

THE SOLVING OF A MURDER.

BY GRANT JONES.

It is not often that a railway company runs special trains for the accommodation of persons wishing to attend a murder trial. The London, Chatham and Dover Railway company did so upon the occasion of the trial of Percy Lefroy Mapleton, at Maidstone, on November 4, 1881, "in consequence of the vast public interest in the case." I traveled down in one of these trains, with Montagu Williams and other barristers engaged in the trial. The train was besieged by a crowd of the general public. As a celebrated and cynical legal gentleman remarked, "we might have been going to a race meeting."

I doubt whether, among all the assassins I have seen in the dock, I have met one who was more dangerous than Lefroy—as he chose to call himself. He was a tall, weedy looking young fellow of about 25, thin, with sunken cheeks, dark, short hair, and a peculiarly pallid complexion. He was neatly dressed in a dark suit, with a turn down collar, and a little knotted dark blue tie. His bearing was of the exaggerated theatrical type.

As he appeared in the dock, and walked forward to its front, every gesture seemed artificial, and his eyes glanced round as if he were surveying his audience, expecting their approbation.

He was charged with the murder of Isaac Frederick Gold on Monday, June 27, in a Brighton express on the London, Brighton & South Coast railway, between Three Bridges and Balcombe. The case was one which presented many extraordinary features. Montagu Williams had been especially retained to defend the prisoner. The attorney general himself went down to Maidstone to lead the prosecution. Lord Chief Justice Coleridge, it is said, in arranging the circuits of the judges, took some care that he should himself preside at the Lefroy trial. The court was crowded to suffocation.

For some weeks indeed the whole nation had been excited over the miscreant, now safely caged in that dock in the Maidstone criminal court. As people unfolded their newspapers on the morning of June 28 their eyes had fallen upon the startling words in the heaviest type calling their attention to one of the most cruel and dastardly crimes ever perpetrated. And the perpetrator had disappeared.

Isaac Gold was an aged London gentleman, who had retired from business, and who had gone to live in the suburbs of Brighton. On the morning of June 27 he left home and came to London to collect some money owing to him, and he caught the two o'clock express to Brighton from London bridge on his return journey. He was well known to the station officials, and was seen by them comfortably seated in a first-class smoking carriage reading a newspaper as the train started out of the station. He was doomed never to reach the end of that journey alive.

As he sat snugly ensconced in his corner, lazily glancing at his paper, and nearly asleep, overcome by the intense heat of the day, a tall, thin young man in a dark frock coat, with dark hair and small side whiskers, and with a low felt hat worn rather on the back of the head, walked slowly up and down the platform, languidly looking into the carriages, as if in search of a comfortable seat. At last he opened the door of the carriage in which Mr. Gold sat, and entering took his place in it.

At 23 minutes past two o'clock the express car was swinging through Croydon. A few minutes later, with a shrill shriek of its whistle, it plunged into the mile long Merstham tunnel. As the engine uttered that shriek a passenger named Gibson, in a second-class compartment of the train, heard five quick, sharp explosions. "Fog signals," he remarked to a companion.

Eight minutes later the express was speeding past the village of Horley. Two or three hundred yards from the line are some cottages, and in the window of one of these a woman was sitting busily

sewing. As the train whirled by she raised her eyes from her work to gaze at it. "Look, Rhoda!" she exclaimed to her daughter, who was in the room with her. "Look at those men in that carriage! They are fighting or having a game."

Following her pointing finger with her eyes, Rhoda Brown also distinctly saw those men for an instant. They were wrestling, she thought. She could see them "waving their arms."

About one mile from Brighton the express drew up at Preston Park for the collecting of tickets. When the ticket collector came and threw open the door of one of the first-class carriages he drew back with a cry of amazement. In one corner was a passenger, pale and exhausted, his features and dress smeared with blood. He had no hat, his clothes were torn, and his tie and collar had apparently been wrenched forcibly from his neck.

"I have been murderously attacked and fired at," he said. "Is there a doctor near? I am faint. Can you get me some water?"

Some water was brought, while the station officials consulted as to what was best to be done, and, as there was no doctor handy, it was suggested that the stranger had better go on to Brighton—only a minute's journey—and two of the officials were put in the carriage with him.

Before the train started the stranger got out for a moment's air upon the platform. As he walked up and down the platform one of the porters noticed a piece of gold chain hanging out of his shoe, and, stooping down, he seized it and dragged out a gold watch.

"That is mine," said the stranger. "I put it there for safety." And the porter handed the watch to him.

In a few minutes the three were at Brighton, and, proceeding to the stationmaster's room, the passenger told his story.

He was, he said, Alfred Lefroy, and he lived at an address in Wallington. He had entered the train at London Bridge, taking his place in a first-class carriage with two other passengers, one of whom was an aged man of medium height with slight gray whiskers, and dressed in dark clothes. The other was a fresh-complexioned individual of about 40, with dark whiskers, no mustache, and dressed in a dark-gray suit. Neither of these persons spoke to him as he entered the train, and as they arrived at the tunnel, after leaving Croydon, he saw a flash and heard a report of firearms. Springing up from his seat, he was felled by a terrible blow on the head, which rendered him unconscious until he came to Preston Park.

"I have been robbed and nearly murdered," he protested. "You must do your best to catch these two men."

He could give no further particulars and could not guess what had become of his assailants, and the police, having been summoned, accompanied him to the hospital, where his injuries were seen to. They were superficial, and there was nothing to account for that prolonged insensibility in the carriage. While the doctor was attending to him the detectives searched his clothes. They found a few shillings in his pockets, some pawn tickets, and several Hanoverian sovereigns—flash coins often used by tricksters for the purpose of impressing unsuspecting people with an idea of wealth. Lefroy protested that he knew nothing of these. His assailant must have put them in his pocket.

An examination of the railway carriage revealed signs of a terrible outrage having been attempted or perpetrated in it. There were the marks of revolver shots on the woodwork.

The conduct of the police called in the first place to investigate the mystery excited much comment.

Lefroy's injuries having been seen to, one of the officers went with Lefroy back by the train to the address he had given at Wallington. As the train they were in stopped at a station on the way from Brighton, the stationmaster came to the carriage and informed the officers that the searchers sent out had discovered the dead body of an old gentleman—a Mr. Gold—on the line near Balcombe tunnel. Having seen

Lefroy into his lodgings at Wallington, the detective, left him.

"If you should want me for anything to-morrow," said Lefroy, calmly, as he bade the officer good day, "you will find me here or at my club in the Strand."

A short time later the officer was again at the house. He had received a message warning him to detain Lefroy, as it was evident that a murder had been committed. But Lefroy, he was told, had left the house almost immediately after his arrival, and none knew where he had gone. He had fled!

All the witnesses declared that Lefroy, during his questioning by the railway officials and police, showed remarkable coolness and readiness in explanation. It must have been a fearful nervous effort. But he succeeded in allaying all suspicion and excited their pity as they looked at him with those terrible stains upon him. Judging by them, he must have lost a large quantity of blood. As a matter of fact the blood was that of his victim, Mr. Gold.

The railway company and the government at once offered a reward of £100 for information leading to the murderer's capture, and placards were issued bearing the descriptions of Lefroy, his portrait, and specimens of his handwriting. A likeness of him which appeared in a daily paper led to his capture.

Lefroy had taken refuge in lodgings in a little house in Smith street, Stepney. He informed his landlady that his name was Clarke, and that he was an invalid engraver from Liverpool. His conduct was mysterious and excited his landlady's suspicion. He stayed in all day and kept the blind of his room—his window looked out into the street—drawn close down as if fearful of anyone looking in. His landlady had seen the picture in the paper. She consulted the police respecting "the strange young man."

The detectives—Swanston and Jarvis—who visited Smith street to interview the mysterious lodger, recognized him and pounced upon him at once.

"I am glad you have found me," declared Lefroy. "I am sick of it and should have given myself up in a day or two. I am sorry I ran away. It puts such a wrong complexion on things; but I could not bear the exposure."

The jury quickly returned a verdict of guilty, and, pale and trembling, Lefroy listened, apparently all unnered, to the sentence of death. When the lord chief justice finished, however, he had recovered some amount of self-possession.

"Gentlemen," he cried, striking a theatrical attitude and in impressive tones, as he lifted his hand to Heaven, "the day will come when you will know that you have murdered me!"

He was hanged three weeks later—after having tried to delay his fate by making an absurdly impudent confession of another murder of which he did not know even the leading details.

Struck It Right.

Krunkleigh—Yes, I am seldom fooled on a point of physiognomy. Now that man yonder—I never saw him before, but I'll wager that he has to shoulder heavy responsibilities. Pardon me, sir, but would you mind telling us your occupation?

The Unknown—Shoor not. Oi carry a hod!—Cleveland Leader.

The Human Owl.

The cynic is one who never sees a good quality in a man, and never fails to see a bad one. He is the human owl, vigilant in darkness and blind to light, mousing for vermin, and never seeing noble game.—H. W. Beecher.

Money of American Heiresses.

At any rate it will never get so that a foreign aristocrat will refuse to marry an American heiress because her father's money is not above suspicion.—Denver Republican.

His Experience.

Knicker—Have you never heard the call of the wild?

Bocker—No, I always take my shoes off and try to get in as quietly as possible.—N. Y. Sun.

Not His Fault.

Tom—I thought you were on the water wagon.

Dick—I was. But high places always make me dizzy, and I fell off.—Detroit Free Press.

SMART DUCK IN NEW ROLE

Raised Brood of Chickens and Taught Them to Swim in Short Time.

I have seen a pet duck raise a brood of chickens, and before they were two weeks old she had them well versed in duck language, and had them taught how to swim, says a writer in Forest and Stream. The reason I have for believing that they understand duck language is this: That if a hawk or crow flew near she would give one harsh quack and every one of the chicks would scud away into the woods, and after the danger was past she would give five or six gentle quacks and out they would come without the least appearance of fear.

But the greatest performance was the way she impressed it on their minds that it was time they learned to swim. One foggy, cold morning, early in the spring, when they were about a week old, I heard her using some of the worst duck language that I ever heard and the chicks were yelling all kinds of bloody murder. I ran out to learn what was the trouble, and there she was at the edge of the water, grabbing the chicks in her mouth and throwing them in the river, and they were scrambling out so fast that she never had more than one-half of the brood in the water at one time. I knew that the water and the weather were so cold that she would have them so chilled in a short time that they would all die, so I shut her up in the coop and kept her there for several days.

When I again let her out she took the chickens to the water and gave them another lesson in swimming, and she repeated this several times a day, and in three or four days she had them educated so that when she would go into the water and call to them to come along they did so without any hesitation. She apparently had sense enough not to keep them in the water long at a time, and that I can reason, for it certainly was not instinct.

FOLLOWED HIS DIRECTIONS

Doctor's Instruction Are Adhered To and Still His Services Were Again Rendered Necessary.

"What on earth have you been eating, Brown?" asks the doctor who has been called in hurriedly at midnight, according to the Chicago Tribune.

"What?" groans Brown.

"You have been eating something that was eminently unfitted for your digestion. How many times have I told you to confine your bill of fare to fruits and vegetables, and—"

"Look here, Doc. If I hadn't followed your scientific suggestions I wouldn't have had to rush over here to-night. First thing, I ate some apples and berries and nuts and raisins, because you said they were fine to begin the day on. I was still hungry, so I tackled a grape fruit and some early cantaloupe; then some oatmeal and wheat and other grain preparations; for lunch I had spinach, dandelion, nut outlets, fruit salad, more berries and plenty of whole wheat bread; then I was hungry this evening and ate plentifully of watercress, bananas, apples, nuts, spinach, kale, cabbage, potatoes, young onions, lettuce, radishes, cherries, tomatoes, and all the rest of the blood-cooling, flesh-making, nerve-building fruits and vegetables, just the ones you have so constantly and consistently recommended to me. And now—"

But the doctor, lost in thought, was trying to figure out what sort of a diet to put the man on.

Lucky Doctor.

In France it is not only the uneducated who plunge in the public lotteries. They are patronized by all classes, and a Calais doctor has just found Dame Fortune more kind than he was ever likely to find Aesculapius. His name is Dr. Huc, and he took a whole ticket in the last issue of Panama lottery bonds. He has just received notification that he has drawn the grand prize of £20,000. Dr. Huc was chief surgeon to the hospitals of Calais.

Occupied.

First Cook—An' what was yez talkin' about?

Second Cook—Oh, we was discussin' the mistress problem.—Puck.

ANTS BUILD GOOD ROADS.

They Are as Smooth as If Cemented from End to End—Greatest Constructors on Earth.

The greatest road builders in the world are a species of red ants found in South America. In building a road they carry minute particles of clay, with which they line all the roads as well as the galleries and passages of their nests till they look as smooth as if cemented by a master mason. Some idea of their number can be formed when it is remembered that the whole of this road to their tree, perhaps nearly half a mile long, is densely thronged with a multitude going out empty and coming back with their umbrallike burdens, while thousands upon thousands swarm in the doomed tree.

That this vast army is under the best discipline can be proved by watching them only a few moments. The drivers are constantly running up and down giving their orders to the workers, which they do by touching heads for a moment. The individual so touched will stop, turn back, hurry forward or show in some such way that he is following some command. But a better proof of the discipline is found in the fact that when the army meets with an obstacle, such as a log or large stone, there is a jam of ants on both sides and they run about in dismay and disorder. Instantly the drivers hurry up, showing the greatest excitement, and run over, around and under the impediment to find the best way out of the difficulty. When they have decided they lead off the line of march in the proper direction. But until they take this step the workers make no attempt to pass the obstacle.

When a selection of a level piece of ground has been made a perpendicular shaft some eight inches in diameter and six or seven feet deep is formed. This is for drainage and ventilation, never for ingress or egress. If the ground slopes the shaft is horizontal, the mouth, of course, being at the bottom of the hill. From the perpendicular shaft, commencing at the bottom, radiate galleries, like the spokes of a wheel set at a slight angle. At the end of each series of galleries' spokes a circular gallery is made, forming, as it were, a set of wheels one above the other. In, or rather above these circular galleries the nests or dwelling places are constructed. These are oval in shape and about a foot long. The narrow end of the oval is downward and opens into the roof of the gallery, and as the spokes always slope slightly toward the shaft no tropical rains, no matter how heavy, can enter the homes and breeding places of the ants.

NO FOOD FOR ELEVEN DAYS

Blind Indian Falls Into Mine Shaft and Subsists Until Friends Rescue Him.

Macey Ball, a blind Modoc Indian, living three miles northwest of Seneca, fell into an abandoned mining shaft about 60 feet deep, over which brush had been heaped. Eleven days later Ball was rescued. "There must have been considerable water in the shaft," says the Hustler, "as the Indian declares he never struck bottom. It seems that in some way, when he arose to the surface of the water, he caught on to something long enough to keep from drowning, and had dug a hole in the side of the shaft with his hands large enough to crawl into, and there he had remained the entire 11 days without food of any kind. A rope was lowered to him and he placed the noose around his body and was pulled out. He seemed none the worse for his fasting, as he was able to walk home, about half a mile. Sam Lawyer had been out hunting for the missing man, and his dogs, passing the shaft, heard the Indians making queer sounds, peculiar to his tribe, and set up a howl. Sam looked into the shaft, but could see no one, as Macey had burrowed deep enough to be entirely out of sight, but he heard him and secured the help of Ben Lawyer and Tom Welsh and they rescued the imprisoned man."

The Morning After.

Guest (to bell boy)—Is this a foundry?

Bell Boy—No, sir; this is a hotel. That thumping you hear is on the inside of your head. — Detroit Free Press.

MUSSELS FIND MANY USES.

Some Facts About a Familiar Shellfish—At Its Best in the Spring—How to Cook Them.

Mussels are at their best in the spring. Mussels thrive in bays and inlets, on sandy bottoms, to which, and to one another, they attach by their byssus threads, these being slender filaments issuing from between the shells, says a New York writer. They are sometimes in great beds extending over a hundred acres, thousands of bushels of mussels being obtained in a single bed.

Fishermen go for mussels as soon as the ice is out of the bays in the spring, and sometimes when wind and weather are propitious they sandwich in a trip for mussels between the end of one fishing trip and the beginning of another. There are plenty of mussel beds within easy reaching distance of New York, and once on a mussel bed a load for a ten-ton sloop might be dredged up in a single tide.

So with good luck a fisherman could go to a mussel bed 20, 30 or 40 miles distant, and get a load of mussels, and be back in New York ready to sell them, all within two days.

The profit on the trip depends on what he gets for his catch. If there should be many boatloads of mussels in the market at the same time he would get less for them; but if he should happen to come in when mussels were scarce he would get more. If he got, say, \$1.25 a barrel, about an average price, and he had from 50 to 75 barrels in his sloop and he had made a quick trip and disposed of his catch quickly there would be fair money in it.

But the fisherman takes chances in mussel fishing, just as he does in every other sort of fishing.

Fishermen sometimes eat mussels fried, but the great bulk of mussels consumed are pickled. The mussels are first boiled, and then picked out of their shells, and then what is called the beard, which consists of the inward ends of the byssus threads, is removed, and with it a little sac into which the mussel is likely to have drawn more or less sand. Then the mussels are put up in jars in pickle, with a few spices added. Pickled mussels have long been a familiar item of free lunch, and people buy them as well to carry home.

The mussel is a much cheaper shellfish than the oyster or the clam, but still it is not eaten to the same extent. There are people with whom the mussel does not agree, because of its rich flavor. But there are epicures who are fond of them, and who like to eat them occasionally, and so mussels may be found on the bills of fare of the finest restaurants.

Junkmen who go into the country buying junk sometimes take down their jangling bells and stow them away somewhere in the wagon and take into the country a wagonload of mussels, which they dispose of to farmers, trading the mussels, maybe, for junk. Pickled mussels have been shipped from New York at least as far away as Chicago; so that, altogether the quantity of mussels disposed of in the Gotham market is considerable.

Novel Way to Kill Sharks.

The engineers in the British navy have a very effective way of killing sharks. They seal up a dynamite cartridge in an empty can, and put the can inside a large piece of pork. The pork is thrown overboard on a wire which has been connected with an electric battery. When the shark takes the bait the engineer presses a button, which explodes the cartridge and kills the fish.

A Beginner.

He—The airships do not seem to be perfected yet. The great problem is how can a man be kept up in the air?

She—Well, I saw you out horse-back riding the other day, and it looked very much as if you were in the air most of the time!—Yonkers Statesman.

His First Attack.

She (toying with the ring)—And am I the first woman you ever loved?

He—No, indeed. At the early age of seven I thought seriously of eloping with my teacher.—Chicago Daily News.