

Historic Crimes and Mysteries

By Walt Mason

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THE CURE AND THE CALDRON.

To the tired traveler the village of Croix-Daraude, three miles from Toulouse, is much like other drowsy French villages; but if he remains there a few hours he will hear a story that will awaken his interest in the place. For Croix-Daraude was the theater of a crime that has been talked about in the vicinity for more than two hundred years.

In the year 1700 Saturnin Siadoux was a prosperous oil manufacturer there. He had his own establishment, was out of debt, and was happy and comfortable in his family relations. He was sixty years old, a widower, and the father of three sons and two daughters. He had a sister, the widow Miralhe, who lived at Toulouse. Her husband had left her well provided for, although his affairs were badly tangled when he died in an unexpected and extemporaneous manner. She had a neighbor named Cantegrel, who was of the greatest assistance in straightening out her financial affairs. Cantegrel was a butcher, but he was well educated and had the acumen of a lawyer, and he didn't charge the widow a red sou for his aid. It is not surprising, therefore, that Madame Miralhe was grateful.

Now, this Madame Miralhe had told her brother, Saturnin, in so many words that she would not marry again, and that when she died her money and property would go to his children. Saturnin was not greedy or covetous, but he was disturbed when he heard stories to the effect that Cantegrel was courting his sister with great enthusiasm, and that his sister regarded him with unmistakable favor. Saturnin had reason to believe that Cantegrel was a wicked man, and he went to Toulouse to investigate. There he heard many rumors which amounted to nothing, and one story which he considered worth investigating. It was to the effect that Cantegrel had committed various crimes in Narbonne, where he formerly lived.

Saturnin Siadoux was a close-mouthed man. He told his children that he was going to Narbonne for a few days, but said nothing about the purpose of his visit. A day or two after his departure the sons received a letter announcing his arrival at Narbonne, and saying that he would return home on a certain day. There was so much affection and good feeling in this family that the sons and daughters decided to have a big supper to celebrate the father's return, and so invited various friends, including the cure, Father Pierre Celestin Chaubard. The hour came when the parent should have returned, but he was missing. The guests sat at the groaning board; they waited an hour or two, and then it was assumed that Saturnin must have been delayed somewhere, so the feast was proceeded

with. And throughout the feast the conduct of the priest attracted the attention of the younger son. Father Chaubard, who usually was fond of good viands, could not eat. He trifled with his food, and sighed heavily, and was forever brushing perspiration from his face. It was evident that something troubled the good man.

The guests departed after the meal, and the children and Madame Miralhe looked anxiously up the road time and again for the belated Saturnin. At last they beheld a body of a man approaching. The men came to the door and stopped, and, drawing apart, disclosed the body of Saturnin Siadoux, stretched on a litter. He had been stabbed eleven times where he had fallen, on the bank of the Lers river.

The officers of justice busied themselves, but could find no clew that pointed to the murderer. The three sons of Saturnin, who loved their father passionately, vowed that they would track down and bring the criminal to punishment if they had to devote their lives to the task. The two older sons sought for clews everywhere, and all in vain. The whole business was in impenetrable mystery. The younger son said little, but sat brooding and thinking in quiet places. At last he went to his two brothers and said: "If we would know the truth we must force it from Father Chaubard! He knows! He knew when he was at our feast why father did not return!"

The older brothers were shocked; the younger brother was insistent. The latter had force of character, and

the confessional I commit sacrilege. Beware, my sons!"

Jean motioned to his brothers. They, stalwart men, seized the priest and held him over the bubbling oil. The horror of the awful death that threatened him was too much for the cure. "I will tell," he gasped, and they put him down on the floor. Then, weeping, racked with anguish and remorse the priest said that Cantegrel had confessed, immediately after murdering Saturnin. In some way the butcher had learned of the old man's trip to Narbonne, and guessed at the nature of his errand. He knew that Siadoux must have learned things which would disgrace him in the widow's eyes forever, so he ambushed the old man on the way home. Then he fled to a church, and, by the merest accident, Father Chaubard was in that church and heard his confession.

Having told all he knew, calmness returned to the priest, but it was an awful calmness, such as might come to one who had resigned himself to the executioner. He looked at the three young men long and sadly, as though pitying them.

"I forgive you, my sons," he said, gently. "Pray for me when my time comes."

The brothers hastened at once to Toulouse to lay their information before a magistrate, and when the magistrate heard their story his face was ghastly, and his eyes sick with terror.

"Better for you had you never been born," said he. The brothers were sublimely ignorant of the awful consequences of their act. They soon



"If You Answer Our Questions Truly, You Have Nothing to Fear." He Pointed Significantly to the Caldron.

soon brought his brothers to his way of thinking. They consulted together a long time, and decided upon a plan for learning the truth.

Louis and Thomas went to the priest's house, and told him that Madame Miralhe was in great distress, and begged his presence. The cure, always ready to help others, agreed to go at once, although the night was wild and wet. He accompanied the brothers to the Siadoux home.

"Come into the factory first," said they, and the priest, who seemed dazed with trouble, followed them. There the younger son was standing by a huge caldron of boiling oil. He locked the door after the others entered.

He pointed significantly to the caldron. The unfortunate priest trembled as the brothers closed around him. His eyes were full of agony, his lips bloodless, and his brow covered with cold sweat.

"Our father was brought home murdered," said the inexorable Jean. "Do you know who slew him?"

"I do," feebly answered the cure.

"Then name him!"

"Never!" shrieked the priest. "My knowledge was obtained in the confessional. If I betray the secrets of

learned that the violation of the confessional was the unpardonable crime. They had the satisfaction of seeing the murderer sentenced to death and broken upon the wheel, but at the time they were themselves under sentence of death.

The poor priest, who yielded under threat of a terrible death in a caldron of oil, suffered a much worse fate. He was broken upon the wheel, and, while still living, tied to a stake and burned.

After the punishment of the priest, which stirred the people to fury, the sentiment in favor of the three Siadoux boys became so intense that the parliament suspended the death sentence. Thomas Siadoux won the heart of the jailer's daughter, and she managed to release the three brothers, after drugging her father. They succeeded in crossing the frontier, and a few days later their effigies were hanged in Toulouse, and thenceforth they were legally dead.

The Difference.

"The women are all running after that man, and he is not in the least vain about it."

"How can he help being?"

"Because he's a congressman in an equal suffrage state."

perpetual vision of a better world, whose light shines through the darkness of the present life? For myself, I believe profoundly in that better world; and after many struggles, much study and numberless trials, this is the supreme conviction of my reason as it is the supreme consolation of my soul.—Victor Hugo.

Barbarous New Words.

Some of the newest words invented by chemists to describe new substances are cited by the Medical Record as illustrative of the barbarous terminology that they are trying to foist upon us. Among these are the following, all taken from a single number of the Journal of the Chemical Society: tetradimethylaminotetraphenylhydrazine, dimethylaminophenylmethylquinolindimide and tetramethylaminotetramethylaminodiphenylhydriodropenazine. These the Medical Record calls "Gargantuan philological outrages."

Irrigation projects under construction for India involve about 10,000,000 acres of land.

Temperance Notes

(Conducted by the National Woman's Christian Temperance Union.)

FOR PROHIBITION NOW.

Mr. Alexander Nesbit has been sheriff of Denver for 12 years—and he didn't vote for prohibition. Here are some of the many things he said about the good effects of the law in an interview published in the Pueblo Chief-tain:

"The habitual loafer has disappeared. The crowds that used to hang around the lower end of the city at free lunch counters have gone. Where, I haven't the least idea. Like last summer's flies, they just disappeared. Again, the wine rooms are no more and the 'after the theater' dinners are over. There is no place to go except to the picture shows, and then for a light lunch and then home, unless they go to the pool halls. You know it doesn't take long to get a lunch after the theater now. Few people say 'have another' on a glass of water. And the old slogan, 'Let's have another' is a misnomer in Denver. Neither do very many people say: 'Let's have another lunch' and they get through and go home."

"We haven't had a case of murder since the first of the year. Our suicides are falling off to a great extent; the mileage of the ambulance and patrol wagon is less than 60 per cent of what it formerly was; our officers on the beats are treated more courteously; there is a better air morally around the city; the places where crime was formerly hatched are gone and the city is better off in every way so far as its police department and their work is concerned."

"Let me tell you another thing, the can-rusher, the old soak who came home with a quarter in his pocket and sent his eight-year-old, ragged, bare-footed girl to the saloon for a can of beer and then tossed her a crust of bread while he swigged the beer and snarled at her through his drunkenness, is no longer a resident of Denver. You can't get a photograph of one of these fellows in the city."

DIVORCE LABOR FROM LIQUOR.

"The sooner the labor movement and the labor press divorces itself from the liquor business, the quicker real organization will become possible," says the Galesburg (Ill.) Labor News. "Our movement advocates the education, the elevation of our membership, the securing of better conditions and wages for our membership. We cannot secure them by affiliating with the greatest power against them."

Another labor paper expresses itself in much the same strain. It says in part:

"Many trade-union journals and dozens of the best-known labor leaders in America have come out openly for prohibition. According to the Plumbers' Journal, the liquor interests are finding out that 'a lot of men who drink whisky won't vote for it.' The locomotive engineers, 70,000 strong, have gone on record for the abolition of the liquor traffic."

Mr. E. J. Keenan, president of an organization of dry labor union men in Ohio, says that with the exception of the brewery workers and bartenders every labor union in Cincinnati is lined up for prohibition. The following pledge is used by Mr. Keenan: "We believe the labor movement will not develop and grow as it should until the influence of the liquor traffic is removed."

DISARMING THE BODY.

We may point out that alcohol, as far as the digestive organs are concerned, not only interferes with their normal digestive functions, but also destroys their natural powers of protecting the body from disease. A person who is suffering from alcoholic dissipation, mild or severe, is less able to destroy the microbes of disease which may be taken in with the food, and is, therefore, far more susceptible to typhoid fever, cholera, and similar diseases. The vital resistance to both heat and cold is also diminished, as well as resistance to infection, and the body is thus disarmed to a large extent of its natural resistive and fighting forces, and thus becomes a more easy prey to sickness, disease and death.—A. B. Olsen, M. D., D. P. H., Catterham Valley, England.

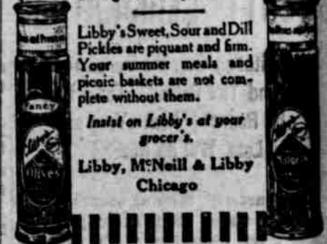
BEER AND BALL PLAYING.

It is stated that the Baseball Players' Fraternity is to prohibit beer drinking among its members. Ed. Ruelbach, pitcher of the Boston Braves, says: "I have seen many stars whose careers were cut short by their intemperate habits. Conserved energy is the only thing which will prolong a diamond career. Temperance among the players will add years to their time on the playing field."

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will remove any corn or callous in four to five days. Sent postpaid to any address for twenty-five cents. Mearns Chemical Co., Mendon, Wis.

Needless Expense.

A traveling man for a Boston house tells of an incident that he observed in one of the northern towns of Aroostook County, Maine. He was seated in the smoking room of the station when a typical Frenchman, from across the border of Canada, appeared at the ticket window and asked the agent for a ticket to Lewiston. "Straight or return?" inquired the agent. "What you mean, 'straight or return'?" inquired the Frenchman, bewildered. "Why," said the agent, "a straight ticket will take you to Lewiston only, and a return ticket will bring you back here."

The Only Way.

Trade was bad. At the end of another blank day the discouraged salesman called on another prospective customer and asked to show his samples. "No, there is nothing I want today," said the customer. "But will you just examine my line of goods?" the salesman persisted. The customer would not. "Then," said the salesman meekly, "will you let me use a part of your counter to look at them myself, as I have not had the opportunity for some time."

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IRON BACTERIA ARE FOUND

Were First Discovered in Pipes in Rotterdam in 1887, But Are Little Known in This Country.

Iron bacteria were first discovered in iron pipes in Rotterdam in 1887. Comparatively little is known about them in this country. Bacteriologists claim that they are in reality a higher form of life than the ordinary varieties of bacteria.

They thrive in water which contains iron, and authorities have concluded that they are attached to that metal. Iron bacteria are believed to have the power of storing iron away in the cells of their bodies, after taking it from the water. Some savants maintain that the bacteria assisted very materially in forming the rocks of prehistoric ages. The bacteria become saturated with an iron oxide as they develop and increase.

Myriads of them are found in springs. If an individual is of an investigative turn of mind he may be curious enough to scrape some of the red deposit that floors a spring or

covers the rocks at the bottoms of springs, and examine it through a microscope. He will find that he is looking at an abundance of minute pipes or tubes. These are relics of the iron bacteria, and give an idea of how industrious they must keep during their lives to build such compact structures.

"The pathologist has been unable to prove that they are in any sense deleterious to health, though the organisms are sometimes a menace to reservoirs. If conditions are advantageous they increase at an alarming and prodigious rate, causing water to take on a decidedly reddish tinge. If conditions are not relieved filters may become badly clogged, resulting in considerable trouble and expense."

Lines to Be Remembered.

Let us not forget, and let us teach it to all, that there would be no dignity in life, that it would not be worth while to live, if annihilation were to be our lot. What is it which alleviates and which sanctifies toil, which renders men strong, wise, patient, just, at once humble and aspiring, but the