France, and, except the daughter Eve, who was released, put upon their trial. The latter, however, did not take place until August, 1903,

when they were all convicted, but, astonishing to relate, were allowed "extenuating circumstances," which prevented the judge inflicting such long sentences as he might otherwise have done. This clearly shows the dominating influence women have over the minds of men in France, for if ever there was a case tried in a criminal court which was devoid of the smallest tittle of justification for leniency it was surely this case. In addition to her borrowings and credit transactions, Madame Humbert had started the "Rente Viagère," an insurance office something after the style of the Prudential, or perhaps more like the late Balfour Building Society, because it was mixed up with religion, and invited you to save your money and your soul at the same time. By this means Madame drew large sums of money from the poor, whom she thus defrauded as well as the rich. Surely a fitting subject for "extenuating circumstances!"

The sentences were—five years' solitary confinement each for Madame and her husband, three years for Romain Daurignac, and two for Emile. Thus the "divine Thérèse" and her confederates passed into an ignominious oblivion.

There have been many minor Madame Humberts, but perhaps the nearest approach in magnitude to her case was that of the American woman, Mrs Leroy Chadwick. Her defalcations amounted to something like a million pounds. The case came to light in December, 1904, the year following the sentence of the Humberts. The methods of Mrs

Chadwick were so similar to those of Madame Humbert's that one naturally supposes that she took a leaf out of the Frenchwoman's "manual of instruction." Mrs Chadwick obtained large sums of money as loans on securities that had no more real existence than Madame Humbert's "millions." She also kept the imaginary securities in a safe. She was the wife of Dr Leroy Chadwick, a man well-known in Cleveland. She is described as both beautiful and fascinating, and, judging from the photograph I have before me, she had the "fatal eyes." That she had a persuasive and plausible tongue was proved by her achievements. She, like Madame Humbert, lived most extravagantly, making large purchases of costly things and indulging in every possible luxury. On one occasion she bought eight grand pianos and presented them all to her friends. She raised a loan amounting to nearly £50,000 from the president of a bank at Oberlin, Ohio, on the security of two notes totalling £150,000. The notes purported to be signed by Mr Andrew Carnegie, but were proved to be forgeries. Mr Carnegie denied having signed the notes, or that he had ever seen or heard of Mrs Chadwick. The president of the bank, who, with the cashier, was arrested for violating the Federal Laws by excessive loans to Mrs Chadwick, declared that she swore that she saw Mr Carnegie sign the notes, and produced an alleged Carnegie lawyer from New York who confirmed her statement.

Mrs Chadwick also obtained a loan of £40,000 from Mr Herbert Newton, a Massachusetts million-

aire, by representing that she had securities for a million pounds in a safe at the Wade Park National Bank in Cleveland. When the safe came to be opened there were certainly found a number of papers, but they were all worthless. She was arrested at midnight on the 7th December, 1904, at the Hotel Breslin, the detectives invading her bedroom for that purpose. At the time she was wearing a belt which was estimated to contain from £5000 to £10,000. In the dock she appeared to feel her position very much and fainted. This was probably mere acting, as she turned out to be a most notorious woman. She had led a most detestable life. One of her practices was to bring together financiers and young girls, whom she would well dine and wine. Having thus compromised the former, she would obtain loans from the men under threats of exposure.

But the most remarkable part of the case was the discovery which was subsequently made that this woman who had got herself married to Dr Chadwick, and had moved in the best circles of society, was none other than a notorious criminal named Lydia de Vere. A witness from San Francisco first discovered the identity; Mrs Chadwick was known to be skilled in clairvoyance and a hypnotist; so was Lydia de Vere. The facial resemblance between the two was seen to be remarkable. Mrs Chadwick refused to account for her past career. Finally the police were able to confirm the suspicion and place it beyond doubt that the two women were one and the same person.

The woman had had a remarkable career. She

was born in humble circumstances at Strathroy, near Woodstock, Ontario, in 1859. Her name then was Lydia Bigley, and at the age of sixteen she was arrested for forgery. She was, however, acquitted on the ground of insanity. It is, however, not at all likely that she ever was insane. She then went to the United States, where, under a number of aliases, she followed a career of extensive swindling. At Toledo, Ohio, she assumed the name of "de Vere" and practised clairvoyance. In 1890, in order to extricate herself from the position of financial embarrassment into which her extravagance had landed her, she forged a bill for £8000. The forgery was detected, she was arrested, tried, convicted and sentenced to nine years' imprisonment. Having served three-and-a-half years she was released. Why, does not appear. Three years later she contrived to get herself married to Dr Chadwick and once more found herself in a state of affluence.

Mrs Chadwick's extravagant habits found vent in various ways. She bought heaps of jewellery, took many girl friends to Europe, had her house re-decorated while she was at the theatre, presented her cook with a sealskin mantle and bought a score of clocks, one of them having solid gold works. However, her career was brought to a close for the time being by a conviction and a long term of imprisonment. It is to be hoped that the authorities will not be foolish enough to prematurely release her again.

One of the most remarkable cases ever heard in a

court of law was that of Mrs Sophia Annie Watson, an ex-convict, who was charged at the Old Bailey with having committed perjury in an action for breach of promise which she had brought against Major-General H. Terrick Fitz-Hugh, of Hassocks, Brighton. The latter was a visiting justice, and made the acquaintance of Mrs Watson while visiting Aylesbury Prison, where the latter was serving a term of three years' penal servitude for fraud. The breach of promise action was heard before Mr Justice Grantham in the High Court on 15th January, 1904, and ended in a verdict for the defendant. The plaintiff, who appealed for the modest sum of £10,000 with which to salve her wounded feelings, was present in charge of a wardress, Aylesbury at the time being her residence. It appeared that she had been released on ticket-of-leave, that she had then entered the action against the General, and then had gone to Paris. Afterwards she returned to London, and, having failed to "report" herself, she was arrested and taken back to Aylesbury. Hence the presence of the wardress.

Mrs Watson in the civil action applied for an adjournment, as she said she was not prepared to go on with the case. She further stated that when she was arrested the police took possession of all her belongings, and would not allow her access to her papers. Without these, she declared, she was unable to proceed with the case. The judge, however, refused to adjourn the hearing, and as Mrs Watson objected to go into the witness-box, the defence were

allowed to give evidence. General Fitz-Hugh went into the box and gave a categorical denial of everything. During the hearing of the case it transpired that Mrs Watson had, so far as was then known, been convicted and imprisoned five times for fraud and false pretences, the dates and terms being as follows:—1890, two months (Chesterton); 1895, twelve months (North London Sessions); 1896, eighteen months (Brighton); 1899 sixteen months (Brighton); and 1901, three years' penal servitude (Lewes). She alleged that the promise was made while the two were in a train together going from Hassocks to Brighton. It was admitted by the defence that the General did travel alone with Mrs Watson in a first-class carriage from Hassocks to Brighton, and that he had been with her on various other occasions. The plaintiff also stated that the defendant had written many letters to her, but the latter insisted that he had only written to her on one occasion, namely, when he wrote requesting her not to send him any more letters. She said that the letters he had written her were in the box which the police seized when they arrested her, and that they had refused to give them up. One of the jurymen asked the defendant what became of the letters which it was admitted the plaintiff had written him, and he said that he had burnt them. Another jurymen remarked, "There must have been some friendship between them." Therefore, although they gave a verdict for the defendant, they would appear to have entertained some doubt in the matter.

In the following July Mrs Watson was tried at the Old Bailey for perjury, the judge being Sir Forrest Fulton, the Recorder. Mrs Watson conducted her own defence in a very adroit and clever manner. She cross-examined the witnesses from the dock. She was attired in a black dress with a deep white lace collar. She had with her several sheets of paper and a lead pencil. But these, it appeared she produced to be merely for show, because she made but few notes, using the pencil mostly to punctuate her observations. She was a short woman and decidedly plain. She had, however, a very nice voice, and her manner generally indicated that she had at one time been in a good position. She cross-examined the witnesses sharply and generally regarded the proceedings with an air of lofty disdain. Now and again she would condescendingly agree with observations made by the judge. General Fitz-Hugh having repeated the denials he gave in the High Court action, the prisoner subjected him to a merciless cross-examination which must have been very trying to him. She put such questions as, "Did you not ask me to marry you?" "Don't you love me any more?" "Then you never did love me?" "Did you ever intend to marry me?" and "Did you ever give me any money?" To all of which the witness gave a direct "No."

The prisoner was keen and to the point in her observations. For instance, while she was referring to the letters which had been taken from her the judge remarked: "I'm continually receiving letters,

some from people of unsound mind, but I always put them in the waste-paper basket." To which the prisoner replied, "But I don't suffer from unsound mind." She made a very good speech for the defence, in which she said, "Had you (the jury) been in the railway carriage, where the General made his proposal, it would not have taken you long to make up your minds on the question. I am a persecuted woman. (Bursting into tears.) The board of magistrates at the prison knew the General had proposed to me, and they told him to make it up with me when I got out. It is for you, gentlemen, to decide whether I am such an awful liar, such an awful inventor, as the General tries to make me out." The speech would appear to have had some weight with the jury, for having been away three hours they were unable to agree. The judge then said, "Have you considered that by your failure to agree you are imputing perjury, not only to the Major-General, but to the governor of the gaol?" "We have," replied the foreman, "but we cannot agree." "Then I discharge you," said the judge, "with regret, and this case will be tried again on Thursday before another jury." Whereupon the prisoner said, "Thank you, gentlemen, they have committed perjury."

The case was tried a second time and ended in a conviction, the prisoner being sentenced to four years' penal servitude, which certainly did not err on the side of leniency. The prisoner burst into tears and exclaimed, "I'll end my life before I'll do

it; it is a cruel, wicked thing. I'll hang myself before I'll do it."

After the General had given his evidence he sat down beside me, and I took the opportunity of having a chat with him in order to get an impression. All the time he was talking there was an amused twinkle in his eye, which gave one the impression that there was something at the back of his head which he had not revealed. It seemed clear to me that something had happened between him and Mrs Watson. It might have been a practical joke which developed, as practical jokes have a habit of doing, on serious lines. It is inconceivable that General Fitz-Hugh could have meant anything seriously. She, however, took it so. The General died a little while ago. The last heard of Mrs Watson was in July, 1907, when she was again charged with failing to notify her address. She had not lost her keenness of repartee. A witness she had summoned to appear on her behalf had not turned up, when the judge remarked, "No one likes to come here." To this she replied, "No, but they like to send other people here." She was put back till the next sessions, when she was sent back to prison.

The case of the Charlesworths will be well remembered. These women, mother and daughter, like Madame Humbert and Mrs Chadwick, performed an elaborate "confidence trick." Again there was the mythical fortune and the dupes who believed the story. Also the younger woman had personal attractions and was able to manipulate men. It will

be recalled that the young woman, while motoring with her sister and her chauffeur in Wales, was supposed to have met with an accident and been cast into the sea and drowned. It was alleged to have occurred at Penmaenbach Point, twenty miles from her home at Boderw, St Asaph. The car was found by the cliff-edge with the wind-screen smashed and the sister and the chaffeur on the rocks more or less injured. The other lady, Miss Violet Charlesworth, was missing. At first the story of the accident was believed, but when it came to be examined closely it was found to be full of mysterious features. Very little could be got out of the two survivors, who appeared to be too shaken up to enter into details.

The path or road where the accident was supposed to have happened ran beside the sea. The car had apparently come into collision with the low wall skirting the rocks. Miss Charlesworth herself was driving at the time, and she, it was stated by the survivors, was hurled through the wind-screen into the sea and lost. However, the following peculiar features of the incident soon led to doubt being cast upon the truth of the story:—The steering-wheel was in no way injured; although, as it was said, the missing woman had been hurled through a large sheet of glass she had not been cut at all, for there was not the slightest trace of blood anywhere; she must also have rolled down the cliff, a gentle descent of about twenty feet, into quite shallow water; although somebody was on the scene a few minutes after the accident, the body of the missing lady was

nowhere to be seen; the chaffeur, who had been sitting on the side of the car next to the sea-wall, had been hurled on to a rock full of jagged points which had not in any way injured him, for he had neither bruise nor scratch; and the missing lady's hat was found at the bottom of the rocks *quite dry*.

The sister, whose name was Lilian, although she had passed through such an unnerving experience, was peculiarly calm. In fact the nurse at the home to which the two were afterwards taken said, "I never saw a woman so calm after such a terrible accident in my life." It was soon made clear that the accident was a "fake," that Miss Violet Charlesworth had good reasons for disappearing, for the tradespeople in the neighbourhood where she lived were pressing for payment of their many overdue accounts. One tradesman in fact had obtained judgment and proceeded to execution, when he found that the furniture at the house did not belong to the lady, and so he had to retire discomfited. Another account was that of £28 for petrol. Further investigation revealed the fact that Miss Charlesworth had for some considerable time been carrying on an extensive system of fraud, obtaining goods and money under false pretences. She had given out that she was engaged to an army officer named Gordon, who had gone out to South Africa and died on his way home, leaving her a large fortune. The latter was always coming but never arrived. It was just as elusive as Madame Humbert's "treasure" or Mrs Chadwick's "securities."

In order to lend a little realism to the story Miss

Charlesworth declared that she was going to take ship to the Bay of Biscay, where her lover and benefactor had lost his life, and drop a wreath in the water. Which touching act of devotion must have brought tears to the eyes of her creditors. By telling this story Miss Charlesworth succeeded in obtaining every penny of the savings of a trusting old woman of her acquaintance amounting to some hundreds of pounds, as a consequence of which the woman was left destitute. This, perhaps, was the worst incident in the whole affair. Miss Charlesworth used very smart stationery, adorned with a crest consisting of a cock's head issuing from a coronet, with the motto: "Mors Potius Macula" ("Death rather than a stain"). This is a familiar device of those who make a practice of defrauding tradesmen, and is of course adopted to inspire confidence. "Appearances" are everything.

The "accident" occurred early in January, 1909, and Miss Charlesworth was missing for about a fortnight. She was then found by a journalist at Macpherson's Palace Temperance Hotel, Oban, where she was staying under the name of Margaret Cameron M'Leod. For a little while she kept up the farce of denying her own identity, but at length admitted that she was indeed the missing Miss Charlesworth. The case then developed on remarkable lines. Miss Charlesworth became the best advertised woman in England. She was made a kind of heroine of by foolish and unscrupulous people. She was given a lucrative engagement to appear on the

music-hall stage, where she did nothing but stand to be gazed at. This was too much even for the British public, and her reception was in consequence "mixed." She was also paid a large sum of money to write her "life," which was perhaps the most arrant twaddle that was ever dignified with type. And when one reflects that there are many able and experienced journalists drifting about Fleet Street who find it difficult to make a bare living, this sort of thing does not inspire one with respect for certain features of the Fourth Estate.

Bankruptcy proceedings were instituted against Miss Charlesworth and eventually both she and her mother were criminally prosecuted. They were both convicted and sent to prison, the young lady thus finding herself committed to an "engagement" different from either that of the music-halls or the army officer. It was made clear at the trial that the whole system of fraud had been conceived and developed by the mother, who for years had practically been training her daughter in the deception. That being so one cannot help but feel somewhat sorry for the daughter who, by virtue of her personal attractions and accomplishments (other than those which she employed in her frauds), deserved a better fate. At one time she was engaged to a doctor, who for some reason or other would appear to have put an end to the connection.

In all these cases of what one may term the "minor Humberts" we find much the same methods adopted. A very remarkable case was that of a young English-

woman of humble birth who posed as the daughter of the Earl of Ilchester and called herself the "Hon. Eva Fox-Strangways." Being a woman of some education and pleasant of speech, she inspired confidence and committed many clever swindles in Europe and America. She seems to have been very successful in the latter country, being accepted by the members of the coterie known as the "four hundred" as a representative high-born British lady. She was neither beautiful nor accomplished, except in the arts of deception. She for some time lived in fine style until at length she reached the end of her tether and was arrested at Toronto. She was conveyed to New York and did not at all like it when she was taken to the "rogues' gallery" to be photographed, measured, and have her finger prints taken. She protested to Commissioner Woods that she was forced to live a life of deceit by the New York "wealthy parvenus, little nobodys, who just took me to their bosoms when they heard that I was an earl's daughter. I simply had to live extravagantly," she explained, "and as I was passionately fond of good society, I could not avoid acting as I did. Why, when I showed my acquaintances my name in "Burke's Peerage," and the "Almanach de Gotha," they went into ecstasies of delight and overpowered me with attentions."

In Canada she had lived as Louise St Clair, although she signed the police register "Eva Fox-Strangways." When arrested she was hiding under the name of Margaret Sinclair. Eventually she confessed that she was the daughter of an English

coastguard. At one time she was living at Montreal as the fiancée of an Australian millionaire, who it was said allowed her £500 a month. Rather liberal, even for a millionaire. It is not surprising to learn that this allowance "came to an end." For years this remarkable young woman had lived a life of fraud, and her success may be gauged by the fact that among her effects were found visiting cards and letters of introduction from many most distinguished persons. She told many different stories about herself, most of them being fiction. At one time she stated that she was travelling for the firm of George Newnes, Limited, and among her papers were found several manuscripts, one being entitled, "Fate's Rendering, or the Strange Adventures of a Woman Searching for Happiness." Certainly a strange way of looking for it.

The woman had defrauded many persons by passing worthless cheques. She had in her possession cheque books on the Bank of England, the National Provincial Bank of England, and the Capital and Counties Bank. She was originally a governess or school teacher, but this life was much too slow for her. Her true name was Strangways. By prefixing it with "Fox" she gave herself the family name of the Earl of Ilchester, who owns large estates around her native place. The "Hon. Eva" was a further addition she made. Having thus conferred social distinction upon herself, it only remained for her to "tell the tale." This she did, as we have seen, most successfully. For years she lived in fine style on the

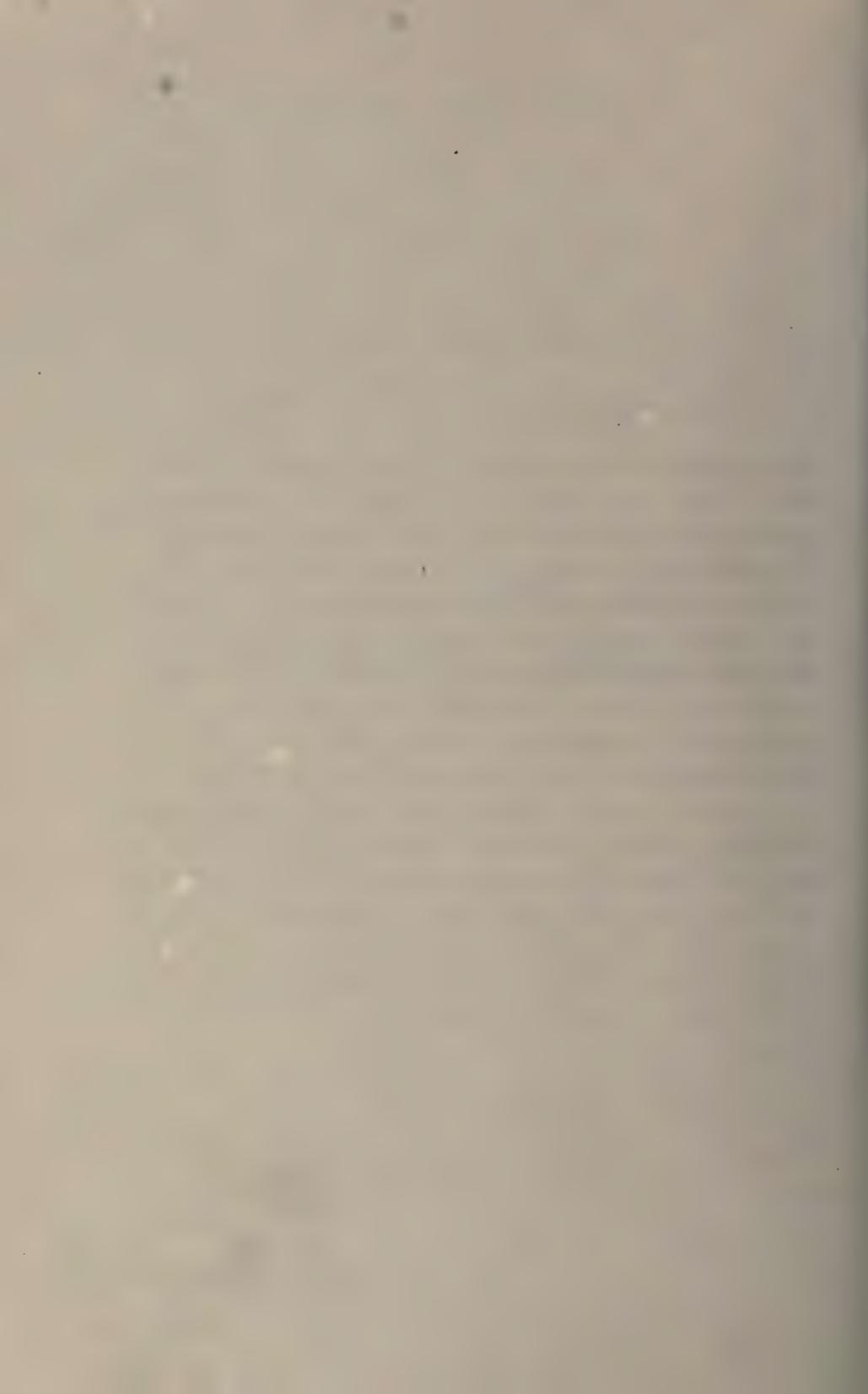
Continent and in America. She of course had to vary the tale to suit the company in which she happened to find herself. Thus at one time she owned, she said, parts of Achill Island, and at another 32,000 acres of land off County Mayo, Ireland. It was quite true, as she declared upon another occasion, that she was travelling for pleasure, but hardly true, as she further stated, that she was also travelling "to do good to the poor." This must have been material intended for Messrs. Newnes—probably for the *Wide World Magazine*.

I never met the "Hon. Eva," but I learn that she is a striking brunette, although not beautiful, and that she has "alluring eyes." No doubt the "fatal eyes" again, of the French. No doubt Eva lulled suspicion in her victims by the anæsthetics of her personality, the glibness and imperturbability of her mendacity, the power of her "alluring eyes" and the invincibility of her will-power. She is described as having a "determined manner."

From the foregoing it will be seen the class of crime usually committed by the "financial defrauder," and the various methods of committing it.

PART III

THE AIDERS AND ABETTORS OF
CRIME



CHAPTER XIII

THE STAUNTON CASE—MRS MCLACHLAN

WE now have to consider a few cases in which women have figured as aiders and abettors to crime. A woman may aid and abet either directly or indirectly. A person who renders active assistance to another in the perpetration of a crime is a direct aider and abettor. A person who is present during, and witnesses the perpetration of, a crime by another, or possesses knowledge that a crime is being committed or is going to be committed by another, and who takes no steps to prevent it, is an indirect aider and abettor. In this respect women may be equally guilty with men, although force or influence employed by the latter may be taken into consideration as a mitigating circumstance. But the mere fact of her being a woman does not reduce the degree of her guilt. Even a woman who is herself a victim may be an indirect aider and abettor in the crime of which she is a victim; that is to say, *morally* so. If a woman behaves towards a man in such a manner that she goads him on to the commission of a crime, of which either she herself or somebody else is the victim, she is morally and indirectly answerable for that crime.

And if she uses the natural influence of her sex to impel a man to the commission of a crime she is also morally answerable. And it is in this manner that women enter far more extensively into crime than is shown, or can be shown, in statistics. She is answerable for much crime in men.

We shall now proceed to consider our cases, beginning with that of the Stauntons, known as the "Penge Mystery."

Briefly the facts were as follow:—A young fellow named Louis Staunton married a woman named Harriet Butterfield, who would appear to have been of somewhat feeble intellect. It was clear that the only attraction she possessed for Staunton was the fact that she was heiress to a considerable sum of money. Her mother, prompted by her maternal affection and her own good sense, strongly opposed the marriage. Her daughter, however, was determined to have Staunton, for whom she seemed to have conceived some kind of slavish preference. It may be that he had taken captive her feeble mind. Be that as it may, they were duly married and set up house in Camberwell. Staunton had a brother named Patrick, who was a kind of an artist. Mrs Patrick Staunton had a young sister named Alice Rhodes, to whom it was quite clear Louis Staunton, even before his marriage to Butterfield, had pledged his affections. That was the ugly situation which was created by the ill-fated marriage of Harriet Butterfield. All were concerned in depriving the latter lady of her worldly possessions. By marrying

her Louis obtained control of her affairs. The next thing to do was to lay hands on her money. Unhappily a child was born of the marriage and shared the hapless fate of its mother.

It was never made clear precisely when the guilty intimacy which was subsequently known to exist between Louis and Alice Rhodes began, but probably the first act of adultery was committed while he and his wife were living at Camberwell. They were living in the Loughborough Park Road. During the illness of Louis's wife Alice Rhodes was constantly in attendance. There was also a servant named Clara Brown there, a girl of fifteen who subsequently played an important part in the case. Patrick and his wife were also near neighbours. Prior to this Mrs Butterfield had been forbidden the house at Camberwell for no discoverable reason. This was an indication that the first stage of the crime had been entered upon. It had been decided that mother and daughter must not meet again.

The next step was the removal of the whole party from Camberwell, from which they disappeared, leaving no trace behind. Patrick and his wife went down to a place called Cudham, in Kent, where they occupied a cottage, "The Woodlands," also called "Frith Cottage." The former, however, was the name it was mostly known by. It was a very small house, situated in a remote and little-frequented part of the country, standing well back from the road, and hedged in at the back by a plantation. The place was well chosen for the commission of a crime, being

so effectually shut off from observation. From Camberwell Louis and his wife went to live at Gipsy Hill, Norwood. But they did not stop there very long. The next move was a decisive one for Harriet Staunton. With her child she was passed on to Patrick and his wife and installed in the lonely cottage at Cudham. Louis took a small farm in the neighbouring village of Little Grays. He had with him Alice Rhodes, who lived with him as his wife. He allowed his brother Patrick £1 a week to look after his wife. He had already got possession of a considerable portion of his wife's property. Shortly after, he caused her to go with him to her solicitor and sign over the remainder.

Louis was now living in adultery with Alice Rhodes on the money forcibly obtained from his wife. The latter and her child were subsequently subjected to a course of cruelty and neglect that culminated in the death of both. The child, while *in extremis*, was taken to a hospital in London, where it soon expired. The mother, also almost at her last grasp, was hastily removed to a house in the Forbes Road, Penge, where a few hours later she succumbed. Hence the case came to be known as the "Penge Mystery," although the mystery was not long in being cleared up.

And so this odious crime was fully consummated.

In the meantime Mrs Butterfield was searching high and low for her daughter, concerning whose fate she entertained the liveliest misgivings. She had good reasons for doing so. She had in various places and at various times seen and questioned all the

members of what one may call the "gang," all of whom had lied to her, the two men even threatening her with violence. The truth came to light in a curious manner. Louis Staunton was inquiring of a shopkeeper in the neighbourhood of Penge as to where he could register a death, some particulars of which he gave, when he was overheard by a relation of Mrs Butterfield's named Mr Casabianca, who happened to be in the shop. Mr Casabianca, who knew all the circumstances of the missing Harriet Staunton, at once became suspicious. The name of the doctor who had attended the deceased having been mentioned, he, Mr Casabianca, called upon him and communicated to him the facts connected with Harriet Staunton's disappearance. In consequence of this the doctor withdrew his certificate and advised the coroner. Mrs Butterfield was summoned, identified her daughter, and the murder was out.

It is safe to say that no more brutal murder was ever committed by a set of callous wretches than that of Harriet Staunton by her husband and his relations. We have, however, here, only to consider the conduct of the females in the case. As is generally known all four were subsequently at the Old Bailey sentenced to death by Mr Justice Hawkins, all afterwards being reprieved, three sent to penal servitude and one, Alice Rhodes, released. To what extent were the women responsible and guilty? It is quite clear that from the very first both of them knew perfectly well what it was intended to do with Harriet Butterfield. It is also clear that they were

well acquainted with the progress that was being made with the crime, to which they gave their countenance and assistance. Morally they were fully as guilty as the men. It was, however, held that Alice Rhodes was not legally responsible. Hence her release. But is it conceivable that she was not aware what was being done with Harriet Staunton while she was living in adultery with the husband? By the mere fact of her living as she was doing made her an aider and abettor in the crime. It was in order to bring about this situation that Harriet Staunton was treated as she was. In order to be free of the crime she would have had to have refused to live with Louis Staunton under those conditions. She was actually participating in the plunder which had been extracted from the victim. She must have known that this condition of things could not continue indefinitely and that it was the intention to bring about the death of Harriet Staunton. When she was met by Mrs Butterfield and asked as to the whereabouts of Harriet, which she knew, she lied about it. That alone made her a confederate. However, she was, although convicted, held to have no legal responsibility in regard to the life of Harriet Staunton. It seems to have been a very fine line to draw, and may have been done out of deference to public opinion, which was very strong against the sentences.

Mrs Patrick Staunton was clearly a participant in the crime. It was testified to by the servant already mentioned, namely, Clara Brown, that she had witnessed acts of cruelty on the part of Mrs Patrick

towards Harriet. It must be admitted that the evidence of this witness was not to be relied upon too implicitly, as at the inquest she had given evidence wholly in favour of the accused. She afterwards explained that she was influenced to do so by the male prisoners, who had actually told her what to say. It is quite possible that that was so. When she was removed from their influence she altered her story. Mrs Patrick Staunton not only assisted her husband in committing acts of violence on Harriet, but she herself also behaved brutally towards her. In the way of neglect she was even more guilty than her husband, for it was more her province than her husband's to look after her. Harriet was kept confined in a kind of loft, or attic, which was very dirty, and from which she was never allowed to emerge until she was taken, more dead than alive, to Penge to end her miserable existence. Her body was in a shocking condition, being emaciated and verminous. There was, of course, the usual conflict of medical opinion, but there can be no doubt that the poor woman died from exhaustion resulting from starvation. To see women engaged in such a crime as this, is to view them in hideous guise.

A curious case was that of Mrs McLachlan. Although she alone was charged and convicted, I think the evidence makes it clear that she was at worst but an accessory after the fact. The case was a peculiar one and at the time aroused considerable controversy. Briefly stated, the facts were as follows:—

In the year 1862 there lived at 17 Sandyford Place, Glasgow, a Mr John Fleming, an accountant. His domestic establishment consisted of his sister, two daughters, his son John, a lad of twenty, his father, James Fleming, an old man, and his servants. Among the latter was a young woman named Jessie M'Pherson. In addition to his house at Sandyford Place, Mr Fleming also had a country residence on the Clyde coast, known as Avondale Lodge, which was situated between Innellan and Dunoon. Thither it was his custom to repair with his family to spend the week-ends.

On the morning of Friday, the 4th of July, Mr Fleming, with his son, went as usual to his office, leaving at the house at Sandyford Place, his aged father, James Fleming, and the servant, Jessie M'Pherson. All the others were staying at Avondale Lodge. Later in the day Mr Fleming and his son left Glasgow to spend their usual week-end in the country, without returning to Sandyford Place. On the following Monday, the 7th, they returned to Glasgow, going straight to the office. At 4 o'clock that same afternoon young Fleming returned home to the house in Sandyford Place, the door being opened by his grandfather. He therefore naturally asked what had become of the servant, M'Pherson, when old Fleming told him that she had gone away and that he had not seen her since the previous Friday. At this juncture the lad's father arrived upon the scene and was at once acquainted with the disappearance of the servant. He went straight to

the latter's bedroom and found the door locked. The room was situated in the basement next to the pantry. The key of the latter was tried in the lock of the bedroom and found to fit it. The door being thus opened the Flemings entered the room. Upon the floor in the middle of the room lay the body of Jessie M'Pherson, who had been most brutally murdered.

Dr Watson was summoned and made an examination of the body. He found no fewer than over forty wounds on head, face, neck and wrists. The police were also summoned, Constable Cameron and Dr Joseph Fleming, police surgeon, arriving at the house about 4.30. Upon the premises being examined bloodstains were found in various places, including in a room used by old Fleming. There was also blood on some clothing belonging to him. The weapon which had been used by the murderer was found in the scullery and consisted of a cleaver. Other bloodstains also made it clear that the body had been dragged from the kitchen to the room where it was found. Some silver was found to be missing, also clothing belonging to the deceased.

Who had committed this terrible deed and what was the motive? Suspicion at once fixed upon the old man. From the nature of the wounds it was made clear that the crime was probably committed either by a woman or an old man, because they were not the blows of a strong person. That at least was the conclusion arrived at by the doctors. But although it turned out to be correct in this case, it would not be safe to always draw the same inference under

similar circumstances, as either a woman or an old man might be capable of delivering very severe blows. However, there were other facts which directed the finger of suspicion towards old Fleming. In spite of the fact that he was well-known to be of a most inquisitive nature, particularly in regard to the doings of the servants, he had not made a single inquiry of the many persons he had spoken to since the previous Friday as to the whereabouts of the missing servant, nor in any way referred to her disappearance. On the Saturday morning he had himself opened the door when the milkboy called and said no milk was required—a thing never known to have happened before. It was also discovered that some portions of the kitchen and bedroom floors had been *recently* washed. The old man stated that on the previous Friday night, while in bed, he heard screams, but took no notice as he thought they emanated from some unruly persons in the street. He varied this story, however, on another occasion by saying that he thought perhaps Jessie had some friends with her.

The first practical step taken by the police was to arrest old Fleming, who was held for examination. It is, however, pretty clear that in consequence of certain information having been conveyed to them that they at the same time were making investigations in another direction. As an outcome of these old Fleming was at length released and a Mr and Mrs McLachlan arrested. This Mrs McLachlan, it should be explained, was a friend of the deceased woman

and had formerly been a fellow servant in the Fleming household. Her husband was a seaman, and it being subsequently proved that at the time of the crime he was away, he was released. What was the evidence against Mrs McLachlan? Well, she was found to have pawned the missing silver, to be in possession of the missing clothing of the deceased, and to have clothing of her own which was blood-stained. She was also known to have visited the house in Sandyford Place on the day of the crime. After she was taken into custody she emitted a declaration, in accordance with Scotch criminal law, the contents of which was kept secret by her counsel till after the trial. He did so from the best of motives, although it was considered by some to have been an unwise thing to have done.

We now have two persons closely concerned in this murder, one in custody and charged with having committed it, the other at liberty, but under a heavy cloud of suspicion. The remarkable part of this case is the extremely flimsy motive for it. Let us examine the motives which either or both these persons might have had. Take the case of the woman first. Robbery was the only possible motive she could have had. She was known to be poor and many pawn-tickets were found in her possession. But this brings us face to face with a somewhat incredible state of things. It seems scarcely conceivable that a woman would so brutally do to death a close friend, such as the deceased woman was, for the mere sake of robbery. It is only a very desperate character—

usually a habitual criminal—who deliberately commits murder for mere robbery, and Mrs McLachlan was neither one nor the other. On the contrary, she was known to be a woman of a very kindly disposition, and moreover was in a bad state of health. Again if robbery was the only motive why so many wounds? It was not necessary to mutilate the body in that fashion for the sake of mere robbery. Another argument against this theory is the fact that Mrs McLachlan must have known that old Fleming was in the house, that she would have to silence him as well as the girl, and that it was futile to deal with one without also dealing with the other. It is inconceivable that she imagined that she could commit the double crime of murder and robbery while the old man was in the house without attracting his attention. Why, the mere fact of her calling there, which she was in the habit of doing as a friend of the dead girl's, would be sure to draw his attention towards her.

Thus this motive almost entirely disappears. But robbery was committed, and we shall presently see pretty plainly under what circumstances.

Now for the motive which old Fleming may have had. In the first place he was known to be, old as he was, a man of lascivious habits. Subsequently it transpired that he had a short time before been "carpeted" by the committee of a religious body of which he was a member for having had an illegitimate child by a woman not named. As he appeared very contrite, and made a clean breast of everything, he was pardoned. In effect the celestials said, "We

forgive you this one, but please have no more." The incident was recorded in the minute book, from which obscurity it was subsequently lifted in defence of the hapless woman, McLachlan. The old Don Juan was also known to have been in the habit of paying unwelcome attentions to the female servants of the Fleming household, particularly so "favouring" Jessie M'Pherson. The latter had more than once complained to her friends of the conduct of "that old devil," appearing considerably distressed at the treatment she was receiving at his hands.

So here we have a motive, which, instead of weakening the more it is looked into, as in the case of that of the woman McLachlan, becomes stronger and more convincing. In the declaration made by McLachlan and already referred to, she stated that when she arrived at the house she went to the kitchen where old Fleming was. All three had drink. During the conversation which ensued Jessie said something to the effect that if she liked to open her mouth she could say something that would do a certain person no good, the allusion of course being to old Fleming. McLachlan was then asked to go out and fetch more drink, which she accordingly did. When she got back she heard groans and found Fleming standing with a cleaver in his hand, over the prostrate form of her friend, whom he had already severely wounded. Later on, when she, McLachlan, was about to go for a doctor the old man attacked the girl again and finished her off.

What happened at the house in Sandyford Place

while McLachlan was gone for the drink? It seems to me that old Fleming must have made some attempt to accomplish his purpose with the girl, that an altercation took place, and that the girl expressed her determination to inform Mr John Fleming of everything upon his return. She probably also threatened to expose him publicly. Something of the kind must have happened, when he attacked her with the cleaver. It would have been a serious matter, not only for him, but also for his son and his son's family, for such an exposure to have been made. What with the drink, the girl's resistance and threats, no doubt the old man became infuriated and attacked her with the weapon which was ready to hand. The first few blows were probably so struck, and he subsequently deemed it expedient to silence her altogether.

Thus McLachlan became involved in the affair and could not help herself. No doubt the old man used threats towards her if she did not consent to remain silent, giving her the silver and the garments as an inducement for her not to inform against him. In her declaration she explained that the silver was given to her by old Fleming to pawn, and I believe these were the circumstances under which he did so. McLachlan, realising that in any event she was involved, and being poor, took the bribe. She explained the presence of bloodstains on her own clothing by stating that she had tended the deceased girl before she had been attacked a second time, her clothing thus coming in contact with the blood from Jessie's wounds.

The case created tremendous excitement and engendered feelings of partizanship, there being the "McLachlanites" and the "Flemingites." The judge who tried the case, Lord Deas, was grossly partial to Fleming, treating the unhappy prisoner in a hostile manner throughout the trial. His summing-up was a masterpiece of partiality and confused fact. It was, therefore, not surprising that the jury should have returned their verdict with positively indecent promptitude, taking only a quarter of an hour to deliberate. The verdict was "Guilty" and the prisoner was sentenced to death. The sentence was subsequently commuted to penal servitude for life. The feeling against old Fleming was so strong that he was hooted and hounded from place to place.

On the 5th October, 1877, Mrs McLachlan was released on ticket-of-leave from Perth General Prison. She had £30 which she had earned while in prison. Her husband was dead. She afterwards went to America, where she was joined by her son. She married again and settled down in the new world. On the 14th February, 1899, she died of heart disease at Port Huron, Michigan.

Old Fleming had been gathered to his forebears long before Mrs McLachlan was released. Thus all the principal characters that figured in the "Sandyford Mystery" have been summoned to that great Assize where alone the full truth of it shall be revealed.

CHAPTER XIV

MME. MURAVIOVA—THE FEMALE SPY—PERJURY AND
DIVORCE—MADAME GUERIN

IN a previous work of mine,* published a few years ago, in writing of the poisoner I made use of the following words: "The poisoner of the future will not resort to any of the old blundering methods included in Schedule A, he will eschew alkaloids altogether, he will never be discovered through the medium of the tests of March, Reinsch, and others, he will even defy the law of circumstantial evidence, for his weapons will be microbes. Every infectious disease has its particular bacilli—typhoid fever, pneumonia, cholera, enteritis, and so forth."

Only three years later these words were verified by the case of Count Buturlin, who was poisoned by the administration of disease germs. Count Buturlin was an employé of the Ministry of the Interior at St Petersburg. He died after a week's illness. It appears that Count Patrick O'Brien de Lacy, a Russian of Irish descent, who, curiously enough, was a cousin of the notorious Countess Tarnovski, whose case I have already dealt with,† plotted to kill

* "The Story of Crime" (1908), T. Werner Laurie.

† Page 164.

off a number of his wife's relations so that she might thus inherit certain property. This connection between Count de Lacy and Countess Tarnovski is another instance of crime running in families. At the time of the poisoning of Count Buturlin Countess Tarnovski was in prison in Italy. Count de Lacy offered to give a Dr Panchenko £2,000 if he would "remove" his brother-in-law, £10,000 if he would deal similarly with his father-in-law, and £50,000 for the disposal of his mother-in-law, who was the richest of all. Dr Panchenko had a mistress named Madame Muraviova, who was charged with the other two, and it is concerning the part she played in the crime alone that we have here to deal with. Dr Panchenko, who was apparently a comparatively poor man, was keeping Madame Muraviova in considerable luxury. Evidently he was obtaining money in divers discreditable ways, being encouraged and assisted so to do by his mistress. He thus became a ready hireling ever on the look out for any kind of means to "raise the wind." He became acquainted with Count de Lacy, in whom he found an enterprising and lucrative patron. Suspicion first became aroused by a young man, who occupied a flat adjoining that of Panchenko's, overhearing a conversation between the doctor and his mistress. During this the latter asked, "Did you do it properly?" To which the doctor replied, "Well, I squirted two full doses, although one would have been enough."

The young fellow reported the matter to the

police, who, having made inquiries, promptly arrested Count de Lacy, Dr Panchenko, and Madame Muraviova. In accordance with criminal law in Russia, the accused were subjected to frequent and searching examinations in prison, an ordeal which is similar to the magisterial interrogatory which prevails in France, and the ordeal which accused persons in America are sometimes subjected to, and which is known as the "third degree." Such a proceeding would not do in this country, where an accused person is not called upon to incriminate himself. The nearest approach to it is the perfunctory examination which a suspected person may be called upon to undergo on the part of the police, when he is asked to account for his movements on a certain date. If he could do so he would at once be released; if not, he would be held for further inquiries to be made. But he would not under any circumstances be called upon to admit that he had committed any crime. It would be for the police to prove that he had.

Such methods, repugnant as they may appear to us, do occasionally succeed in extorting a confession from a guilty person and so paving the way to the administration of justice. It was so indeed in the case under notice. Dr Panchenko owned up at length that he had brought about the death of Count Buturlin, having been bribed so to do by Count de Lacy. He, however, declared that Madame Muraviova was innocent, that she knew nothing about it. But this was clearly not the case, for there was ample

evidence to prove that she knew perfectly well how the large sums of money which the doctor was receiving were procured, and from whom they came. She had made injudicious statements, as many other criminals have done before and will doubtless do again, concerning the money she and the doctor expected shortly to come into.

The way in which the crime was carried out was described by Dr Panchenko, and forms somewhat grim reading. It appeared at the time that cholera was very prevalent in St Petersburg, and it was at first contemplated to bring about the death by injecting or administering the germs of cholera by placing them on bread buttered and covered with caviare. But this was afterwards abandoned, why does not appear clear. It was afterwards decided to inject diphtheria toxin. The doctor was introduced to Buturlin, whom he got interested in a certain drug, which was supposed to be very beneficial to the system. After a while Buturlin became a patient of Panchenko's, and after a good deal of persuasion allowed him to inject, as was supposed, some of the drug by way of experiment. The injection was made in the thigh. Instead, however, of the drug being administered, it was the diphtheria toxin which was injected.

The germs were obtained from a chemist, who believed the doctor's story that they were required for experiments on rabbits. Two injections were made, and soon after Buturlin fell ill. Before he died he said, "Three months long they were at me

to have the injections, but I refused as though I had a presentiment of what was coming." The father of the deceased man, General Buturlin, demanded a post-mortem, which was readily agreed to by de Lacy, who did not believe that anything incriminating could be discovered. Nor did the doctor. Nor would anything incriminating have been discovered, it seems pretty clear, had it not been for the injudicious utterances of Madame Muraviova and the conversation between her and the doctor, which was overheard by the young fellow in the adjoining flat as already explained. All were convicted.

The part of a spy is ever a despicable one; not infrequently it leads to crime and loss of life. Therefore, in considering the female criminal, we must include the part she plays as a spy.

It seems to me that one of the lowest uses to which a woman can put her personal attractions and influence of her sex is that of discovering or extorting information from men for the purpose of using it to their destruction. Every man's hand, be he criminal or public benefactor, must be against such women. To voluntarily prostitute the gifts of nature to base treachery for the purposes of gain is to earn the detestation of every person with an atom of decency in their composition. Yet we have women constantly so engaged. Now and again they come to a deservedly untimely end, as in the case of the woman known as "Marie Derval," who committed suicide in a London hotel in the early part of 1906.

The methods of the ordinary female political spy are compounded of treachery and deceit. Being young and attractive—no others would be any good for the part—she easily wins her way into the confidence of youthful military officers, whom she induces to betray State secrets. Sometimes they are discovered. A few years ago a young and beautiful woman named Peterson was arrested at Kiel in Germany on suspicion of being a French spy. Posing as a teacher of languages she had entered into a love affair with a non-commissioned officer named Dietrich, of the Explosives Department, for the purpose of inducing him to reveal important German naval secrets. She had, by the exercise of her arts of fascination, attained complete ascendancy over the young fellow, who was found to be supplying her with the formula for the manufacture of German smokeless powder, and the situation of port mines. The attention of the authorities was first drawn to her by the ample funds she always seemed to have at her disposal, and her disinclination to report to the police her frequent changes of address.

A notorious Russian female spy was Madame Joutchenko, whose methods were somewhat similar to those of "Marie Derval." She joined the Terrorists, whose plans she betrayed to the authorities. For this she was paid a handsome monthly salary. She began her career as a spy at the early age of twenty-three, her first and biggest act of betrayal being that of the Raspontine plot against the Czar in 1895. She was the cause of many persons

losing their lives and of many others being sent into exile. She even went to big German cities, where exiled Russians were located, whom she fraternised and plotted with, only to basely betray them afterwards to the authorities. In order to avoid suspicion she would herself be taken, but would contrive, by arrangement with the authorities of course, to escape while on the way to exile. Through her instrumentality a young girl named Frania Froumkin was sent to the gallows in connection with a plot to kill the Prefect of Moscow. This contemptible woman would also work her way into the confidence of families, and then betray them to the Government, as a consequence of which many persons found themselves on their way to Siberia. No work was too dirty for this handsome traitress to do in pursuit of her blood-money.

Sometimes women are indirectly the cause of young soldiers betraying the secrets of their own country. A case in point was that of the notorious French beauty known as La Belle Lison. A young naval officer named Lieutenant Ullmo was deeply fascinated with her, and was ready to gratify her most costly whim. As is usually the case with such women her tastes were extremely expensive, as a consequence of which young Ullmo found himself in pressing need of funds. He obtained them by selling some of his country's secrets to a foreign Power. He was, however, discovered, and put on trial. An important witness against him was the woman who had ruined him, who had robbed him of

his honour and outraged his principles. She had the boldness to testify that she had threatened to leave the infatuated youth unless he continued to supply her with all she required in the way of "jewels and soft, clinging silk robes." She also confessed that they spent days together lying on the floor of a beautiful villa, inhaling the fumes of opium. In the end the young man was publicly degraded and sentenced to imprisonment for life. Nothing appears to have been done with the woman, although it seems clear that she ought to have been held guilty as an accessory. But in such cases Justice rarely comes fully by her own.

Another instance of a woman having aided and abetted in a crime without being convicted of it was in connection with a certain divorce case. A man brought an action for divorce against his wife, making a relation of his co-respondent, from whom he claimed damages. In the end the divorce was granted and damages awarded to a considerable sum. The co-respondent knew that perjured evidence had been given by an important witness for the petitioner, so he set himself to unmask this individual. In the meantime he had to pay the damages into court, where they would remain pending the result of his investigations. Fortunately, it was not long before evidence of the perjury was forthcoming, the witness in question being arrested and charged with the offence. This created a peculiar situation. If the man in question were acquitted the divorce would stand and the money become payable to the peti-

tioner. If, however, the prisoner were convicted, the divorce would be dismissed and the money returned to the co-respondent. At the trial the wife who had been divorced voluntarily came forward as a witness for the defence in order, as she put it, that "the innocent might not suffer." She had no sort of interest whatever in the prisoner himself, but the woman who had been convicted, as it were, of having committed adultery with a relation of her husband's, suddenly arose as a kind of guardian angel of the wronged and persecuted to stay the hand of injustice.

However, counsel for the prosecution held quite a different opinion as to her motive, and completely unmasked her. Never did a "guardian angel" cut such a sorry figure in this sinful world. It was quite painful to behold her floundering about in a kind of quagmire of mendacity. It was a grievous thing to see a young, handsome, and refined-looking woman in such a position, being compelled as she was to go through all the obscene details of an alleged filthy liaison. Her cross-examination lasted for about two or three hours, and it was nearly as much of an ordeal to me to witness it as it must have been to her to endure it. I feel sure that if she could have been enlightened beforehand as to what was in store for her she would have hesitated before coming forward in the interests of the "innocent." One derives a little comfort from this reflection, in spite of the fact that I afterwards saw her walking nonchalantly along the street, apparently indifferent to

her recent uncomfortable experience. But I think such women are not so indifferent as they profess to be. To be sure they are shallow-minded, and I suppose a little braggadocio acts as a kind of emulsion to their lacerated feelings.

Well, in the end, the prisoner was convicted and sent to penal servitude. So the "innocent" had to suffer, the divorce fell to the ground, and the damages were returned to the co-respondent.

This is, of course, no isolated case in regard to the perjury which was proved to have been committed in the divorce court, there being more perjury committed there than in any other court in the Kingdom. Therein female perjurers have committed crimes innumerable, for which they have never been punished, nor of course been given statistical credit. It is not often, as in the above case, that mendacity in the divorce court has a sequel in a criminal court. It would be far better if it were so. Who can estimate or describe the punishment visited upon the innocent by such perjury? Yet scarcely anything is done to check or minimise it.

I pass on to another form of aiding and abetting, taking the case of Madame Guerin. It has been many times proved that matrimonial agencies sometimes lead to crime. We have recently had several cases of men having systematically duped women through the medium of matrimonial agencies. We have seen how the portentous criminal, Mrs Bell Gunness, lured her victims to their doom through the agency of specious matrimonial advertisements.

We know that the notorious criminal, Dougal, secured several of his victims through matrimonial agencies. In fact, all kinds of crimes, up to the most serious one of murder, have been traceable to the aid rendered the criminal by a matrimonial agency. This state of things seems to call for some interference on the part of the Legislature.

Madame Guerin appears to have made contemplated matrimony a kind of handmaiden to systematic crime. She had as a companion in her dealings a man known as M. Cesbron. They ran a bogus matrimonial agency at Versailles. All their transactions were of a fraudulent nature, as they never at any time intended to complete any of them. They employed two young women known as Miss Smith and Miss Northcliff, who posed as "heiresses," and to whom many applicants were introduced with the ultimate object of marriage. But so soon as certain payments had been procured from the ardent swains the "heiresses" mysteriously disappeared, leaving behind not a trace of their going. Thus, whatever may have been the "intentions" of the male applicants, those of the females concerned in the business were only too painfully obvious. Many men were so duped, including an attaché at the French Ministry of Fine Arts.

Another victim of Madame Guerin's was a M. Lalère, who lost 35,000 francs over his matrimonial negotiations. Madame had offered him the pick of a whole bevy of "wealthy heiresses." While at the Opera at Covent Garden on one occasion she pointed

to three ladies in a private-box and told Lalère that he might take his choice. He selected one who happened to be Miss Northcliffe, because, said he, she was the youngest and prettiest. Finally, as usual, the ladies mysteriously disappeared.

While in London Madame Guerin and Cesbron became acquainted with a Dr Hebert, a London physician, to whom they came with an invention for a new process for the sterilization of milk. In due course the lady introduced the subject of her matrimonial agency, trotting out her "wealthy" though elusive "heiresses." As in the case of Lalère she offered the doctor the "pick of the bunch," and the latter's choice fell upon Miss Smith. In this case the intentions of the woman and her confederate were far graver than those in any of their other negotiations. Dr Hebert was possessed of a considerable sum of money which lay with the Credit Lyonnais. Guerin and Cesbron determined to secure this money by any means whatsoever. Representing, as usual, that Miss Smith was wealthy, they also declared that she was in love with Dr Hebert. In fact, they told the story so well that the doctor quite believed them, making serious preparations for marrying the lady.

They further represented that Miss Smith had much money in a certain bank in Paris, and endeavoured to induce Dr Hebert to transfer his account to that bank. In fact to join his account with that of Miss Smith's. In view of subsequent events this was a sinister move. However, it did not succeed,

although this did not deter them from carrying out their other plans. It was quite clear that the two had now resolved to murder Dr Hebert and so obtain possession of his property. So they worked the "heiress" trick for all it was worth. In the meantime they had taken a lonely villa at Bois le Roi, where they induced Dr Hebert to visit them and remain for a few days prior to his marriage with Miss Smith. They had already had a large trunk brought to the villa. Dr Hebert had not the slightest suspicion that the Cesbrons—there can be no doubt that the two were man and wife—were entertaining any mischief towards him. They all laughed and joked together, and appeared to be the best of friends. One incident, however, was significant, viewed in the light of subsequent events. Cesbron had a bout with the doctor as a test of strength, which served to demonstrate that the latter was much the stronger of the two. This was doubtless purposely introduced by Cesbron in order that he might ascertain this fact.

On the evening of the day that this took place Dr Hebert was sitting in a room by himself, writing. Suddenly there was an explosion behind him and a bullet passed into his neck behind the left ear, cutting through the tongue and soft palate and breaking several teeth. Dr Hebert turned round and beheld Cesbron standing near him with a smoking pistol in his hand. The doctor at once rushed at his assailant, who, however, doubtless remembering the contest of strength which had taken

place a few hours before, fled before him. Dr Hebert now endeavoured to make good his escape. Finding himself in the garden he made for the gate. It was locked. This was doubtless one of the many precautions which had already been taken to prevent his escape. Dr Hebert's position was now indeed a perilous one. He climbed to the top of the wall, his head thus becoming a target against the sky. A second shot was fired which hit Hebert, who fell back into the garden. Fortunately for him the night was dark. He crawled into some bushes, and by this means contrived to get away from the house.

This occurred on the evening of 9th November, 1906. Dr Hebert, who does not appear to have been pursued by his assailants with any degree of determination, staggered or crawled along until he arrived, bleeding profusely and in a half-fainting condition, at the police office at Fontainebleau. Here he was able to furnish the police with details of his negotiations with the Cesbrons, who, it appeared, were already known to them, and of the attack upon him at the villa at Bois le Roi. For some time afterwards Dr Hebert lay in hospital. The woman was arrested soon after at Versailles. In consequence of a number of charges she made against the doctor the latter was detained by the police for some time. It was at length, however, made clear that the woman was lying, an art in which she had become a past-mistress, so Dr Hebert was released and produced as a witness against Madame Guerin, or Mrs

Cesbron, as she unquestionably was. She was also known to the police as "Madame Cent Kilos."

Mrs Cesbron was not convicted until July 1907, when she was sentenced to three years' imprisonment. In the meantime every effort had been made to discover the whereabouts of Cesbron, but without success. He has not, so far as I have been able to ascertain, yet been taken. But he has been sentenced in default to two years' imprisonment. Neither of these sentences, taking into consideration the gravity of the crime, errs on the side of severity. They are in fact altogether inadequate. It was only by a fluke that they did not succeed in accomplishing what they undoubtedly intended doing, namely, murdering Dr Hebert. We repeatedly find the criminal law in France being strangely administered. Here we have the man who actually committed the deed being given a lighter sentence than the woman, who, *prima facie*, was merely an accomplice. It is quite inexplicable. If this case had occurred in England it is safe to say that the sentences would have been long terms of penal servitude, if they had not been actually for life. And such sentences would certainly have been nearer justice than the trivial sentences passed in France.

Apparently, the French authorities, in giving the woman the heavier sentence, regarded her as the organiser of the crime, but there was certainly no evidence of this. It is unusual for the French criminal courts to deal harshly with female offenders, as we have already seen in many cases. The Cesbron case

appears to be an exception. Unfortunately, in addition to the police failing to take Cesbron, they also failed to trace the whereabouts of the two decoys, the women who passed as "Miss Smith" and "Miss Northcliffe." The identities of these two women, who of course were clearly confederates, were never made known. The names they were known by were of course fictitious. They must have been women of fairly good education, with an appearance of refinement and personally attractive, to have deceived the men they did. An attaché of the French Ministry of Fine Arts is scarcely likely to be quite a fool, nor could Dr Hebert, a London physician, be so described. Yet these two men were completely deceived and victimised. Dr Hebert has admitted that he quite believed what was said concerning Miss Smith being in love with him. These two women must have played their parts exceedingly well, in addition to being equipped by nature for so doing. It is a great pity that the true identities of women who lent themselves to such odious work were not made known. Admitted their comings and goings were very mysterious, still they were seen frequently and openly, and ought to have been traced.

Altogether the conduct of this case does not reflect creditably upon the French police.

CHAPTER XV

PROVOCATION AND MURDER—THE “UNWRITTEN LAW” —THE THAW CASE—A SEDUCER OF MEN

A FEW years ago there occurred a peculiar case—a tragic case—which displayed a phase of the female character which has a distinct bearing on crime. Although the woman was a victim, she was also, in a way and indirectly, an aider and abettor in the crime of which she was a victim. This fact was taken into consideration by the authorities, who, although the man concerned was convicted of murder most deliberate and premeditated, refrained from executing him.

The case was the outcome of what is euphemistically termed a “love affair.” It terminated in the man killing “the thing he loved.” There can be no doubt that when he did so he was suffering from a certain form of mental derangement which neither the medical profession nor the law would seem to have yet quite decided to recognise. The latter did, however, in the present case, as I have already pointed out, admit it to their consideration as a mitigating circumstance. There have been other cases of the kind, notably the case of George Victor Townley, in 1863, over whose state of mind there

was waged for some time a perfect war of words. The medical profession were as usual divided about it—I wonder if the time will ever come when doctors will agree about anything appertaining to their profession?—and the law officers did not appear to know quite what to do. Finally, they would seem to have decided to compound with their consciences by condemning the man to penal servitude for life. However, the man himself definitely decided matters by committing suicide in prison. He threw himself from an upper gallery to the floor below. I believe it was this suicide which led to the introduction of the wire screens which now stretch from gallery to gallery in all our prisons.

The case of Victor Townley is so strikingly similar to the one I have opened this chapter with that I shall briefly deal with both, as being parallel cases, identical in all their salient features, although they are divided in time by half a century of years. The comparison is the more interesting from the fact that it serves to prove that the relations between the sexes is in no way affected by time, and that man is still occasionally called upon to endure at the hands of fickle woman suffering too acute for his mental stamina.

This Victor Townley, then, a man somewhat richly endowed intellectually although poor indeed in worldly wealth, fell deeply in love with a young woman named Bessie Goodwin, the granddaughter of Captain Goodwin, of Wigwell Grange, Derbyshire. Her guardian would not, however, hear of

the match, as he not unnaturally regarded it as scarcely likely to prove advantageous to his granddaughter. Townley, however, although poor, came of a respectable family. He was living at Hendham Vale, near Manchester, where he earned a precarious livelihood by teaching languages and music. At first and for some time Bessie Goodwin appeared to fully reciprocate the affection of her admirer, although, in the light of subsequent events, the sincerity of her reciprocity must have been more apparent than real. There was, however, no doubt about the sincerity of Townley's affection, which was destined to be a serious matter for both.

In view of the opposition to the match on the part of Captain Goodwin, the courtship of the couple had to be carried on clandestinely. This went on for some time, when suddenly the conduct of Miss Goodwin towards Townley underwent a change. Her ardour cooled many degrees, and she prevaricated over her appointments. This caused Townley some anxiety, which was in no way lessened when he learned that his fiancée had become "interested" in a young clergyman who lived near the Grange. Thenceforth for some time she would appear to have played with Townley in much the same manner as a cat does with a mouse. Finally she announced her intention of breaking off the match between them altogether. In the meantime Townley had been suffering agonies of mind, which was testified to by his mother and a gentleman friend. In fact his mother had become so alarmed at the state of his

mind that she had called in the friend referred to, and asked him to sit up one night with Townley. She evidently had an idea that he was likely to do himself some mischief.

Townley seemed to accept his dismissal with resignation, although he wrote to Miss Goodwin stating that he wished to see her once more in order to say good-bye. She first agreed to meet him, and then, prompted by her evidently fickle nature, refused to do so. However, he did not intend to give her up without a final interview, so went over to the Grange in spite of her refusal to see him. The two met and sat in the grounds for some time, when they went together into a lane close by, where they walked up and down for an hour or two. Suddenly—it was supposed at the moment of parting—Townley fell upon the unfortunate girl with a knife, with which he hacked her unmercifully about the head and face.

Miss Goodwin fell to the ground bleeding from many wounds. Townley assisted in carrying her back to the Grange. On the way he exclaimed, "Poor Bessie! you should not have proved false to me." Arrived at the Grange, he confessed he did it, and made no effort to escape. Shortly after the girl expired. Townley was tried, convicted, and sentenced to death. He was afterwards reprieved under the circumstances already described.

The other case occurred only a few years ago. A young fellow fell deeply in love with a girl many years younger than himself. Up to that time he did

not appear to have been troubled much with the "tender passion," having lived a kind of hum-drum existence of irreproachable respectability. However, his life became exciting enough after he met the girl in question. She accepted his addresses, and the two were looked upon as formally engaged, he having presented her with the customary engagement ring. For a time, as in the case of Townley, the course of true love went smoothly enough. Then the fickle nature of the young woman asserted itself, and she proceeded to treat the young fellow in such a manner as can only be described as fiendish. What it is in a woman that prompts her to deal with the man who is devoted to her in a brutal manner it is difficult to surmise. The whole thing is a mystery. If she derives any satisfaction from it it is of a very ungodly kind. It is also very dangerous, as these two cases prove.

Evidently this young fellow's mind became unhinged for the time being by the mental torture he was subjected to by the object of his affections. It seemed that nothing he could say or do would induce her to treat him in a fair and straightforward manner. She did nothing but play with him. There is a limit to human endurance, and she at length arrived at the limit of his. In a desperate moment he decided to put an end to the torture in a summary and effectual manner. For this purpose he purchased a revolver, which he loaded in all its chambers. About this time the young lady had been treating him rather worse than usual. She was, in

fact, although she knew it not, preparing her own shroud. The man would appear to have determined to give her one more chance before making use of the revolver. What occurred at this final interview, what conversation passed between the two, can no more be said than as to what transpired at the fatal interview between the young woman Byron and her victim. But it must have been something decisive, something which precipitated the deed of violence with which the interview culminated. In the former case the young man fired twice at the girl, killing her on the spot.

I saw the man subsequently when he was put on trial, and his appearance and manner were certainly those of a man whose mind was not in its normal condition. There was a peculiar detached look in his eyes, and he gazed about him in a dazed manner. There was nothing whatever in his personal appearance to indicate that he could be guilty of a deed of violence. Altogether he presented a most pathetic aspect. The letters which he had written to the dead girl, and which were read out in court, made it clear that he had, up to the time of the commission of the deed, behaved in a perfectly honourable manner towards her. They were the letters of a man protesting against the most inexcusable illusage, which he in no way deserved. Well, the case ended as I have described, which, however, did not elucidate the mystery of why a woman should behave in such a manner towards the man who shows her only the greatest consideration and devotion.

We find that what is called the "unwritten law" is resorted to mostly by females, or by men inspired so to do by women. It is altogether a cowardly and uncouth form of taking vengeance, which happily does not often occur in this country. It is most prevalent in America and on the Continent. The case of Madame Foucault, already dealt with, is a specimen of it, but it was only by a fluke that it occurred in this country. Most of the sordid story was worked out in France, the culminating act of cowardice and cruelty only occurring in this country, in consequence of the young man having sought asylum here from the attentions of his violent and obnoxious paramour.

It is said that in connection with the "unwritten law" there exist certain unwritten rules, such for instance as, "The man who seeks deadly vengeance must do it immediately on the discovery of the injury," and "If he is unable to meet his enemy forthwith he must serve notice on him of his intentions, so that the man may have an opportunity to prove his innocence and defend himself." Which is pretty good twaddle. A few years ago a woman named Mrs Annie Bradley killed her lover, Senator Brown, by whom she had had several children, and because he had failed to marry her and so legitimise the children. It was altogether a repugnant business, for Brown was a married man, the promise having been made while his wife was still alive. He promised to marry Mrs Bradley when his wife died. Presumably his wife did die, but he failed to keep his promise. She followed him from her home in Utah to Washington,

where she shot him in his hotel. She was tried and acquitted. Judge Loving of Virginia shot a man named Estes, who was supposed to have wronged his, Loving's, daughter. In spite of the fact that the offence Estes was supposed to have committed was not proved, the murderer, Loving, was acquitted. There are many other cases in America where men have been murdered for similar supposed offences and the murderers acquitted. Which is a pretty bad state of things for any country calling itself civilised.

Perhaps one of the most remarkable cases of the “unwritten law” ever recorded was that of the man Thaw. Thaw was essentially a type of the degenerate which may be found somewhat plentifully in America at the present day. They are the outcome of the mad and foolish money worship which prevails there, the incessant frantic rush to “get rich quick.” That sort of thing breeds unstable minds and robs life of most of its health and grace. But in this place we have more to consider the character of Mrs Thaw than that of her degenerate and homicidal husband. Nearly all the principal characters in this wretched and sordid story are beneath contempt, but at one time it was thought that at least the tender, dainty, delicately beautiful, innocent and wronged “Evelyn” was beyond reproach. Was this supposition justified by after events? I venture to think not. Was her past that of an innocent and pure woman? Was it not rather that of an adventuress? Also, was her mother any better than she was herself, or worse? She discreetly kept in the background. It was made

abundantly clear that this gentle little Evelyn, the poor scotched butterfly, had for years been living on her wits and her personal attractions.

And what part did she play in the actual crime itself? I say she had played the part of an aider and abettor. She unquestionably incited her morbid-minded and vicious-natured husband to the commission of the deed as an act of vengeance on the man White, towards whom she undoubtedly bore feelings of animosity. That she cared nothing for her mad-brained husband was afterwards made clear by her practically deserting him, dissociating herself from him altogether, the man who was supposed to have taken the life of another man, and placed his own in jeopardy in the defence of her "honour." Though where the defence was called for it is difficult to discover. Of course such women as her never have any sincere affection for anybody or anything but themselves, and then it is only a gross affection. Thaw, as I have said, is a distinct specimen of a certain kind of degenerate, and his wife of the class of women who prey upon such degenerates. It was but fitting that he should be placed in an asylum, though had his life been taken the world would have been well rid of him.

There can be no sort of doubt, however unpleasant it may be to recognise the fact, that there exists a certain class of women, possessed of certain personal attractions, who regard men as their natural prey, and to the victimising of whom they devote their whole lives and energies. Their conduct invariably,

sooner or later, leads to the commission of some deed or deeds of crime. But they are altogether callous of consequences, mindful only of their own personal gratification. They figure in drama as the "adventuress," a character much truer to life than the orthodox heroine. She is invariably either on the borderline of crime or actually engaged in criminal enterprises, taking care, however, to shield herself behind her male associates.

I recall a case of the kind, the case of a woman who might correctly be described as a seducer of men, who for years lived in the lap of luxury by cozening men, but whose career was brought to an abrupt conclusion in a tragic manner.

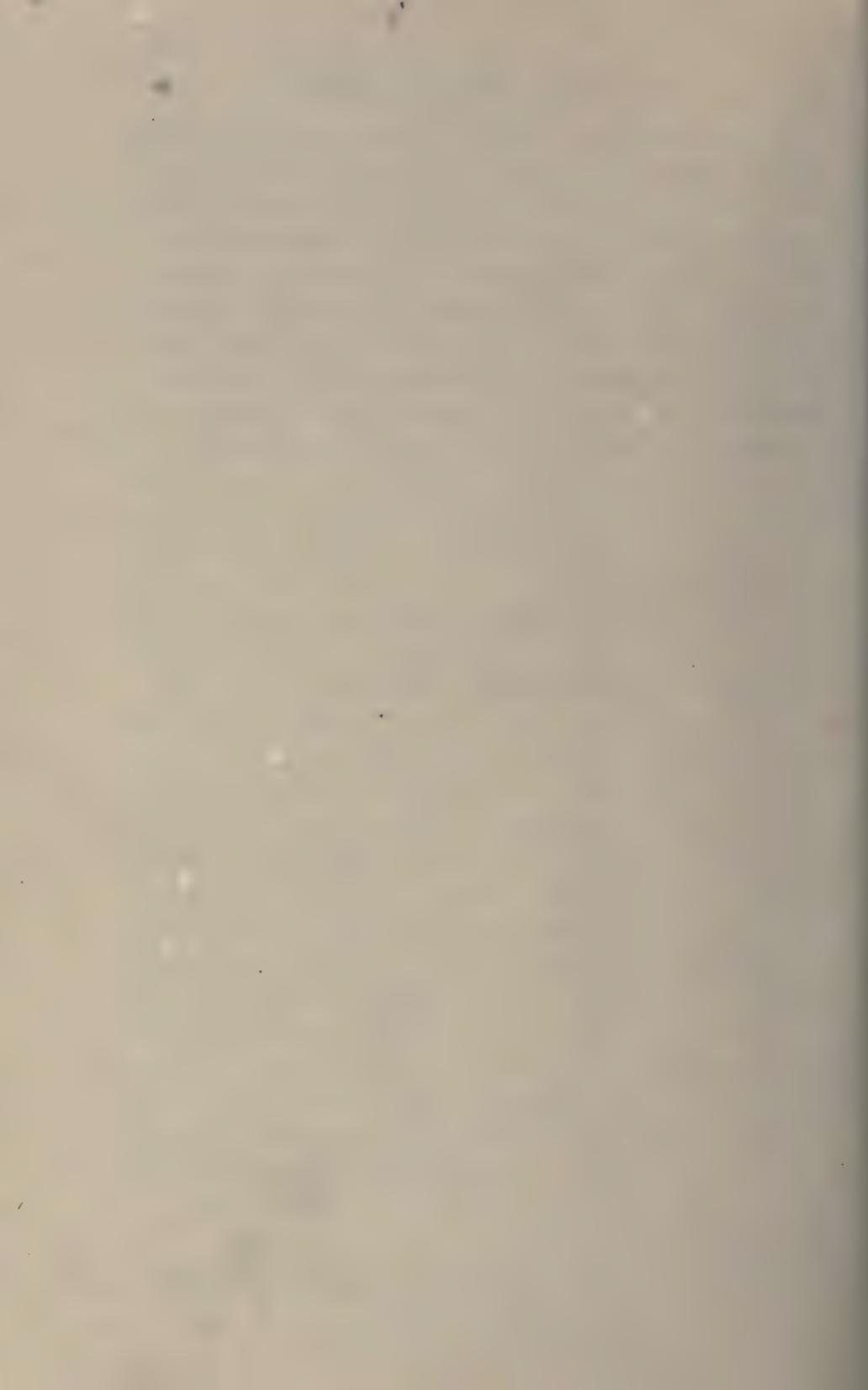
The case occurred in 1901. The woman, whom we will call Norah Hope, possessed personal attractions which were irresistible to a certain class of men. She was the daughter of a publican, who died while she was yet a child. At the age of sixteen she became a waitress and otherwise distinguished herself by saving a child from drowning. Later she married a dentist, who however died. She then procured a situation as a lady's-maid, afterwards married a merchant, with whom she went out to Jamaica. A few years later she was back in London without her husband. She met a certain gentleman of means, who appears to have become deeply infatuated with her. She became his mistress, and he kept her on luxurious lines. But this did not seem to satisfy her, so she picked up with another man who was younger, and whom she met clandestinely.

Her husband was still alive and was likely to be coming back to England shortly. Still, that was a mere detail.

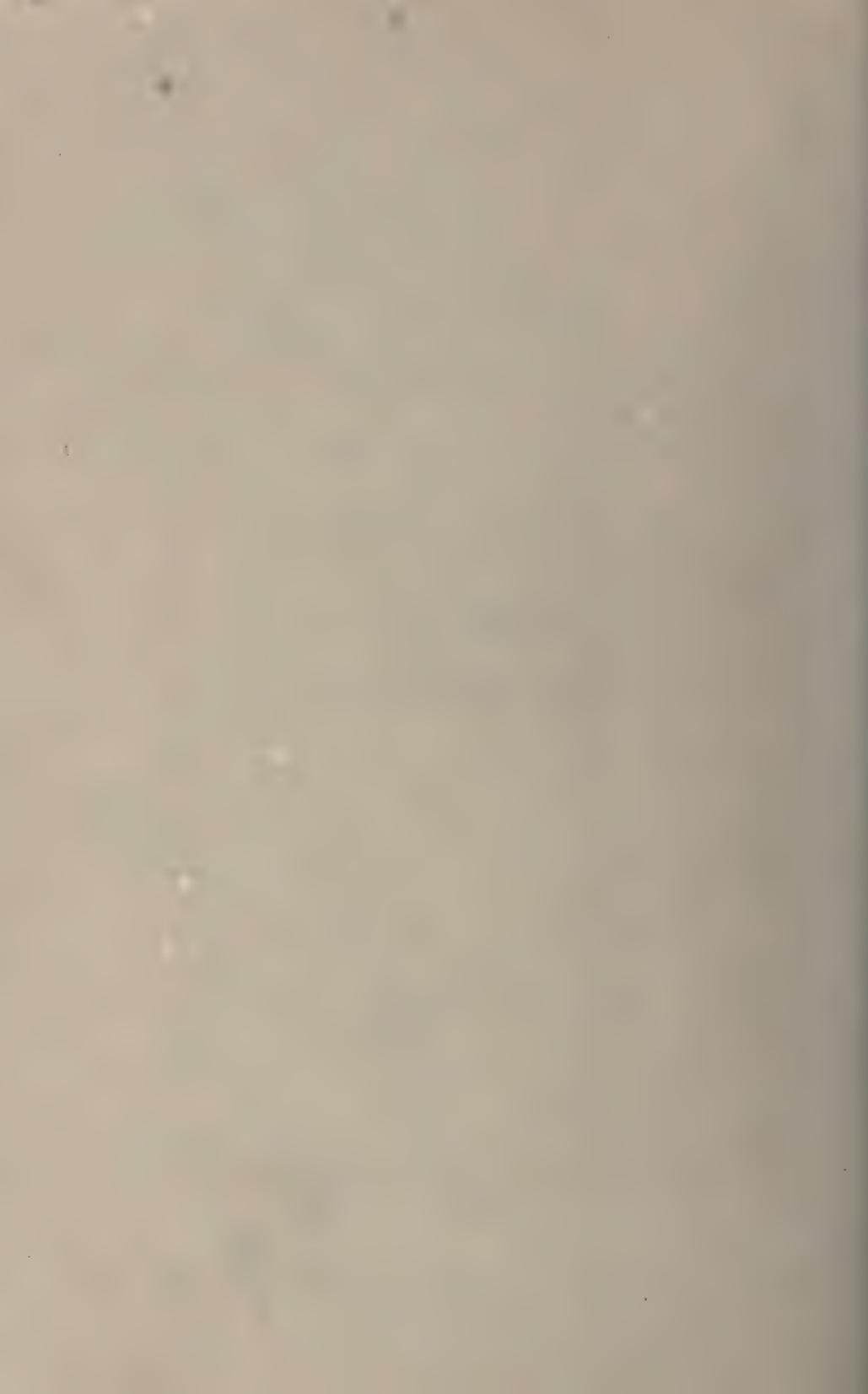
The older man, who was still showering his wealth on Norah, became suspicious concerning the younger man, with the result that he kept vigilant watch, and soon confirmed his suspicions. Thereupon Norah disappeared with the younger man. But the other, whose infatuation seemed to be in no way diminished, had no intention of losing her in this fashion, so by means of a ruse he discovered her whereabouts, and entreated her to rejoin him. She at length consented, but if she could have had the slightest peep into her lover's mind, and there read his true intentions towards her, she would have fled from him with the utmost speed.

He took a nice little villa for her in a retired suburb of London, which he furnished in a comfortable manner. In this elegant cage, thought he, he would keep his handsome bird. He had formerly been keeping her in a flat in London. The treachery of this woman may be gauged from the fact that she had eloped with the younger man with money she had obtained from the other under the plea that she wanted to pay her eldest daughter's school fees. It is not surprising that the man became enraged, and determined that she should play him false no more. He went down to the villa one week-end and there accomplished his purpose. He shot both her and himself, their dead bodies being found days afterwards in the lonely house.

Thus tragically ended the life-story of Norah Hope, who had applied the attractions with which nature had endowed her to a sorry use. It was pretty clear that she had had other lovers besides these two men. The last heard of the inmates of the villa was the playing of a pianola, and it was surmised that the woman was shot while in the act of playing and from behind. The man's body was found in the bathroom. Attention was drawn to the woman's body by the howling of a little dog.



PART IV
THE ACQUITTALS



CHAPTER XVI

MADELEINE SMITH—MME. STEINHEIL

IN our task of endeavouring to discover the full extent to which women, directly and indirectly, are concerned in crime, it will be necessary to examine a few cases where they have been charged with crimes but acquitted. In these the reader will be called upon to himself estimate the degree of responsibility resting upon the shoulders of the accused, if any, and to himself decide whether the verdict of acquittal was justified by the evidence, and was a fit and proper one in the interests of truth and justice. It may be, even in the case of innocence of the actual crime charged, the conduct of the accused may be open to severe censure, and may have had something to do, directly or indirectly, with the commission of the crime. All these points must be taken into consideration if we are to get anything like an accurate and comprehensive view of the true part played by women in the criminal drama of the world.

The first case we shall take will be that of the notorious Madeleine Smith. Although the details of

the crime are familiar to most students of crime, I shall just briefly recall them:

Madeleine Hamilton Smith, then, was the daughter of Mr James Smith, an architect of Glasgow. She was the eldest of a family of three daughters and two sons. She was a very attractive looking girl, as most women are who have been guilty of crimes of passion, accomplished and popular in the social circle wherein she moved. In April, 1855, she made the acquaintance of a young Frenchman named Pierre Emile L'Angelier, a clerk in the warehouse of Huggins & Co., merchants, Glasgow. She was introduced to him by a mutual acquaintance, a young man named Baird. It was a fateful introduction for both. L'Angelier became deeply enamoured of the handsome young lady, but as the social position of the latter was much above his no open engagement could be entered into between them. So the acquaintance was kept up in a clandestine manner through the medium of secret meetings and correspondence.

By the end of 1856, when the Smiths were living at 7 Blythswood Square, Madeleine had completely committed herself to L'Angelier, who regarded her, according to Scotch law, as his wife. I here quote a letter written by Miss Smith to her lover, which shows the state of her feelings towards him at the time:

“BELOVED EMILE,—I hope you will have this to-night. Accept it with my best, my kindest love.

A kiss, sweet darling—I don't know if you shall have a letter from me again before Monday, but I shall try—I was at the concert, M—— was with me. Jack and B——. I have put up this likeness in a (*sic*) Old Book, so that it may not be felt to be glass. I am just going out. Adieu, dearest love, a kiss, a fond embrace. Ever thine, thy own fond wife, Thy Mimi. 12 o'clock. Thursday."

This is one of the shortest of the innumerable letters which the passionate young woman wrote to her, as we must call him, paramour. Many of the letters were simply disgusting, so much so indeed as to be altogether unprintable—so low had the young woman descended in her immorality. I have already referred to the letters which figured in the Foucault case; in this connection we have history repeating itself. I am afraid these horrible epistolary emanations are invariably a feature of such degrading intrigues. In the Smith case, as in the Foucault case, the letters were destined to play an important part in the crime and the trial which succeeded it.

In February, 1857, we find Madeleine's ardour for young L'Angelier slowly on the wane. There was a twofold reason for this. She was in the first place undoubtedly tiring of him, passion of that kind being bound sooner or later to burn itself out, and there being no real love about it, nature asserted itself and created a reaction. There had also appeared upon the scene a gentleman name Minnoch, a Glasgow merchant, of good position, who had

offered her clean, honest marriage which had been approved of by her parents. Altogether this match was one highly desirable to the young lady, and she had no hesitation in accepting the offer. But, as the old proverb warns us, it is well to be off with the old love ere you take on with the new. Madeleine had not followed this excellent advice, with the result that she found herself in a very awkward predicament. She had intimated to L'Angelier that she proposed to put an end to their secret and guilty acquaintance, but the young Frenchman had no intention of falling in with this arrangement. Unfortunately for her—and for him also for that matter—he was in possession of many of her extremely improper letters, which he threatened to hand over to her father if she carried out her expressed intention of dropping him. That threat sealed his fate. Madeleine Smith was a woman of resolution, and was prepared to go to any lengths to avert the disgrace which threatened to descend upon her at the hands of L'Angelier. But before taking any extreme step she first tried persuasion, so wrote the young Frenchman the following letter, which all, I think, will agree is a very pathetic epistle:—

“Monday Night.—Emile, I have just had your note. Emile, for the love you once had for me do nothing till I see you—for God's sake do not bring your once loved Mimi to an open shame. Emile, I have deceived you. I have deceived my mother. God knows she did not boast of any thing I had said

of you—for she, poor woman, thought I had broken off with you last winter. I deceived you by telling you she still knew of our engagement. She did not. This I now confess—and as for wishing for any engagement with another, I do not fancy she ever thought of it. Emile, write to no one, to papa or any other. Oh, do not till I see you on Wednesday night—be at the Hamiltons at 12, and I shall open my shutter, and then you come to the area gate, I shall see you. It would break my mother's heart. Oh, Emile, be not harsh to me. I am the most guilty miserable wretch on the face of the earth. Emile, do not drive me to death. When I ceased to love you, believe me, it was not to love another. I am free from all engagement at present. (She was already engaged to Mr Minnoch.) Emile, for God's sake do not send my letters to papa. It will be an open rupture. I will leave the house. I will die. Emile, do nothing till I see you. One word to-morrow night at my window to tell me, or I shall go mad. Emile, you did love me. I did fondly, truly love you too. Oh, dear Emile, be not so harsh to me. Will you not—but I cannot ask forgiveness, I am too guilty for that. I have deceived—it was love for you at the time made me say mama knew of our engagement. To-morrow one word—and on Wednesday we meet. I would not again ask you to love me, for I know you could not. But oh, Emile, do not make me go mad. I will tell you that only myself and C. H. knew of my engagement to you. Mama did not know since last winter. Pray for me

for a guilty wretch, but do nothing. Oh, Emile, do nothing. Ten o'clock to-morrow night one line, for the love of God."

"Tuesday morning.—I am ill. God knows what I have suffered. My punishment is more than I can bear. Do nothing till I see you, for the love of heaven do nothing. I am mad, I am ill."

This was succeeded by another and longer letter, even more entreating and despairing. But they had no effect upon L'Angelier, who persisted in his determination to hand the letters over to her father. Then the young woman turned upon him in all her wrath and set about encompassing his death. She made purchases of arsenic, and with astonishing dissimulation made it appear to him that she had thought better of ending their acquaintance by renewing her former expressions of ardent devotion. By this means she induced him to come to the house where she lived clandestinely, their interviews being held at the window of a basement room, which looked out upon the street. At the first of these interviews she handed him a cup of cocoa or coffee, which he drank. On his way home he was seized with illness, and was queer for some days after. The symptoms of his illness were abdominal pains and vomiting.

Having recovered he went away for a short holiday to regain his strength, but was soon back again in answer to a letter from Madeleine, which

summoned him to another secret meeting at the basement window. Again he received a cup of coffee or cocoa from the hand of his "Mimi," sweetened with honeyed words from her lips, which he drank. He was again taken seriously ill on his way home, the symptoms being similar to those of the last attack. He was so bad this time that he was unable to get into the house without assistance. The landlady found him prostrate on the doorstep. He was assisted in reaching his bedroom and was put to bed. He gradually grew worse, and a doctor was sent for. The latter administered morphia and said he thought time and quiet would bring about recovery. They did, however, do nothing of the kind. Some time later the landlady looked at him, and, thinking he was asleep, left him. When the doctor came again he was told that the patient was asleep. He went to the bed and examined him. It is true that he was asleep, but it was the sleep from which there is no awakening. "Draw the curtain; the man is dead," said the doctor.

Thus the man had paid the penalty for the part he had played in that odious intrigue. What of the woman? Upon hearing of the death she sought refuge in flight. The facts becoming known, she was pursued and brought back. She was formally taken into custody and charged with the crime. The exposure which ensued was, of course, a terrible one for her family. Unfortunately for the prosecution they were unable to produce evidence to prove that the prisoner saw and spoke with the deceased upon the

night when the fatal dose of poison was undoubtedly given. At least they could not produce it in time, although it was forthcoming at a stage in the proceedings when, according to Scotch criminal law, it could not be introduced. As a result of this unfortunate state of things the jury were compelled to return a verdict of Not Guilty on the first count of the indictment, and Not Proven on the other two, so that the obviously guilty woman was allowed to go free. A fact that scarcely increases one's respect for the law.

It is not good for justice and law and order that the guilty should go free any more than it is for the innocent to be made to suffer. Such miscarriages of justice as the above and that of Madame Foucault are therefore much to be deplored. Every such case acts as an incentive to other would-be wrongdoers. Some means ought to be devised for avoiding the possibility of such serious legal mishaps. There is no end to the folly of the injudicious and the shallow-minded, and as the acquittal of Madame Foucault was applauded and the woman herself made a kind of heroine of by such individuals, so in the case of Madeleine Smith many foolish and indelicate men offered marriage to the gross adultress and relentless homicide. I understand she did, eventually, become married in another country, but whether to a man acquainted with her past or not I am unable to say.

The remarkable part about Madeleine Smith is the thoroughness with which she accomplished her

wrongdoing. In her immorality she went to the utmost lengths. In accomplishing the destruction of L'Angelier nothing could stay her hand. But she does not appear in statistics.

The next case we shall consider is that of the Frenchwoman, Madame Steinheil.

On the night of May 30, or the morning of May 31, 1908, Adolphe Steinheil and his mother-in-law, Madame Japy, were murdered at their house in the Impasse Ronsin, Paris. The former was found strangled in a room adjoining that in which the latter was found bound, gagged and also strangled. When, by what means and by whom had the double murder been committed? That is a question which, so far, the authorities have failed to adequately answer. At the top of the house slept the valet, who stated that he had heard nothing during the night to arouse his suspicions. Madame Steinheil herself had also apparently been attacked, being found bound and gagged on her bed. According to her own account she saw the assailants very clearly, and was able to describe them with a wealth of detail which was rather remarkable. She said they consisted of a red-haired woman and two men, one of whom had a long, fair beard and wonderfully piercing eyes. All three wore robes like the Russian Pope's gown. According to Madame Steinheil herself she had a conversation with the red-haired woman, during which the latter indulged freely in slang which puzzled the French police a good deal. They had never heard such slang before.

Both jewellery and money were supposed to have been stolen. The police could make nothing of the crime, the information afforded them by Madame Steinheil rather mystifying than helping them. Nothing was done for some time, when Madame Steinheil, who had apparently been chafing at the supposed inactivity of the police, bestirred herself, and volunteered to find the assassin or assassins herself. The result of her investigations were peculiar, not to say disastrous. First of all, the valet, Rémy Couillard, was accused by her, of having committed the crime. One of the missing jewels, a pearl, was found in his pocket-book. The man indignantly denied all knowledge of either the crime or the pearl. Couillard was proved to have had no hand in the crime, and Madame Steinheil afterwards confessed that she had put the pearl in his pocket-book. Asked why she did this, she explained that feeling convinced that the valet was guilty she put the pearl in his pocket-book in order to create evidence of his guilt. Which was not quite in accordance with the methods of Sherlock Holmes. She next accused the son of her cook, Mariette Wolff, expressing herself equally as confident of his guilt as she had done of Couillard's. Again she was curiously mistaken, for the innocence of Alexandre Wolff was as readily provable as was that of the valet. She made quite a detailed statement concerning Wolff's supposed guilt. She said, when asked who the actual murderer was:—"It is Alexandre Wolff, son of my cook. His object was robbery. He entered the house,

thinking we were still at Bellevue. (Their country house.) He came into my room. I awoke and screamed for help. My husband rushed into the room, and Alexandre killed him. All the time I kept screaming. My mother heard me and called out, 'What is the matter?' Alexandre then rushed into the other room and finished off poor mother. When he returned to my room he rushed at me, threw me on the bed, gagged and bound me, and said, 'I spare your life because of your daughter, but if you reveal to the police what has happened I shall charge you with being my accomplice, and say you instigated the crime!' Then I fainted and remember no more. As I had no witnesses I was afraid to tell the truth to the police, fearing I would be charged as an accomplice, so the day after I took and hid the jewellery in order to simulate a burglary. No! I swear Wolff has never been my lover. The cook knew nothing of the crime, but some time ago I told her the whole story."

The discrepancies in the above story are obvious. The valet declared that he had not been disturbed by any noise during the night. It is inconceivable that he should not have heard Madame Steinheil, if, as she declared, she "kept screaming." As Steinheil was found in or near the bathroom he could not have been killed by Wolff in the manner stated by Madame Steinheil. The whole statement is clearly an invention. When confronted by Wolff in the presence of the magistrate, Wolff in a perfect fury said:

"Miserable, wretched woman, how can you make

such an accusation! You know that I had nothing to do with the crime."

"Yes, you are the murderer," persisted Madame Steinheil.

"No! No! No!" reiterated Wolff emphatically; "you lie. You are telling a monstrous, infamous lie."

"I tell the truth," the woman insisted.

"It is a lie and you know it," said Wolff. "I shall be able to prove that you are attempting with me the game you played with Rémy Couillard. I am innocent, and I can prove that I was elsewhere on the night of the crime." Then looking straight and sternly at Madame Steinheil, he added, "You are either mad or a liar, or you are both. You are trying to shield someone else; but you will be found out."

Madame Steinheil here became faint and staggered, and to the astonishment of those present said,

"If it was not Alexandre Wolff who killed my husband, it was someone who is very much like him."

"Will you never tell us the truth?" despairingly asked the magistrate. "Do you intend to retract, and now say you have falsely charged Wolff, as you charged Rémy Couillard?"

"I might have made a mistake," said the prevaricating lady, "but I won't say anything more till I see my lawyer."

She afterwards confessed that she was herself guilty, but subsequently this she also denied. I should imagine there never was a bigger liar than

Madame Steinheil. She seemed quite incapable of telling the truth, except inadvertently. Asked why, when everything had quieted down, she herself revived the matter, she replied:

“ Because I wished to justify myself in the eyes of someone who is very dear to me, whose love I had lost, and whom, alas! I must now try to forget.”

If we examine somewhat closely the salient facts in the tragedy itself I do not think we shall find much mystery about it. On the night it occurred four persons were sleeping in the house in the Impasse Ronsin. They were M. and Mme. Steinheil, Mme. Japy, Madame Steinheil's mother, and the valet, Rémy Couillard. The last-named was sleeping at the top of the house. All the others were sleeping below on the same floor, although in separate rooms. Couillard was the first to discover the crime upon his descent the following morning. He found Steinheil near or in the bathroom, strangled. By the position of the body it was clear that he had been attacked from behind and strangled with a cloth of some kind. Madame Japy was found bound, gagged, and strangled on her own bed. Madame Steinheil was also found on her bed bound and gagged. There were several significant facts in connection with the occurrence which are important in arriving at the truth. For instance, the gag in the case of Madame Steinheil was a trivial affair, which could not have caused her much inconvenience. Her bonds were also almost loose, which made it clear that the binding was mere make-believe.

The strangest part of all was the fact that although the police closely examined the house from top to bottom, inside and out, not a trace could they discover of how the supposed burglars effected an entrance. Therefore it was not an ordinary burglary. That is quite certain. No burglar ever yet entered a building without leaving behind evidence of how he got in. Even if he entered by means of a chimney he would leave behind traces of his method of ingress. This brings us face to face with two theories. Either the murders were committed by someone already in the house, or the assassins entered in the ordinary way by means of a key. And it is important in this connection to note that the front door was in fact left unfastened. This must have been done intentionally, because an ordinary burglar or burglars would not have known of this omission, and would have forced an entry in the usual manner. Another peculiar feature of the affair was the fact that the clock in the hall had been stopped by somebody. No ordinary burglar would trouble to do that. This was probably done by the same individual who gave the assassins the key, so that the police might be deceived as to the exact time the murders were committed, and so help the assassins to avoid detection.

Still another peculiar feature of the affair was the killing of Madame Japy. My impression is that this was unpremeditated and rendered expedient by untoward circumstances. I should say that Madame Japy being roused and becoming aware of the presence of the assassins, the latter killed her in order

to secure their own safety and on the principle that "dead men tell no tales." It seems clear that Steinheil, hearing a noise, went to see the cause of it, and was then attacked. Was the noise purposely made? It may have been that Madame Japy was killed elsewhere, and her body put on the bed where it was found.

What was the motive of the crime? At the outset Madame Steinheil stated that both money and jewellery were missing. She afterwards denied that any jewellery was missing. As a matter of fact, it was proved that she herself had disposed of it. In regard to the money, there was no proof that it was missing beyond the word of Madame Steinheil. Can that be relied upon? It is therefore pretty safe to say that robbery was not the motive, nor was any burglary committed. Madame Japy's death being brought about, as it were, by misadventure, does not enter into the question of motive. We have therefore only the death of Steinheil to consider. Who would benefit by his death? He was not killed for robbery. It was not done by an outsider out of revenge, for the assassin would have had the same difficulty in getting into the house as a burglar would. We have made it clear that if anybody from outside did the deed they must have been assisted in getting into the house by somebody already inside. At this juncture it is as well to record the fact that on the night of the crime, Madame Steinheil's daughter, Martha, and the cook, Wolff, happened to be away, staying at a friend's house.

I repeat, who benefited by the death of Steinheil? Madame Steinheil confessed that there was another man who was "very dear" to her, and for whose sake she tried in the frantic manner we have seen to lift the cloud of suspicion which, naturally hung over her. She also confessed that she detested her husband, although she denied having killed him. It may very well be that she did not kill him with her own hands, but— She was altogether a most sinister woman—a woman "with a past" with a vengeance. For years she had "dealt" in men, as it were. She had the usual irresistible attraction to a certain class of men and the "fatal eyes." She took the fullest possible advantage of the accident of her sex. Her husband was a poor artist—I mean poor in a financial sense—but Madame always had plenty of money and kept up a fine establishment, where she received, as in the case of Madame Humbert, some of the highest in the land. It was known that there were many wealthy men who were in receipt and enjoyment of her "favours." Among her "clients" was even the President himself—Felix Faure. He had met her in the Alps, doubtless while he was in a state of mental exaltation, and at once been attracted to her. The acquaintance ripened until it became a customary thing for Madame Steinheil to call upon the President about twice a week. Presumably she did not call to play draughts with him. One fatal day, while she was in his presence, the President was seized with apoplexy and died within the hour. The lady was bundled into a cab and driven away, the

affair being for a time hushed up. The truth, however, came out at length.

After Madame Steinheil became friendly with the President commissions for pictures poured in upon her husband, who was also decorated with the Legion of Honour. There is no evidence that M. Steinheil was aware of the life his wife was leading. She probably furnished some plausible story to account for her affluence. We have seen that she was a ready and resourceful liar. And Steinheil was obviously a jelly-fish of a husband, whom it would not be difficult for a woman like Madame Steinheil to cajole and humbug. It is curious that women of that class invariably have fools for husbands. It may be that they select them so purposely as being the easier to victimise. Such women are good readers of male character. They usually know every inch of a man, for it is by playing on his weaknesses that they attain an ascendancy over him.

As is generally known the police failed to prove their case against Madame Steinheil, who was accordingly released. The trial was characterised by the usual dramatic scenes which invariably attend French criminal cases. Nobody else has since been charged with the crime, which remains unpunished to the present day. The reader must form his own ideas as to where guilt lay and why Steinheil was killed. It does not seem to me to be even vague. It is similar to many of the "unsolved mysteries" which have occurred in this country, which are no mysteries at all to the police.

It was reported quite recently that the daughter of Madame Steinheil was married to Signor Raphael del Perugia, a young Italian artist.

Such women as Madame Steinheil do not get into criminal statistics.

CHAPTER XVII

“ NAN ” PATTERSON—MRS HASKELL—ADELAIDE
BARTLETT—COUNTESS KWILECKY

IN the case of Mrs “ Nan ” Randolph Patterson we have the miserable, sordid Thaw story practically repeated—a story which seems to be typical of a certain phase of American life. It appears to exhibit life at about its lowest moral standard. Again we have the reckless profligate, and the woman, young and of attractive appearance, who preys upon him. A man is certainly a fool who marries a woman merely for her good looks. It is the good-looking women who cause most of the trouble in the world. A man had better be contented with a good homely face and plenty of humdrum virtues.

Mrs Patterson had been on the stage as a chorus-girl in *Floradora*. She was one day seen by Mr “ Cæsar ” Young, an Englishman resident in America, a bookmaker, rancher, and racehorse-owner, who at once became infatuated with her. Having plenty of money, and the lady being one who had no fixed principles, Mr Young was enabled to gratify his disorderly predilection. The fact that there existed a Mr Patterson and a Mrs Young did

not seem to count for much, for the two practically lived as man and wife. Young spent his money pretty freely, not only upon his mistress, but also, apparently, upon her sister and her sister's husband. In fact, he was bled copiously by all three, and at one time it was contemplated to prosecute the sister and her husband for blackmail. They have some desperately bad men and women in America, and Young, loose as was his own mode of life, fell among some who were bad indeed. One feels sorry for people like Mr Patterson, who did not appear on the scene at all, and Mrs Young, who in vain endeavoured to save her husband from the consequences of his own indiscretion.

There can be no doubt that Young made a resolute effort to free himself from the woman Patterson and her harpy relations, but found it a very difficult matter to do so. At one time, while in the heat of his infatuation, he went away with Patterson, but Mrs Young found them at Los Angeles, and induced her husband to return to her. The wretched woman, Patterson, however, followed him up, and would not let him be. Then Mrs Young decided to take her husband away from America and return to England. This precipitated the tragedy. Everything was arranged, and the day of departure arrived. Mrs Young waited on the quay for her husband, who had gone to bid his mistress farewell. It was not made clear whether he voluntarily sought out Patterson to say good-bye, or she went to him to endeavour to dissuade him from departing. Under all the circum-

stances the latter seems to be the more probable theory. At all events the two unfortunately met that day, and it was while they were driving in a cab to the docks that the tragedy happened.

Young was shot in the side and expired soon after. The question which had to be decided was as to whether he shot himself or was shot by his companion. Patterson said he shot himself during a fit of depression produced by the prospect of parting with her. This seems to be contradicted by nearly all the known and admitted facts. There can be no doubt that Young had practically tired of her, and was not in any way coerced into leaving America. The nature of the wound also made suicide highly improbable. The woman said she heard a muffled report, and saw the revolver fall to the ground, which inferred that he had shot himself while holding the weapon in his pocket. She further said she picked up the weapon and put it in his pocket, where it was found. An examination of the man's clothing proved this to be incorrect, nor was there any indication on the man's fingers that he had handled the weapon in any way.

There were also these additional and significant facts:—Young was never known to carry a revolver. The one with which the deed was accomplished was proved to have been sold by a dealer named Schneider over the counter in the Broadway, New York, in November, 1898. At that time Young was known to have been in San Francisco. The theory of the prosecution was that the weapon was sold to

Patterson's brother-in-law, and that she obtained it in that way. Unfortunately, they were unable to prove this, the dealer failing to identify the brother-in-law as the man who made the purchase. It was made quite clear that the wound could not have been self-inflicted. It was on the man's left side. He was sitting on the right of Patterson in the cab. He had not shot himself from the inside of his pocket, and he could not possibly have shot himself from the outside, and then have put the weapon in his pocket afterwards. Such a thing would have been quite impossible. If you add to these facts the circumstances that two women were practically in conflict for the possession of the man, and that one of them, the lawful wife, was on the eve of victory, anybody with only a small amount of knowledge of female human nature will have no difficulty in arriving at a definite conclusion in the matter.

However, in spite of the above significant facts, three American juries were unable to agree about it, for the woman was tried three times without a verdict being returned. No doubt the woman's youth and personal appearance had a good deal to do with this indecision, for it seems that the average man is incapable of dissociating sentiment from his judgment of the actions of women. So the woman was neither convicted nor acquitted, for the prosecution entered a *nolle prosequi*, and she was allowed to go free; a most unsatisfactory state of things for all parties concerned. Juries certainly do seem to be compounded of extremely poor material.

When once a jury disagrees it is not easy to obtain a verdict, however plain the facts may be. There have been cases, however, where a verdict has been returned, either one way or the other, after a disagreement. In Ireland a few years ago a man was convicted of murder after two disagreements, and in the case of Mrs Haskel, which will doubtless be fresh in the minds of my readers, the prisoner was acquitted after one disagreement.

The case of Mrs Adelaide Bartlett will be remembered by most people. It bore a striking resemblance to the Maybrick case. Mrs Bartlett was the wife of a member of the firm of Baxter & Bartlett, grocers and provision merchants. She was many years younger than her husband, and had formed a close attachment to a young clergyman named Dyson. Her husband, who certainly entertained peculiar notions regarding marriage, had injudiciously countenanced this acquaintance. The two had lived somewhat unhappily for some time, Barlett having latterly been in indifferent health. He was found dead one morning under somewhat suspicious circumstances. He had died after having partaken of a dose of medicine. His wife was the only person who was with him at the time. At first, both she and Dyson were charged with the crime, as it transpired that he had made several purchases of poison for her. He, however, was afterwards released and accepted as a Crown witness.

The evidence against the prisoner was, as is usually the case in such crimes, purely circumstantial. There

was, however, no question about the purchase or purchases of poison, Dyson giving evidence to this effect in the witness-box. He, however, in his own defence, declared that he thought Mrs Bartlett wanted it for an innocent purpose, which was scarcely in keeping with the fact that he made purchases at several different places and afterwards threw the bottles away surreptitiously. If the poison was intended for an innocent purpose, why should there have been so much secrecy about its purpose? Also, what did he suppose Mrs Bartlett wanted so much deadly poison for? The case against Mrs Bartlett rested upon the question of administration. The defence set up was that the deceased man took the poison himself, with his own hand, during a fit of depression. It was true that he had been in a depressed state lately, but on the night of his death he was rather cheerful than otherwise, and exhibited no signs of suicidal tendency. However, the jury had to decide whether the poison was administered by the prisoner or whether he, the deceased, took it with his own hands, intentionally or by misadventure. They adopted the latter theory, and acquitted the prisoner. The verdict was received with the usual indelicate demonstration of approval by the rowdy crowd assembled in and about the Old Bailey.

Mrs Bartlett was defended by Mr (now Sir) Edward Clark, who afterwards declared that the case nearly doubled his business. Certainly, it was an achievement to procure an acquittal in face of the

evidence that was forthcoming for the prosecution. Of course, when the prisoner is a woman, there is always a good chance of working on the sympathies of a jury and so dimming or obscuring facts. It is not so easy to do that when the prisoner is a man, even when the evidence for the prosecution is open to doubt. Many an impassioned appeal has been made by counsel on behalf of male prisoners, but they have nearly all failed with the jury. No matter how obvious a woman's guilt may be, there is always a chance of getting her off or dealt with leniently by arousing sympathy on behalf of her sex. It is impossible to get a just and logical view of facts when they become mixed up with sentiment. It is, of course, no defence to a crime that it was committed by a woman; on the contrary, if it was a crime of cruelty, it rather exaggerates the enormity of it. But jurymen are rarely logical and clear-minded, and may nearly always be safely appealed to on a point of sentiment.

A rather remarkable case was that of the Countess Kwilecky, the story of which reads like a novel or drama. With her husband she was charged with having passed off the child of another woman as her own son in order to defraud another branch of her family of certain property, which they would otherwise have inherited as next-of-kin. The case was tried in Berlin in November, 1903, the prisoners having been in custody for nearly a year. Besides the Count and Countess there were also three other women of the lower classes in the dock, they being

charged as accessories. It appeared that the boy in question had been born sixteen years after the Countess's last child and when she herself was about fifty years of age. It was also known that she had for some time been estranged from her husband, the two not having been living together. It was, therefore, maintained by the prosecutors that it was not possible that the child could be hers. If the charge were proved the prisoners could be given ten years' imprisonment, and the little boy would be condemned to live in poor circumstances with low-class people. So it was a fateful trial.

For the defence it was made clear that the Countess was indeed confined of a child, that cohabitation between her and her husband had been resumed, and that the child in question bore a striking facial resemblance to her. It was also proved by medical witnesses that a woman of her age could have a child, and that it was quite possible for sixteen years to elapse between the birth of two children. The story of the prosecution was that the boy was bought for £8 from a certain low-class woman and introduced into the Countess's room where she was supposed to be confined but was not. But persons who were present in the room at the time testified that the lady was indeed confined, and that the little boy in question was the child which was brought into the world. The jury accepted this version and returned an acquittal. The likeness alone was convincing evidence of the child's legitimacy. But the lapse of time and the circumstances under which the child

was born were certainly peculiar. The motive and energy of the prosecution is understood when it is known that all the other children of the Countess were girls, and that the birth of the boy diverted the entail.

CHAPTER XVIII

CONCLUSION

I THINK from the foregoing that it is clear that women play a much more important part in crime than appears upon the surface. That she is answerable for a large amount of crime in men I maintain that I have made obvious. That she is frequently an aider and abettor in crime cannot be denied. Take the crime of abortion, for instance, for which men, doctors, are invariably convicted. The law in this instance is grossly one-sided. A woman, desiring to avoid the ordeal of confinement and the responsibility of maternity, goes voluntarily to a medical man and asks him to perform an illegal operation upon her, for which she is prepared to pay him liberally. He does so, is found out and severely punished. But the woman is allowed to go free, although she has actually been the instigator of the crime, and in addition is also committing a grave offence against the State in seeking to elude her natural responsibilities of maternity. True, she sometimes pays the penalty with her life, but that is scarcely a defence to the offence.

As a bigamist I do not think a woman plays a very serious part. In this she is more often sinned against than sinning. Her offences in this respect being so venial do not call for much comment here.

Women are also culpable through the medium of their own offspring. The woman who either neglects her children or inculcates injurious notions into them is indirectly answerable for any crimes those children may subsequently commit. And she daily becomes more guilty in this respect. Mr Morrison, in his "Crime and Its Causes," says: "One thing at least is certain, that crime will never permanently decrease till the material conditions of existence are such that women will not be called upon to fight the battle of life as men are, but will be able to concentrate their influence on the nurture and education of the young, after having themselves been educated mainly with a view to that great end. European society at the present moment is moving away from this ideal of woman's functions in the world; she is getting to be regarded in the light of a mere intellectual or industrial unit; and the flower of womankind is being more and more drafted into commercial and other enterprises . . . it is unquestionably opposed to the moral interests of the community. These interests demand that women should not be debased, as criminal statistics prove that they are, by active participation in modern industrialism; they demand that the all-important duties of motherhood should be in the hands of persons capable of fulfilling them worthily, and not in the hands of persons whose previous

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occupations have often rendered them unfit for being a centre of grace and purity in the home. It cannot be too emphatically insisted on that the home is the great school for the formation of character among the young, and it is on character that conduct depends."

Some years ago at the International Conference for the regulation of labour, which was held at Berlin, M. Jules Simon made the following remarks:

"You will pardon me for concluding my observations with a personal remark, which is perhaps authorised by a past entirely consecrated to a defence of the cause which brings us here. The object we are aiming at is moral as well as material; it is not only in the physical interests of the human race that we are endeavouring to rescue children, youths, and women from excessive toil; we are also labouring to restore woman to the home, the child to its mother, for it is from her only that those lessons of affection and respect which make the good citizen can be learned. We wish to call a halt in the path of demoralisation down which the loosening of the family tie is leading the human mind."

Those words are even truer now than they were then. The situation has continued to grow worse. Women have continued, and do still continue, to drift farther and farther from the important and responsible duties of maternity, to embark in the, to her, demoralising activities of the prominent and sordid affairs of the world. As a result she is becoming, either directly or indirectly, more and more concerned in crime. We find the most extensive and

daring frauds which are perpetrated by women are so perpetrated in countries where women are paramount, as witness the frauds of Madame Humbert in France and Mrs Chadwick in America. Both these women had dedicated their lives to the cozening of men, because they realised that the men of their nation entertained countless delusions about them, and were, therefore, likely to be easy victims.

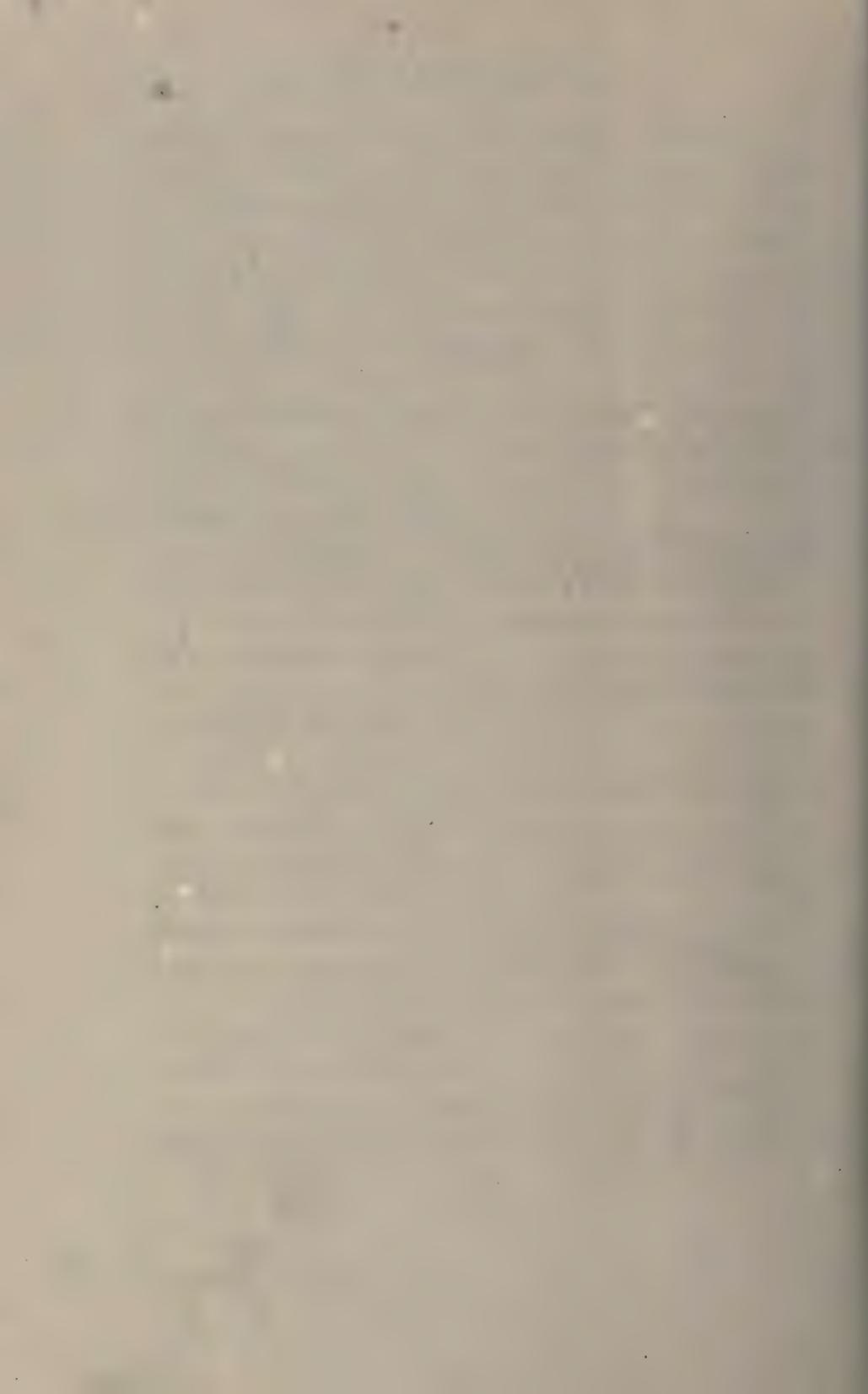
The law itself encourages women to commit crime by the misplaced leniency with which it treats them. One does not ask for vengeful punishments to be visited upon female offenders, but it is in the interests of the community at large that the punishments should be adequate and just. There must be justice for women as well as men. If, as we are given to understand, women are situated on a higher moral plane than men, then when they fall their descent must be the greater and more reprehensible. The graver the responsibility the graver the wrongdoing.

There can be no doubt that the more a woman's maternal instinct becomes blunted the more sensual she becomes and the more prone to commit crime. She grows callous and indifferent to the sufferings of others. A callous woman is in the way of being an outrage on human nature. A married woman who lives only for her own personal gratification is a peril to her husband. I make bold to say that there is far more secret poisoning of husbands by their wives than is generally known. If only half what the police know in this connection were made public there would be consternation among the married men of

this nation. There are other ways, of course, by which evil wives may and do rid themselves of their husbands. The writer of these lines knows several women who encompassed the deaths of their husbands against whom no steps were taken, because no steps could be taken. Our law could not touch them; they are saved for that Great Assize where the souls of all human beings shall be bared before the Omnipotent. "There is but one Judge Who is just."

Finally, let it be said that women are gravely responsible for a large amount of crime through the medium of their intemperate habits. A female habitual drunkard is a very dangerous criminal, yea, a portentous one. In most poor neighbourhoods you may see women drinking in low public-houses with their little ones waiting outside about the doors. Before the recent law was introduced, which prohibits young children being taken upon licensed premises, the children used to be inside with them. I have seen women with babies at the breast, which they were giving gin. It is very truly said that there is scarcely an Act of Parliament through which a coach-and-four could not be driven, and the way in which drunken mothers, aided and abetted by publicans, have got round this last enactment is instructive. They simply leave them just outside, or in a corridor, and bring drink out to them. The scene outside public-houses in the suburbs on Saturday and Sunday nights constitutes one of the gravest indictments against the women of this country that could be framed.

So when we come to take a comprehensive survey of the subject of the criminal responsibility of women we find it is widespread, vast, and constantly increasing. Crime generally, we know, is on the increase, and it is both feeble and foolish to shut one's eyes to the fact that women are extensively answerable for this. As women can make saints she can also make sinners, and when she ceases to make so many of the latter it will be better for mankind. It is, of course, a worthy thing to "gently scan our brother man," likewise "still gentler sister woman," but there is no escaping the unpleasant fact that the latter have not of late years been behaving in such a manner as to be deserving the unsparing gratitude of man.



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