

The Mystery of The Yellow Room

By GASTON LEROUX

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SYNOPSIS.

CHAPTER I.—A mysterious attempt is made at midnight to murder Mlle. Stangerson, daughter and assistant of Prof. Stangerson, who is at work on his theory of the dissociation of matter in a pavilion near his chateau. Pistol shots and the young woman's cries for help are heard behind the locked and bolted door of her chamber, the yellow room. The cries are answered by Professor Stangerson and Daddy Jacques, an aged servant. Aided by the concierges, bernier and his wife, they break open the door and find Mlle. Stangerson swooning and half strangled, with a wound in her temple, but find no trace of her assailant. The only possible outlet from the yellow room is the door. The weird cry of the "tete du bon Dieu," a cat belonging to Mother Angenoux, a recluse, is heard just before Mlle. Stangerson's death. II.—Joseph Rouletabille, a reporter-detective, is introduced to the reader by M. Sainclair, the narrator of the story. Rouletabille declares the revolver was fired by Mlle. Stangerson, wounding her assailant in the hand. Sainclair is to use his friendship with M. Darzac, Mlle. Stangerson's lover, to introduce Rouletabille into the chateau. III.—Rouletabille induces M. de Marquet, the examining magistrate, and M. de Malaine, his registrar, to talk about the case. The only possible point of egress from the pavilion for the murderer has been the window of the pavilion's vestibule, near which bloodstains have been found. The window, however, was found latched after the assassin's escape. A bullet hole is found in the ceiling of the yellow room. IV.—Shortly before the attack the announcement of the engagement of Mlle. Stangerson and M. Darzac had been made. V.—Rouletabille and Sainclair are informed by Frederic Larsen, a famous detective working on the case, that the concierges have been arrested. Meeting M. Darzac, Rouletabille utters a mystic sentence. "The presbytery has lost nothing of its charm nor the garden its brightness," which seems to terrify Darzac. VI.—The arrest of the concierges is due to the fact that they were seemingly near the pavilion when the crime was committed. Their denial of guilt is doubted. Rouletabille and Darzac become friendly. A mutton bone such as is used by French assassins, has been found in Mlle. Stangerson's room and Rouletabille finds in one of the professor's retorts a partly burned paper bearing the strange sentences about the presbytery. VII.—In the yellow room Rouletabille finds a woman's hair, which he declares to be important evidence.

CHAPTER VIII.

The Examining Magistrate Questions Mlle. Stangerson.

TWO minutes later, as Rouletabille was bending over the footprints discovered in the park, under the window of the vestibule, a man, evidently a servant at the chateau, came toward us rapidly and called out to M. Darzac, then coming out of the pavilion: "M. Robert, the magistrate, you know, is questioning mademoiselle." M. Darzac uttered a muttered excuse to us and set off running toward the chateau, the man running after him. "We must know," said my friend. "Let's go to the chateau." And he drew me with him. But at the chateau a gendarme placed in the vestibule denied us admission up the staircase of the first floor. We were obliged to wait downstairs. This is what passed in the chamber of the victim while we were waiting below. The family doctor, finding that Mlle. Stangerson was much better, but fearing a relapse which would no longer permit of her being questioned, had thought it his duty to inform the examining magistrate of this, who decided to proceed immediately with a brief examination. At this examination the registrar, M. Stangerson and the doctor were present. Later I obtained the text of the report of the examination, and I give it here in all its legal dryness: "Question. Are you able, mademoiselle, without too much fatiguing yourself, to give some necessary details of the frightful attack of which you have been the victim? Answer. I feel much better, monsieur, and I will tell you all I know. When I entered my chamber I did not notice anything unusual there. "Q. What did you do on that day? I want you to be as minute and precise as possible. I wish to know all you did that day if it is not asking

too much of you. A. I rose late, at 10 o'clock, for my father and I had returned home late on the night previously, having been to dinner at the reception given by the president of the republic in honor of the Academy of Science of Philadelphia. When I left my chamber at half past 10 my father was already at work in the laboratory. We worked together till midday. We then took half an hour's walk in the park, as we were accustomed to do, before breakfasting at the chateau. After breakfast we took another walk for half an hour and then returned to the laboratory. There we found my chambermaid, who had come to set my room in order. I went into the yellow room to give her some slight orders, and she directly afterward left the pavilion, and I resumed my work with my father. At 5 o'clock we again went for a walk in the park and afterward had tea. "Q. Before leaving the pavilion at 5 o'clock did you go into your chamber? A. No, monsieur. My father went into it, at my request, to bring me my hat. "Q. And he found nothing suspicious there. A. Evidently no, monsieur. "Q. It is, then, almost certain that the murderer was not yet concealed under the bed. When you went out was the door of the room locked? A. No; there was no reason for locking it. "Q. You were absent from the pavilion some length of time, M. Stangerson and you? A. About an hour. "Q. It was during that hour, no doubt, that the murderer got into the pavilion. But how? Nobody knows. Footmarks have been found in the park leading away from the window of the vestibule, but none has been found going toward it. Did you notice whether the vestibule window was open when you went out? A. I don't remember. "M. Stangerson—It was closed. "Q. And when you returned? "Mlle. Stangerson—I did not notice. "M. Stangerson—It was still closed. I remember remarking aloud, "Daddy Jacques must surely have opened it while we were away." "Q. Strange! Do you recollect, M. Stangerson, if during your absence and before going out he had opened it? You returned to the laboratory at 6 o'clock and resumed work? "Mlle. Stangerson—Yes, monsieur. "Q. And you did not leave the laboratory from that hour up to the moment when you entered your chamber? "M. Stangerson—Neither my daughter nor I, monsieur. We were engaged on work that was pressing, and we lost not a moment, neglecting everything else on that account. "Q. Did you dine in the laboratory? A. For that reason. "Q. Are you accustomed to dine in the laboratory? A. We rarely dine there. "Q. Could the murderer have known that you would dine there that evening? "M. Stangerson—Good heavens! I think not. It was only when we returned to the pavilion at 6 o'clock that we decided, my daughter and I, to dine there. At that moment I was spoken to by my gamekeeper, who detained me a moment to ask me to accompany him on an urgent tour of inspection in a part of the woods which I had decided to thin. I put this off until the next day and begged him as he was going by the chateau to tell the steward that we should dine in the laboratory. He left me to execute the errand, and I rejoined my daughter, who was already at work. "Q. At what hour, mademoiselle, did you go to your chamber while your father continued to work there? A. At midnight. "Q. Did Daddy Jacques enter the yellow room in the course of the evening? A. To shut the blinds and light the night light. "Q. He saw nothing suspicious? A. He would have told us if he had seen. Daddy Jacques is an honest man and greatly attached to me. "Q. You affirm, M. Stangerson, that Daddy Jacques remained with you all the time you were in the laboratory? "M. Stangerson—I am sure of it. I have no doubt of that. "Q. When you entered your chamber, mademoiselle, you immediately shut the door and locked and bolted it? Was not that taking unusual precautions, knowing that your father and your servant were there? Were you in fear of something? A. My father would be returning to the chateau, and Daddy Jacques would be going to his bed. And, in fact, I did fear something. "Q. You were so much in fear of something that you borrowed Daddy Jacques' revolver without telling him you had done so? A. That is true. I did not wish to alarm anybody, the more because my fears might have proved to have been foolish. "Q. What was it you feared? A. I hardly know how to tell you. For several nights I seemed to hear, both in the park and out of the park, around the pavilion, unusual sounds, sometimes footsteps, at other times the cracking of branches. The night before the attack on me, when I did not get to bed before 3 o'clock in the morning, on our return from the Elysée I stood for a moment before my window, and I felt sure I saw shadows. "Q. How many? A. Two. They moved round the lake. Then the moon became clouded, and I lost sight of them. At this time of the season every year I have generally returned to my apartment in the chateau for the winter, but this year I said to myself that I would not quit the pavilion before my father had finished the resume of his works on the "Dissociation of Matter" for the academy. I did not wish that that important work, which was to have been finished in the course of a few days, should be delayed by a change in our daily habit. You can well understand that I did not wish to

speck of my childish fears to my father, nor did I say anything to Daddy Jacques, who, I knew, would not have been able to hold his tongue. Knowing that he had a revolver in his room, I took advantage of his absence and borrowed it, placing it in the drawer of my night table. "Q. You know of no enemies you have? A. None. "Q. You understand, mademoiselle, that these precautions are calculated to cause surprise? "M. Stangerson—Evidently, my child, such precautions are very surprising. "A. No, because I have told you that I had been uneasy for two nights. "M. Stangerson—You ought to have told me of that. This misfortune would have been avoided. "Q. The door of the yellow room locked, did you go to bed? A. Yes, and being very tired, I at once went to sleep. "Q. The night light was still burning? A. Yes, but it gave a very feeble light. "Q. Then, mademoiselle, tell us what happened. A. I do not know whether I had been long asleep, but suddenly I awoke and uttered a loud cry. "M. Stangerson—Yes, a horrible cry. "Q. You uttered a loud cry? A. A man was in my chamber. He sprang at me and tried to strangle me. I was nearly stifled when suddenly I was able to reach the drawer of my night table and grasp the revolver which I had placed in it. At that moment the man had forced me to the foot of my bed and brandished over my head a sort of mace. But I had fired. He immediately struck a terrible blow at my head. All that, monsieur, passed more rapidly than I can tell it, and I know nothing more. "Q. Nothing? Have you no idea as to how the assassin could escape from your chamber? A. None whatever. I know nothing more. One does not know what is passing around one when one is unconscious. "Q. Was the man you saw tall or short, little or big? A. I saw only a shadow which appeared to me formidable. "Q. You cannot give us any indication? A. I know nothing more, monsieur, than that a man threw himself upon me and that I fired at him. I know nothing more. Here the interrogation of Mlle. Stangerson concluded. Rouletabille waited patiently for M. Robert Darzac, who soon appeared. From a room near the chamber of Mlle. Stangerson he had heard the interrogation and now came to recount it to my friend with great exactitude, aided by an excellent memory. His docility still surprised me. Thanks to hasty pencil notes, he was able to reproduce almost textually the questions and the answers given. It looked as if M. Darzac were being employed as the secretary of my young friend and acted as if he could refuse him nothing—nay, more, as if under a compulsion to do so. The fact of the closed window struck the reporter as it had struck the magistrate. The circumstance of the dinner in the laboratory also seemed to interest him in the highest degree, and he had it repeated to him three times. He also wanted to be sure that the forest keeper knew that the professor and his daughter were going to dine in the laboratory and how he had come to know it. When M. Darzac had finished I said, "The examination has not advanced the problem much." "It has put it back," said M. Darzac. "It has thrown light upon it," said Rouletabille thoughtfully. (To be continued.)

Railroads Sued for Land Sold.

Portland—Another step in the fight of the federal government to recover possession of the land included in the immense grant to the Oregon & California Railroad Company was taken Saturday when B. D. Townsend, special assistant to the attorney-general, filed in the Federal court in Portland 35 suits in equity against the Oregon & California and Southern Pacific Companies and over 100 other defendants. These suits are supplementary to those previously filed against the Harriman companies and are for the purpose of recovering land included in the grant and already sold by the railroads, or, where title to the land cannot be regained, of securing for the government all monies paid for the land in excess of \$2.50 an acre, the price at which it was stipulated in the original grant the land would be sold. Besides the railroads, the defendants in the suits are those who have purchased land from these companies. The suits involve more than \$15,000,000 and also more than 353,288 acres of land. All of the land is located in Oregon. Will Celebrate Admission of State. Eugene—On Friday, February 12 the University of Oregon will hold an Oregon or Commonwealth day, which will hereafter be an annual affair, the same as a number of other special university days. The day is to commemorate the day that Oregon was admitted to the Union as a state and will be held hereafter on February 14, which is the date on which Oregon was admitted; but as the date comes on Sunday this year the date of the commemoration has been changed to February 12. The object of Commonwealth day is to bring the people of the state in closer touch with the State University, and to give the citizens of Oregon a chance to see the university in actual working order. Never-slip horseshoes at Keltner's.

AT NATION'S CAPITAL

Roosevelt Is Not Consulted by Taft About Selections for Cabinet.

NEW STATEHOOD BILL UP

Preparations Are Being Made for An Elaborate Inauguration of Taft and Sherman.

Washington, Feb. 3.—Mr. Taft is not keeping President Roosevelt posted on the formation of his cabinet. He is neither seeking the advice of the President nor submitting names for his approval after selection has been made. The fact is that Mr. Roosevelt is entirely in the dark with regard to the Taft cabinet; he knows no more than he gathers from the newspapers. There is some truth in the report that the President feels slighted because Mr. Taft has not seen fit to offer Secretary Loeb a place in his cabinet, but the President is more disturbed because Mr. Taft is inclined to choose an entirely new cabinet, retiring all members of the present body with the possible exception of Secretary of War Wright, who was appointed on recommendation of Mr. Taft just prior to his retirement from the Roosevelt cabinet. The definite statement can be made that James R. Garfield, secretary of the interior, will not be a member of the cabinet of the next administration. Neither will he be an ambassador to a foreign country. He will return to his home in Ohio and take up the practice of law.

An omnibus bill providing separate statehood for the territories of New Mexico and Arizona was introduced in the house by Hamilton, of Michigan, chairman of the house committee on territories. The bill was framed by the Republican members of the committee and submitted to the minority members, who approved it. New Mexico is given two representatives in the house, to be elected at large, and the city of Santa Fe is designated as the capital of the state until 1920.

Four sections of land in every township are granted to New Mexico for the support of common schools. Two of these had been previously granted to the territory.

When adopted into the Union, New Mexico is to be attached to the eighth judicial district. One hundred thousand dollars is appropriated for the expenses incident to the elections and constitution provided for in the bills.

Most of the provisions for Arizona are similar to those for New Mexico. Phoenix is designated as the capital until 1920. Arizona is given one representative in the house; 120,000 acres of land are granted for university purposes and other grants are equal to those made for New Mexico.

Great preparations are being made for Taft's inauguration. The programme is divided into five important feature and others of less interest, among which are:

An imposing military parade is being arranged on a big scale by Major-General J. Franklin Bell, who has been appointed grand marshal. A great display of fireworks on the White Lot, just in front of the White House, in combination with the illumination of the streets of Washington throughout the downtown section, the dome of the Capitol and the Washington monument and a drill and display of pyrotechnics by the Republican Flambeau Club of Minneapolis.

The inaugural ball will be held in the pension building, the largest brick structure in the world.

With the convening of a new congress scarcely more than a month distant, the selection of standing committees of the next house and particularly the award of chairmanships has become the subject of keen speculation.

The understanding among members is that the rule of seniority will be used in the selection of a chairman. There are, however, important committees whose chairmen will not be members of the next house and the selection of their successors is causing no little speculation.

The American National Red Cross Association has cabled to Ambassador Griscom at Rome \$225,000, which he will present to Queen Helena for the purpose of beginning an agricultural colony in Calabria or Sicily for the orphans in the Italian earthquake district.

For the purpose of shipping lumber for houses for the earthquake sufferers, the Red Cross has given \$100,000 to the navy department.

The delivery of a package containing intoxicating liquor to any person but the consignee is prohibited by the provisions of a bill introduced by Representative Miller, of Kansas. A fine of not more than \$5000 or imprisonment for two years is fixed as a penalty for any violation. The bill applies to interstate shipments.

Names Noted

President Elect Taft's Youngest Brother, Horace—Edmund Billings and His Mission to Italy.



H. D. TAFT.

THE public has heard a good deal about several members of the Taft family, but the youngest of the brothers now so much in the public eye has thus far managed to escape publicity better than the rest. He is Horace D. Taft, the eldest of President Elect Taft's brothers. Charles P. Taft of Cincinnati, has been talked of considerably because of the contest for the Ohio senatorship, in which he met defeat at the hands of Theodore E. Burton. Henry W. Taft of New York has been prominent as a member of the bar and in connection with various occasions on which his brother William H. has been his guest. Horace has been teaching school in Connecticut and content to remain in the shade, not even enjoying the reflected light which might be shed upon him from the presidential chair at Washington were he to get in an attitude to receive it. They wanted to elect him a member of the Connecticut legislature last fall, but he would not take a nomination. He said "Brother Bill" was getting enough glory for the family, and he was satisfied to teach "Brother Bill's" kid, young Charlie Taft. The latter is in attendance at his school in Watertown, an institution which has a high educational standing. Indeed, Mr. Horace Taft ranks high among members of his profession, as was attested in his recent election as president of the Head Masters' association. He is a graduate of Yale, like all the rest of the family.

The Rev. Dr. William J. Dawson of England is one of the most eloquent evangelists this country has known since the time of Moody. Unlike some revivalists, he is a man of culture and scholarship, and his methods are not sensational, although he does not hesitate to depart from beaten paths upon occasion. This was illustrated during a mission he conducted recently at the famous St. George's Episcopal church, New York, the church of Dr. Stephen H. Tyng and Dr. William S. Rains.



REV. DR. WILLIAM J. DAWSON.

ford, now presided over by the Rev. Dr. Hugh Breckhead, a young man who is determined that mere traditions or fear of criticism shall not stand in the way of his making his church as beneficial as possible to the thousands of poor and struggling people in the midst of whom it is placed. The mission at St. George's brought within the sound of prayer and praise and words of exhortation many who do not often darken church doors, but in order that still more should be reached a procession was organized which wended its way through the streets in the neighborhood of the church and made its appeal to the interest of the wayfarers or dwellers in the vicinity. At the head of the procession a large cross was carried, illuminated by electric lights. At either side were men carrying the batteries that furnished the current for the incandescent lamps. Then came a band, and behind it Dr. Breckhead and the other clergy of the parish in their robes and the missioner, Dr. Dawson. Following them were seventy chorists, who led the singing as the march proceeded, and behind them were many others, making up a parade 700 strong altogether. On the return to the church a great meeting was held, at which Dr. Dawson delivered a most stirring appeal.

Dr. Dawson has a magnetic presence and a most effective delivery. Dr. Dawson was born in Northamptonshire in 1854 and is a son of a Wesleyan minister. He was educated at Didsbury college, Manchester, and was for a time in the Wesleyan ministry, but from 1882 to 1906 was minister of Highbury Quadrant Congregational church, London. He is a voluminous writer, and his works comprise not only books on religious sub-

In the News

Next President of Harvard, Abbott Lawrence Lowell—Other Figures in the Public Prints.

jects, but lyric and dramatic poetry, fiction and essays.

Abbott Lawrence Lowell, who has been chosen to succeed Charles W. Eliot as president of Harvard university, may be described as author, lawyer and professor of the science of government. He is a brother of Professor



PROFESSOR ABBOTT LAWRENCE LOWELL.

Percival Lowell, also of Harvard, whose astronomical discoveries have given him wide fame.

When President Eliot tendered his resignation in November, to take effect in the spring, there was at first a strong sentiment in favor of selecting a comparatively young man as his successor. President Eliot himself was a young man—only thirty-five—when he became Harvard's head. But it is admitted that he was exceptionally well qualified for the post for a man of his years when he took it. The sentiment in favor of choosing a scholar and man of affairs of large experience and wide reputation grew stronger as the weeks passed by and resulted in the choice of Professor Lowell. He is fifty-two, but in full vigor, and it is believed he will have twenty years of activity before him. He has proved his ability in every field he has entered and is a rare combination of the man of the world and of the university leader. He is not only the most popular but the keenest lecturer in the university. And so far as concerns the amenities of the president's position, including the proper entertainment of guests and the relations between the head of the university and the undergraduates, he can be counted upon.

Professor Lowell was born in Boston on Dec. 13, 1856, and was graduated from Harvard in 1877. He then took a law course, receiving his degree from Harvard Law school in 1880 and being admitted to the bar the same year. In 1877 he married his cousin, Miss Anna Parker Lowell. For seventeen years the practice of law demanded the greater part of his attention, but he continued to pursue his favorite study of comparative government. Several books on government and on politics in continental Europe, published during this time, gave him high standing as an authority on the science of government, and in 1897 he was called to be lecturer in that department at Harvard.

Three years later on the establishment of the Eaton professorship of the science of government he was appointed to that chair. In the last year he has published a work on "The Government of England," which has attracted wide attention and brought to him the honor of election as president of the American Political Science association in succession to Ambassador Bryce, whose "American Commonwealth" brought him the same distinction.

One of the Americans prominent in the relief work in the regions of Italy and Sicily devastated by earthquake is Edmund Billings of Boston. Mr. Billings had charge of similar work in Boston after the Chelsea fire. He went to Messina as the official representative of the state of Massachusetts and took with him a fund of \$500,000 with which to aid in relieving the distress. He sailed on the Kaiser Wilhelm der Grosse and left the steamer at Cherbourg, taking train from there to southern Italy in order to reach the scene of the earthquake as quickly as possible.

Have You? "You have a very nice home here." "Yes, indeed. Why, we have all the comforts of a modern penitentiary."—Boston Herald.

Thinking of a Phone. "The receiver is as bad as— What's the rest of it, my child?" "The transmitter, pa."—New York Press.