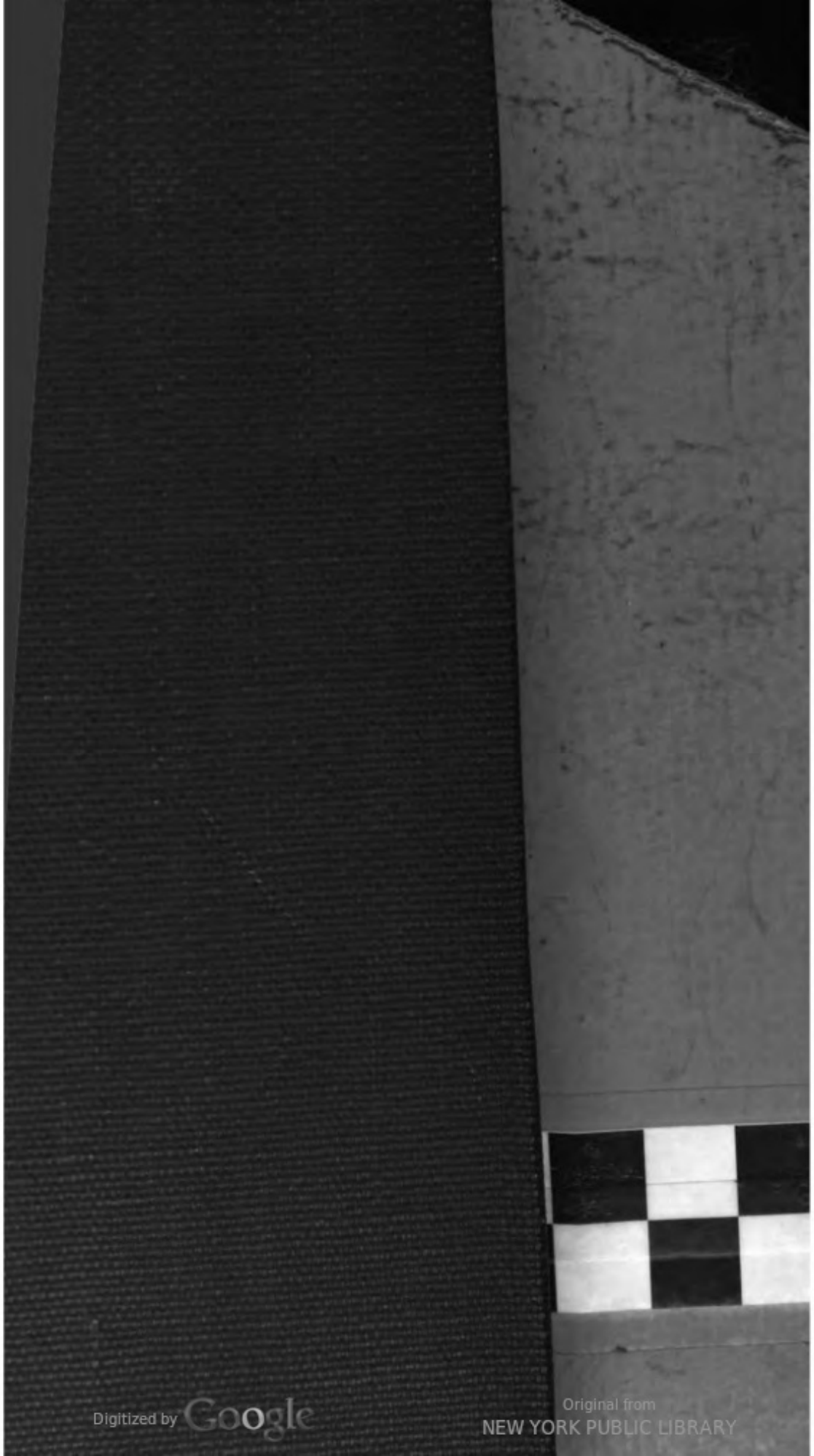

Digitized by Google
Original from
NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

Digitized by Google
Original from
NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

NAL
Hawthorne
Digitized by Google
Original from
NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

Digitized by Google
Original from
NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

Digitized by Google

Original from
NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

Digitized by Google

Original from
NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

THE LOCK AND KEY LIBRARY

CLASSIC MYSTERY AND DETECTIVE STORIES OF ALL NATIONS

TEN VOLUMES

NORTH EUROPE MEDITERRANEAN GERMAN CLASSIC FRENCH
MODERN FRENCH FRENCH NOVELS OLD TIME ENGLISH
MODERN ENGLISH AMERICAN REAL LIFE

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

TRANSLATORS

whose work is represented in this collection of "CLASSIC MYSTERY and DETECTIVE STORIES," many here rendered into English for the first time

---

ARTHUR ARRIVET . . . . . *Japanese*

JOHN P. BROWN . . . . . *Turkish*
United States Legation, Constantinople

JONATHAN STURGES . . . . . *French*

SIR RICHARD FRANCIS BURTON . . . . . *Arabic*

LADY ISABEL BURTON . . . . . *Arabic*

GRACE I. COLBRON . . . . *German-Scandinavian*

FREDERICK TABER COOPER, PH.D. *Romance Languages*

GEORGE F. DUYSTERS . . . . . *Spanish*

HERBERT A. GILES . . . . . *Chinese*
British Consular Service

GLANVILL GILL . . . . . *French*

D. F. HANNIGAN, LL.B. . . . . *French*

LOUIS HOFFMANN . . . . . *French*

FLORENCE IRWIN . . . . . *French*

CHARLES JOHNSTON . . . . . *Russian-Oriental*
Royal Asiatic Society, Indian Civil Service

EUGENE LUCAS . . . . . *Hungarian*

R. SHELTON MACKENZIE . . . . . *French*

ELLEN MARRIAGE . . . . . *French*

JOHN A. PIERCE . . . . . *French*

W. R. S. RALSTON, M.A. . . . . *Tibetan*

EDWARD REHATSEK . . . . . *Persian*
Royal Asiatic Society, Examiner Bombay University

GEORGE RAWLINSON, M.A. (OXON.) . . . . *Greek*

MARY J. SAFFORD . . . . . *French*

FRANZ ANTON VON SCHIEFNER . . . . . *Tibetan*
Librarian, St. Petersburg Academy of Sciences

CHARLES HENRY TAWNEY, M.A., C.I.E. . . . *Hindoo*
Librarian, India Office

R. WHITTLING, M.A. (OXON.) . . . . . *French*

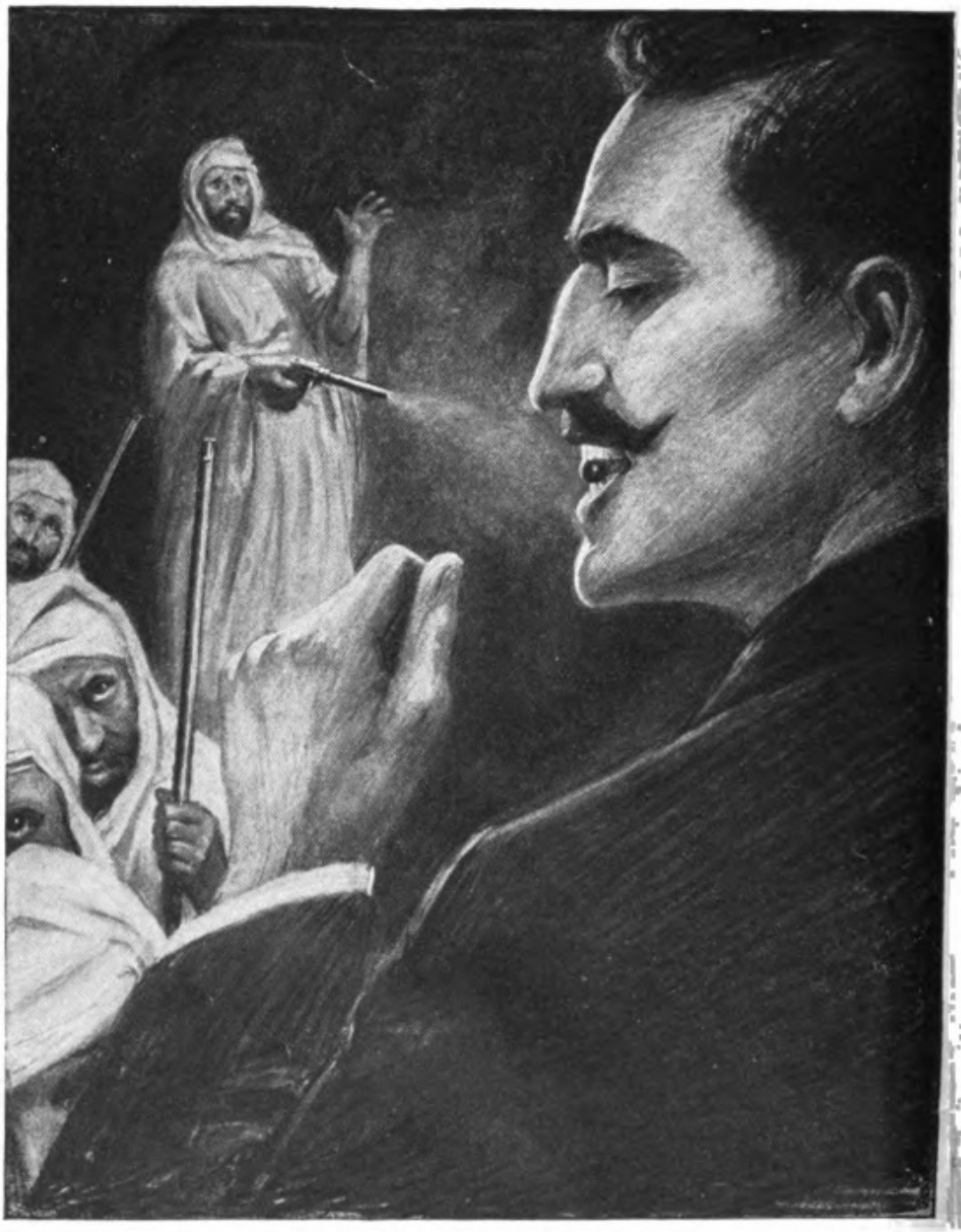
EDWARD ZIEGLER . . . . . *German*

Digitized by Google

Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

Digitized by Google

Original from
NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY



"The Ball Appeared between my Teeth. The Spectators Raised Their Eyes to Heaven"

To illustrate "Facing the Arab's Pistol," by Robert-Houdin

Digitized by Google

Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

THE LOCK AND KEY LIBRARY

THE MOST INTERESTING STORIES OF ALL NATIONS

Edited by
Julian Hawthorne

REAL LIFE

Arthur Train
P. H. Woodward
Andrew Lang
M. Robert-Houdin
Charles Dickens

NEW YORK
THE REVIEW OF REVIEWS CO.
1915

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

LIBRARY
64827A
STOR, LENOX AND
DEN FOUNDATIONS
R 1922 L

Copyright, 1909, by
THE REVIEW OF REVIEWS COMPANY

Digitized by Google
Original from
NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

Table of Contents

PART I

ARTHUR TRAIN — PAGE

A Flight into Texas 9

P. H. WOODWARD

Adventures in the Secret Service of the Post-Office Department 29
An Erring Shepherd 34
An Aspirant for Congress 42
The Fortune of Seth Savage 44
A Wish Unexpectedly Gratified 46
An Old Game Revived 52
A Formidable Weapon 53

ANDREW LANG

Saint-Germain the Deathless 59
The Man in the Iron Mask
The Legend 73
The Valet's History 76
The Valet's Master 92
Original Papers in the Case of Roux De Marsilly . 104

PART II—TRUE STORIES OF MODERN MAGIC

M. ROBERT-HOUDIN

A Conjurer's Confessions
Self-Training 9
"Second Sight" 13
The Magician Who Became an Ambassador . . . 28
Facing the Arab's Pistol 38

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

Table of Contents

DAVID P. ABBOTT

Fraudulent Spiritualism Unveiled — PAGE

A Doctor of the Occult 45
How the Tricks Succeeded 50
The Name of the Dead 55
Mind Reading in Public 65
Some Famous Exposures 81

HEREWARD CARRINGTON

More Tricks of "Spiritualism"
"Matter through Matter" 85
Deception Explained by the Science of Psychology . 86

ANONYMOUS

How Spirits Materialize 96

PART III

CHARLES DICKENS

Inspector Bucket's Job
In Fashion 9
The Law-Writer 16
Our Dear Brother 28
The Coroner's Jury 35
On the Watch 40
Tom-all-Alone's 54
Moving On 64
Mr. Bucket 79
National and Domestic 91
In Mr. Tulkinghorn's Room 105
In Mr. Tulkinghorn's Chamber 115
Closing In 123
The Track 133
Springing a Mine 146

Digitized by Google

Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

PART I

Detective Stories from Real Life

Digitized by Google

Original from
NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

Digitized by Google

Original from
NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

Arthur Train

A Flight into Texas

THE flight and extradition of Charles F. Dodge unquestionably involved one of the most extraordinary battles with justice in the history of the criminal law. The funds at the disposal of those who were interested in procuring the prisoner's escape were unlimited in extent, and the arch conspirator for whose safety Dodge was spirited away was so influential in political and criminal circles that he was all but successful in defying the prosecutor of New York County, even supported as the latter was by the military and judicial arm of the United States Government. For, at the time that Dodge made his escape, a whisper from Hummel was enough to make the dry bones

(The District Attorney's office in New York City is undoubtedly one of the best watch-towers known from which to observe "Real Life Detective Stories."

Arthur Train, sometime member of this prosecuting staff, has opportunity to record several of these curious and exciting "True Stories of Crime" (copyright, 1908, by Charles Scribner's Sons). None yields less to fiction save in the fact that it is true, and not at all in quality of dramatic interest, than "A Flight into Texas," here given.

Readers of the newspapers a few years ago will remember the names of Abraham Hummel and Charles F. Dodge. The latter, a railroad conductor, was alleged to have committed perjury at the dictate of the former, known as one of the brightest, least scrupulous lawyers in this city. It was one of District Attorney Jerome's great ambitions to bring Hummel to justice. Here was an opportunity. If Dodge could only be forced to testify to this perjury before a court, Hummel could undoubtedly be convicted of a crime that would not only disbar him from the legal profession, but would put him in jail.

Dodge had run away and disappeared as the storm seemed about to burst. Where was he? Who could find and bring him back—against Abe Hummel's wish?—EDITOR.)

Digitized by Google

Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

of many a powerful and ostensibly respectable official rattle and the tongue cleave to the roof of his mouth in terror.

Who could accomplish that in which the law was powerless?—Hummel. Who could drive to the uttermost ends of the earth persons against whom not a shadow of suspicion had previously rested?—Hummel. Who dictated to the chiefs of police of foreign cities what they should or should not do in certain cases; and who could, at the beckoning of his little finger, summon to his dungeon-like offices in the New York Life Building, whither his firm had removed from Centre Street, the most prominent of lawyers, the most eminent of citizens?—Surely none but Hummel. And now Hummel was fighting for his own life. The only man that stood between him and the iron bars of Blackwell's Island was Charles F. Dodge—the man whom he had patted on the knee in his office and called a "Mascot," when quite in the nature of business he needed a little perjury to assist a wealthy client.

Hummel in terror called into play every resource upon which, during forty years of practice, his tiny tentacles had fastened. Who shall say that while he made a show of enjoying himself nightly with his accustomed lightheartedness in the Tenderloin, he did not feel confident that in the end this peril would disappear like the others which had from time to time threatened him during his criminal career? But Hummel was fully aware of the tenacity of the man who had resolved to rid New York of his malign influence. His Nemesis was following him. In his dreams, if he ever dreamed, it probably took the shape of the square-shouldered District Attorney in the shadow of whose office building the little shyster practiced his profession. Had he been told that this Nemesis was in reality a jovial little man with a round, ruddy face and twinkling blue eyes he would have laughed as heartily as it was in his power to laugh. Yet such was the fact. A little man who looked less like a detective than a commercial traveler selling St. Peter's Oil or some other cheerful

Digitized by Google Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

concoction, with manners as gentle and a voice as soft as a spring zephyr, who always took off his hat when he came into a business office, seemingly bashful to the point of self-effacement, was the one who snatched Charles F. Dodge from the borders of Mexico and held him in an iron grip when every influence upon which Hummel could call for aid, from crooked police officials, corrupt judges, and a gang of cutthroats under the guise of a sheriff's posse, were fighting for his release.

Jesse Blocher is not employed in New York County, and for business reasons he does not wish his present address known. When he comes to New York he occasionally drops into the writer's office for a cigar and a friendly chat about old times. And as he sits there and talks so modestly and with such quiet humor about his adventures with the Texas Rangers among the cactus-studded plains of the Lone Star State, it is hard, even for one who knows the truth, to realize that this man is one of the greatest of detectives, or rather one of the most capable, resourceful, adroit, and quick-witted knights of adventure who ever set forth upon a seemingly impossible errand.

It is unnecessary to state just how the District Attorney discovered the existence of "Jesse," as we knew him. It is enough to say that on Saturday morning, July 23, 1904, he was furnished with the proper credentials and given instructions to proceed at once to New Orleans, Louisiana, and "locate," if it were humanly possible to do so, Charles F. Dodge, under indictment for perjury, and potentially the chief witness against Abraham H. Hummel, on a charge of conspiracy. He was told briefly and to the point that, in spite of the official reports from the police headquarters of both New York City and New Orleans to the contrary, there was reason to believe that Dodge was living, although not registered, as a guest at the St. Charles Hotel in the latter city. A partial and inaccurate description of Dodge was given him and he was warned to use extreme caution to prevent any knowledge of his mission from being made known. Once Dodge had been discovered, he was to

Digitized by Google Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

keep him under surveillance and wire New York immediately.

Accordingly, Jesse left the city upon the same day at 4.45 P. M. and arrived two days later, at 9.15 on Monday morning, at New Orleans, where he went directly to the St. Charles Hotel, registered, and was assigned to room Number 547 on the fifth floor. Somewhere in the hotel Dodge was secreted. The question was how to find him. For an hour Jesse sat in the hotel foyer and meditatively watched the visitors come and go, but saw no sign of his quarry. Then he arose, put on his hat, and hunted out a stationery store where for two cents he bought a bright-red envelope. He then visited a ticket-scalper's office, secured the owner's business card, and wrote a note on its back to Dodge, offering him cheap transportation to any point that he might desire. Armed with this he returned to the hotel, walked to the desk, glanced casually over a number of telegrams exposed in a rack and, when the clerk turned his back, placed the note, addressed to Charles F. Dodge, unobserved, upon the counter. The office was a busy one, guests were constantly depositing their keys and receiving their mail, and, even as Jesse stood there watching developments, the clerk turned round, found the note, and promptly placed it in box Number 420. The very simple scheme had worked, and quite unconsciously the clerk had indicated the number of the room occupied by Dodge.

Jesse lost no time in ascending to the fourth floor, viewed room Number 420, returned to the desk, told the clerk that he was dissatisfied with the room assigned him, and requested that he be given either room Number 421, 423, or 425, one of which he stated that he had occupied on a previous visit. After some discussion the clerk allotted him room Number 423, which was almost directly opposite that occupied by Dodge, and the detective at once took up his task of watching for the fugitive to appear.

Within the hour the door opened and Dodge and a companion, who subsequently proved to be E. M. Bracken, alias "Bradley," an agent employed by Howe and Hum-

Digitized by Google Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

mel, left the room, went to the elevator, and descended to the dining-room upon the second floor. Jesse watched until they were safely ensconced at breakfast and then returned to the fourth floor where he tipped the chambermaid, told her that he had left his key at the office, and induced her to unlock the door of room Number 420, which she did under the supposition that Jesse was the person who had left the chamber in Dodge's company. The contents of the room convinced Jesse that he had found Dodge, for he discovered there two grips bearing Dodge's name as well as several letters on the table addressed to him. The detective returned to the hall and had a little talk with the maid.

"The old gentleman with you has been quite sick," she said. "How is he to-day?"

"He is some better," answered Jesse.

"Yes, he does look better to-day," she added, "but he sho'ly was powerful sick yesterday. Why, he hasn't been out of his room befo' fo' five or six days."

This statement was corroborated by Dodge's physical appearance, for he looked haggard and worn.

Jesse was now confident that he had found Dodge, in spite of the reports of the New Orleans police to the contrary, and he was also reasonably sure that the fugitive was too sick to leave the hotel immediately. He therefore telegraphed his superiors that he had discovered Dodge and that the latter was ill at the St. Charles Hotel.

At three o'clock in the afternoon Jesse received a wire from New York as follows:

"New Orleans police department claims party not there. Left for Mexico three weeks ago. Ascertain correct destination and wire at once."

Jesse at once replied:

"No question as to identity and presence here at this time."

Digitized by Google Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

He now took up the task of keeping his quarry under absolute surveillance day and night, which duty from that moment he continued for a period of nearly ten months.

During the remainder of the afternoon and throughout the night Dodge and Bracken remained in room Number 420, and during the evening were visited by several strangers, including a plain-clothes officer from the New Orleans Police Headquarters. Little Hummel, dining in Long Acre Square in the glare of Broadway, was pressing some invisible button that transmitted the power of his influence even to the police government of a city two thousand miles away.

The following day, January 26th, at about 8.40 in the morning, Dodge and Bracken descended to the lobby. Bracken departed from the hotel, leaving Dodge to pay the bill at the cashier's window, and Jesse heard him order a cab for the 11.30 A. M. Sunset Limited on the Southern Pacific Railroad and direct that his baggage be removed from his room. Jesse did the same.

In the meantime Bracken returned and promptly at 11 A. M. left for the railroad station in a cab with Dodge. Jesse followed in another. As the two passed through the gates the detective caught a glimpse of Dodge's ticket and saw that it had been issued by the Mexican National Railway. Retiring to the telegraph office in the station he wired New York as follows:

"Bird flying.—Sunset Limited. Destination not known. I am with him."

He then hastily purchased a ticket to Houston, Texas, and boarded the train. Dodge's companion had bidden him good-by as the engine started, and Jesse's task now became that of ferreting out Dodge's destination. After some difficulty he managed to get a glimpse of the whole of the fugitive's ticket and thus discovered that he was on his way to the City of Mexico, via Eagle Pass, Texas, while from the Pullman conductor he learned that Dodge had se-

Digitized by Google

Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

cured sleeping-car accommodation as far as San Antonio, Texas, only.

So far all was well. He knew Dodge but Dodge did not know him, and later on in the afternoon he had the satisfaction of a long talk with his quarry in the observation car where they amiably discussed together current events and argued politics with the same vehemence as if they had been commercial travellers thrown fortuitously into each other's company. Dodge, however, cleverly evaded any reference to his destination.

When the train reached Morgan City, Louisiana, at 3 P.M., which was the first stop, Jesse wired New York as follows:

"On Sunset Limited with friend. He has transportation to the City of Mexico, via Eagle Pass, where I am now journeying with him. Answer to Beaumont, Texas."

Later in the afternoon he sent an additional message from Lafayette, Louisiana:

"Have seen transportation of friend and am positive of destination."

Dodge was occupying Section 3 of the sleeping car "Capitola," and, as became an invalid, retired early.

At Beaumont Jesse failed to receive any reply to his various messages, and when the train arrived at Houston no word came from New York until it was almost the time of departure. Waiting until practically the last moment Jesse hurried through the gates of the Union Station at Houston and bought a ticket to San Antonio. As he was leaving the ticket window Night Chief of Police John Howard and two officers came hurrying up inquiring anxiously for "Mr. Jesse." The reënforcements had arrived.

Outside on the track "The Sunset Limited" was just getting under way. The first frantic puffs were being vomited from the funnel. Inside Dodge was sleeping peacefully in his berth. Jesse, accompanied by Chief Howard,

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

hurried up to the conductor who was about to swing on to the steps of the sleeper, and ordered him to hold the train till the fugitive could be removed. After some argument the conductor grumblingly complied and Dodge was aroused from pleasant dreams of the "Creole Quarter" to the cold reality of being dragged out of bed by a policeman. He was unceremoniously hustled out of the sleeping car into a carriage and taken to Headquarters where he admitted his identity and remarked:

"I know what I am wanted for, but I will never return to New York."

In his grip was found the sum of $1,563.15, as well as numerous letters from the law firm of Howe and Hummel, and a quantity of newspaper clippings relative to his case.

Dodge pleaded with Chief Howard not to lock him up, urging that he was a sick man and offering a goodly sum if he might be taken to a hotel and guarded for the remainder of the night. But what "went" in New Orleans did not "go" in Houston, and the best that Dodge could get for himself was a cot in the "Ladies' Detention Room" on the second floor of the jail.

Early the following morning Jesse visited Police Headquarters and for the first time met George Ellis, Chief of Police of Houston, for whom he will always have a feeling of deep gratitude for his enthusiastic coöperation and loyalty in the many stirring events that followed. Dodge now received a telegram from New York, which was submitted to Jesse before reaching the prisoner, to the effect that Howe and Hummel were sending on an attorney to aid the fugitive in resisting extradition, and informing him that they had employed Messrs. Hunt and Meyers as attorneys to look out for his welfare. These last immediately jumped *in medias res* and on the afternoon of the same day secured a writ of habeas corpus from Norman J. Kitrell, District Judge of Harris County, Texas, returnable the following morning.

The next day, January 28th, Kitrell released Dodge from custody.

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

Jesse had anticipated this and immediately swore out another warrant with the result that the prisoner was rearrested before he left the courtroom.

Meantime the Dodge interests retained another firm of lawyers, Messrs. Andrews and Ball, who, on the following day, secured a second writ of habeas corpus from Judge Ashe.

The result of the first engagement thus being a draw, counsel on both sides agreed that this writ should not be returnable for six days. During this period District Attorney Jerome employed Messrs. Baker, Botts, Parker and Garwood to represent him and secured from Governor Odell at Albany a requisition on Governor Lanham of Texas for the extradition of the prisoner, which he entrusted to Detective Sergeant Herlihy of the New York Police. Herlihy reached Houston with the papers on the evening of January 30th, and on the same train with him came Abraham Kaffenburgh, a member of the law firm of Howe and Hummel and a nephew of the latter. Likewise also came Bracken, still styling himself "E. M. Bradley," and from now on Bracken was the inseparable companion, guide, philosopher, and friend (?) of the unfortunate Dodge, whose continued existence upon this earth had become such a menace to the little lawyer in New York.

Herlihy, accompanied by Judge Garwood, proceeded direct to Austin where they found Dodge already represented by Messrs. Andrews and Ball who, at the hearing before Governor Lanham, made a strong effort to induce that executive to refuse to honor the requisition of the Governor of New York. This effort failed and Governor Lanham issued his warrant, but Herlihy had no sooner returned to Houston for the purpose of taking possession of the prisoner than he was served with an injunction enjoining him, together with Chief of Police Ellis, from taking Dodge into custody, pending a hearing upon a new habeas corpus which had been issued by Judge Waller T. Burns of the United States District Court for the Southern

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

District of Texas. This new writ was returnable February 9th.

After exhaustive but futile argument by the counsel for Dodge, Judge Burns remanded the prisoner to Herlihy's custody to be returned to the State of New York, but this decision had no sooner been rendered than an appeal was taken therefrom by Dodge's lawyers, and the prisoner released upon bail fixed at twenty thousand dollars.

During this period Dodge was quartered under guard at the Rice Hotel in Houston, and the day following the argument the twenty-thousand-dollars bail was put up in cash and Dodge released from custody.

In the meantime, however, Jesse, knowing that no sum, however large, would deter Hummel from spiriting Dodge out of the country, had made his arrangements to secure a new extradition warrant from the Governor of Texas, so that if the prisoner did succeed in getting beyond the Southern District of the Federal Court of Texas, he could be seized and conveyed to New York.

Of course someone had to keep watch over Dodge while Jesse hurried to Austin to see the Governor, and it was decided to leave Sergeant Herlihy, reënforced by a number of local detectives for that purpose. But while the watchful Jesse was away, Bracken proceeded to get busy in the good old Howe and Hummel fashion. Lots of people that Herlihy had never seen before turned up and protested that he was the finest fellow they had ever met. And as Herlihy was, in fact, a good fellow, he made them welcome and dined and wined at their expense until he woke up in the Menger Hotel in San Antonio and inquired where he was.

Jesse meantime had returned from Austin to discover that Dodge with his companions, Kaffenburgh and Bracken, had slipped out of Houston early in the morning of February 11th, after disposing of Herlihy and eluding the watchfulness of Herlihy's assistants. Hummel was leading and by ten o'clock the next morning Dodge and his comrades were on board an English merchantman lying in the

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

harbor of Galveston. Later in the same day the Hummel interests chartered from the Southern Pacific Railroad for the sum of three thousand dollars the sea-going tug *Hughes*, to which Dodge was now transferred for the purpose of being conveyed to the port of Tampico in the Republic of Mexico.

But here Hummel's wires became crossed with Jerome's, and unfortunately for the little lawyer, the persons from whom the tug had been leased turned out to be closely allied with the prosecution's interests, with the result that the captain of the tug was instructed by his superiors under no consideration to put into any Mexican port, but on the contrary, to delay his departure from the harbor of Galveston for a period of two days and then to proceed only as far as Brownsville, Texas, where he should compel the debarkation of the fugitive. The captain, who was a good sport as well as a good officer, promptly threw himself into the part and told Bracken and Kaffenburgh that it was evident from the barometer that a severe storm was approaching (which must have had a sinister implication to these two unfortunate gentlemen), and that he could not think of putting to sea. Once the "storm" had blown over, the tug started out across the blue waters of the Gulf of Mexico. But now Bracken and Kaffenburgh were informed for the first time it was impossible to consider putting into any port of the Republic of Mexico, since to do so would cause international complications and compel the revocation of the captain's license. In desperation the Hummel interests offered the captain five thousand dollars in cash to disregard his instructions and put into Tampco, but the worthy sea-dog was adamant. It was probably worth five thousand dollars to him to see three gentry of this pattern so much put about.

While Dodge and his accomplices were dallying in the harbor of Galveston, Jesse was taking advantage of his opportunity to proceed at once by railroad to Alice, Texas, which at that time was the furthermost southern point reached by any railway in the direction of Brownsville.

Digitized by Google

Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

On his arrival, he at once applied to Captain John R. Hughes, commanding Company D of the Texas Rangers, who received him with great joy and ordered a detachment of the Rangers to meet the tug at Point Isabelle at the mouth of the Rio Grande River on the border of Mexico. In the meantime, Jesse started on a toilsome stage journey to Brownsville, across one hundred and seventy miles of desert, which occupied two days and nights, and necessitated his going without sleep for that period. During the trip Jesse heard no word of English and had as his associates only Mexican cattlemen. Every fifteen miles a fresh relay of broncos was hitched to the stage and after a few moments' rest the misery began again.

Jesse had been hurrying toward Brownsville by stage while Dodge, Kaffenburgh, and Bracken were landing at Point Isabelle, where they were kept under close surveillance by Sergeant Tom Ross of the Rangers. Thence they took the train to Brownsville, registering at the Miller House under the assumed names of C. F. Dougherty, A. Koontzman, and E. M. Barker, all of Oklahoma. But, although they knew it not, Sergeant Tom was at their elbow, and had Dodge attempted to cross the border into Mexico he would instantly have been placed under arrest.

As Brownsville was within the Southern District of the Federal Court of Texas, Jesse decided not to arrest Dodge until he should actually attempt flight, and when Dodge and his companions, on the following morning, February 15th, entered the stage (the same upon which Jesse had arrived) and started for Alice, Jesse and Tom Ross procured the best horses they could find and started after them, keeping just in sight of the stage. Dodge's intention in making this move was to take the Mexican International Railway at Alice and cross over to Mexico via Laredo.

Jesse and Ross covered the seventy-four miles from Brownsville to Santa La Cruz Ranch by four in the afternoon, which was fairly strenuous work for a New York detective, and here found themselves so sore and exhausted from their ride that they were glad to hire a pair of horses

Digitized by Google

Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

and buggy with which to complete the journey to Alice. Luckily they were able to get into telephonic communication with various ranch owners along the road and arrange to have fresh relays of horses supplied to them every twenty miles, and here also Jesse called up Captain Hughes at Alice, and suggested that he substitute for the regular night clerk at the City Hotel one of the privates of the Rangers by the name of Harrod.

Dodge and his companions arrived in Alice on February 17th, and, as Jesse had anticipated, repaired at once to the City Hotel, where, inasmuch as they were dry from the dust of their trip and depressed by lack of society, they entered at once into an enthusiastic and confidential friendship with the man behind the counter in the hotel office, sublimely ignorant that they were unfolding to a member of the Texas Rangers all their most secret intentions. Harrod was just as glad to see Dodge as Dodge apparently was to see Harrod, and kindly offered to assist the fugitive to get into Mexico in any way that the latter desired. Dodge, for his part, took advantage of his usefulness to the extent of requesting him to purchase them railroad tickets, the plan being to leave Alice the following morning for Monterey, Mexico. Three hours after the stage bearing Dodge and his party pulled up at the City Hotel, Tom Ross and Jesse drove in behind a pair of fagged-out broncos at two in the morning. Jesse had had no sleep of any sort and no proper nourishment for five days, and had just strength enough left to drag himself up one flight of stairs and tumble into bed, from which he did not emerge for many hours.

In the meantime day broke and Dodge, Kaffenburgh, and Bracken, having breakfasted, drove comfortably down to the International Railway Station and settled themselves in the smoker, but they had no sooner given this direct evidence of their intention before Captain Hughes entered and placed Dodge under arrest. The latter's surprise may be appreciated when it is stated that from the time the three had left Houston, they had no idea that they were being

Digitized by Google

Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

followed and believed that they had completely foiled Jesse and his assistants.

While Jesse had been chasing Dodge across the desert, his lawyers had not been idle and had secured at Austin another extradition warrant from Governor Lanham, who, on receiving news of the arrest, promptly instructed Captain Hughes by wire to assume charge of the prisoner and to deliver him into the hands of the New York officer to be conveyed to New York.

There now began such a legal battle as the State of Texas had never known. Hummel had been forced into his last ditch and was fighting desperately for life. Through Kaffenburgh he at once applied for a new writ of habeas corpus in Nueces County and engaged counsel at Corpus Christi to assist in fighting for the release of the prisoner. Precisely as Hummel had intended, Chief Wright of Nueces rode into Alice and demanded the prisoner from Captain Hughes. As Hummel had *not* intended, Captain Hughes refused to surrender the prisoner and told Chief Wright to go to—well, he told him that he intended to obey his commander-in-chief, the Governor of Texas.

On February 20th, Hummel, through Kaffenburgh, attempted to get another writ of habeas corpus in Bee County, and promptly the Bee chief came buzzing over and demanded Dodge, but to him Hughes replied even as he had spoken to Wright.

Excitement in Alice had now reached such a pitch that Judge Burns, of the Federal Court, in Houston, ordered United States Marshal John W. Vann, of Alice, to assume charge of the prisoner. The indomitable Hughes, however, paid no more attention to the United States Marshal than he had to the local chiefs. But the situation was so delicate and the clash of authority might so easily have resulted in bloodshed that it was finally agreed by all parties that the best thing to do was to have the prisoner returned to Houston in the *joint* custody of Captain Hughes of the Rangers and the United States Marshal.

Digitized by Google

Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

Jesse, through his counsel, in proper course, made application to forfeit Dodge's bond and remand him to jail, but the Hummel attorneys finally induced the Court, on the plea that to confine Dodge in jail would be detrimental to his already badly impaired health, to permit the prisoner to go free on a greatly increased bond, nevertheless restricting his movements to Harris County, Texas.

While Jesse had fought a winning battle up to this point he was at the end of his resources so far as the extradition of the prisoner was concerned, for Dodge was now at liberty, pending the decisions upon the habeas corpus proceedings of the United States Circuit Court of Appeals at Fort Worth, and the United States Supreme Court at Washington. But his orders were to *bring Dodge back to* New York. Hence, with the aid of some new men sent him from the North, he commenced an even closer surveillance of the prisoner than ever before by both day and night.

Meantime Kaffenburgh departed for New York, fleeing from the wrath of Judge Burns, who had issued a summons for him for contempt of the Federal Court on the ground that he had induced Dodge to attempt to jump his bond. In place of the blustering Kaffenburgh was sent another member of the famous law firm of Howe and Hummel, David May, an entirely different type of man. May was as mild as a day in June—as urbane as Kaffenburgh had been insolent. He fluttered into Houston like a white dove of peace with the proverbial olive branch in his mouth. From now on the tactics employed by the representatives of Hummel were conciliatory in the extreme. Mr. May, however, did not long remain in Houston, as it was apparent that there was nothing to be done by either side pending the action of the courts, and in any event Dodge was abundantly supplied with local counsel. The time had now come when Hummel must have begun to feel that the fates were against him and that a twenty-year term in state prison was a concrete possibility even for him.

In the meantime, Dodge and Bracken had taken up their headquarters at the Rice Hotel in the most expensive suite

Digitized by Google

Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

of rooms in the house, a new scheme for getting the prisoner beyond the reach of the New York courts apparently having been concocted. Dodge was now indulged in every conceivable luxury and vice. He was plunged into every sort of excess, there was no debauchery which Bracken could supply that was not his and their rapid method of existence was soon the talk of the county and continued to be so for ten long months. There is more than one way to kill a cat and more than one method of wiping out the only existing witness against a desperate man striving to escape the consequences of crime.

Dodge's daily routine was somewhat as follows: He never slept at his own hotel, but arose in the morning between ten and eleven o'clock, when he was at once visited by Bracken and supplied with numerous drinks in lieu of the breakfast for which he never had any desire. At noon the two would have luncheon with more drinks. In the afternoon they would retire to the poolrooms and play the races, and, when the races were over, they would then visit the faro banks and gamble until midnight or later. Later on they would proceed to another resort on Louisiana Street where Dodge really lived. Here his day may be said to have begun and here he spent most of his money, frequently paying out as much as fifty dollars a night for wine and invariably ending in a beastly state of intoxication. It is quite probable that never in the history of debauchery has any one man ever been so indulged in excesses of every sort for the same period of time as Dodge was during the summer and fall of 1904. The fugitive never placed his foot on mother earth. If they were going only a block, Bracken called for a cab, and the two seemed to take a special delight in making Jesse, as Jerome's representative, spend as much money in cab hire as possible. The Houston jehus never again experienced so profitable a time as they did during Dodge's wet season; and the life of dissipation was continued until, from time to time, the prisoner became so weak from its effects that he was forced to go under the care of a physician. A few days of abstinence always re-

Digitized by Google

Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

stored his vitality and he would then start out upon another round of pleasure.

During this period Jesse maintained a close and vigilant personal espionage over the prisoner. For over ten months he slept less than four hours each day, his fatigue being increased by the constant apprehension of treachery among his own men, and the necessity of being ever on the alert to prevent some move on the part of the defense to spirit the prisoner away. During the summer attempts were repeatedly made to evade the vigilance of Jesse and his men and several desperate dashes were frustrated by them, including one occasion when Bracken succeeded in rushing Dodge as far as Galveston, where they were forced to abandon their design.

From time to time Bracken would disappear from Houston for a week or ten days, stating on his return that he had been to New York, after which there was invariably some new move to get the prisoner away. Time and space prevent giving a detailed account of all the marches and counter-marches that took place in this battle of wit against wit.

In August, 1904, Bracken made one of his periodical visits to New York, and when he returned sought out Jesse and said: "Blocher, you might as well be a good fellow and get yours while you can. I mean that Dodge is not going back to New York, even if it cost a million dollars to prevent it." A few days later Bracken sent a gambler named Warner to Jesse, who offered the latter thirty-five hundred dollars to get "lost" long enough for the prisoner to slip over to Mexico. Acting upon the advice of his attorney, Jesse encouraged this attempt, under the belief that if he could get the Hummel forces in the position of having attempted to bribe him the prisoner's bail could then be forfeited and Dodge himself taken into custody. Hummel became wary, however, and apparently abandoned for the time the idea of bribery. Later on Bracken again disappeared. On his return a marked change was noticeable in his demeanor and Jesse observed that he was in constant

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

consultation with Dodge, from which the detective drew the inference that some last desperate move was to be made towards the escape of the prisoner.

On one occasion Jesse saw Bracken showing Dodge a map and some drawings on paper, which so excited his suspicions that he followed the two with unremitting assiduity, and within a day or two was rewarded through Bracken's carelessness with an opportunity for going through the latter's coat pockets in the billiard room. Here he found a complete set of plans worked out in every detail for spiriting the prisoner from San Antonio into Mexico during the State Fair. These plans were very elaborate, every item having been planned out from the purchase of tickets, and passing of baggage through the customs, to hotel accommodation in the City of Mexico and Tampico, and steamship tickets from Tampico to Europe.

The plan had been to secure permission from the Court for Dodge to leave Houston long enough ostensibly to attend the fair at San Antonio and to "lose" him during the excitement and crowded condition of the city at that time.

It is, of course, needless to say that these plans were abandoned when Bracken discovered that Jesse had been forewarned.

Almost immediately thereafter the Circuit Court of Appeals at Fort Worth, Texas, decided one of the habeas corpus cases adversely to Dodge, but it still permitted him to retain his liberty pending the final determination of the questions involved by the Supreme Court at Washington.

The Hummel forces were apparently losing hope, however, for early in October another attempt was made to bribe Jesse. Bracken entered his room one evening and informed him that he could get his own price if he would only be a good fellow, and even went so far as to exhibit a quantity of money which he stated was twenty-five thousand dollars. The only result of this offer was to lead Jesse to redouble his precautions, for he argued that the situation must indeed be acute when such an offer could be deemed worth while. Thereafter it was obvious that the revelry of

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

Dodge and his companions was on the increase. Accordingly Jesse added to his force of assistants.

On December 2, 1904, Nathaniel Cohen, another member of the firm of Howe and Hummel, arrived at Houston, and the next day the Supreme Court at Washington decided the appeal in the *habeas corpus* against the prisoner, who was at once ordered by Judge Burns into the custody of United States Marshall William M. Hansen.

Things looked black indeed for Dodge and blacker still for Hummel. How the little attorney, eating his midday lunch four thousand miles away, at Pontin's restaurant on Franklin Street, must have trembled in his patent leather boots! His last emissary, Cohen, at once procured an assistant by the name of Brookman and with him proceeded to Wharton County, Texas, where they secured a new writ of *habeas corpus* and induced the local sheriff, one Rich, to swear in a *posse comitatus* of one hundred men for the purpose of coming to Houston to take the prisoner by force of arms out of the hands of the United States Marshal.

This was one of the most daring and desperate attempts made in recent years to frustrate the law. Jesse believes that the real object of this *posse* was to precipitate a fight between themselves and the Federal authorities. It is not inconceivable that in such an event Dodge might either have escaped or been killed. The men composing the *posse* were of the most desperate character, and consisted largely of the so-called "feud factions" of Wharton County, known as "The Wood Peckers" and "The Jay Birds." Jesse has been informed, on what he regards as reliable authority, that this move cost the Hummel forces fifteen thousand dollars and that each member of the *posse* received one hundred dollars for his contemplated services in the "rescue" of the prisoner. But civil war, even on a small scale, cannot be indulged in without some inkling of the facts becoming known to the authorities, and prior to the receipt of the mandate of the Supreme Court, Judge Burns ordered the prisoner removed to Galveston for safe keeping.

Thus the long, expensive, and arduous struggle came

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

finally to an end, for Judge Burns in due course ordered that Charles F. Dodge should be conveyed to New York in the personal custody of the United States Marshal and delivered by him to the New York authorities "within the borders of that State." Such an order was, of course, exceedingly unusual, if not almost unheard of, but it was rendered absolutely necessary by the powerful influence and resources, as well as the unscrupulous character, of those interested in securing Dodge's disappearance.

In order to thwart any plans for releasing the prisoner by violence or otherwise, and to prevent delay through the invoking of legal technicalities, Hansen and Jesse decided to convey Dodge to New York by water, and on the 16th of December the marshal and his five deputies boarded a Mallory Line steamer at Galveston and arrived in New York with their prisoner on the evening of December 23d.

Dodge reached New York a physical wreck. How he was induced to tell the whole truth after he had pleaded guilty to the charge against him is a story in itself. A complete reaction from his dissipation now occurred and for days his life was despaired of. Jesse, too, was, as the expression is, "all in," and the only persons who were still able to appreciate the delights of New York were the stalwart marshal and his boys, who for some time were objects of interest as they strolled along Broadway and drank "deep and hearty" in the *cafés*. To the assistants in the District Attorney's office they were heroes and were treated as such.

How Dodge finally testified against Hummel on the witness stand has already been told. As they say downtown, if Jerome had never done anything alse, he would have "made good" by locking up Abe Hummel. No one ever believed he would do it. But Jerome never would have locked up Hummel without Jesse. And, as Jesse says with a laugh, leaning back in his chair and taking a long pull on his cigar, "I guess I would not do it again—no, I *would* not do it again for all the money you could give me. The wonder is that I came out of it alive." When the reader comes to think about it he will probably agree with him.

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

P. H. Woodward

Adventures in the Secret Service of the Post-Office Department *

THERE is a class of post-office thieves who make a specialty of rifling the registered letters that pass through their hands in transit on journeys of greater or less length. Some of them have managed operations very shrewdly, in the evident belief that they had discovered an infallible method for doing the work and at the same time escaping detection. Too late they generally learn by sad experience that no patents can be taken out for the protection of crime.

In this class of cases something tangible always remains to exhibit the peculiar style of workmanship belonging to each; and it would often surprise the uninitiated to learn how many traits of character, what indexes of habit and vocation, can be picked up by careful study of the minute points presented for inspection. Unless, however, an agent

* The author of the pages that follow was chief special agent of the Secret Service of the United States Post-Office Department during pioneer and romantic days. The curious adventures related are partly from his own observation, and partly from the notebooks of fellow officers, operating in many sections of the country.

The stories are true, although, of course, justice demands that in some cases persons and places be usually disguised under fictitious names.

The stories have interest not only for their exciting play of honest wits against dishonest, but also for the cautions they sound against believing things "too good to be true" from the pen of strangers.

Digitized by Google

Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

cultivates a taste for thoroughness even to details and trifles that might at first view appear utterly insignificant, he will never succeed in interpreting the hieroglyphics.

At intervals of two or three weeks, beginning in the summer of 1871, registered packages passing to and fro from Chicago to a town in the interior of Dakota Territory, which for convenience will be called Wellington,—though that was not its name,—were reported to the department as rifled. As the season wore on, the complaints increased in frequency. Under the old method of doing business at headquarters, which often amounted practically to a distribution of the cases about equally "among the boys," the agent stationed at Chicago received most of them at first; then a part were sent to an agent in Iowa; and as the number multiplied, Furay, at Omaha, was favored with an occasional sprinkling. Under the present more perfect system, great care is taken to group together all the complaints growing out of each series of depredations, to locate the seat of trouble by comparisons carefully made in the department itself, and to give everything bearing on the subject to the officer specifically charged with the investigation.

March came around before Mr. Furay found time to give personal attention to this particular thief. He then passed over the route to Wellington, eighty miles by stage-coach from the nearest railroad station, with ten intermediate offices. All the packages remained over night at Sioux City, Iowa, a fact sufficiently important to invite close scrutiny; but the detective soon became satisfied that he must look elsewhere for the robber. His suspicions were next directed to another office, where also the mails lay over night; but the postmaster bore a countenance so open and honest that he too was eliminated from the problem.

He continued on to Wellington, skirmishing along the line, and observing the faces of the postmasters; but these studies in physiognomy threw no light on the mystery, as the officials of the department on the route, though far removed from central supervision, seemed to be all that

Digitized by Google

Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

their affectionate uncle at Washington could wish. On the return trip the detective was equally observant and equally perplexed. At that season the stage stopped for the night at Hannibal; but there, likewise, the postmaster shared the honest looks that seemed to prevail through eastern Dakota.

Proceeding on, the passengers dined at Raven's Nest, where one Michael Mahoney, Sr., kept a small store and the post-office, running also—with the aid of a young son and a son-in-law—a farm. The store was managed by Michael Mahoney, Jr., a married son, who happened to be absent both when the special agent went up and when he returned. The face of the old man indicated that he was vicious, ignorant, and unscrupulous; but clearly he was not sharp enough to execute nice work like that under investigation.

With the exception of a general knowledge of the offices, the special agent returned but little wiser for the trip, and concluded, as the best that could be done under the circumstances, to allow the bird to flutter a little longer before renewing the hunt. Meanwhile the thief grew more reckless, and the papers that came to Mr. Furay, though covering a fraction only of the depredations, located the thief on the lower end of the route, within fifty miles of the terminus.

During the summer one or two other agents took up the matter cursorily, but made no discoveries. In the meantime Mr. Furay was kept too busily occupied with a succession of important cases in Nebraska to give much thought to the outlying territory of Dakota. At length, in September, he went carefully over the papers that had accumulated during his late prolonged absences, and soon knew exactly where to look for the chap who had so long plundered the public with impunity.

For some time Chicago had been closing registered package envelopes with wax, which, on this route at least, effectually secured them against molestation. Imitating the example, Camden, Dakota, began to do the same; but, hav-

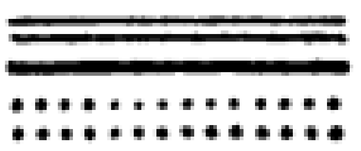
Digitized by Google

Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

ing no seal suitable for the purpose, improvised a substitute by using the flat surface of a rasp.

Camden placed the wax near each end of the envelope, which materially interfered with the game of the thief, because it was just here that he operated. Evidently piqued that a rural postmaster should presume to outwit him, he studied hard to devise some means for opening these particular packages without leaving such traces of his handiwork as would attract the notice of other officials through whose hands they might subsequently pass. The effort was crowned with a measurable degree of success, for Mr. Furay, at the general overhauling referred to, was the first to discover that the seal had been tampered with.

As it was necessary to break one of the seals, the object of the robber was to restore it as nearly as possible to its original appearance; and to effect this he used a dampened thimble, rolling it over the wax while the latter was hot. There was but one envelope of the kind in the lot, but it told the whole story to the eye that could penetrate its meaning. As the thimble passed along the edge, it left the mark of the rim, then a smooth, narrow band, followed by pointed elevations closely resembling continuous lines, thus:



On the opposite side of the same seal the wax flattened out so as to cover a good deal of surface; and, to give it the desired appearance, the manipulator resorted to the thimble again, but this time *used a different one,* the indentations on the surface being perceptibly finer and more shallow.

The violation of that single seal betrayed the thief, for the detective at once inferred that the job was done in a store where the operator had access to a variety of thimbles. Only one was required; and no person but a merchant would be likely to have more than one within convenient reach. In a store, however, it would be natural to take down a boxful, and place it on the counter, to be selected from at random. One is picked up, used, and thrown back. The operator now finds another spot that requires attention, and without waiting to hunt for the thimble that has al-

Digitized by Google

Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

ready served as a seal,—for the wax is cooling and no time must be lost,—grasps the first that comes to hand, too absorbed in the main issue to give a thought to what would pass as an insignificant subsidiary trifle. No rascal is sharp enough to guard every point,—a general fact that illustrates over and over again, in the experience of man, the seminal truth that in a mercenary and physical as well as in a high and spiritual, sense there is neither wisdom nor profit outside of the limits of absolute integrity and unflinching uprightness.

The detective laid aside the papers with a light heart, knowing that at last he was complete master of the situation. Below Camden on the infested route the post-office was kept in a store at two points only, and in one of those no thimbles were sold. The clew pointed unerringly to Raven's Nest as the spot where alone the requisite conditions to account for the imprint on the violated seal were to be found. Thither the officer accordingly went; and the moment his eye rested on Michael Mahoney, Jr., he recognized the heaven-branded features of a thief.

Returning to Sioux City, he telegraphed to another agent, who had a large number of the cases growing out of the robberies, to come on at once. The two men took stations, one on each side of Raven's Nest, and in thirty hours they arrested the youthful criminal, who in the interval stole four decoy letters, and paid a portion of the contents to one of the officers who was testing him.

Mr. Furay collected from the thief and his relatives the full amount stolen from the mails during the entire continuance of the depredations, restoring the money to the rightful owners dollar for dollar. Young Mahoney made a written confession, supplemented by three or four codicils relating to items which, to use his own language, "at first did not to me occur." He was tried the following February, and sentenced to the penitentiary for the term of three years.

Within fifteen days from the time when the doors of the prison were closed upon the son, the villainous old father,

Digitized by Google Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

acting perhaps on the theory that no two shots ever strike in exactly the same place, began also to rob the mails. In due time Mr. Furay again appeared on the scene and took the old reprobate away a prisoner. When the trial came on, a material witness for the prosecution happened to be absent, the lack of whose testimony proved fatal to the case, for after hanging a day and a night, the jury brought in a verdict of acquittal.

AN ERRING SHEPHERD

THE ingenuity and perseverance of the fraternity of swindlers is only equaled by the gullibility and patience of their dupes. During the flush times that followed the war, immense fortunes were suddenly acquired by a class of cheats who operated on the credulity of the public through gift enterprises, lotteries, and other kindred schemes. Most of the large concerns established their headquarters in New York City, flooding the entire country, particularly the South and West, with lithographic circulars, written apparently with the pen for the exclusive benefit of the recipient, and showing how fortunes could be securely made by remitting specified sums to the houses in question. Some of the bogus firms simply pocketed the cash of correspondents without pretending to render any equivalent whatever; while others, no more honest, but a little more politic, sent forth worthless jewelry and other stuff by the bushel.

One of the most villainous and at the same time successful devices was built up on the offer of counterfeit currency at a heavy discount. In substance, the circulars, emanating from different parties, and from the same parties under different names, were all alike. They usually began with an insidious compliment to the person addressed, to the effect that from trustworthy sources the writer had heard of him as a man of more than ordinary capacity and shrewdness, and, emboldened by the high estimate placed

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

upon his abilities by persons well qualified to judge, had selected him as the very individual to aid in securing a fortune for both with "absolute safety." The circular usually goes on to state that the writer is a first-class engraver,—indeed "one of the most expert in the United States,"—while his partner is a first-class printer. Hence the firm possess unrivaled facilities for imitating the national currency. The recipient is particularly cautioned to beware of a class of miscreants who infest the city of New York and advertise throughout the country the goods that he manufactures, but send nothing except rubbish. The "original Doctor Jacobs" excoriates unmercifully the whole tribe of swindlers whose rascalities debauch and bring odium upon the trade. He exhorts the gentleman of great reputed "shrewdness and sagacity" to observe the utmost caution in conducting operations, and gives him explicit directions how to forward the purchase-money.

Several years ago a preacher of the gospel, stationed not far from the northern frontier of the republic, received by mail one of the seductive missives of Ragem & Co., of New York City. The *douceur* opened with the usual complimentary references to the pecular personal fitness of the clergyman for the proposed enterprise, and went on to state that, in exchange for genuine greenbacks, Ragem & Co. would furnish in the proportion of fifty to one imitations so absolutely perfect that the most experienced bank officers could not distinguish the difference. Rev. Zachariah Sapp,—for such was the euphonious name of the preacher,—after an attentive perusal of the flattering proposal, deposited the document in his coat-pocket for convenience of reference. Having pondered the subject for a day or two, he decided to write to Ragem & Co. for more explicit information.

Divining with the peculiar instinct of the guild the character of the fish now nibbling at the naked hook, the cheat resolved to risk a little bait, and accordingly sent by return mail a genuine one-dollar note, with a written invitation both for a reply and a personal conference.

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

Never before did the Rev. Zachariah Sapp subject a piece of paper to such scrutiny. Both with the naked eye and with a microscope,—a relic of collegiate days,—he studied the engravings and filigree work. Detail by detail he compared the supposed imitation with bills of known genuineness without being able to discover the slightest point of variation between them. Paper, printing, and engraving seemed to be absolutely perfect. While the study was progressing, the imagination of the clergyman soared through the empyrean of dazzling expectations. Why continue to toil hard for a small pittance when the golden apples were hanging within easy reach? Why drag out an existence in penury when wealth and its joys were thrust upon him?

Zachariah, however, was prudent and thrifty—indeed rather more thrifty in the estimation of parishioners than befitted one who held by right of faith a title-deed to mansions in the skies. Almost as soon would he risk his future inheritance as peril on a doubtful venture the few hundred dollars snugly saved up for a wet day by prudence and economy.

Not willing to rely entirely on his own judgment, he rather reluctantly decided to call on a banker in an adjacent town, with whom he enjoyed a slight acquaintance. In thinking the matter over he was greatly perplexed to determine how to introduce the subject. Of course it would not answer to allow the cashier to fathom his secret purpose, and yet he was oppressed with a vague consciousness that only a translucent film hid his thought from the world. Once or twice, in driving over on the unfamiliar errand, weak and irresolute he half resolved to turn back, but greed finally prevailed, and he kept on to the village.

With a strong but unsatisfactory effort to appear at ease, he sauntered into the bank. After the usual interchange of greetings, he nervously remarked, "Brother Hyde, as I was coming this way to-day to call on Brother Tompkins, I have taken the liberty to drop in to ask you a question on a matter in your line."

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

"Very well," replied the banker, "I shall be happy to serve you."

"I had a transaction a few days ago," resumed the clergyman, "with a peddler,—an entire stranger to me,—who, in making change, gave me a number of bills which I have reason to suspect are counterfeits. I desire your opinion."

"Please let me see them," said Mr. Hyde.

He took the one-dollar note from the hand of the unfaithful pastor, and after scanning it a moment, inquired, "What is the matter with it?"

"Is it good?" queried the anxious owner.

"I wish I had my safe full of the same sort," answered the banker. "There is nothing bad about the bill. What makes you think so? Perhaps you have shown me the wrong one. Let me see the others."

"I must have left the rest at home," replied the preacher, fumbling among the compartments of the pocket-book.

Having accomplished the object of his mission without perpetrating, as he thought, any disastrous blunder, Mr. Sapp brought the interview to a close with a few commonplace remarks, and hurried away to enjoy in solitary self-communion the thick-crowding visions of future affluence.

With the last doubt satisfactorily overcome, the plans of the prospective millionaire rapidly took shape. He could raise five hundred dollars, which at the proposed rate of interchange would purchase twenty-five thousand of the "absolutely perfect imitations." The sum seemed vast—incalculable. His imagination, hitherto bound down by the narrow circumstances of remote rural life, staggered while trying to grasp the conception of so much wealth. Like the mysteries of time and space, it appeared too grand for comprehension. Then his reveries strayed into another channel. What noble fellows were Ragem & Co.! Why, among forty millions of people, did they pick out him, an unknown clergyman, living in an obscure place hundreds of miles from the metropolis, to be the favored recipient of untold wealth? Surely, this is a special Providence. Not a spar-

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

row falleth to the ground without His knowledge. He watches over his own. Suddenly the erring clergyman feels a terrible pull at his heart-strings. What right has he, about to betray a sacred trust, and engage in operations branded as infamous by the laws of the land, to claim the watchful care of Providence? Will not the all-seeing eye follow him? Will not the omnipotent hand strike him heavily in wrath? The poor man wipes the cold perspiration from his forehead, and wonders if it will pay.

But he has paltered too long, and now the devil claims him for his own.

Returning home, Sapp wrote to Ragem & Co., stating the amount of his available resources, and saying that upon a given day and hour he would meet them at the appointed rendezvous. On the following Sunday the congregation were startled at the close of the afternoon services by an extraordinary announcement from the pulpit.

Before pronouncing the benediction the pastor said: "I take this opportunity to communicate to you collectively a piece of personal intelligence which I have hitherto kept secret. Under the will of a relative who recently died in the State of Michigan, I inherit a large sum—to me, with my humble wants, a very large sum. By appointment, I am to meet the executor of the estate this week in New York City to receive the first installment of the legacy. I do not propose to leave you, my dear parishioners, but to remain among you and toil with you as I have done for so many years. A goodly portion at least of my inheritance I intend to invest in this community, that neighbors and friends may share jointly in my prosperity. I trust I may be guided to make a wise use of the talents thus unexpectedly, and I may say providentially, committed to my keeping. We know from the teachings of Scripture that wealth brings great responsibilities, and that we shall be held to a strict account for the manner in which we employ it. May your prayers go with me."

The congregation crowded around the pastor with congratulations. Particularly demonstrative were the ebulli-

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

tions of two or three brothers who saw a chance of exchanging sundry unsalable possessions for slices in the inheritance.

Mr. Sapp reached New York City in the evening, and the momentous interview was to take place at an early hour the next day. Sleep came in brief and fitful snatches. But the stars roll on in their majestic spheres, regardless of mortal hopes and fears. At length day broke, when the preacher rose from bed anxious and unrefreshed. A little before the appointed time he proceeded to a certain building, and having mounted two flights of stairs, saw the magic number on the door in front of him. As the clock struck he entered. Agreeably to a preconcerted plan, he wiped the right corner of his mouth with a white handkerchief, and nodded three times. The only person in the room, a well-dressed and apparently affable gentleman, responded by wiping the left corner of his mouth with a red silk handkerchief, and nodding three times. The signal is correctly answered: it is he! So far all works beautifully, with every promise kept. The bill was a perfect imitation; the engraver is on hand to a second.

> "Two truths are told,
> As happy prologues to the swelling act
> Of the imperial theme."

The fellow passing under the name of Ragem & Co. welcomed the new arrival cordially. "Ah," said he "your promptness and circumspection show that I am not disappointed in my man. I see that you come up to the full measure of my expectations. Do you know I am a remarkable judge of character? In fact, I seldom or never make a mistake. We are both in luck."

"I was trained to punctuality from early youth," replied the preacher; and proceeding directly to business, without further circumlocution, continued, "I succeeded in raising five hundred dollars, which entitles me under the agreement to twenty-five thousand."

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

From an inner pocket, after removing a number of pins, he produced six one hundred dollar notes, saying, by way of explanation, "For greater security I converted my funds into bills of large denomination. One I reserve for contingencies; the other five are for you."

"Your money is here in the safe," said Ragem, taking the five notes, and turning toward the safe as if to unlock it. But the scoundrel evidently reasoned that it would be silly to remain content with the five when he could just as easily capture the sixth.

Walking back, he remarked, "I want to show you that my large bills are just as perfect as the small ones"; and, as if for purposes of comparison, he took the remaining note from the hand of the clergyman.

At this moment began a fearful knocking on a side door, that threatened the speedy demolition of the frail barrier. "Run, run," whispered Ragem, as if in the extremity of terror, "the police are on us."

The preacher needed no second invitation, fear of exposure giving wings to his feet. Almost at a bound he cleared the two flights of stairs and emerged into the street, walking several blocks, and turning a number of corners before he dared to look back.

The *bona fide* occupant of the room where these parties met had no share whatever in the nefarious transactions carried on there. Through the treachery of the janitor, Ragem was permitted at certain hours to make use of the apartment for the purpose of keeping appointments with his victims. A confederate stationed on the outside delivered the knocks as soon as customers were plucked and it became desirable to get rid of their company. Occasional hints of improper practices reached the ear of the real lessee, but these had never yet taken such shape as to give a decisive clew to the trouble, dupes for the most part pocketing their losses in silence.

After an interval of two or three hours Mr. Sapp plucked up courage to return. Having mounted the stairs, he entered the room warily. His late partner was not there.

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

A stalwart gentleman, who seemed to be the proprietor, looked up inquiringly, and was not a little puzzled when the visitor supplemented the performance of wiping the right corner of his mouth by three deliberate nods. "What can I do for you to-day?" inquired the gentleman, rising.

"You are, I presume, a partner of Mr. Ragem," answered Sapp. "I see he is out. Our business this morning was unfortunately interrupted by the police, and I have returned to complete it."

"What business?" asked the proprietor, in undisguised astonishment.

Now the preacher made the very natural mistake of supposing that the surprise manifested by his interlocutor was a mere matter of policy and caution. Hence he proceeded to explain. "Ragem must have told you. I am the gentleman who gave him the five hundred dollars, and he said that my twenty-five thousand were locked up in the safe."

The proprietor did not wait to hear more, but seizing the affrighted creature by the collar, thundered forth, "I have heard of you before. You are the villain, are you, who has been turning my office into a den of thieves? I have caught you at last!"

Awaking to a partial comprehension of the situation, the poor wretch stammered forth, "There must be some mistake. My name is a—is a—is a Smith—Smith—John Smith."

"John Smith, is it?" growled the proprietor. "Well, all I have to say is, John Smith, if not the biggest is the most numerous rascal in the city. John, come along to the police station."

And John went, billows of trouble rolling over him as the waters of the Red Sea closed over Pharaoh. Vain the effort to recall consolatory texts pertinent to the occasion! He was sorely chastened indeed, but the stripes were inflicted not in love but in wrath. He mourned, yet whence could he look for comfort?

To avoid a worse fate, the prisoner revealed his identity, exhibited the correspondence from "Ragem & Co.," and

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

made a full statement of the facts. The painful news reached the church shortly after the return of the pastor, when his pulpit career came to an ignominious end. He soon removed to the far West, hoping to bury his disgrace in the shades of the primeval forest.

The fall of Rev. Zachariah Sapp sounds a note of warning not without its lessons. The only safety in dealing with temptation is to repel its insidious approaches from the outset. Whoever listens in patience to the siren whisper is half lost already. Human experience abundantly confirms the divine wisdom of the command, "Get thee behind me, Satan," as the one sole safe way of meeting evil advances. At the close of well-spent, useful lives, myriads can thank a kind Providence, not that they have been stronger than others who have turned out differently, but that they have been tried less. Walking among unseen perils, none can without danger of ruin discard even for a moment the armor of honesty and truth.

AN ASPIRANT FOR CONGRESS

A FEW years ago, the "Hon." John Whimpery Brass, of Georgia, one of the "thoughtful patriots" of the period, who now and then found time to lay aside the cares of statecraft to nurse little private jobs of his own, allured by the seductive offers of "Wogan & Co.'" of New York City, wrote to that somewhat mythical concern proposing to become their agent for the circulation of the "queer." Even after receiving the first installment of their wares, the honorable gentleman did not comprehend that the firm dealt exclusively in sawdust, not in currency. He wrote again, complaining that, after a journey of sixty miles over a rough road to the nearest reliable express office, he found nothing but a worthless package, marked "C. O. D.," awaiting him. Did Wogan & Co. distrust either his parts or fidelity? He ventured to assert that no man in the State could serve them so effectually. He had just run for Con-

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

gress, and though beaten at the polls by "fraud," intended to contest the seat with the chances of success in his favor. The mountaineers among whom he lived did not care whether the money in their pockets was good or bad so long as it circulated. He could put thousands of counterfeits afloat without the slightest fear of detection. His constituency believed in him and would stand by him. Currency was very scarce in that congressional district, and it would really be doing his people a great favor to give them more. After setting forth the mutual benefits to accrue from trusting him, he appealed to Wogan & Co. with the vehemence and energy of the sewing-machine man, or life-insurance agent, to send on the goods without further delay. They should never regret dealing with him, his character and standing being a sufficient guaranty that he could not play false. He was acting in good faith, and expected like treatment in return.

Unfortunately for the political aspirations of "Hon." John Whimpery Brass, the authorities not long after made a descent upon the den of Wogan & Co., finding a great many letters from credulous fools, and a large supply of sawdust—their only stock in trade. The missives of the prospective congressman were published, thus gaining much more extensive currency than he proposed to give to the imitation greenbacks. It was supposed that the noisy fellow would slink away to some cave in his native mountains, and never show his brazen face among honest people again. But the impudence of "Hon." John Whimpery Brass rose to the level of the emergency. Instead of hiding or hanging himself, he published a card representing that he embarked in the scheme for the purpose of entrapping Wogan & Co. and bringing them to justice.

Pathetic was the spectacle, showing the confidence of an ingenuous soul in its own prowess, of the volunteer detective, digging parallels on the southern spurs of the Blue Ridge for the capture of the wily swindler a thousand miles away! Armed with a kernel of corn, the doughty gosling sets forth to catch the wicked fox that is preying on the

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

flock! If the bold mountaineers, the constituency of "Hon." John Whimpery Brass, cannot commend the discretion displayed by the projector of the enterprise, they must certainly admire his pluck. In face of the odds, few goslings would volunteer.

Perhaps the card might have been accepted by the more trustful class of adherents as a satisfactory explanation of the letters, had not the aspiring statesman in course of time fallen under the ban of the law for defrauding widows of their pensions, the campaign against Wogan & Co. having so completely exhausted the virtue of the amateur who planned it as to leave no residue to fructify in subsequent operations.

THE FORTUNE OF SETH SAVAGE

At one time the bogus-lottery men drove a thrifty business, but the efforts, virtually co-operative, of the post-office department and of the legislatures of the older states, have latterly pretty effectually forced them into the wilderness. The managers forage on the same class of people as the sawdust swindlers, procuring lists of names in the same way. A common method of procedure is to inclose with advertisements announcing the prizes, together with the place and date of drawing, one or more tickets duly numbered. Great confidence is expressed in the personal fitness of the party addressed, who is requested to act as agent for the sale of the tickets. A few weeks later another letter is sent to the intended victim, informing him that the ticket of a given number forwarded to him at such a date had drawn a prize, the value of which is variously stated from a few hundred to many thousand dollars. He is then requested to send immediately ten dollars—more or less—for the ticket, perhaps ten or twenty more for additional charges, when the full face value of the prize will be forwarded promptly by express, check on New York, or in any other way the recipient may direct. He is also told to antedate the letter, the intermediary promis-

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

ing to blur the postmark to correspond, so that the remittance may appear to have been made prior to the drawing. In conclusion the writer adroitly suggests that he desires the fortunate man to exhibit the money to his neighbors, stating how he obtained it, and mentioning particularly the address of the agent from whom the ticket was purchased, the object being to create an excitement in the place with a view to large sales for the next drawing.

Even of a trick as transparent as this the victims are counted by thousands, exposures and warnings being alike disregarded. The infatuation of a certain class of ignorant and credulous people is well illustrated by the case of Seth Savage, a poor man possessed of a few acres in the vicinity of a small village in Vermont. One day, when a special agent of wide experience happened to be visiting the post-office, Seth received a letter, the perusal of which threw him into a frenzy of excitement.

"What is the matter?" inquired the postmaster. "You seem to have good news."

"Look a-here," replied Seth, holding forth the missive in his shriveled and bony fingers, "for nigh on to sixty-five year, Mr. Martin, I've fit and work'd and work'd and fit jest for my vittles and drink. Neow when I'm tew old tew 'joy it, a fortin comes to me."

"Is that so?" answered Mr. Martin. "I am very glad; but tell me, what is it? Your neighbors will all be glad to hear of your good luck."

"Read that," said Seth, handing him the letter triumphantly.

The postmaster read the manuscript. One Dewitt of New York City assured Mr. Savage that a certain ticket sent to him a month before had drawn a prize of three thousand dollars; that on receipt of thirty-five dollars in a letter antedated according to directions, the full amount would be forwarded to him.

"Surely, Seth," expostulated the postmaster, "you are not going to be fooled in this way. Dewitt is a humbug, a swindler."

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

"Neow, heow dew yeou know that?" inquired Seth. "Has he ever fool'd yeou?"

"I don't deal with that sort of people," replied Mr. Martin mildly. "I dislike to see anyone wronged, especially a neighbor. Here is a gentleman who knows all about such matters." And Seth was formally introduced to the special agent, who took pains to explain the character of the swindle fully.

The officer left the village with the pleasant assurance that his brief visit had contributed at least toward the rescue of one poor object from the jaws of the devourer.

After all, however, Seth was not convinced. By selling his only cow he managed to swell his scanty stock of cash to the requisite sum, which he sent to Dewitt, fully expecting to be able in a few days to confound the postmaster by the actual display of his newly gotten wealth. The dupe, who had invested a goodly portion of his scanty means in the venture, waited long if not patiently. At length, after the expiration of the last hope, Mr. Martin inquired, "How did it happen, Seth, that you threw away your money on that lottery scamp, when we showed you that the whole thing was a cheat?"

"Wall, neow, arter it's all lost," replied Seth, "I'll tell yeou jest heow 'twas. Human natur' is naturally suspectin'. I tho't yeou and that ar' t'other postoffis fellah want'd to git the prize for yeourselfs; an' I didn't mean to be beat so."

A WISH UNEXPECTEDLY GRATIFIED

When the bogus-lottery men were driven out of the large cities by the vigor of the postal authorities, they tried for a while to operate from small country towns by collusion with dishonest postmasters. As the delinquencies of the offenders were successively brought to light, their heads rolled into the basket at the foot of the official guillotine. The swindlers, however, succeeded in bribing fresh victims, and for a time cunning and duplicity managed with toler-

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

able success to maintain a foothold against the power of the department.

Among other similar swindles, sealed circulars were at one time scattered broadcast over the more remote states, announcing that on a given date the drawing for a series of magnificent prizes would take place at Livingston Hall, No. 42 Elm Avenue, Wington Junction, Connecticut. Patrons were urged to remit the purchase-money for tickets promptly, as there would be no postponement of the grand event under any circumstances. "Fortune," continued the glittering advertisement, "knocks once at every one's door, and she is now knocking at yours."

As usual, multitudes swallowed the bait, but some, instead of sending the greenbacks to Highfalutin & Co., forwarded the circulars to the department. Thereupon special agent Sharretts was instructed to visit Wington Junction, with the view of learning whether the postmaster was properly discharging his duties. Taking an early opportunity to perform the mission, he alighted at the station one morning, and proceeded to survey the town, which consisted of four or five houses scattered along the highway for a distance of half a mile. "Livingston Hall" and "Elm Avenue" were nowhere visible. It was apparent that "No. 42" on any avenue was a remote contingency not likely to arise in the present generation.

Having previously ascertained that the postmaster was also switch-tender at the junction, and that the cares of the office devolved on his wife, the officer walked up to a keen-looking man in front of the little round switch-house, whose energies were devoted exclusively at that moment to the mastication of a huge quid of tobacco, and who, after a prolonged scrutiny of the stranger, answered his salutation in an attenuated drawl,' "Meornin', sir."

"Will you be kind enough to tell me, sir, where Mr. Morris, the postmaster, can be found?" asked the agent.

"Wall, I guess my name's Morris. What kin I do fur yeou?"

"Mr. Morris, I should like a few minutes' private con-

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

versation on business of great importance, which can be so managed as to turn out advantageously to us both. I do not wish to be overheard or interrupted. In these times even blank walls have ears, you know."

The last suggestion seemed to serve as a passport to the confidence of the postmaster. Leading the way into the switch-house, he remarked, "Come in heear. Neow, what is it?"

"The fact is, Mr. Morris, some friends of mine propose to go into a little speculation, which will involve a large correspondence; and for reasons that I need not specify to a man like you, they do not wish to have every ragtag, bobtail post-office clerk poring over their letters, and asking impertinent questions at the delivery-window. If they can find a shrewd, square man, who knows how to keep his mouth shut, and who can't be fooled, that for a handsome consideration will put the letters away in a safe place till called for, they are willing to make an arrangement that will be profitable all around. You have been recommended as just the person. I am told that you generally know which side your bread is buttered, and have called to see if we can't arrange to pull together."

"'Nuff said," ejaculated Morris, with a sly wink. "I know what yeou want, but my wife is the one to fix things. I don't have nuthin' to dew with the letters. Sue 'tends to everything. The folks as we'se a-workin' for said we must be plaguey keerful about the deetecters. I'll bet nun on 'em can't play it on my wife tho'. If they dew, they'll have to git up arly in the mornin'."

With that he thrust his head out of the window, and yelled: "Sue, Sue!"

As the sound died away, a tall, raw-boned female, from whose cheeks the bloom of youth had faded a number of years before, emerged from the side door of a two-story cottage, about eighty rods distant, and walked briskly to the switch-house, where she was introduced to the stranger as "my wife."

After a little preliminary skirmishing, she invited the

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

agent to go over to the cottage. Having been duly ushered into the "best room," he embellished for her benefit the story already told to the husband.

"I think I kin 'commodate yeou," she broke forth, "but yeou'll have to pay putty well for't. Laws me, I'm told—and I've ways o' heerin' 'bout these things—that the deetecters are jest as likely as not to come a-swoopin' deown enny minnit. Yeou know, if they feound it out, we'd be smash'd."

Her terms were ten dollars a week. Highfalutin & Co. paid six, but she understood the business a great deal better now than when she made the bargain with them. The agent thought the price rather high, but finally consented to contract at that figure.

Then, as if troubled by an after-thought, he said, "Madam, how do I know but some of these 'deetecters' may come around, and, seeing my letters, get me into difficulty?"

"Why, laws a' mercy," said she, "don't be skeer'd. Yeou jest leave that to me. The minnit them air letters gits here, I hides 'em in that bewro-draw'r," pointing to an article of furniture in the corner.

"Is it a safe place?" queried the agent.

"Yas, it is," answered the woman. "Got it half full neow. Carry the key in my pocket."

She gave a grin, intended for a knowing smile, in admiration of her own cleverness.

"I believe the hiding-place is tolerably secure," replied the officer, with the air of one who desired to be convinced, but had not yet reached the point of full assurance.

"You seem to be very particl'r and diffikilt to satisfy," continued Mrs. Morris; "but, if yeou don't believe it, jest come and sée for you'sef."

She led the way to the bureau, opened the drawer, and, raising a plaid cotton handkerchief, displayed the contraband letters by the score. All were directed to the lottery firm, and were turned over to the knave from time to time

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

as it suited his convenience to call for them. As no such firm did business at Wington Junction, it was the duty of the postmaster to forward to the department, as fictitious and undeliverable, all letters bearing the address of the swindlers. In similar cases neglect to obey the regulation was treated as sufficient ground for instant removal.

More fully pleased with the result of the examination than the woman surmised, the officer resumed: "I see you are very particular about your methods of doing business, and do not mean to be caught napping. The arrangement we are about to enter into is a very important one, and, as you are not postmaster, your husband will have to be present to witness and ratify the bargain."

"Bless yeour soul," replied she, "it's all right. I 'tend to all the biznis. My husband doesn't bother hissef abeout it in the least."

"Madam," answered the officer, "pardon me. I had my training in a large city, and am accustomed to pay minute attention to every detail. Your husband is the principal in this case, and must ratify the agreement to make it binding. Of course you will derive all the benefit, but his presence is essential as a matter of form."

Apparently satisfied, she called for "John," who replied promptly to the summons.

"Mr. Morris," said the officer, "your wife has agreed to keep my letters for me——"

"Yaas," broke in the postmaster. "I know'd she would. Yeou'll find she'll dew it right, tew. Nobody can't come enny tricks on her—can they, Sue? I wish one o' 'em durn'd deetecters would come around, jest tew see heow she'd pull the wool over 'im. I wudn't ax enny better fun;" and he indulged in a fit of loud cachinnation at the absurdity of supposing that anyone could match in sharpness his own beloved Sue.

"The letters will come to that address," said the agent, pulling out his commission from the postmaster-general, and exhibiting it to the pair.

Taking in the purport of it at a glance, Morris jumped

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

several inches into the air, slapped his sides, and exclaimed, "A deetecter, arter all; sold, by jingo!"

"We're bust'd then," chimed in Sue, with a melancholy grin.

It was even so. The letters for Highfalutin & Co. went to Washington, and Morris went out of the post-office; but the fact that Sue was overmatched hurt him more than the loss of the place.

June 8, 1872, a law was approved making it a penal offense to use the mails for the purpose of defrauding others, whether residing within or outside of the United States. The postmaster-general was also authorized to forbid the payment of postal money orders to persons engaged in fraudulent lotteries, gift enterprises, and other schemes for swindling the public, and to instruct postmasters to return to the writers, with the word "fraudulent" written or stamped on the outside, all registered letters directed to such persons or firms. Prior to the enactment of this law, the most wholesale and barefaced operations were conducted by professional cheats, mainly through the facilities afforded by the mails, with almost absolute impunity. Letters addressed to bogus firms were indeed forwarded from the offices of delivery to the department as "fictitious" and "undeliverable," and many colluding postmasters were decapitated. Such petty measures of warfare served merely to annoy the vampires and to whet their diabolical ingenuity for the contrivance of new devices. Since the law of 1872 went into effect, however, the scoundrels have been compelled to travel a thorny road. Scores of arrests have been made, and in many cases the criminals have been sentenced to the penitentiary.

It would exceed our limits even to enumerate the devices which have been tried by different swindlers with greater or less success. Gift enterprises of various kinds are the most common and notorious, constituting a distinct branch of the business; but the pretenses on which human credulity

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

is invited to part with actual cash for imaginary benefits are innumerable. A few speciments are given as illustrations.

AN OLD GAME REVIVED

On the 18th of September, 1875, a fellow was arrested in West Virginia who sent the victims whom he proposed to bleed letters whereof the following is a copy:—

"A lady who boarded with me died on last Saturday of apoplexy. She left a trunk containing the following property: One very fine ladies' gold watch and chain, one ladies' gold necklace, six ladies' finger rings, earrings, and a great deal of ladies' clothing. Among other things was a letter addressed to you. I suppose you to be a relative of the deceased, and want to send you the trunk. When Miss Thompson died she left a board bill unpaid amounting to $20.50. You will please send this amount by return mail, and the trunk will be forwarded to you immediately."

Instead of remitting the money as modestly requested, the recipient of one of these choice *douceurs*, a lady residing in the interior of Pennsylvania, sent the letter to the mayor of the town where it was dated and postmarked, who in turn handed it over to special agent T. P. Shallcross; and he in the course of a day or two succeeded in capturing the miscreant.

This particular form of the confidence game is very old; yet in the year of our Lord eighteen hundred and seventy-five a swindler by means of it succeeds not only in maintaining himself in dashing style, but also in sporting a flashy traveling companion of the female persuasion!

Where the letters are addressed to men, the articles reported to be found in the imaginary trunk are changed to correspond to masculine habits and wants. The operators receive many singular and some entertaining replies. The following, dated long ago from a small town at the South,

Digitized by Google Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

may serve as a sample, the orthography of the original being preserved:—

"COL. SNOWDEN,

"Dear Sir,—Yours received, and you say John is dead. Poor fellow! I always expected it. Death runs in the family. Dyed suddenly of appleplexy—eat too many apples. Well, I always thought John would hurt himself eating apples. I s'pose you had him buried. You said nothing about funeral expenses. He had a trunk—gold watch in it, &c. Well, well, what an unexpected legacy! but strange things happen sometimes. Never thought I should get a gold watch so. And he had the watch in his trunk, did he? Poor fellow! was always so particular 'bout his watch and fixings. Had two revolvers. What is them? I never heard John say anything about them. Well, you have been so kind as to write to me; just keep all the balance of the things, you can have them; but the gold watch, send that to me by express. Send immediately if not sooner.

"Very truly,

"GEO. STREAM.

"P. S. My mother in law says, if you come this way, call. She likes to know all such good, kind folks."

It is safe to conclude that "Col. Snowden" never accepted the invitation to call from the hospitable mother-in-law.

A FORMIDABLE WEAPON

IN the summer and fall of 1875 circulars were scattered broadcast over the country, and advertisements appeared in the weekly editions of several leading papers of New York City and other large towns, setting forth the rare merits of a weapon of destruction called "Allan's New Low-Priced Seven-Shooter." As a specimen of ingenious

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

description, the more salient parts of the circular are herewith reproduced:—

"In introducing this triumph of mechanical genius to the American public, it is proper to say that it is not an entirely new article, but that it has lately been improved in appearance, simplicity of construction, and accuracy, having new points of excellence, making it superior in many respects to those first made. The manufacturers having improved facilities for making them cheaply and rapidly, have reduced the price to one dollar and fifty cents; and while the profits on a single one are necessarily small, this price places them within the reach of all.

"We wish it distinctly understood that this is no cheap, good-for-nothing 'pop-gun'; and while none can expect it to be 'silver-mounted' for $1.50, they have a right to expect the worth of their money, and in this new improved seven-shooter a want is supplied.

"Great care is taken in the adjustment of EACH, so that ALL are equally good and reliable. In their production no trouble or expense has been spared. An elaborate and complete set of machinery and gauges has been made, by means of which all the parts are produced exactly alike, thus insuring great uniformity in the character of the work produced."

This remarkable implement, equally useful for peace or war, is offered to an eager public at the low price of $1.50 each, or $13 per dozen. On the score of cheapness, the inventor greatly prefers the mails to the express as a vehicle for the transport of his wares. In fact, he declines to patronize the express companies at all, unless a prepayment of twenty-five per cent. accompanies each order as a guaranty of the "purchaser's good faith."

At first the enterprise succeeded even beyond the most sanguine expectations of its projector, letters with the cash inclosed pouring in by the hundred. For several months,

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

however, after the first publication of the advertisement, "this triumph of mechanical genius," though "not an entirely new article," existed only in the comprehensive brain of the gentleman who had the greatness to discern in the imperfect work of predecessors the germs of ideal perfection. Having no seven-shooters to send, he was compelled to dishonor the requisitions of the expectant "traveler, sailor, hunter, fisherman, etc." While careful to lay aside the inclosures, he entirely forgot even to so far remember his patrons as to make a record of their names.

In due time, however, the "factory" went into operation, and the seven-shooters were actually produced. The mechanical "triumph," rudely made of a cheap metal composition, is a duplicate of a toy long used by boys to the delight of each other, and to the annoyance of their elders. The propulsive power resides in a steel spring, which has force enough to send a bird-shot across a good-sized room. The outfit would cost perhaps six or eight cents to the manufacturer. A portion of the orders were now filled, the greater part being still thrown unhonored into the waste-basket as before.

Curses both loud and deep began to be showered on the head of the swindler. Complaints having reached the department, special agent C. E. Henry started to hunt for "Wilcox & Co.," of Windsor, Ohio, for such was the direction in the advertisements and on the circular. Proceeding several miles from the nearest railroad, he found the rural settlement where the factory was supposed to be located.

Guided by various inquiries, he finally drove up to the small farm-house where the parents of Wilcox & Co. resided. On entering, the officer said, "I am in search of Mr. Wilcox, of the firm of Wilcox & Co."

"I am your man," remarked a youth, perhaps twenty-two years of age, whose countenance at once suggested acuteness and cunning. "What will you have?"

"I would like to take a look about the arsenal and gun-

Digitized by Google Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

factory located here," replied the detective, leisurely surveying the landscape.

"The works are in Cleveland," answered the great inventor. "You can see them by calling there."

"But where is the arsenal? I understand it was situated here."

"Your information is correct," replied the young man. "That is it, across the road."

Casting his eye in the direction indicated, the officer saw a rickety woodshed about seven feet by nine in size.

Observing the smile of amused incredulity that played upon the features of his questioner, Wilcox reiterated, with an air of half offended dignity,—

"That's it. We keep our seven-shooters there. But look here; before this thing goes any further, I want to know who you are."

"Oh, certainly, sir," answered the stranger. "You will find nothing about me that I care to keep concealed. I am a special agent of the post-office department, and my business here is to arrest you."

"Why, what have I done to warrant such a visit?" queried youthful innocence.

"I shall be happy to make that point clear to you," replied the detective, "though I am afraid the enlightenment will come too late to prove of much service to you. In using the mails for the purpose of swindling, you have violated the laws of the country, and must suffer the penalty."

"But where does the swindling come in?" expostulated Wilcox. "I advertised a seven-shooter. I didn't say anything about a revolver. It will shoot seven shot, or twice that number, if you only put them in. If anybody is green enough to suppose I meant a revolver, that's his lookout, not mine."

"We are not called upon to decide the point," said the special agent. "The question is one for the court and the jury. But you must go with me to Cleveland. So get ready."

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

Finding persuasion, argument, and remonstrance alike useless, the great mechanical genius packed his satchel in preparation for the journey. Once fairly on the road, he became communicative, and explained the reasons which led him to embark in the enterprise. "In the first place," said he, "I read Barnum's Life, and accepted the doctrine that the American people like to be humbugged. I planned the shooter myself, and, in wording the circular, aimed to cover the points and keep within the law. I think I have succeeded."

"I beg leave to differ," argued the special agent. "Aside from the general falsity of the description, there are specific claims which you cannot make good."

"I don't see the matter in that light," replied the champion of the seven-shooter. "I say, 'Wherever introduced, they advertise themselves.' Well, don't they? Whoever gets one will be apt to tell his neighbors. Isn't that advertising itself? I also say, 'The sale of one opens the market for a dozen in any neighborhood;' but observe, I don't claim that any more will be sold in that neighborhood, even if the market is opened. So far as my guaranty is concerned, I only warrant them to be as good after three years' use as when first purchased. Will you, or will any court, call that in question?"

"It is charged," said the officer, changing the subject, "that you neglected to fill a good many orders. How do you explain that?"

"Why, to furnish the shooter and pay the postage cuts down the profits terribly," was the unique and characteristic reply.

Orders began to arrive in response to the circular nearly five months before the first shooter came from the hands of the manufacturer; and as none of them were ever filled, or even recorded, it is impossible to estimate how many dupes long watched the mails in anxious expectancy, and perhaps attributed their disappointment to dishonesty among the employees of the department.

Of course the papers which printed the advertisement would have spurned the impostor and exposed the fraud,

Digitized by Google Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

had they discovered the facts. The most scrupulous and careful publishers are often deceived in the character of advertisements that come through the regular channels of business, and appear plausible on their face. In fact, the religious journals are the favorite vehicles of the swindlers. The solicitude felt by the newspapers, not only for their own reputation, but for the interests of their patrons, was illustrated in the correspondence found on the person of Wilcox. An influential western journal had addressed him two notes which ran thus:—

"GENTS: We receive frequent letters from subscribers, saying they receive no answers to letters they send you containing money for '7-shooters.' How is it? Are you swindlers?"

Wilcox, though fully able to answer the conundrum, did not see fit to do so; and hence, on the 3d of November, the same parties deployed their forces to renew the charge.

"——, Nov. 3, 1875.

"WILCOX & Co.:

"We have written you once before, that our patrons complain to us that you do not fill their cash orders, and will not answer their letters of inquiry as to why you don't. We have received so many such that we suspect there is something wrong, and, unless you explain satisfactorily, we will have to expose you."

As the special agent arrived on the same day with the inquiry, the young man had no opportunity to make the desired explanation. Indeed it is doubtful if one so modest and reticent on matters of personal merit, would have answered the question even if permitted to take all winter to do it in.

The United States commissioner, while fully recognizing the ingenuity of the circular, differed somewhat from its author in interpreting its legal construction, and accordingly placed him under a bond of fifteen hundred dollars to appear for trial.

Digitized by Google Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

Andrew Lang

Saint-Germain the Deathless

AMONG the best brief masterpieces of fiction are Lytton's *The Haunters and the Haunted*, and Thackeray's *Notch on the Axe* in *Roundabout Papers*.* Both deal with a mysterious being who passes through the ages, rich, powerful, always behind the scenes, coming no man knows whence, and dying, or pretending to die, obscurely—you never find authentic evidence of his disease. In other later times, at other courts, such an one reappears and runs the same course of luxury, marvel, and hidden potency.

Lytton returned to and elaborated his idea in the Margrave of *A Strange Story*, who has no "soul," and prolongs his physical and intellectual life by means of an elixir. Margrave is not bad, but he is inferior to the hero, less elaborately designed, of *The Haunters and the Haunted*. Thackeray's tale is written in a tone of mock mysticism, but he confesses that he likes his own story, in which the strange hero, through all his many lives or reappearances, and through all the countless loves on which he fatuously plumes himself, retains a slight German-Jewish accent.

It appears to me that the historic original of these romantic characters is no other than the mysterious Comte de Saint-Germain—not, of course, the contemporary and normal French soldier and minister, of 1707-1778, who bore the same name. I have found the name, with dim allusions, in the unpublished letters and MSS. of Prince Charles Edward Stuart, and have not always been certain whether the

*** Both given in the accompanying volume containing "Old-Time English" Stories. See also the first story in the "North Europe" volume.—*Editor*.**

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

reference was to the man of action or to the man of mystery. On the secret of the latter, the deathless one, I have no new light to throw, and only speak of him for a single reason. Aristotle assures us, in his *Poetics,* that the best-known myths dramatized on the Athenian stage were known to very few of the Athenian audience. It is not impossible that the story of Saint-Germain, though it seems as familiar as the myth of Œdipus or Thyestes, may, after all, not be vividly present to the memory of every reader. The omniscent Larousse, of the *Dictionnaire Universel,* certainly did not know one very accessible fact about Saint-Germain, nor have I seen it mentioned in other versions of his legend. We read, in Larousse, "Saint-Germain is not heard of in France before 1750, when he established himself in Paris. No adventure had called attention to his existence; it was only known that he had moved about Europe, lived in Italy, Holland, and in England, and had borne the names of Marquis de Monteferrat, and of Comte de Bellamye, which he used at Venice."

Lascelles Wraxall, again, in *Remarkable Adventures* (1863), says: "Whatever truth there may be in Saint-Germain's travels in England and the East Indies, it is undubitable that, for from 1745 to 1755, he was a man of high position in Vienna," while in Paris he does not appear, according to Wraxall, till 1757, having been brought from Germany by the Maréchal de Belle-Isle, whose "old boots," says Macallester the spy, Prince Charles freely damned, "because they were always stuffed with projects." Now we hear of Saint-Germain, by that name, as resident, not in Vienna, but in London, at the very moment when Prince Charles, evading Cumberland, who lay with his army at Stone, in Staffordshire, marched to Derby. Horace Walpole writes to Mann in Florence (December 9, 1745):

"We begin to take up people . . . the other day they seized an odd man who goes by the name of Count Saint-Germain. He has been here these two years, and will not tell who he is, or whence, but professes that he does not go by his right name. He sings, plays on the violin won-

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

derfully, composes, is mad, and not very sensible. He is called an Italian, a Spaniard, a Pole; a somebody that married a great fortune in Mexico, and ran away with her jewels to Constantinople; a priest, a fiddler, a vast nobleman. The Prince of Wales has had unsatiated curiosity about him, but in vain. However, nothing has been made out against him; he is released, and, what convinces me he is not a gentleman, stays here, and talks of his being taken up for a spy."

Here is our earliest authentic note on Saint-Germain; a note omitted by his French students. He was in London from 1743 to 1745, under a name not his own, but that which he later bore at the Court of France. From the allusion to his jewels (those of a deserted Mexican bride), it appears that he was already as rich in these treasures as he was afterwards, when his French acquaintances marveled at them. (As to his being "mad," Walpole may refer to Saint-Germain's way of talking as if he had lived in remote ages, and known famous people of the past).

Having caught this daylight glimpse of Saint-Germain in Walpole, having learned that in December, 1745, he was arrested and examined as a possible Jacobite agent, we naturally expect to find our contemporary official documents about his examination by the Government. Scores of such records exist, containing the questions put to, and the answers given by, suspected persons. But we vainly hunt through the Newcastle MSS., and the State Papers, Domestic, in the Record Office, for a trace of the examination of Saint-Germain. I am not aware that he was anywhere left his trail in official documents; he lives in more or less legendary memoirs, alone.

At what precise date Saint-Germain became an intimate of Louis XV., the Duc de Choiseul, Madame de Pompadour, and the Maréchal de Belle-Isle, one cannot ascertain. The writers of memoirs are the vaguest of mortals about dates; only one discerns that Saint-Germain was much about the French Court, and high in the favor of the King, having rooms at Chambord, during the Seven Years' War, and

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

just before the time of the peace negotiations of 1762-1763. The art of compiling false or forged memoirs of that period was widely practiced; but the memoirs of Madame du Hausset, who speaks of Saint-Germain, are authentic. She was the widow of a poor man of noble family, and was one of two *femmes de chambre* of Madame de Pompadour. Her manuscript was written, she explains, by aid of a brief diary which she kept during her term of service. One day M. Senac de Meilhan found Madame de Pompadour's brother, M. de Marigny, about to burn a packet of papers. "It is the journal," he said, "of a *femme de chambre* of my sister, a good, kind woman." De Meilhan asked for the manuscript, which he later gave to Mr. Crawford, one of the Kilwinning family, in Ayrshire, who later helped in the escape of Louis XVI. and Marie Antoinette to Varennes, where they were captured. With the journal of Madame du Hausset were several letters to Marigny on points of historical anecdote.*

Crawford published the manuscript of Madame du Hausset, which he was given by de Meilhan, and the memoirs are thus from an authentic source. The author says that Louis XV. was always kind to her, but spoke little to her, whereas Madame de Pompadour remarked, "The King and I trust you so much that we treat you like a cat or a dog, and talk freely before you."

As to Saint-Germain, Madame du Hausset writes: "A man who was as amazing as a witch came often to see Madame de Pompadour. This was the Comte de Saint-Germain,

*One of these gives Madame de Vieux-Maison as the author of a *roman à clef*, *Secret Memoirs of the Court of Persia*, which contains an early reference to the Man in the Iron Mask (died 1703). The letter-writer avers that D'Argenson, the famous minister of Louis XV., said that the Man in the Iron Mask was really a person *fort peu de chose*, 'of very little account,' and that the Regent d'Orléans was of the same opinion. This corroborates my theory, that the Mask was merely the valet of a Huguenot conspirator, Roux de Marsilly, captured in England, and imprisoned because he was supposed to know some terrible secret—which he knew nothing about. See *The Valet's Tragedy*, Longmans, 1903.

Digitized by Google Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

who wished to make poeple believe that he had lived for several centuries. One day Madame said to him, while at her toilet, "What sort of man was Francis I., a king whom I could have loved?" "A good sort of fellow," said Saint-Germain; "too fiery—I could have given him a useful piece of advice, but he would not have listened." He then described, in very general terms, the beauty of Mary Stuart and La Reine Margot. "You seem to have seen them all," said Madame de Pompadour, laughing. "Sometimes," said Saint-Germain, "I amuse myself, not by making people believe, but by letting them believe, that I have lived from time immemorial." "But you do not tell us your age, and you give yourself out as very old. Madame de Gergy, who was wife of the French ambassador at Venice fifty years ago, I think, says that she knew you there, and that you are not changed in the least." "It is true, Madame, that I knew Madame de Gergy long ago." "But according to her story you must now be over a century old." "It may be so, but I admit that even more possibly the respected lady is in her dotage."

At this time Saint-Germain, says Madame du Hausset, looked about fifty, was neither thin nor stout, seemed clever, and dressed simply, as a rule, but in good taste. Say that the date was 1760, Saint-Germain looked fifty; but he had looked the same age, according to Madame de Gergy, at Venice, fifty years earlier, in 1710. We see how pleasantly he left Madame de Pompadour in doubt on that point.

He pretended to have the secret of removing flaws from diamonds. The King showed him a stone valued at 6,000 francs—without a flaw it would have been worth 10,000. Saint-Germain said that he could remove the flaw in a month, and in a month he brought back the diamond—flawless. The King sent it, without any comment, to his jeweler, who gave 9,600 francs for the stone, but the King returned the money, and kept the gem as a curiosity. Probably it was not the original stone, but another cut in the same fashion, Saint-Germain sacrificing 3,000 or 4,000 francs to his practical joke. He also said that he could increase

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

the size of pearls, which he could have proved very easily—in the same manner. He would not oblige Madame de Pompadour by giving the King an elixir of life: "I should be mad if I gave the King a drug." There seems to be a reference to this desire of Madame de Pompadour in an unlikely place, a letter of Pickle the Spy to Mr. Vaughan (1754)! This conversation Madame du Hausset wrote down on the day of its occurrence.

Both Louis XV. and Madame de Pompadour treated Saint-Germain as a person of consequence. "He is a quack, for he says he has an elixir," said Dr. Quesnay, with medical skepticism. "Moreover, our master, the King, is obstinate; he sometimes speaks of Saint-Germain as a person of illustrious birth."

The age was skeptical, unscientific, and, by reaction, credulous. The *philosophes*, Hume, Voltaire, and others, were exposing, like an ingenious American gentleman, "the mistakes of Moses." The Earl of Marischal told Hume that life had been chemically produced in a laboratory, so what becomes of Creation? Prince Charles, hidden in a convent, was being tutored by Mlle. Luci in the sensational philosophy of Locke, "nothing in the intellect which does not come through the senses"—a queer theme for a man of the sword to study. But, thirty years earlier, the Regent d'Orléans had made crystal-gazing fashionable, and stories of ghosts and second-sight in the highest circles were popular. Mesmer had not yet appeared, to give a fresh start to the old savage practice of hypnotism; Cagliostro was not yet on the scene with his free-masonry of the ancient Egyptian school. But people were already in extremes of doubt and of belief; there might be something in the elixir of life and in the philosopher's stone; it might be possible to make precious stones chemically, and Saint-Germain, who seemed to be over a century old at least, might have all these secrets.

Whence came his wealth in precious stones, people asked, unless from some mysterious knowledge, or some equally mysterious and illustrious birth?

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

He showed Madame de Pompadour a little box full of rubies, topazes, and diamonds. Madame de Pompadour called Madame du Hausset to look at them; she was dazzled, but skeptical, and made a sign to show that she thought them paste. The Count then exhibited a superb ruby, tossing aside contemptuously a cross covered with gems. "That is not so contemptible," said Madame du Hausset, hanging it round her neck. The Count begged her to keep the jewel; she refused, and Madame de Pompadour backed her refusal. But Saint-Germain insisted, and Madame de Pompadour, thinking that the cross might be worth forty louis, made a sign to Madame du Hausset that she accept. She did, and the jewel was valued at 1,500 francs—which hardly proves that the other large jewels were genuine, though Von Gleichen believed they were, and thought the Count's cabinet of old masters very valuable.

The fingers, the watch, the snuffbox, the shoe-buckles, the garter studs, the solitaires of the Count, on high days, all burned with diamonds and rubies, which were estimated, one day, at 200,000 francs. His wealth did not come from cards or swindling—no such charges are ever hinted at; he did not sell elixirs, nor prophecies, nor initiations. His habits do not seem to have been extravagant. One might regard him as a clever eccentric person, the unacknowledged child, perhaps, of some noble, who had put his capital mainly into precious stones. But Louis XV. treated him as a serious personage, and probably knew, or thought he knew, the secret of his birth. People held that he was a bastard of a king of Portugal, says Madame du Hausset. Perhaps the most ingenious and plausible theory of the birth of Saint-Germain makes him the natural son, not of a king of Portugal, but of a queen of Spain. The evidence is not evidence, but a series of surmises. Saint-Germain, on this theory, 'wrop his buth up in a mistry' (like that of Charles James Fitzjames de la Pluche), out of regard for the character of his royal mamma. I believe this about as much as I believe that a certain Rev. Mr. Douglas, an obstreperous Covenanting minister, was a descendant of the captive Mary

Digitized by Google Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

Stuart. However, Saint-Germain is said, like Kaspar Hauser, to have murmured of dim memories of his infancy, of diversions on magnificent terraces, and of palaces glowing beneath an azure sky. This is reported by Von Gleichen, who knew him very well, but thought him rather a quack. Possibly he meant to convey the idea that he was Moses, and that he had dwelt in the palaces of the Ramessids. The grave of the prophet was never known, and Saint-Germain may have insinuated that he began a new ayatar in a cleft of Mount Pisgah; he was capable of it.

However, a less wild surmise avers that, in 1763, the secrets of his birth and the source of his opulence were known in Holland. The authority is the *Memoirs* of Grosley (1813). Grosley was an archæologist of Troyes; he had traveled in Italy, and written an account of his travels; he also visited Holland and England, and later, from a Dutchman, he picked up his information about Saint-Germain. Grosley was a Fellow of our Royal Society, and I greatly revere the authority of a F.R.S. His later years were occupied in the compilation of his *Memoirs*, including an account of what he did and heard in Holland, and he died in 1785. According to Grosley's account of what the Dutchman knew, Saint-Germain was the son of a princess who fled (obviously from Spain) to Bayonne, and of a Portuguese Jew dwelling in Bordeaux.

What fairy and fugitive princess can this be, whom not in vain the ardent Hebrew wooed? She was, she must have been, as Grosley saw, the heroine of Victor Hugo's *Ruy Blas*. The unhappy Charles II. of Spain, a kind of "mammet" (as the English called the Richard II. who appeared up in Islay, having escaped from Pomfret Castle), had for his first wife a daughter of Henrietta, the favorite sister of our Charles II. This childless bride, after some ghostly years of matrimony, after being exorcised in disgusting circumstances, died in February, 1689. In May, 1690 a new bride, Marie de Neuborg, was brought to the grisly side of the crowned mammet of Spain. She, too, failed to prevent the wars of the Spanish Succession by

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

giving an heir to the Crown of Spain. Scandalous chronicles aver that Marie was chosen as Queen of Spain for the levity of her character, and that the Crown was expected, as in the Pictish monarchy, to descend on the female side; the father of the prince might be anybody. What was needed was simply a son of the *Queen* of Spain. She had, while Queen, no son, as far as is ascertained, but she had a favorite, a Count Andanero, whom she made minister of finance. "He was not a born Count," he was a financier, this favorite of the Queen of Spain. That lady did go to live in Bayonne in 1706, six years after the death of Charles II., her husband. The hypothesis is, then, that Saint-Germain was the son of this ex-Queen of Spain, and of the financial Count, Andanero, a man, "not born in the sphere of Counts," and easily transformed by tradition into a Jewish banker of Bordeaux. The Duc de Choiseul, who disliked the intimacy of Louis XV. and of the Court with Saint-Germain, said that the Count was "the son of a Portuguese Jew, *who deceives the Court*. It is strange that the King is so often allowed to be almost alone with this man, though, when he goes out, he is surrounded by guards, as if he feared assassins everywhere." This anecdote is from the *Memoirs* of Gleichen, who had seen a great deal of the world. He died in 1807.

It seems a fair inference that the Duc de Choiseul knew what the Dutch bankers knew, the story of the Count's being a child of a princess retired to Bayonne—namely, the ex-Queen of Spain—and of a Portuguese-Hebrew financier. De Choiseul was ready to accept the Jewish father, but thought that, in the matter of the royal mother, Saint-Germain "deceived the Court."

A queen of Spain might have carried off any quantity of the diamonds of Brazil. The presents of diamonds from her almost idiotic lord must have been among the few comforts of her situation in a Court overridden by etiquette. The reader of Madame d'Aulnoy's contemporary account of the Court of Spain knows what a dreadful dungeon it was. Again, if born at Bayonne about 1706, the Count

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

would naturally seem to be about fifty in 1760. The purity with which he spoke German, and his familiarity with German princely Courts—where I do not remember that Barry Lyndon ever met him—are easily accounted for if he had a royal German to his mother. But, alas! if he was the son of a Hebrew financier, Portuguese or Alsatian (as some said), he was likely, whoever his mother may have been, to know German, and to be fond of precious stones. That Oriental taste notoriously abides in the hearts of the Chosen People.*

> "Nay, nefer shague your gory locks at me,
> Dou canst not say I did it,"

quotes Pinto, the hero of Thackeray's *Notch on the Axe*. "He pronounced it, by the way, I *dit* it, by which I *know* that Pinto was a German," says Thackeray. I make little doubt but that Saint-Germain, too, was a German, whether by the mother's side, and of princely blood, or quite the reverse.

Grosley mixes Saint-Germain up with a lady as mysterious as himself, who also lived in Holland, on wealth of an unknown source, and Grosley inclines to think that the Count found his way into a French prison, where he was treated with extraordinary respect.

Von Gleichen, on the other hand, shows the Count making love to a daughter of Madame Lambert, and lodging in the house of the mother. Here Von Gleichen met the man of mystery and became rather intimate with him. Von Gleichen deemed him very much older than he looked, but did not believe in his elixir.

In any case, he was not a cardsharper, a swindler, a professional medium, or a spy. He passed many evenings almost alone with Louis XV., who, where men were concerned, liked them to be of good family (about ladies he was much less exclusive). The Count had a grand manner; he treated some great personages in a cavalier way, as if he were at least their equal. On the whole, if not really the son of a princess, he probably persuaded Louis

* *Voyage en Angleterre*, 1770.

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

XV. that he did come of that blue blood, and the King would have every access to authentic information. Horace Walpole's reasons for thinking Saint-Germain "not a gentleman" scarcely seem convincing.

The Duc de Choiseul did not like the fashionable Saint-Germain. He thought him a humbug, even when the doings of the deathless one were perfectly harmless. As far as is known, his recipe for health consisted in drinking a horrible mixture called "senna tea"—which was administered to small boys when I was a small boy—and in not drinking anything at his meals. Many people still observe this regimen, in the interest, it is said, of their figures. Saint-Germain used to come to the house of de Choiseul, but one day, when Von Gleichen was present, the minister lost his temper with his wife. He observed that she took no wine at dinner, and told her that she had learned that habit of abstinence from Saint-Germain; that *he* might do as he pleased, "but you, madame, whose health is precious to me, I forbid to imitate the regimen of such a dubious character." Gleichen, who tells the anecdote, says that he was present when de Choiseul thus lost his temper with his wife. The dislike of de Choiseul had a mournful effect on the career of Saint-Germain.

In discussing the strange story of the Chevalier d'Eon, one has seen that Louis XV. amused himself by carrying on a secret scheme of fantastic diplomacy through subordinate agents, behind the backs and without the knowledge of his responsible ministers. The Duc de Choiseul, as Minister of Foreign Affairs, was excluded, it seems, from all knowledge of these double intrigues, and the Maréchal de Belle-Isle, Minister of War, was obviously kept in the dark, as was Madame de Pompadour. Now it is stated by Von Gleichen that the Maréchal de Belle-Isle, from the War Office, started a *new* secret diplomacy behind the back of de Choiseul, at the Foreign Office. The King and Madame de Pompadour (who was not initiated into the general scheme of the King's secret) were both acquainted with what de Choiseul was not to know—namely, Belle-Isle's plan

Digitized by Google Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

for secretly making peace through the mediation, or management, at all events, of Holland. All this must have been prior to the death of the Maréchal de Belle-Isle in 1761; and probably de Broglie, who managed the regular old secret policy of Louis XV., knew nothing about this new clandestine adventure; at all events, the late Duc de Broglie says nothing about it in his book *The King's Secret*.*

The story, as given by Von Gleichen, goes on to say that Saint-Germain offered to conduct the intrigue at the Hague. As Louis XV. certainly allowed that maidenly captain of dragoons, d'Eon, to manage his hidden policy in London, it is not at all improbable that he really intrusted this fresh cabal in Holland to Saint-Germain, whom he admitted to great intimacy. To The Hague went Saint-Germain, diamonds, rubies, senna tea, and all, and began to diplomatize with the Dutch. But the regular French minister at The Hague, d'Affry, found out what was going on behind his back—found it out either because he was sharper than other ambassadors, or because a personage so extraordinary as Saint-Germain was certain to be very closely watched, or because the Dutch did not take to the Undying One, and told d'Affry what he was doing. D'Affry wrote to de Choiseul. An immortal but dubious personage, he said, was treating in the interests of France, for peace, which it was d'Affry's business to do if the thing was to be done at all. Choiseul replied in a rage by the same courier. Saint-Germain, he said, must be extradited, bound hand and foot, and sent to the Bastille. Choiseul thought that he might practice his regimen and drink his senna tea, to the advantage of public affairs, within those venerable walls. Then the angry minister went to the King, told him what orders he had given, and said that, of course, in a case of this kind it was superfluous to inquire as to the royal pleasure. Louis XV. was caught; so was the Maréchal de Belle-Isle. They blushed and were silent.

It must be remembered that this report of a private inci-

* The Duc de Broglie, I am privately informed, could find no clue to the mystery of Saint-Germain.

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

dent could only come to the narrator, Von Gleichen, from de Choiseul, with whom he professes to have been intimate. The King and the Maréchal de Belle-Isle would not tell the story of their own discomfiture. It is not very likely that de Choiseul himself would blab. However, the anecdote avers that the King and the Minister for War thought it best to say nothing, and the demand for Saint-Germain's extradition was presented at The Hague. But the Dutch were not fond of giving up political offenders. They let Saint-Germain have a hint; he slipped over to London, and a London paper published a kind of veiled interview with him in June 1760.

His name, we read, when announced after his death, will astonish the world more than all the marvels of his life. He has been in England already (1743-17—?); he is a great unknown. Nobody can accuse him of anything dishonest or dishonorable. When he was here before we were all mad about music, and so he enchanted us with his violin. But Italy knows him as an expert in the plastic arts, and Germany admires in him a master in chemical science. In France, where he was supposed to possess the secret of the transmutation of metals, the police for two years sought and failed to find any normal source of his opulence. A lady of forty-five once swallowed a whole bottle of his elixir. Nobody recognized her, for she had become a girl of sixteen without observing the transformation!

Saint-Germain is said to have remained in London but for a short period. Horace Walpole does not speak of him again, which is odd, but probably the Count did not again go into society. Our information, mainly from Von Gleichen, becomes very misty, a thing of surmises, really worthless. The Count is credited with a great part in the palace conspiracies of St. Petersburg; he lived at Berlin, and, under the name of Tzarogy, at the Court of the Margrave of Anspach. Then he went, they say, to Italy, and then north to the Landgrave Charles of Hesse, who dabbled in alchemy. Here he is said to have died about 1780-85, leaving his papers to the Landgrave; but all is very vague

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

after he disappeared from Paris in 1760. When next I meet Saint-Germain he is again at Paris, again mysteriously rich, again he rather disappears than dies, he calls himself Major Fraser, and the date is in the last years of Louis Philippe. My authority may be caviled at; it is that of the late ingenious Mr. Van Damme, who describes Major Fraser in a book on the characters of the Second Empire. He does not seem to have heard of Saint-Germain, whom he does not mention.

Major Fraser, "in spite of his English (*sic*) name, was decidedly not English, though he spoke the language." He was (like Saint-Germain) "one of the best dressed men of the period. . . . He lived alone, and never alluded to his parentage. He was always flush of money, though the sources of his income were a mystery to everyone." The French police vainly sought to detect the origin of Saint-Germain's supplies, opening his letters at the post-office. Major Fraser's knowledge of every civilized country at every period was marvelous, though he had very few books. "His memory was something prodigious. . . . Strange to say, he used often to hint that his was no mere book knowledge. "'Of course, it is perfectly ridiculous,'" he remarked, with a strange smile, "'but every now and then I feel as if this did not come to me from reading, but from personal experience. At times I become almost convinced that I lived with Nero, that I knew Dante personally, and so forth.'" * At the major's death not a letter was found giving a clew to his antecedents, and no money was discovered. *Did* he die? As in the case of Saint-Germain, no date is given. The author had an idea that the major was "an illegitimate son of some exalted person" of the period of Charles IV. and Ferdinand VII. of Spain.

The author does not mention Saint-Germain, and may never have heard of him. If his account of Major Fraser is not mere romance, in that warrior we have the undying friend of Louis XV. and Madame de Pompadour. He

* *An Englishman in Paris*, vol. i., pp. 130-133. London, 1892.

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

had drunk at Medmenham with Jack Wilkes; as Riccio he had sung duets with the fairest of unhappy queens; he had extracted from Blanche de Béchamel the secret of Goby de Mouchy. As Pinto, he told much of his secret history to Mr. Thackeray, who says: "I am rather sorry to lose him after three little bits of *Roundabout Papers.*"

Did Saint-Germain really die in a palace of Prince Charles of Hesse about 1780-85? Did he, on the other hand, escape from the French prison where Grosley thought he saw him, during the French Revolution? Was he known to Lord Lytton about 1860? Was he then Major Fraser? Is he the mysterious Muscovite adviser of the Dalai Lama? Who knows? He is a will-o'-the-wisp of the memoir-writers of the eighteenth century. Whenever you think you have a chance of finding him in good authentic State papers, he gives you the slip; and if his existence were not vouched for by Horace Walpole, I should incline to deem him as Betsy Prig thought of Mrs. Harris.

The Man in the Iron Mask

I

THE LEGEND

THE Mystery of the Man in the Iron Mask is, despite a pleasant saying of Lord Beaconsfield's, one of the most fascinating in history. By a curious coincidence the wildest legend on the subject, and the correct explanation of the problem, were offered to the world in the same year, 1801. According to this form of the legend, the Man in the Iron Mask was the genuine Louis XIV., deprived of his rights in favor of a child of Anne of Austria and of Mazarin. Immured in the Isles Sainte-Marguerite, in the bay of Cannes (where you are shown his cell, looking north to the sunny town), he married, and begot a son. That son was carried to Corsica, was named *de Buona Parte,* and was the ancestor of Napoleon. The Emperor was thus the legitimate representative of the House of Bourbon.

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

This legend was circulated in 1801, and is referred to in a proclamation of the Royalists of La Vendée. In the same year, 1801, Roux Fazaillac, a *Citoyen* and a revolutionary legislator, published a work in which he asserted that the Man in the Iron Mask (as known in rumor) was not one man, but a myth, in which the actual facts concerning at least two men were blended. It is certain that Roux Fazaillac was right; or that, if he was wrong, the Man in the Iron Mask was an obscure valet, of French birth, residing in England, whose real name was Martin.

Before we enter on the topic of this poor menial's tragic history, it may be as well to trace the progress of the romantic legend, as it blossomed after the death of the Man, whose Mask was not of iron, but of black velvet. Later we shall show how the legend struck root and flowered, from the moment when the poor valet, Martin (by his prison pseudonym "Eustache Dauger"), was immured in the French fortress of Pignerol, in Piedmont (August, 1669).

The Man, *in connection with the Mask,* is first known to us from a kind of notebook kept by du Junca, Lieutenant of the Bastille. On September 18, 1698, he records the arrival of the new Governor of the Bastille, M. de Saint-Mars, bringing with him, from his last place, the Isles Sainte-Marguerite, in the bay of Camnes, "an old prisoner whom he had at Pignerol. He keeps the prisoner always masked, his name is not spoken . . . and I have put him alone, in the third chamber of the Bertaudière tower, having furnished it some days before with everything, by order of M. de Saint-Mars. The prisoner is to be served and cared for by M. de Rosarges," the officer next in command under Saint-Mars.*

The prisoner's death is entered by du Junca on November 19, 1703. To that entry we return later.

The existence of this prisoner was known and excited

* Funck-Brentano, *Légendes et Archives de la Bastille,* pp. 86, 87. Paris, 1898, p. 277, a facsimile of this entry.

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

curiosity. On October 15, 1711, the Princess Palatine wrote about the case to the Electress Sophia of Hanover, "A man lived for long years in the Bastille, masked, and masked he died there. Two musketeers were by his side to shoot him if ever he unmasked. He ate and slept in his mask. There must, doubtless, have been some good reason for this, as otherwise he was very well treated, well lodged, and had everything given to him that he wanted. He took the Communion masked; was very devout, and read perpetually."

On October 22, 1711, the Princess writes that the Mask was an English nobleman, mixed up in the plot of the Duke of Berwick against William III.—Fenwick's affair is meant. He was imprisoned and masked that the Dutch usurper might never know what had become of him.*

The legend was now afloat in society. The sub-commandant of the Bastille from 1749 to 1787, Chevalier, declared, obviously on the evidence of tradition, that all the Mask's furniture and clothes were destroyed at his death, lest they might yield a clew to his identity. Louis XV. is said to have told Madame de Pompadour that the Mask was "the minister of an Italian prince." Louis XVI. told Marie Antoinette (according to Madame de Campan) that the Mask was a Mantuan intriguer, the same person as Louis XV. indicated. Perhaps he was, it is one of two possible alternatives. Voltaire, in the first edition of his "Siècle de Louis XIV.," merely spoke of a young, handsome, masked prisoner, treated with the highest respect by Louvois, the Minister of Louis XIV. At last, in "Questions sur l'Encyclopédie" (second edition), Voltaire averred that the Mask was the son of Anne of Austria and Mazarin, an elder brother of Louis XIV. Changes were rung on this note: the Mask was the actual King, Louis XIV. was a bastard. Others held that he was James, Duke of Monmouth—or Molière! In 1770 Heiss identified him with Mattioli, the Mantuan intriguer, and especially after the

* *Op. cit.* 98, note 1.

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

appearance of the book by Roux Fazaillac, in 1801, that was the generally accepted opinion.

It *may* be true, in part. Mattioli *may* have been the prisoner who died in the Bastille in November 1703, but the legend of the Mask's prison life undeniably arose out of the adventure of our valet, Martin or Eustache Dauger.

II

THE VALET'S HISTORY

After reading the arguments of the advocates of Mattioli, I could not but perceive that, whatever captive died, masked, at the Bastille in 1703, the valet Dauger was the real source of most of the legends about the Man in the Iron Mask. A study of M. Lair's book "Nicholas Fouquet" (1890) confirmed this opinion. I therefore pushed the inquiry into a source neglected by the French historians, namely, the correspondence of the English ambassadors, agents, and statesmen for the years 1668, 1669.* One result is to confirm a wild theory of my own to the effect that the Man in the Iron Mask (if Dauger were he) may have been as great a mystery to himself as to historical inquirers. He may not have known *what* he was imprisoned for doing! More important is the probable conclusion that the long and mysterious captivity of Eustache Dauger, and of another perfectly harmless valet and victim, was the mere automatic result of "red tape" of the old French absolute monarchy. These wretches were caught in the toils of the system, and suffered to no purpose, for no crime. The two men, at least Dauger, were apparently mere supernumeraries in the obscure intrigue of a conspirator known as Roux de Marsilly.

This truly abominable tragedy of Roux de Marsilly is "another story," narrated in the following essay. It must suffice here to say that, in 1669, while Charles II. was

* The papers are in the Record Office; for the contents see the following essay, *The Valet's Master*.

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

negotiating the famous, or infamous, secret treaty with Louis XIV.—the treaty of alliance against Holland, and in favor of the restoration of Roman Catholicism in England—Roux de Marsilly, a French Huguenot, was dealing with Arlington and others, in favor of a Protestant league against France.

When he started from England for Switzerland in February, 1669, Marsilly left in London a valet called by him "Martin," who had quitted his service and was living with his own family. This man is the "Eustache Dauger" of our mystery. The name is his prison pseudonym, as "Lestang" was that of Mattioli. The French Government was anxious to lay hands on him, for he had certainly, as the letters of Marsilly prove, come and gone freely between that conspirator and his English employers. How much Dauger knew, what amount of mischief he could effect, was uncertain. Much or little, it was a matter which, strange to say, caused the greatest anxiety to Louis XIV. and to his Ministers for very many years. Probably long before Dauger died (the date is unknown, but it was more than twenty-five years after Marsilly's execution), his secret, if secret he possessed, had ceased to be of importance. But he was now in the toils of the French red tape, the system of secrecy which rarely released its victim. He was guarded, we shall see with such unheard-of rigor that popular fancy at once took him for some great, perhaps royal, personage.

Marsilly was publicly tortured to death in Paris on June 22, 1669. By July 19 his ex-valet, Dauger, had entered on his mysterious term of captivity. How the French got possession of him, whether he yielded to cajolery, or was betrayed by Charles II., is uncertain. The French ambassador at St. James's, Colbert (brother of the celebrated Minister), writes thus to M. de Lyonne, in Paris, on July 1, 1669:* "Monsieur Joly has spoken to the man Martin" (Dauger), "and has really persuaded him that, by going to France

* Transcripts from Paris MSS., Vol. xxxiii., Record Office.

Digitized by Google Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

and telling all that he knows against Roux, he will play the part of a lad of honor and a good subject."

But Martin, after all, was *not* persuaded!

Martin replied to Joly that *he knew nothing at all,* and that, once in France, people would think he was well acquainted with the traffickings of Roux, "*and so he would be kept in prison to make him divulge what he did not know.*" The possible Man in the Iron Mask did not know his own secret! But, later in the conversation, Martin foolishly admitted that he knew a great deal; perhaps he did this out of mere fatal vanity. Cross to France, however, he would not, even when offered a safe-conduct and promise of reward. Colbert therefore proposes to ask Charles to surrender the valet, and probably Charles descended to the meanness. By July 19, at all events, Louvois, the War Minister of Louis XIV., was bidding Saint-Mars, at Pignerol in Piedmont, expect from Dunkirk a prisoner of the very highest importance—a valet! This valet, now called "Eustache Dauger," can only have been Marsilly's valet, Martin, who, by one means or another, had been brought from England to Dunkirk. It is hardly conceivable, at least, that when a valet, in England, is "wanted" by the French police on July 1, for political reasons, and when by July 19 they have caught a valet of extreme political importance, the two valets should be two different men. Martin must be Dauger.

Here, then, by July 19, 1669, we find our unhappy serving man in the toils. Why was he to be handled with such mysterious rigor? It is true that State prisoners of very little account were kept with great secrecy. But it cannot well be argued that they were all treated with the extraordinary precautions which, in the case of Dauger, were not relaxed for twenty-five or thirty years. The King says, according to Louvois, that the safe keeping of Dauger is "of the last importance to his service." He must have intercourse with nobody. His windows must be where nobody can pass; several bolted doors must cut him off from the sound of human voices. Saint-Mars himself, the

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

commandant, must feed the valet daily. *"You must never, under any pretense, listen to what he may wish to tell you. You must threaten him with death if he speaks one word except about his actual needs.* He is only a valet, and does not need much furniture." *

Saint-Mars replied that, in presence of M. de Vauroy, the chief officer of Dunkirk (who carried Dauger thence to Pignerol), he had threatened to run Dauger through the body if he ever dared to speak, even to him, Saint-Mars. He has mentioned this prisoner, he says, to no mortal. People believe that Dauger is a Marshal of France, so strange and unusual are the precautions taken for his security.

A Marshal of France! The legend has begun. At this time (1669) Saint-Mars had in charge Fouquet, the great fallen Minister, the richest and most dangerous subject of Louis XIV. By-and-by he also held Lauzun, the adventurous wooer of la Grande Mademoiselle. But it was not they, it was the valet, Dauger, who caused "sensation."

On February 20, 1672, Saint-Mars, for the sake of economy, wished to use Dauger as valet to Lauzun. This proves that Saint-Mars did not, after all, see the necessity of secluding Dauger or thought the King's fears groundless. In the opinion of Saint-Mars, Dauger did not want to be released, "would never ask to be set free." Then why was he so anxiously guarded? Louvois refused to let Dauger be put with Lauzun as valet. In 1675, however, he allowed Dauger to act as valet to Fouquet, but with Lauzun, said Louvois, Dauger must have no intercourse. Fouquet had then another prisoner valet, La Rivière. This man had apparently been accused of no crime. He was of a melancholy character, and a dropsical habit of body: Fouquet had amused himself by doctoring him and teaching him to read.

In the month of December, 1678, Saint-Mars, the commandant of the prison, brought to Fouquet a sealed letter from Louvois, the seal unbroken. His own reply was also to be sealed, and not to be seen by Saint-Mars. Louvois

* The letters are printed by Roux Fazáillac, Jung, Lair, and others.

Digitized by Google Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

wrote that the King wished to know one thing, before giving Fouquet ampler liberty. Had his valet, Eustache Dauger, told his other valet, La Rivière, what he had done before coming to Pignerol? (*de ce à quoi il a été employé aupravant que d'être à Pignerol*). "His Majesty bids me ask you [Fouquet] this question, and expects that you will answer without considering anything but the truth, that he may know what measures to take," these depending on whether Dauger has, or has not, told La Rivière the story of his past life.* Moreover, Lauzun was never, said Louvois, to be allowed to enter Fouquet's room when Dauger was present. The humorous point is that, thanks to a hole dug in the wall between his room and Fouquet's, Lauzun saw Dauger whenever he pleased.

From the letter of Louvois to Fouquet, about Dauger (December 23, 1678), it is plain that Louis XIV. had no more pressing anxiety, nine years after Dauger's arrest, than to conceal *what it was that Dauger had done*. It is apparent that Saint-Mars himself either was unacquainted with this secret, or was supposed by Louvois and the King to be unaware of it. He had been ordered never to allow Dauger to tell him; he was not allowed to see the letters on the subject between Lauzun and Fouquet. We still do not know, and never shall know, whether Dauger himself knew his own secret, or whether (as he had anticipated) he was locked up for not divulging what he did not know.

The answer of Fouquet to Louvois must have satisfied Louis that Dauger had not imparted his secret to the other valet, La Rivière, for Fouquet was now allowed a great deal of liberty. In 1679, he might see his family, the officers of the garrison, and Lauzun—it being provided that Lauzun and Dauger should never meet. In March, 1680, Fouquet died, and henceforth the two valets were most rigorously guarded; Dauger, because he was supposed to know something; La Rivière, because Dauger might have imparted the real or fancied secret to him. We shall return to these poor serving men, but here it is necessary to state that,

*Lair, *Nicholas Foucquet*, ii. pp. 463, 464.

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

ten months before the death of their master, Fouquet, an important new captive had been brought to the prison of Pignerol.

This captive was the other candidate for the honors of the Mask, Count Mattioli, the secretary of the Duke of Mantua. He was kidnaped on Italian soil on May 2, 1679, and hurried to the mountain fortress of Pignerol, then on French ground. His offense was the betraying of the secret negotiations for the cession of the town and fortress of Casal, by the Duke of Mantua, to Louis XIV. The disappearance of Mattioli was, of course, known to the world. The cause of his *enlèvement*, and the place of his captivity, Pignerol, were matters of newspaper comment at least as early as 1687. Still earlier, in 1682, the story of Mattioli's arrest and seclusion in Pignerol had been published in a work named "La Prudenza Trionfante di Casale." * There was thus no mystery, at the time, about Mattioli; his crime and punishment were perfectly well known to students of politics. He has been regarded as the mysterious Man in the Iron Mask, but, for years after his arrest, he was the least mysterious of State prisoners.

Here, then, is Mattioli in Pignerol in May, 1679. While Fouquet then enjoyed relative freedom, while Lauzun schemed escapes or made insulting love to Mademoiselle Fouquet, Mattioli lived on the bread and water of affliction. He was threatened with torture to make him deliver up some papers compromising Louis XIV. It was expressly commanded that he should have nothing beyond the barest necessaries of life. He was to be kept *dans la dure prison*. In brief, he was used no better than the meanest of prisoners. The awful life of isolation, without employment, without books, without writing materials, without sight or sound of man save when Saint-Mars or his lieutenant brought food for the day, drove captives mad.

In January, 1680, two prisoners, a monk † and one

* Brentano, *op. cit.*, p. 117.

† A monk, who *may* have been this monk, appears in the following essay, p. 34, *infra*.

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

Dubreuil, had become insane. By February 14, 1680, Mattioli was daily conversing with God and his angels. "I believe his brain is turned," says Saint-Mars. In March, 1680, as we saw, Fouquet died. The prisoners, not counting Lauzun (released soon after), were now five: (1) Mattioli (mad); (2) Dubreuil (mad); (3) The monk (mad); (4) Dauger, and (5) La Rivière. These two, being employed as valets, kept their wits. On the death of Fouquet, Louvois wrote to Saint-Mars about the two valets. Lauzun must be made to believe that they had been set at liberty, but, in fact, they must be most carefully guarded *in a single chamber*. They were shut up in one of the dungeons of the "Tour d'en bas." Dauger had recently done something as to which Louvois writes: "Let me know how Dauger can possibly have done what you tell me, and how he got the necessary drugs, as I cannot suppose that you supplied him with them" (July 10, 1680).*

Here, then, by July, 1680, are the two valets locked in one dungeon of the "Tour d'en bas." By September Saint-Mars had placed Mattioli, with the mad monk, in another chamber of the same tower. He writes: "Mattioli is almost as mad as the monk," who arose from bed and preached naked. Mattioli behaved so rudely and violently that the lieutenant of Saint-Mars had to show him a whip, and threaten him with a flogging. This had its effect. Mattioli, to make his peace, offered a valuable ring to Blainvilliers. The ring was kept to be restored to him, if ever Louis let him go free—a contingency mentioned more than once in the correspondence.

Apparently Mattioli now sobered down, and probably was given a separate chamber and a valet; he certainly had a valet at Pignerol later. By May 1681, Dauger and La Rivière still occupied their common chamber in the "Tour d'en bas." They were regarded by Louvois as the most important of the five prisoners then at Pignerol. They, not Mattioli, were the captives about whose safe and secret keeping Louis and Louvois were most anxious. This ap-

* Lair, *Nicholas Foucquet*, ii., pp. 476, 477.

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

pears from a letter of Louvois to Saint-Mars, of May 12, 1681. The jailer, Saint-Mars, is to be promoted from Pignerol to Exiles. "Thither," says Louvois, "the king desires to transport *such of your prisoners as he thinks too important to have in other hands than yours.*" These prisoners are "*the two in the low chamber of the tower,*" the two valets, Dauger and La Rivière.

From a letter of Saint-Mars (June, 1681) we know that Mattioli was not one of these. He says: "I shall keep at Exiles two birds (*merles*) whom I have here: they are only known as *the gentry of the low room in the tower; Mattioli may stay on here at Pignerol with the other prisoners*" (Dubreuil and the mad monk). It is at this point that Le Citoyen Roux (Fazaillac), writing in the Year IX. of the Republic (1801), loses touch with the secret.* Roux finds, in the State Papers, the arrival of Eustache Dauger at Pignerol in 1669, but does not know who he is, or what is his quality. He sees that the Mask must be either Mattioli, Dauger, the monk, one Dubreuil, or one Calazio. But, overlooking or not having access to the letter of Saint-Mars of June, 1681, Roux holds that the prisoners taken to Les Exiles were the monk and Mattioli. One of these must be the Mask, and Roux votes for Mattioli. He is wrong. Mattioli beyond all doubt remained at Pignerol.

Mountains of argument have been built on these words, *leux merles*, "two jail-birds." One of the two, we shall see, became the source of the legend of the Man in the Iron Mask. "How can a wretched jail-bird (*merle*) have been the Mask?" asks M. Topin. "The rogue's whole furniture and table-linen were sold for 1*l.* 19*s.* He only got a new suit of clothes every three years." All very true; but this jail-bird and his mate, by the direct statement of Louvois, are "the prisoners too important to be intrusted to other hands than yours"—the hands of Saint-Mars—while Mattioli is so unimportant that he may be left at Pignerol under Villebois.

* *Recherches Historiques sur l'Homme au Masque de Fer*, Paris. An. IX.

Digitized by Google Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

The truth is, that the offense and the punishment of Mattioli were well known to European diplomatists and readers of books. Casal, moreover, at this time was openly ceded to Louis XIV., and Mattioli could not have told the world more than it already knew. But, for some inscrutable reason, the secret which Dauger knew, or was suspected of knowing, became more and more a source of anxiety to Louvois and Louis. What can he have known? The charges against his master, Roux de Marsilly, had been publicly proclaimed. Twelve years had passed since the dealings of Arlington with Marsilly. Yet, Louvois became more and more nervous.

In accordance with commands of his, on March 2, 1682, the two valets, who had hitherto occupied one chamber at Exiles as at Pignerol, were cut off from all communication with each other. Says Saint-Mars, "Since receiving your letter I have warded the pair as strictly and exactly as I did M. Fouquet and M. Lauzun, who cannot brag that he sent or received any intelligence. Night and day two sentinels watch their tower; and my own windows command a view of the sentinels. Nobody speaks to my captives but myself, my lieutenant, their confessor, and the doctor, who lives eighteen miles away, and only sees them when I am present." Years went by; in January, 1687, one of the two captives died; we really do not know which with absolute certainty. However, the intensified secrecy with which the survivor was now guarded seems more appropriate to Dauger; and M. Funck-Brentano and M. Lair have no doubt that it was La Rivière who expired. He was dropsical, that appears in the official correspondence, and the dead prisoner died of dropsy.

As for the strange secrecy about Dauger, here is an example. Saint-Mars, in January, 1687, was appointed to the fortress of the Isles Sainte-Marguerite, that sun themselves in the bay of Cannes. On January 20 he asks leave to go to see his little kingdom. He must leave Dauger, but *has forbidden even his lieutenant to speak to that prisoner.* This was an increase of precaution since 1682. He wishes

Digitized by Google Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

to take the captive to the Isles, but how? A sedan chair covered over with oilcloth seems best. A litter might break down, litters often did, and some one might then see the passenger.

Now M. Funck-Brentano says, to minimize the importance of Dauger, "he was shut up like so much luggage in a chair hermetically closed with oilcloth, carried by eight Piedmontese relays of four."

Luggage is not usually carried in hermetically sealed sedan chairs, but Saint-Mars has explained why, by surplus of precaution, he did not use a litter. The litter might break down and Dauger might be seen. A new prison was built specially, at the cost of 5,000 lires, for Dauger at Sainte-Marguerite, with large sunny rooms. On May 3, 1687, Saint-Mars had entered on his island realm, Dauger being nearly killed by twelve days' journey in a closed chair. He again excited the utmost curiosity. On January 8, 1688, Saint-Mars writes that his prisoner is believed by the world to be either a son of Oliver Cromwell, or the Duc de Beaufort,* who was never seen again, dead or alive, after a night battle in Crete, on June 25, 1669, just before Dauger was arrested. Saint-Mars sent in a note of the *total* of Dauger's expenses for the year 1687. He actually did not dare to send the *items*, he says, lest they, if the bill fell into the wrong hands, might reveal too much.

Meanwhile, an Italian news-letter, copied into a Leyden paper, of August 1687, declared that Mattioli had just been brought from Pignerol to Sainte-Marguerite. There was no mystery about Mattioli, the story of his capture was published in 1682, but the press, on one point, was in error; Mattioli was still at Pignerol. The known advent of the late Commandant of Pignerol, Saint-Mars, with a single concealed prisoner, at the island, naturally suggested the erroneous idea that the prisoner was Mattioli. The prisoner was really Dauger, the survivor of the two valets.

From 1688 to 1691 no letter about Dauger has been pub-

*Duc de Beaufort whom Athos releases from prison in Dumas's *Vingt Ans Après*.

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

lished. Apparently he was then the only prisoner on the island, except one Chézut, who was there before Dauger arrived, and gave up his chamber to Dauger while the new cells were being built. Between 1689 and 1693 six Protestant preachers were brought to the island, while Louvois, the Minister, died in 1691, and was succeeded by Barbezieux. On August 13, 1691, Barbezieux wrote to ask Saint-Mars about "the prisoner whom he had guarded for twenty years." The only such prisoner was Dauger, who entered Pignerol in August, 1669. Mattioli had been a prisoner only for twelve years, and lay in Pignerol, not in Sainte-Marguerite, where Saint-Mars now was. Saint-Mars replied: "I can assure you that *nobody has seen him but myself.*"

By the beginning of March, 1694, Pignerol had been bombarded by the enemies of France; presently Louis XIV. had to cede it to Savoy. The prisoners there must be removed. Mattioli, in Pignerol, at the end of 1693, had been in trouble. He and his valet had tried to smuggle out letters written on the linings of their pockets. These were seized and burned. On March 20, 1694, Barbezieux wrote to Laprade, now commanding at Pignerol, that he must take his three prisoners, one by one, with all secrecy, to Sainte-Marguerite. Laprade alone must give them their food on the journey. The military officer of the escort was warned to ask no questions. Already (February 26, 1694) Barbezieux had informed Saint-Mars that these prisoners were coming. "They are of more consequence, one of them at least, than the prisoners on the island, and must be put in the safest places." The "one" is doubtless Mattioli. In 1681 Louvois had thought Dauger and La Rivière more important than Mattioli, who, in March, 1694, came from Pignerol to Sainte-Marguerite. Now in April, 1694, a prisoner died at the island, a prisoner who, like Mattioli, *had a valet*. We hear of no other prisoner on the island, except Mattioli who had a valet. A letter of Saint-Mars (January 6, 1696) proves that no prisoner *then* had a valet, for each prisoner collected his own dirty plates

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

and dishes, piled them up, and handed them to the lieutenant.

M. Funck-Brentano argues that in this very letter (January 6, 1696) Saint-Mars speaks of "les valets de messieurs les prisonniers." But in *that* part of the letter Saint-Mars is not speaking of the actual state of things at Sainte-Marguerite, but is giving reminiscences of Fouquet and Lauzun, who, of course, at Pignerol, had valets, and had money, as he shows. Dauger had no money. M. Funck-Brentano next argues that early in 1694 one of the preacher prisoners, Melzac, died, and cites M. Jung ("La Vérité sur le Masque de Fer," p. 91). This is odd, as M. Jung says that Melzac, or Malzac, "*died in the end of* 1692, *or early in* 1693." Why, then, does M. Funck-Brentano cite M. Jung for the death of the preacher early in 1694, when M. Jung (conjecturally) dates his decease at least a year earlier?* It is not a mere conjecture as, on March 3, 1693, Barbezieux begs Saint-Mars to mention his Protestant prisoners under nicknames. There are *three*, and Malzac is no longer one of them. Malzac, in 1692, suffered from a horrible disease, discreditable to one of the godly, and in October, 1692, had been allowed medical expenses. Whether they included a valet or not, Malzac seems to have been non-existent by March, 1693. Had he possessed a valet, and had he died in 1694, why should *his* valet have been "shut up in the vaulted prison"? This was the fate of the valet of the prisoner who died in April, 1694, and was probably Mattioli.

Mattioli, certainly, had a valet in December, 1693, at Pignerol. He went to Sainte-Marguerite in March, 1694. In April, 1694, a prisoner with a valet died at Sainte-

* M. Funck-Brentano's statement is in *Revue Historique*, lvi. p. 298. "Malzac died at the beginning of 1694," citing Jung, p. 91. Now on p. 91 M. Jung writes, "At the beginning of 1694 Saint-Mars had six prisoners, of whom one Melzac, dies." But M. Jung (pp. 269, 270) later writes, "It is probable that Melzac died at the end of 1692, or early in 1693," and he gives his reasons, which are convincing. M. Funck-Brentano must have overlooked M. Jung's change of opinion between his p. 91 and his pp. 269, 270.

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

Marguerite. In January, 1696, no prisoner at Sainte-Marguerite had a valet. Therefore, there is a strong presumption that the "prisonnier au valet" who died in April, 1694, was Mattioli.

After December, 1693, when he was still at Pignerol, the name of Mattioli, freely used before, never occurs in the correspondence. But we still often hear of "l'ancien prisonnier," "the old prisoner." He was, on the face of it, Dauger, by far the oldest prisoner. In 1688, Saint-Mars, having only one prisoner (Dauger), calls him merely "my prisoner." In 1691, when Saint-Mars had several prisoners, Barbezieux styles Dauger "your prisoner of twenty years' standing." When, in 1696-1698, Saint-Mars mentions "mon ancien prisonnier," "my prisoner of long standing," he obviously means Dauger, not Mattioli—above all, if Mattioli died in 1694. M. Funck-Brentano argues that "mon ancien prisonnier" can only mean "my erstwhile prisoner, he who was lost and is restored to me"—that is, Mattioli. This is not the view of M. Jung, or M. Lair, or M. Loiseleur.

Friends of Mattioli's claims rest much on this letter of Barbezieux to Saint-Mars (November 17, 1697): "You have only to watch over the security of all your prisoners, *without ever explaining to anyone what it is that your prisoner of long standing did.*" That secret, it is argued, *must* apply to Mattioli. But all the world knew what Mattioli had done! Nobody knew, and nobody knows, what Eustache Dauger had done. It was one of the *arcana imperii*. It is the secret enforced ever since Dauger's arrest in 1669. Saint-Mars (1669) was not to ask. Louis XIV. could only lighten the captivity of Fouquet (1678) if his valet, La Rivière, did not know what Dauger had done. La Rivière (apparently a harmless man) lived and died in confinement, the sole reason being that he might perhaps know what Dauger had done. Consequently there is the strongest presumption that the "*ancien prisonnier*" of 1697 is Dauger, and that "what he had done" (which Saint-Mars must tell to no one) was what Dauger did, not what

Digitized by Google Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

Mattioli did. All Europe knew what Mattioli had done; his whole story had been published to the world in 1682 and 1687.

On July 19, 1698, Barbezieux bade Saint-Mars come to assume the command of the Bastille. He is to bring his "old prisoner," whom not a soul is to see. Saint-Mars therefore brought his man *masked*, exactly as another prisoner was carried masked from Provence to the Bastille in 1695. M. Funck-Brentano argues that Saint-Mars was now quite fond of his old Mattioli, so noble, so learned.

At last, on September 18, 1698, Saint-Mars lodged his "old prisoner" in the Bastille, "an old prisoner whom he had at Pignerol," says the journal of du Junca, Lieutenant of the Bastille. His food, we saw, was brought him by Rosarges alone, the "Major," a gentleman who had always been with Saint-Mars. Argues M. Funck-Brentano, all this proves that the captive was a gentleman, not a valet. Why? First, because the Bastille, under Louis XIV., was "une prison de distinction." Yet M. Funck-Brentano tells us that in Mazarin's time "valets mixed up with royal plots" were kept in the Bastille. Again, in 1701, in this "noble prison," the Mask was turned out of his room to make place for a female fortune-teller, and was obliged to chum with a profligate valet of nineteen, and a "beggarly" bad patriot, who "blamed the conduct of France, and approved that of other nations, especially the Dutch." M. Funck-Brentano himself publishes these facts (1898), in part published earlier (1890) by M. Lair.* Not much *noblesse* here! Next, if Rosarges, a gentleman, served the Mask, Saint-Mars alone (1669) carried his food to the valet, Dauger. So the service of Rosarges does not ennoble the Mask and differentiate him from Dauger, who was even more nobly served, by Saint-Mars.

On November 19, 1703, the Mask died suddenly (still in his velvet mask), and was buried on the 20th. The parish register of the church names him "Marchialy" or "Mar-

* *Légendes de la Bastille*, pp. 86-89. Citing du Junca's Journal, April 30, 1701.

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

chioly," one may read it either way; du Junca, Lieutenant of the Bastille, in his contemporary journal, calls him "M. de Marchiel." Now, Saint-Mars often spells Mattioli, "Marthioly."

This is the one strength of the argument for Mattioli's claims to the Mask. M. Lair replies, "Saint-Mars had a mania for burying prisoners under fancy names," and gives examples. One is only a gardener, François Eliard (1701), concerning whom it is expressly said that, as he is a prisoner, his real name is not to be given, so he is registered as Pierre Maret (others read *Navet*, "Peter Turnip"). If Saint-Mars, looking about for a false name for Dauger's burial register, hit on Marsilly (the name of Dauger's old master), that *might* be miswritten *Marchialy*. However it be, the age of the Mask is certainly falsified; the register gives "about forty-five years old." Mattioli would have been sixty-three; Dauger cannot have been under fifty-three.

There the case stands. If Mattioli died in April, 1694, he cannot be the Man in the Iron Mask. Of Dauger's death we find no record, unless he was the Man in the Iron Mask, and died, in 1703, in the Bastille. He was certainly, in 1669 and 1688, at Pignerol and at Sainte-Marguerite, the center of the mystery about some great prisoner, a Marshal of France, the Duc de Beaufort, or a son of Oliver Cromwell. Mattioli was not mystery, no secret. Dauger is so mysterious that probably the secret of his mystery was unknown to himself. By 1701, when obscure wretches were shut up with the Mask, the secret, whatever its nature, had ceased to be of moment. The captive was now the mere victim of cruel routine. But twenty years earlier, Saint-Mars had said that Dauger "takes things easily, resigned to the will of God and the King."

To sum up, on July 1, 1669, the valet of the Huguenot intriguer, Roux de Marsilly, the valet resident in England, known to his master as "Martin," was "wanted" by the French secret police. By July 19, a valet, of the highest political importance, had been brought to Dunkirk, from England, no doubt. My hypothesis assumes that this valet,

Digitized by Google Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

though now styled "Eustache Dauger," was the "Martin" of Roux de Marsilly. He was kept with so much mystery at Pigernol that already the legend began its course; the captive valet was said to be a Marshal of France! We then follow Dauger from Pignerol to Les Exiles, till January, 1687, when one valet out of a pair, Dauger being one of them, dies. We presume that Dauger is the survivor, because the great mystery still is "what he *has done*," whereas the other valet had done nothing, but may have known Dauger's secret. Again the other valet had long been dropsical, and the valet who died in 1687 died of dropsy.

In 1688, Dauger, at Sainte-Marguerite, is again the source and center of myths; he is taken for a son of Oliver Cromwell, or for the Duc de Beufort. In June 1692, one one of the Huguenot preachers at Saint-Marguerite writes on his shirt and pewter plate and throws them out of the window.* Legend attributes these acts to the Man in the Iron Mask, and transmutes a pewter into a silver plate. Now, in 1689-1693, Mattioli was at Pignerol, but Dauger was at Sainte-Marguerite, and the Huguenot's act is attributed to him. Thus Dauger, not Mattioli, is the center round which the myths crystallize: the legends concern *him*, not Mattioli, whose case is well known, and gives rise to no legend. Finally, we have shown that Mattioli probably died at Sainte-Marguerite in April, 1694. If so, then nobody but Dauger can be the "old prisoner" whom Saint-Mars brought, masked, to the Bastille, in September, 1698, and who died there in November, 1703. However suppose that Mattioli did not die in 1694, but was the masked man who died in the Bastille in 1703, then the legend of Dauger came to be attributed to Mattioli: these two men's fortunes are combined in the one myth.

The central problem remains unsolved.

What had the valet, Eustache Dauger, done? †

* Saint-Mars au Ministre, June 4, 1692.

† One marvels that nobody has recognized, in the mask, James Stuart (James de la Cloche), eldest of the children of Charles II. He came to England in 1668, was sent to Rome, and "disappears from history." See *infra*, "The Mystery of James de la Cloche."

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

III

THE VALET'S MASTER

THE secret of the Man in the Iron Mask, or at least of one of the two persons who have claims to be the Mask, was *"What had Eustache Dauger done?"* To guard this secret the most extraordinary precautions were taken, as we have shown in the foregoing essay. And yet, if secret there was, it might have got wind in the simplest fashion. In the "Vicomte de Bragelonne," Dumas describes the tryst of the Secret-hunters with the dying Chief of the Jesuits at the inn in Fontainebleau. They come from many quarters, there is a Baron of Germany and a laird from Scotland, but Aramis takes the prize. He knows the secret of the Mask, the most valuable of all to the intriguers of the Company of Jesus.

Now, despite all the precautions of Louvois and Saint-Mars, despite sentinels for ever posted under Dauger's windows, despite arrangements which made it impossible for him to signal to people on the hillside at Les Exiles, despite the suppression even of the items in the accounts of his expenses, his secret, if he knew it, could have been discovered, as we have remarked, by the very man most apt to make mischievous use of it—by Lauzun. That brilliant and reckless adventurer could see Dauger, in prison at Pignerol, when he pleased, for he had secretly excavated a way into the rooms of his fellow prisoner, Fouquet, on whom Dauger attended as valet. Lauzun was released soon after Fouquet's death. It is unlikely that he bought his liberty by the knowledge of the secret and there is nothing to suggest that he used it (if he possessed it) in any other way.

The natural clew to the supposed secret of Dauger is a study of the career of his master, Roux de Marsilly. As official histories say next to nothing about him, we may set forth what can be gleaned from the State Papers in our Record Office. The earliest is a letter of Roux de Mar-

Digitized by Google

Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

silly to Mr. Joseph Williamson, secretary of Lord Arlington (December, 1668). Marsilly sends Martin (on our theory Eustache Dauger) to bring back from Williamson two letters from his own correspondent in Paris. He also requests Williamson to procure for him from Arlington a letter of protection, as he is threatened with arrest for some debt in which he is not really concerned. Martin will explain. The next paper is indorsed "Received December 28, 1668, Mons. de Marsilly." As it is dated December 27, Marsilly must have been in England. The contents of this piece deserve attention, because they show the terms on which Marsilly and Arlington were, or, at least, how Marsilly conceived them.

(1) Marsilly reports, on the authority of his friends at Stockholm, that the King of Sweden intends, first to intercede with Louis XIV. in favor of the French Huguenots, and next, if diplomacy fails, to join in arms with the other Protestant Powers of Europe.

(2) His correspondent in Holland learns that if the King of England invites the States to any "holy resolution," they will heartily lend forces. No leader so good as the English King—Charles II.! Marsilly had shown *Arlington's letter* to a Dutch friend, who bade him approach the Dutch ambassador in England. He has dined with that diplomatist. Arlington had, then, gone so far as to write an encouraging letter. The Dutch ambassador had just told Marsilly that he had received the same news, namely, that, Holland would aid the Huguenots, persecuted by Louis XIV.

(3) Letters from Provence, Languedoc, and Dauphiné say that the situation there is unaltered.

(4) The Canton of Zurich write that they will keep their promises and that Berne *is anxious to please the King of Great Britain,* and that it is ready to raise, with Zurich, 15,000 men. They are not afraid of France.

(5) Zurich fears that, if Charles is not represented at the next Diet, Bâle and Saint Gall will be intimidated, and not dare to join the Triple Alliance of Spain, Holland, and

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

England. The best plan will be for Marsilly to represent England at the Diet of January 25, 1669, accompanied by the Swiss General Balthazar. This will encourage friends "*to give His Britannic Majesty the satisfaction which he desires*, and will produce a close union between Holland, Sweden, the Cantons, and other Protestant States."

This reads as if Charles had already expressed some "desire."

(6) Geneva grumbles at a reply of Charles "through a bishop who is their enemy," the Bishop of London, "a persecutor of our religion," that is, of Presbyterianism. However, nothing will dismay the Genevans, "si S. M. B. ne change."

Then comes a blank in the paper. There follows a copy of a letter as if *from Charles II. himself*, to "the Right High and Noble Seigneurs of Zurich." He has heard of their wishes from Roux de Marsilly, whom he commissions to wait upon them. "I would not have written by my Bishop of London had I been better informed, but would myself have replied to your obliging letter, and would have assured you, as I do now, that I desire. . . ."

It appears as if this were a draft of a kind of letter which Marsilly wanted Charles to write to Zurich, and there is a similar draft of a letter for Arlington to follow, if he and Charles wish to send Marsilly to the Swiss Diet. The Dutch ambassador, with whom Marsilly dined on December 26, the Constable of Castille, and other grandees, are all of opinion that he should visit the Protestant Swiss, as from the King of England. The scheme is for an alliance of England, Holland, Spain, and the Protestant Cantons, against France and Savoy.

Another letter of Marsilly to Arlington, only dated *Jeudi*, avers that he can never repay Arlington for his extreme kindness and liberality. "No man in England is more devoted to you than I am, and shall be all my life."*

On the very day when Marsilly drafted for Charles his own commission to treat with Zurich for a Protestant al-

* *State Papers*, France, vol. 125, 106.

Digitized by Google Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

liance against France, Charles himself wrote to his sister, Madame (Henriette d'Orléans). He spoke of his secret treaty with France. "You know how much secrecy is necessary for the carrying on of the business, and I assure you that nobody does, nor shall, know anything of it here, but myself and that one person more, till it be fit to be public." * (Is "that one person" de la Cloche?)

Thus Marsilly thought Charles almost engaged for the Protestant League, while Charles was secretly allying himself with France against Holland. Arlington was probably no less deceived by Charles than Marsilly was.

The Bishop of London's share in the dealing with Zurich is obscure.

It appears certain that Arlington was not consciously deceiving Marsilly. Madame wrote, on February 12, as to Arlington, "The man's attachment to the Dutch and his inclination towards Spain are too well known." † Not till April 25, 1669, does Charles tell his sister that Arlington has an inkling of his secret dealings with France; how he knows, Charles cannot tell.‡ It is impossible for us to ascertain how far Charles himself deluded Marsilly, who went to the Continent early in spring, 1669. Before May 15-25, 1669, in fact on April 14, Marsilly had been kidnaped by agents of Louis XIV., and his doom was dight. Here is the account of the matter, written to ——— by Perwich in Paris:

"*W. Perwich to* ———

"Paris, May 25, '69.

"Honored Sir,

"The Cantons of Switzerland are much troubled at the French King's having sent fifteen horsemen into Switzerland from whence the Sr de Manillé, the King's resident there, had given information of the Sr Roux de Marsilly's being there negotiating the bringing the Cantons into the Triple League by discourses much to the disadvantage of France, giving them very ill impressions of the French King's

* *Madame*, by Julia Cartwright, p. 275.

† *Ibid.*, p. 281.

‡ *Ibid.*, p. 285.

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

Government, who was *betrayed by a monk that kept him company* and intercepted by the said horsemen brought into France and is expected at the Bastille. I believe you know the man. . . . I remember him in England."

Can this monk be the monk who went mad in prison at Pignerol, sharing the cell of Mattioli? Did he, too, suffer for his connection with the secret? We do not know, but the position of Charles was awkward. Marsilly, dealing with the Swiss, had come straight from England, where he was *lié* with Charles's minister, Arlington, and with the Dutch and Spanish ambassadors. The King refers to the matter in a letter to his sister of May 24, 1669 (misdated by Miss Cartwright, May 24, 1668.)*

"You have, I hope, received full satisfaction by the last post in the matter of Marsillac [Marsilly], for my Ld. Arlington has sent to Mr. Montague [English ambassador at Paris] his history all the time he was here, by which you will see how little credit he had here, and that particularly my Lord Arlington was not in his good graces, because he did not receive that satisfaction, in his negotiation, he expected, and that was only in relation to the Swissers, and so I think I have said enough of this matter."

Charles took it easily!

On May $\frac{14}{24}$ Montague acknowledged Arlington's letter to which Charles refers; he has been approached, as to Marsilly, by the Spanish resident, "but I could not tell how to do anything in the business, never having heard of the man, or that he was employed by my Master [Charles] in any business. I have sent you also a copy of a letter which an Englishman writ to me that I do not know, in behalf of Roux de Marsilly, but that does not come by the post," being too secret.†

France had been well-informed about Marsilly while he

* *Madame*, by Julia Cartwright, p. 264.

† *State Papers*, France, vol. 126.

Digitized by Google Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

was in England. He then had a secretary, two lackeys, and a valet de chambre, and was frequently in conference with Arlington and the Spanish ambassador to the English Court. Colbert, the French ambassador in London, had written all this to the French Government, on April 25, before he heard of Marsilly's arrest.*

The belief that Marsilly was an agent of Charles appears to have been general, and, if accepted by Louis XIV., would interfere with Charles's private negotiations for the Secret Treaty with France. On May 18 Prince d'Aremberg had written on the subject to the Spanish ambassador in Paris. Marsilly, he says, was arrested in Switzerland, on his way to Berne, with a monk who was also seized, and, a curious fact, Marsilly's valet was killed in the struggle. This valet, of course, was not Dauger, whom Marsilly had left in England. Marsilly "doit avoir demandé la protection du Roy de la Grande Bretagne en faveur des Religionaires (Huguenots) de France, et passer en Suisse *avec quelque commission de sa part.*" D'Aremberg begs the Spanish ambassador to communicate all this to Montague, the English ambassador at Paris, but Montague probably, like Perwich, knew nothing of the business any more than he knew of Charles's secret dealings with Louis through Madame.†

To d'Aremberg's letter is pinned an unsigned English note, obviously intended for Arlington's reading.

"Roux de Marsilly is still in the Bastille though they have a mind to hang him, yet they are much puzzled what to do with him. De Lionne has beene to examine him twice or thrice, but there is noe witnes to prove anything against him. I was told by one that the French king told it to, that in his papers they find great mention of the *Duke of Bucks: and your name,* and speak as if he were much trusted by you. I have enquired what this Marsilly is, and I find by one Mr. Marsilly that I am acquainted withall, and a man

* Bibl. Nat., Fonds. Français, No. 10665.

† *State Papers,* France, vol. 126.

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

of quality, that this man's name is onely Roux, and borne at Nismes and having been formerly a soldier in his troope, ever since has taken his name to gain more credit in Switserland where hee, Marsilly, formerly used to bee employed by his Coll: the Mareschall de Schomberg who invaded Switserland."

We next find a very curious letter, from which it appears that the French Government inclined to regard Marsilly as, in fact, an agent of Charles, but thought it wiser to trump up against him a charge of conspiring against the life of Louis XIV. On this charge, or another, he was executed, while the suspicion that he was an agent of English treachery may have been the real cause of the determination to destroy him. The Balthazar with whom Marsilly left his papers is mentioned with praise by him in his paper for Arlington, of December 27, 1668. He is the General who should have accompanied Marsilly to the Diet.

The substance of the letter (given in full in Note I.) is to the following effect. P. du Moulin (Paris, May $\frac{19}{29}$ 1669) writes to Arlington. Ever since, Ruvigny, the late French ambassador, a Protestant, was in England, the French Government had been anxious to kidnap Roux de Marsilly. They hunted him in England, Holland, Flanders, and Franche-Comté. As we know from the case of Mattioli, the Government of Louis XIV. was unscrupulously daring in breaking the laws of nations, and seizing hostile personages in foreign territory, as Napoleon did in the affair of the Duc d'Enghien. When all failed Louis bade Turenne capture Roux de Marsilly wherever he could find him. Turenne sent officers and gentlemen abroad, and, after four months' search they found Marsilly in Switzerland. They took him as he came out of the house of his friend, General Balthazar, and carried him to Gex. No papers were found on him, but he asked his captors to send to Balthazar and get "the commission he had from England," which he probably thought would give him the security of an official diplomatic position. Having got this

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

document, Marsilly's captors took it to the French Ministers. Nothing could be more embarrassing, if this were true, to Charles's representative in France, Montague, and to Charles's secret negotiations, also to Arlington, who had dealt with Marsilly. On his part, the captive Marsilly constantly affirmed that he was the envoy of the King of England. The common talk of Paris was that an agent of Charles was in the Bastille, "though at Court they pretended to know nothing of it." Louis was overjoyed at Marsilly's capture, giving out that he was conspiring against his life. Monsieur told Montague that he need not beg for the life of a would-be murderer like Marsilly. But as to this idea, "they begin now to mince it at Court," and Ruvigny assured du Moulin "that they had no such thoughts." De Lyonne had seen Marsilly and observed that it was a blunder to seize him. The French Government was nervous, and Turenne's secretary had been "pumping" several ambassadors as to what they thought of Marsally's capture on foreign territory. One ambassador replied with spirit that a crusade of all Europe against France, as of old against the Moslems, would be necessary. Would Charles, du Moulin asked, own or disown Marsilly?

Montague's position was now awkward. On May 23, his account of the case was read, at Whitehall, to the Foreign Committee in London. (See Note II. for the document.) He did not dare to interfere in Marsilly's behalf, because he did not know whether the man was an agent of Charles or not. Such are the inconveniences of a secret royal diplomacy carried on behind the backs of Ministers. Louis XV. later pursued this method with awkward consequences.*

The French Court, Montague said, was overjoyed at the capture of Marsilly, and a reward of 100,000 crowns, "I am told very privately, is set upon his head." The French ambassador in England, Colbert, had reported that Charles had sent Marsilly "to draw the Swisses into the Triple League" against France. Montague had tried to reassure Monsieur (Charles's brother-in-law), but was himself en-

* Cf. *Le Secret du Roi*, by the Duc de Broglie.

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

tirely perplexed. As Monsieur's wife, Charles's sister, was working with Charles for the secret treaty with Louis, the State and family politics were clearly in a knot. Meanwhile, the Spanish ambassador kept pressing Montague to interfere in favor of Marsilly. After Montague's puzzled note had been read to the English Foreign Committee on May 23, Arlington offered explanations. Marsilly came to England, he said, when Charles was entering into negotiations for peace with Holland, and when France seemed likely to oppose the peace. No proposition was made to him or by him. Peace being made, Marsilly was given money to take him out of the country. He wanted the King to renew his alliance with the Swiss cantons, but was told that the cantons must first expel the regicides of Charles I. He undertook to arrange this, and some eight months later came back to England. "He was coldly used, and I was complained of for not using so important a man well enough."

As we saw, Marsilly expressed the most effusive gratitude to Arlington, which does not suggest cold usage. Arlington told the complainers that Marsilly was "another man's spy," what man's, Dutch, Spanish, or even French, he does not explain. So Charles gave Marsilly money to go away. He was never trusted with anything but the expulsion of the regicides from Switzerland. Arlington was ordered by Charles to write a letter thanking Balthazar for his good offices.

These explanations by Arlington do not tally with Marsilly's communications to him, as cited at the beginning of this inquiry. Nothing is said in these about getting the regicides of Charles I. out of Switzerland: the paper is entirely concerned with bringing the Protestant Cantons into anti-French League with England, Holland, Spain, and even Sweden. On the other hand, Arlington's acknowledged letter to Balthazar, carried by Marsilly, may be the "commission" of which Marsilly boasted. In any case, on June 2, Charles gave Colbert, the French ambassador, an audience, turning even the Duke of York out of the room. He

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

then repeated to Colbert the explanations of Arlington, already cited, and Arlington, in a separate interview, corroborated Charles. So Colbert wrote to Louis (June 3, 1669); but to de Lyonne, on the same day, "I trust that you will extract from Marsilly much matter for the King's service. *It seemed to me that milord d'Arlington was uneasy about it* [*en avait de l'inquiétude*]. . . . There is here in England one Martin" (Eustace Dauger), "who has been that wretch's valet, and who left him discontent." Colbert then proposes to examine Martin, who may know a good deal, and to send him into France. On June 10, Colbert writes to Louis that he expects to see Martin.*

On June 24, Colbert wrote to Louis about a conversation with Charles. It is plain that proofs of a murder-plot by Marsilly were scanty or non-existent, though Colbert averred that Marsilly had discussed the matter with the Spanish Ministers. "Charles knew that he had had much conference with Isola, the Spanish ambassador." Meanwhile, up to July 1, Colbert was trying to persuade Marsilly's valet to go to France, which he declined to do, as we have seen. However, the luckless lad, by nods and by veiled words, indicated that he knew a great deal. But not by promise of security and reward could the valet be induced to return to France. "I might ask the King to give up Martin, the valet of Marsilly, to me," Colbert concludes, and, by hook or by crook, he secured the person of the wretched man, as we have seen. In a postcript, Colbert says that he has heard of the execution of Marsilly.

By July 19, as we saw in the previous essay, Louvois was bidding Saint-Mars expect, at Pignerol from Dunkirk, a prisoner of the highest political importance, to be guarded with the utmost secrecy, yet a valet. That valet must be Martin, now called Eustache Dauger, and his secret can only be connected with Marsilly. It may have been something about Arlington's negotiations through Marsilly, as compromising Charles II. Arlington's explanations to the Foreign Committee were certainly incomplete and disingenuous.

* Bibl. Nat., Fonds Français, No. 10665.

Digitized by Google Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

He, if not Charles, was more deeply engaged with Marsilly than he ventured to report. But Marsilly himself avowed that he did not know why he was to be executed.

Executed he was, in circumstances truly hideous. Perwich, June 5, wrote to an unnamed correspondent in England: "They have all his papers, which speak much of the Triple Alliance, but I know not whether they can lawfully hang him for this, having been naturalized in Holland, and taken in a privileged country" (Switzerland). Montague (Paris, June 22, 1669) writes to Arlington that Marsilly is to die, so it has been decided, for "a rape which he formerly committed at Nismes," and after the execution, on June 26, declares that, when broken on the wheel, Marsilly "still persisted that he was guilty of nothing, nor did know why he was put to death."

Like Eustache Dauger, Marsilly professed that he did not know his own secret. The charge of a rape, long ago, at Nismes, was obviously trumped up to cover the real reason for the extraordinary vindictiveness with which he was pursued, illegally taken, and barbarously slain. Mere Protestant restlessness on his part is hardly an explanation. There was clearly no evidence for the charge of a plot to murder Louis XIV., in which Colbert, in England, seems to have believed. Even if the French Government believed that he was at once an agent of Charles II., and at the same time a would-be assassin of Louis XIV., that hardly accounts for the intense secrecy with which his valet, Eustache Dauger, was always surrounded. Did Marsilly know of the Secret Treaty, and was it from him that Arlington got his first inkling of the royal plot? If so, Marsilly would probably have exposed the mystery in Protestant interests. We are entirely baffled.

In any case, Francis Vernon, writing from Paris to Williamson (?) (June $\frac{18}{28}$, 1669), gave a terrible account of Marsilly's death. (For the letter, see Note V.) With a broken piece of glass (as we learn from another source), Marsilly, in prison, wounded himself in a ghastly manner, probably hoping to die by loss of blood. They seared him

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

with a red-hot iron, and hurried on his execution. He was broken on the wheel, and was two hours in dying (June 22). Contrary to usage, a Protestant preacher was brought to attend him on the scaffold. He came most reluctantly, expecting insult, but not a taunt was uttered by the fanatic populace. "He came up the scaffold, great silence all about," Marsilly lay naked, stretched on a St. Andrew's cross. He had seemed half dead, his head hanging limp, "like a drooping calf." To greet the minister of his own faith, he raised himself, to the surprise of all, and spoke out loud and clear. He utterly denied all share in a scheme to murder Louis. The rest may be read in the original letter (p. 51).

So perished Roux de Marsilly; the history of the master throws no light on the secret of the servant. That secret, for many years, caused the keenest anxiety to Louis XIV. and Louvois. Saint-Mars himself must not pry into it. Yet what could Dauger know? That there had been a conspiracy against the King's life? But that was the public talk of Paris. If Dauger had guilty knowledge, his life might have paid for it; why keep him a secret prisoner? Did he know that Charles II. had been guilty of double dealing in 1668-1669? Probably Charles had made some overtures to the Swiss, as a blind to his private dealings with Louis XIV., but, even so, how could the fact haunt Louis XIV. like a ghost? We leave the mystery much darker than we found it, but we see good reason why diplomatists should have murmured of a crusade against the cruel and brigand Government which sent soldiers to kidnap, in neighboring states, men who did not know their own crime.

To myself it seems not improbable that the King and Louvois were but stupidly and cruelly nervous about what Dauger *might* know. Saint-Mars, when he proposed to utilize Dauger as a prison valet, manifestly did not share the trembling anxieties of Louis XIV. and his Minister; anxieties which grew more keen as time went on. However, "a soldier only has his orders," and Saint-Mars executed

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

his orders with minute precision, taking such unheard-of precautions that, in legend, the valet blossomed into the rightful kind of France.

ORIGINAL PAPERS IN THE CASE OF ROUX DE MARSILLY.*

I. *Letter of Mons. P. du Moulin to Arlington.*

Paris, May y^e^ , 1669.

My Lord,

. . . . . .

Ever since that Monsieur de Ruvigny was in England last, and upon the information he gave, this King had a very great desire to seize if it were possible this Roux de Marsilly, and several persons were sent to effect it, into England, Holland, Flanders, and Franche Compté: amongst the rest one La Grange, exempt des Gardes, was a good while in Holland with fifty of the guards dispersed in severall places and quarters; But all having miscarried the King recommended the thing to Monsieur de Turenne who sent some of his gentlemen and officers under him to find this man out and to endeavor to bring him alive. These men after foure months search found him att last in Switzerland, and having laid waite for him as he came out from Mons^r^ Balthazar's house (a commander well knowne) they took him and carryed him to Gex before they could be intercepted and he rescued. This was done only by a warrant from Monsieur de Turenne but as soone as they came into the french dominions they had full powers and directions from this court for the bringing of him hither. Those that tooke him say they found no papers about him, but that he desired them to write to Mons^r^ Balthazar to desire him to take care of his papers and to send him the *commission he had from England* and a letter being written to that effect it was signed by the prisoner and instead of sending it as they had promised, they have brought it hither along with them. *They do all unanimously report that he did constantly affirme that he was imployed by the King of Great Brittain and did act by his commission;* so that the general discourse here in towne is that one of the King of England's agents is in the Bastille; though att Court they pretend to know nothing of it and would have the world think they are persuaded he had no relacion to his Majesty. Your Lordship hath heard by the publique newes how overjoyed this King was att the bringing of this prisoner, and how farr he expressed his thanks to the chiefe person employed in it, declaring openly that this man had long since conspired against his life, and agreeable to this, Monsieur, fearing that Mylord Amb^r^. was come to interpose on the prisoner's behalfe asked him on Friday last att St. Germains whether that was the cause of his coming, and told him that he did not think he would speake for a man that attempted to kill the King. The same report hath been hitherto in everybody's mouth but they begin now to mince it att court, and Monsieur de

* *State Papers,* France, vol. 126.

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

Ruvigny would have persuaded me yesterday, they had no such thoughts. The truth is I am apt to believe they begin now to be ashamed of it: and I am informed from a very good hand that Monsieur de Lionee who hath confessed since that he can find no ground for this pretended attempting to the King's life, and that upon the whole he was of opinion that this man had much better been left alone than taken, and did look upon what he had done as the intemperancy of an ill-settled braine. And to satisfy your Lordship that they are nettled here, and are concerned to know what may be the issue of all this, Monsieur de Turenne's secretary was on Munday last sent to several foreigne Ministers to pump them and to learne what their thoughts were concerning this violence committed in the Dominions of a sovereign and an allye whereupon he was told by one of them that such proceedings would bring Europe to the necessity of entering into a *Croisade* against them, as formerly against the infidels. If I durst I would acquaint your Lordship with the reflexions of all publique ministers here and of other unconcerned persons in relation to his Majesty's owning or disowning this man; but not knowing the particulars of his case, nor the grounds his Maty may go upon, I shall forbeare entering upon this discourse. . . .

Your Lordships' &c.

P. Du Moulin.

II. *Paper endorsed "Mr. Montague originally in Cypher. Received May* 19, '69. *Read in foreigne Committee,* 23 *May. Roux de Marsilli."* *

I durst not venture to sollicite in Monsr Roux Marsilly's behalfe because I doe not know whether the King my Master hath imployed him or noe; besides he is a man as I have been tolde by many people here of worth, that has given out that he is resolved to kill the French king at one time or other, and I think such men are as dangerous to one king as to another: hee is brought to the Bastille and I believe may be proceeded against and put to death, in very few daies. There is great joy in this Court for his being taken, and a hundred thousand crownes, I am told very privately, set upon his head; the French Ambassador in England wacht him, and hee has given the intelligence here of his being employed by the King, and sent into Switzerland by my Master to draw the Swisses into the Triple League. Hee aggravates the business as much as hee can to the prejudice of my Master to value his owne service the more, and they seeme here to wonder that the King my Master should have imployed or countenanced a man that had so base a design against the King's Person, I had a great deal of discourse with Monsieur about it, but I did positively say that he had noe relation to my knowledge to the King my Master, and if he should have I make a question or noe whither in this case the King will owne him. However, my Lord, I had nothing to doe to owne or meddle in a business that I was so much a stranger to. . . .

This Roux Marsilly is a great creature of the B. d'Isola's, wch makes them here hate him the more. The Spanish Resident was

* *State Papers,* France, vol. 126.

Digitized by Google Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

very earnest with mee to have done something in behalfe of Marsilly, but I positively refused.

III. [*A paper endorsed "Roux de Marsilli. Read in for. Committee, 23d May."*] *

Roux de Marsilly came hither when your Majesty had made a union with Holland for making the Peace betwix the two Crownes and when it was probable the opposition to the Peace would bee on the side of France

Marsilly was heard telling of longe things but noe proposition made to him or by him.

Presently the Peace was made and Marsilly told more plainly wee had no use of him. A little summe of money was given him to returne as he said whither he was to goe in Switzerland. Upon which hee wishing his Maty would renew his alience wth the Cantons hee was answered his Maty would not enter into any comerce with them till they had sent the regicides out of their Country, hee undertooke it should bee done. Seven or eight months after wth out any intimation given him from hence or any expectation of him, he comes hither, but was so coldly used I was complained off for not using so important a man well enough. I answered I saw noe use the King could make of him, because he had no credit in Switzerlande and for any thing else I thought him worth nothing to us, but above all because I knew by many circumstances *hee was another man's spy* and soe ought not to be paid by his Majesty. Notwithstanding this his Maty being moved from compassion commanded hee should have some money given him to carry him away and that I should write to Monsieur Balthazar thanking him in the King's name for the good offices hee rendered in advancing a good understanding betwixt his Maty and the Cantons and desiring him to continue them in all occasions.

The man was always looked upon as a hot headed and indiscreete man, and soe accordingly handled, hearing him, but never trusting him with anything but his own offered and undesired endeavours to gett the Regicides sent out of Switzerland.

IV. *Letter of W. Perwich to* ——.*

Paris: June 5, 1669.

Horored Sir,

. . . . . .

Roux Marsilly has prudently declared hee had some what of importance to say but it should bee to the King himselfe wch may be means of respiting his processe and as he hopes intercession may bee made for him; but people talk so variously of him that I cannot tell whether hee ought to bee owned by any Prince; the Suisses have indeed the greatest ground to reclayme him as being taken in theirs. They have all his papers which speake much of the Triple Alliance; if they have no other pretext of hanging him I know not whether they can lawfully for this, hee having been naturallised in Holland and taken in a priviledged Country. . . .

* *State Papers*, France, vol. 126.

Digitized by Google Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

V. *Francis Vernon to [Mr. Williamson?].**

Paris: June ~~11~~, 1669.

Honored Sir,

My last of the 26th Currt was soe short and soe abrupt that I fear you can peck butt little satisfaction out of it.

. . . . . .

I did intend to have written something about Marsilly but that I had noe time then. In my letter to my Lord Arlington I writt that Friday 21 Currt hee wounded himself wch he did not because hee was confronted with Ruvigny as the Gazettes speake. For he knew before hee should dye, butt he thought by dismembering himself that the losse of blood would carry him out of the world before it should come to bee knowne that he had wounded himselfe. And when the Governor of the Bastille spied the blood hee said It was a stone was come from him which caused that effusion. However the governor mistrusted the worst and searcht him to see what wound he had made. So they seared him and sent word to St. Germaines which made his execution be hastened. Saturday about 1 of the clock he was brought on the skaffold before the Chastelet and tied to St. Andrew's Crosse all wch while he acted the Dying man and scarce stirred, and seemed almost breathless and fainting. The Lieutenant General prest him to confesse and there was a doctor of the Sorbon who was a counsellr of the Castelet there likewise to exhort him to disburthen his mind of any thing which might be upon it. Butt he seemed to take no notice and lay panting.

Then the Lieutenant Criminel bethought himself that the only way to make him speake would bee to sende for a ministre soe hee did to Monsr Daillie but hee because the Edicts don't permitt ministres to come to condemned persons in publique but only to comfort them in private before they goe out of prison refused to come till hee sent a huissier who if he had refused the second time would have brought him by force. At this second summons hee came butt not without great expectations to bee affronted in a most notorious manner beeing the first time a ministre came to appeare on a scaffold and that upon soe sinister an occasion. Yet when he came found a great presse of people. All made way, none lett fall soe much as a taunting word. Hee came up the Scaffold, great silence all about. Hee found him lying bound stretched on St. Andrew's Crosse naked ready for execution. Hee told him hee was sent for to exhort him to die patiently and like a Christian. Then immediately they were all surprized to see him hold up his head wch he lett hang on one side before like a drooping calfe and speake as loud and clear as the ministre, to whom he said with a cheerful air hee was glad to see him, that hee need not question butt that hee would dye like a Christian and patiently too. Then hee went and spoke some places of Scripture to encourage him which he heard with great attention. They afterward came to mention some things to move him to contrition, and there hee tooke an occasion to aggravate the horrour of a Crime of attempting against the

* *State Papers*, France, vol. 126.

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

King's person. Hee said hee did not know what hee meant. For his part hee never had any evill intention against the Person of the King.

The Lieutenant Criminel stood all the while behind Monsieur Daille and hearkened to all and prompted Monsr Daillie to aske him if hee had said there were 10 Ravillacs besides wch would doe the King's businesse. Hee protested solemnly hee never said any such words or if hee did hee never remembered, butt if hee had it was with no intention of Malice. Then Monsieur Daillie turned to the people and made a discourse in vindication of those of the Religion that it was no Principle of theirs attempts on the persons of King[s] butt only loyalty and obedience. This ended hee went away; hee staid about an hour in all, and immediately as soon as he was gone, they went to their worke and gave him eleven blows with a barre and laid him on the wheele. He was two houres dying. All about Monsr Daillie I heard from his own mouth for I went to wait on him because it was reported hee had said something concerning the King of England butt hee could tell mee nothing of that. There was a flying report that he should say going from the Chastelet—The Duke of York hath done mee a great injury. The Swisses they say resented his [Marsilly's] taking and misst but ½ an hour to take them which betrayed him [the monk] after whom they sent. When he was on the wheele he was heard to say Le Roy est grand tyrant, Le Roy me traitte d'un façon fort barbare. All that you read concerning oaths and dying en enrage is false all the oaths hee used being only asseverations to Monsr Daillie that he was falsely accused as to the King's person

Sr I am &c

FRANS. VERNON.

VI. *The Ambassador Montague to Arlington.**

Paris: June 22, 1669.

My Lord,

The Lieutenant criminel hath proceeded pretty farre with Le Roux Marsilly. The crime they forme their processe on beeing a rape which he had formerly committed at Nismes soe that he perceiving but little hopes of his life, sent word to the King if hee would pardon him he could reveale things to him which would concerne him more and be of greater consequence to him, than his destruction.

VII. *The same to the same.*

Paris: June 26, '69.

My Lord,

I heard that Marsilly was to be broke on the wheel and I gave order then to one of my servants to write Mr. Williamson word of it, soe I suppose you have heard of it already: they hastened his execution for feare he should have dyed of the hurt he had done himself the day before; they sent for a minister to him when he was upon the scaffold to see if he would confesse anything, but he still persisted that he was guilty of nothing nor *did not know why he was put to death*. . . .

* *State Papers*, France, vol. 126.

Digitized by Google

Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

PART II

True Stories of Modern Magic

Digitized by Google

Original from
NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

Digitized by Google

Original from
NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

True Stories of Modern Magic

M. Robert-Houdin

A Conjurer's Confessions

I

SELF-TRAINING

Sleight-of-hand theories alone cannot explain the mysteries of "magic" as practiced by that eminent Frenchman who revolutionized the entire art, and who was finally called upon to help his government out of a difficulty—Robert-Houdin. The success of his most famous performances hung not only on an incredible dexterity, but also on high ingenuity and moral courage, as the following pages from his "Memoirs" will prove to the reader. The story begins when the young man of twenty was laboring patiently as apprentice to a watchmaker.

IN order to aid my progress and afford me relaxation, my master recommended me to study some treatises on mechanics in general, and on clockmaking in particular. As this suited my taste exactly, I gladly assented, and I was devoting myself passionately to this attractive study, when a circumstance, apparently most simple, suddenly decided my future life by revealing to me a vocation whose mysterious resources must open a vast field for my inventive and fanciful ideas.

One evening I went into a bookseller's shop to buy Berthoud's "Treatise on Clockmaking," which I knew he had. The tradesman being engaged at the moment on matters more important, took down two volumes from the shelves and handed them to me without ceremony. On returning home I sat down to peruse my treatise conscientiously, but judge of my surprise when I read on the back of one of the volumes "SCIENTIFIC AMUSEMENTS." Astonished at finding such a title on a professional work, I opened it im-

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

patiently, and, on running through the table of contents, my surprise was doubled on reading these strange phrases:

The way of performing tricks with the cards—How to guess a person's thoughts—To cut off a pigeon's head, to restore it to life, etc., etc.

The bookseller had made a mistake. In his haste, he had given me two volumes of the Encyclopædia instead of Berthoud. Fascinated, however, by the announcement of such marvels, I devoured the mysterious pages, and the further my reading advanced, the more I saw laid bare before me the secrets of an art for which I was unconsciously predestined.

I fear I shall be accused of exaggeration, or at least not be understood by many of my readers, when I say that this discovery caused me the greatest joy I had ever experienced. At this moment a secret presentiment warned me that success, perhaps glory, would one day accrue to me in the apparent realization of the marvelous and impossible, and fortunately these presentiments did not err.

The resemblance between two books, and the hurry of a bookseller, were the commonplace causes of the most important event in my life.

It may be urged that different circumstances might have suggested this profession to me at a later date. It is probable; but then I should have had no time for it. Would any workman, artisan, or tradesman give up a certainty, however slight it may be, to yield to a passion which would be surely regarded as a mania? Hence my irresistible penchant for the mysterious could only be followed at this precise period of my life.

How often since have I blessed this providential error, without which I should have probably vegetated as a country watchmaker! My life would have been spent in gentle monotony; I should have been spared many sufferings, emotions, and shocks; but, on the other hand, what lively sensations, what profound delight would have been sacrificed!

I was eagerly devouring every line of the magic book

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

which described the astounding tricks; my head was aglow, and I at times gave way to thoughts which plunged me in ecstasy.

The author gave a very plain explanation of his tricks; still, he committed the error of supposing his readers possessed of the necessary skill to perform them. Now, I was entirely deficient in this skill, and though most desirous of acquiring it, I found nothing in the book to indicate the means. I was in the position of a man who attempts to copy a picture without possessing the slightest notion of drawing and painting.

In the absence of a professor to instruct me, I was compelled to create the principles of the science I wished to study. In the first place, I recognized the fundamental principle of sleight-of-hand, that the organs performing the principal part are the sight and touch. I saw that, in order to attain any degree of perfection, the professor must develop these organs to their fullest extent—for, in his exhibitions, he must be able to see everything that takes place around him at half a glance, and execute his deceptions with unfailing dexterity.

I had been often struck by the ease with which pianists can read and perform at sight the most difficult pieces. I saw that, by practice, it would be possible to create a certainty of perception and facility of touch, rendering it easy for the artist to attend to several things simultaneously, while his hands were busy employed with some complicated task. This faculty I wished to acquire and apply to sleight-of-hand; still, as music could not afford me the necessary elements, I had recourse to the juggler's art, in which I hoped to meet with an analogous result.

It is well known that the trick with the balls wonderfully improves the touch, but does it not improve the vision at the same time? In fact, when a juggler throws into the air four balls crossing each other in various directions, he requires an extraordinary power of sight to follow the direction his hands have given to each of the balls. At this period a corn-cutter resided at Blois, who possessed

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

the double talent of juggling and extracting corns with a skill worthy of the lightness of his hands. Still, with both these qualities, he was not rich, and being aware of that fact, I hoped to obtain lessons from him at a price suited to my modest finances. In fact, for ten francs he agreed to initiate me in the juggling art.

I practiced with so much zeal, and progressed so rapidly, that in less than a month I had nothing more to learn; at least, I knew as much as my master, with the exception of corn-cutting, the monopoly in which I left him. I was able to juggle with four balls at once. But this did not satisfy my ambition; so I placed a book before me, and, while the balls were in the air, I accustomed myself to read without any hesitation.

This will probably seem to my readers very extraordinary; but I shall surprise them still more, when I say that I have just amused myself by repeating this curious experiment. Though thirty years have elapsed since the time of which I am writing, and though I scarcely once touched the balls during that period, I can still manage to read with ease while keeping three balls up.

The practice of this trick gave my fingers a remarkable degree of delicacy and certainty, while my eye was at the same time acquiring a promptitude of perception that was quite marvelous. Presently I shall have to speak of the service this rendered me in my experiment of second sight. After having thus made my hands supple and docile, I went on straight to sleight-of-hand, and I more especially devoted myself to the manipulation of cards and palmistry.

This operation requires a great deal of practice; for, while the hand is held apparently open, balls, corks, lumps of sugar, coins, etc., must be held unseen, the fingers remaining perfectly free and limber.

Owing to the little time at my disposal, the difficulties connected with these new experiments would have been insurmountable had I not found a mode of practicing without neglecting my business. It was the fashion in those days to wear coats with large pockets on the hips, called *à la*

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

propriétaire, so whenever my hands were not otherwise engaged they slipped naturally into my pockets, and set to work with cards, coins, or one of the objects I have mentioned. It will be easily understood how much time I gained by this. Thus, for instance, when out on errands my hands could be at work on both sides; at dinner, I often ate my soup with one hand while I was learning to ***sauter la coupe*** with the other—in short, the slightest moment of relaxation was devoted to my favorite pursuit.

II

"SECOND SIGHT"

A thousand more trials of patience and perseverance finally brought to the conjurer a Parisian theater and an appreciative clientele. But he never ceased to labor and improve the quality of his marvelous effects.

THE experiment, however, to which I owed my reputation was one inspired by that fantastic god to whom Pascal attributes all the discoveries of this sublunary world: it was chance that led me straight to the invention of ***second sight***.

My two children were playing one day in the drawing-room at a game they had invented for their own amusement. The younger had bandaged his elder brother's eyes, and made him guess the objects he touched, and when the latter happened to guess right, they changed places. This simple game suggested to me the most complicated idea that ever crossed my mind.

Pursued by the notion, I ran and shut myself up in my workroom, and was fortunately in that happy state when the mind follows easily the combinations traced by fancy. I rested my hand in my hands, and, in my excitement, laid down the first principles of second sight.

My readers will remember the experiment suggested to me formerly by the pianist's dexterity, and the strange

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

faculty I succeeded in attaining: I could read while juggling with four balls. Thinking seriously of this, I fancied that this "perception by appreciation" might be susceptible of equal development, if I applied its principles to the memory and the mind.

I resolved, therefore, on making some experiments with my son Emile, and, in order to make my young assistant understand the nature of the exercise we were going to learn, I took a domino, the cinq-quatre for instance, and laid it before him. Instead of letting him count the points of the two numbers, I requested the boy to tell me the total at once.

"Nine," he said.

Then I added another domino, the quarter-tray.

"That makes sixteen," he said, without any hesitation.

I stopped the first lesson here; the next day we succeeded in counting at a single glance four dominoes, the day after six, and thus we at length were enabled to give instantaneously the product of a dozen dominoes.

This result obtained, we applied ourselves to a far more difficult task, over which we spent a month. My son and I passed rapidly before a toy-shop, or any other displaying a variety of wares, and cast an attentive glance upon it. A few steps farther on we drew paper and pencil from our pockets, and tried which could describe the greater number of objects seen in passing. I must own that my son reached a perfection far greater than mine, for he could often write down forty objects, while I could scarce reach thirty. Often feeling vexed at this defeat, I would return to the shop and verify his statement, but he rarely made a mistake.

My male readers will certainly understand the possibility of this, but they will recognize the difficulty. As for my lady readers, I am convinced beforehand they will not be of the same opinion, for they daily perform far more astounding feats. Thus, for instance, I can safely assert that a lady seeing another pass at full speed in a carriage, will have had time to analyze her toilet from her bonnet

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

to her shoes, and be able to describe not only the fashion and quality of the stuffs, but also say if the lace be real or only machine-made. I have known ladies do this.

This natural, or acquired, faculty among ladies, but which my son and I had only gained by constant practice, was of great service in my performances, for while I was executing my tricks, I could see everything that passed around me, and thus prepare to foil any difficulties presented me. This exercise had given me, so to speak, the power of following two ideas simultaneously, and nothing is more favorable in conjuring than to be able to think at the same time both of what you are saying and of what you are doing. I eventually acquired such a knack in this that I frequently invented new tricks while going through my performances. One day, even, I made a bet I would solve a problem in mechanics while taking my part in conversation. We were talking of the pleasure of a country life, and I calculated during this time the quantity of wheels and pinions, as well as the necessary cogs, to produce certain revolutions required, without once failing in my reply.

This slight explanation will be sufficient to show what is the essential basis of second sight, and I will add that a secret and unnoticeable correspondence [1] existed between my son and myself, by which I could announce to him the name, nature, and bulk of objects handed me by spectators.

As none understood my mode of action, they were tempted to believe in something extraordinary, and, indeed, my son Emile, then aged twelve, possessed all the essential qualities to produce this opinion, for his pale, intellectual, and ever thoughtful face represented the type of a boy gifted with some supernatural power.

Two months were incessantly employed in erecting the scaffolding of our tricks, and when we were quite confident of being able to contend against the difficulties of such an undertaking, we announced the first representation of second sight. On the 12th of February, 1846, I printed in the center of my bill the following singular announcement:

[1] "Telegraphy."

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

"In this performance M. Robert-Houdin's son, who is gifted with a marvelous second sight, after his eyes have been covered with a thick bandage, will designate every object presented to him by the audience."

I cannot say whether this announcement attracted any spectators, for my room was constantly crowded, still I may affirm, what may seem very extraordinary, that the experiment of second sight, which afterwards became so fashionable, produced no effect on the first performance. I am inclined to believe that the spectators fancied themselves the dupes of accomplices, but I was much annoyed by the result, as I had built on the surprise I should produce; still, having no reason to doubt its ultimate success, I was tempted to make a second trial, which turned out well.

The next evening I noticed in my room several persons who had been present on the previous night, and I felt they had come a second time to assure themselves of the reality of the experiment. It seems they were convinced, for my success was complete, and amply compensated for my former disappointment.

I especially remember a mark of singular approval with which one of my pit audience favored me. My son had named to him several objects he offered in succession; but not feeling satisfied, my incredulous friend, rising, as if to give more importance to the difficulty he was about to present, handed me an instrument peculiar to cloth merchants, and employed to count the number of threads. Acquiescing in his wish, I said to my boy, "What do I hold in my hand?"

"It is an instrument to judge the fineness of cloth, and called a thread counter."

"By Jove!" my spectator said, energetically, "it is marvelous. If I had paid ten francs to see it, I should not begrudge them."

From this moment my room was much too small, and was crowded every evening.

Still, success is not entirely rose-colored, and I could

Digitized by Google
Original from NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY