

LOUIS TRACY



***THE ALBERT
GATE MYSTERY***

Louis Tracy

The Albert Gate Mystery

Enriched edition. Including "The Stowmarket Mystery"

Introduction, Studies and Commentaries by Eliza Fairchild

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CHAPTER I

A MYSTERIOUS CRIME

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Reginald Brett, barrister-at-law and amateur detective, had seldom been more at peace with the world and his own conscience than when he entered the dining-room of his cosy flat this bright October morning.

Since the famous affair of Lady Delia Lyle's disappearance and death, he had not been busy, and the joy of healthy idleness is only known to the hard worker. Again, while dressing, he had received a letter inviting him to a quiet shoot at a delightful place in the country.

All these things blended with happy inconsequence to render Brett contented in mind and affable in manner.

"It's a fine morning, Smith," he said cheerily, as he settled himself at the table where his "man" was already pouring out the coffee.

"Bee-utiful, sir," said Smith.

"Smith!"

"Yessir."

"Not even the best English autumn weather can stand being called 'bee-utiful.' Don't do it. You will open the flood-gates of Heaven."

Smith laughed decorously. He had not the slightest idea what his master meant, but if it pleased Mr. Brett to be jocose, it was the duty of a servant who knew his place to be responsive.

The barrister fully understood Smith's delicate appreciation—and its limits. He instantly noticed that the

morning paper, instead of reposing next to his folded napkin, was placed out of reach on a sideboard, and that the eggs and bacon made their appearance half a minute too soon.

As an expert swordsman delights to execute a pass *en tierce* with an umbrella, so did the cleverest analytical detective of the age resolve to amaze his servitor.

"Smith," he said suddenly, composing his features to their most severe cross-examination aspect, "I think the arrangement is an excellent one."

"What arrangement, sir."

"That Mrs. Smith and yourself should have a few days' holiday, while Mrs. Smith's brother takes your place during my forthcoming visit to Lord Northallerton's—why, man, what is the matter? Is it too hot?"—for the cover Smith had lifted off the bacon and eggs clattered violently on the table.

"'Ot, sir. 'Ot isn't the word. You're a fair lick, that's what you are."

Smith invariably dropped his h's when he became excited.

"Smith, I insist that you shall not call me names. Pass the paper."

"But, sir——"

"Pass the paper. Utter another word and I refuse to accept Mrs. Smith's brother as your *locum tenens*."

Smith was silenced by the last terrible epithet. Yet he was so manifestly nervous that Brett resolved to enlighten him before plunging into the day's news.

"For the last time, Smith," he said, "I will explain to you why it is hopeless for you to think of concealing tradesmen's

commissions from me."

The shot went home, but the enemy was acquainted with this method of attack, and did not wince.

"You knew that Lord Northallerton had recently invited me to his October pheasant-shooting. During the last few days a youth, who grotesquely reproduces Mrs. Smith's most prominent features, has mysteriously tenanted the kitchen, ill-cleaned my boots, and bungled over the studs in my shirts. This morning a letter came with the crest and the Northallerton postmark. Really, Smith, considering that you have now breathed the same air as myself for eight long years, I did not expect to be called on for an explanation. Besides, you have destroyed a masterpiece."

"Sir——" began Smith.

"Oh, I understand; there is nothing broken but your reputation. Don't you see that the mere placing of the newspaper at a distance, so that you might have a chance to speak before I opened it, was a subtle stroke, worthy of Lecocq. Yet you demand feeble words. What a pity! Know, Smith, that true genius is dumb. Speech may be silver, but silence is surely golden."

The barrister solemnly unfolded the paper, and Smith faded from the room. On a page usually devoted to important announcements, the following paragraphs stood forth in the boldness of leaded type:—

"MYSTERIOUS OCCURRENCE IN THE WEST END.

"An affair of some magnitude—perhaps a remarkable crime—has taken place in an Albert Gate mansion.

"Owing to the reticence of the authorities, it is at present impossible to arrive at a definite conclusion as to the nature or extent of the incident, but it is quite certain that public interest will be much excited when details are forthcoming. All sorts of rumours attain credence in the locality, the murder of several prominent persons being not the least persistent of these. Without, however, giving currency to idle speculation, several authentic statements may be grouped into a connected form.

"Four weeks ago a party of Turkish gentlemen of high rank in Constantinople, arrived in London and took up their abode in the house in question, after some structural alterations, pointing at great security within and without, had been planned and executed.

"Attending these Turkish gentlemen, or officials, was a numerous suite of Moslem guards and servants, whilst, immediately following their arrival, came from Amsterdam some dozen noted experts in the diamond-cutting industry. These were lodged in a neighbouring private hotel, where they were extremely uncommunicative as to their business in London. They were employed during the day at the Albert Gate house. The presence in the mansion, both day and night, of a strong force of Metropolitan police, tended to excite local curiosity to an intense degree, but no clear conception of the business of the occupants was allowed to reach the public.

"Whatever it was that took place, the full particulars were not only well known to the authorities—the presence of the police hints even at Governmental sanction—but matters proceeded on normal lines until yesterday morning.

"Then it became clear that a remarkable development must have occurred during the preceding night, as the whole of the Dutch workmen and the Turkish attendants were taken off in cabs by the police, not to Morton Street Police Station, but to Scotland Yard; this in itself being a most unusual course to adopt. They are unquestionably detained in custody, but they have not yet been charged before a magistrate.

"The police, later in the day, carried off some of these men's personal belongings, from both hotel and mansion.

"A sinister aspect was given to the foregoing mysterious proceedings by the presence at Albert Gate, early in the day, of two police surgeons, who were followed, about twelve o'clock, by Dr. Tennyson Coke, the greatest living authority on toxicology.

"Dr. Coke and the other medical gentlemen subsequently refused to impart the slightest information as to the reasons that led the police to seek their services, and the Scotland Yard authorities are adamant in the matter.

"The representative of a news agency was threatened with arrest for trespass when he endeavoured to gain admission to the Albert Gate house, and it is quite evident that the police are determined to prevent the facts from leaking out at present—if they can by any means accomplish their wishes."

Brett read this interesting statement twice slowly. It fascinated him. Its very vagueness, its admissions of inability to tell what had really happened, its adroit use of such phrases as "Turkish gentlemen of high rank," "Noted experts in the diamond-cutting industry," "The greatest living authority on toxicology," betrayed the hand of the disappointed journalistic artist.

"Excellent!" he murmured aloud. "It is the breath of battle to my nostrils. I ought to tip Smith for my breakfast. Had I read this earlier, I would not have eaten a morsel."

He carefully examined the page at the back. It contained matter of no consequence—a London County Council debate—so he took a pair of scissors from his pocket and cut out the complete item, placing the slip as a votive offering in front of a finely-executed bust of Edgar Allen Poe, that stood on a bookcase behind him.

Within three minutes the scissors were again employed. The new cutting ran—

"There is trouble at Yildiz Kiosk. A Reuter's telegram from Constantinople states that a near relative of the Sultan has fled to France. The Porte have asked the French Government to apprehend him, but the French

Ambassador has informed Riaz Pasha that this course is impracticable in the absence of any criminal charge."

"These two are one," said the barrister, as he turned towards Poe's bust and laid the slip by the side of its predecessor. This time he had mutilated a critique of an Ibsensite drama.

The rest of the newspaper's contents had no special interest for him, and he soon threw aside the journal in order to rise, light a cigarette, and muster sufficient energy to write a telegram accepting Lord Northallerton's invitation for the following day.

He was on the point of reaching for a telegraph form when Smith entered with a card. It bore the name and address—

"The Earl of Fairholme, Stanhope Gate."

"Curious," thought Brett. "Where is his lordship?" he said aloud—"at the door, or in the street?"

(His flat was on the second floor.)

"In a keb, sir."

"Bring his lordship up."

A rapid glance at "Debrett" revealed that the Earl of Fairholme was thirty, unmarried, the fourteenth of his line, and the possessor of country seats at Fairholme, Warwickshire, and Glen Spey, Inverness.

The earl entered, an athletic, well-groomed man, one whose lines were usually cast in pleasant places, but who was now in an unwonted state of flurry and annoyance.

Each man was favourably impressed by the other. His lordship produced an introductory card, and Brett was

astonished to find that it bore the name of the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.

"I have come——" commenced his lordship hesitatingly.

But the barrister broke in. "You have had a bad night, Lord Fairholme. You wish for a long and comfortable chat. Now, won't you start with a whiskey and soda, light a cigar, and draw an easy chair near the fire?"

"'Pon my honour, Mr. Brett, you begin well. You give me confidence. Those are the first cheerful words I have heard during twenty-four hours."

The earl was easily manœuvred into a strong light. Then he made a fresh start.

"You have doubtless heard of this Albert Gate affair, Mr. Brett?"

"You mean this?" said the other, rising and handing to his visitor the longer paragraph of the two he had selected from the newspaper.

"That is very curious," said the earl, momentarily startled. But he was too preoccupied by his thoughts to pay much heed to the incident. He merely glanced at the cutting and went on:

"Yes, that is it. Well, Edith—Miss Talbot, I mean—vows that she won't marry me until this beastly business is cleared up. Of course, we all know that Jack didn't slope with the diamonds. He's tied up or dead, for sure. But—no matter what may have become of him—why the dickens that should stop Edith from marrying me is more than I can fathom. Just look at some of the women in Society. They don't leave it to their relatives to be mixed up in a scandal, I can tell you. Still, there you are. Edith is jolly clever and

awfully determined, so you've got to find him, Mr. Brett. Dead or alive, he must be found, and cleared."

"He shall," said Brett, gazing into the fire.

The quiet, self-reliant voice steadied the young peer. He checked an imminent flow of words, picked up the newspaper slip again, and this time read it.

Then he blushed.

"You must think me very stupid, Mr. Brett, to burst out in such a manner when you probably have never heard of the people I am talking about."

"You will tell me, Lord Fairholme, if you get quietly to work and try to speak, so far as you find it possible, in chronological sequence."

His lordship knitted his brows and smoked in silence. At last he found utterance.

"That's a good idea of yours. It makes things easier. Well, first of all, Edith and I became engaged. Edith is the daughter of the late Admiral Talbot. She and Jack, her brother, live with their uncle, General Sir Hubert Fitzjames, at 118, Ulster Gardens. Jack is in the Foreign Office; he is just like Edith, awfully clever and that sort of thing, an assistant secretary I think they call him. Now we're getting on, aren't we?"

"Splendidly."

"That's all right. About a month ago a chap turns up from Constantinople, a kind of special Envoy from the Sultan, and he explains to the Foreign Office that he has in his possession a lot of uncut diamonds of terrific value, including one as big as a duck's egg, to which no figures would give a price. Do you follow me?"

"Each word."

"Good. Well—I can't tell you why, because I don't know, and I could not understand it if I did—there was some political importance attached to these gems, and the Sultan roped our Foreign Office into it. So the Foreign Office placed Jack in charge of the business. He fixed up the Envoy in the house at Albert Gate, got a lot of diamond cutters and machinery for him, gave him into the charge of all the smart policemen in London; and what do you think is the upshot?"

"What?"

"The Envoy, his two secretaries, and a confidential servant were murdered the night before last, the diamonds were stolen, and Jack has vanished—absolutely gone clean into space, not a sign of him to be found anywhere. Yesterday Edith sends for me, cries for half an hour, tells me I'm the best fellow that ever lived, and then I'm jiggered if she didn't wind up by saying that she couldn't marry me."

The Earl of Fairholme was now worked up to fever heat. He would not calm down for an appreciable period, so Brett resolved to try the effect of curiosity.

He wrote a telegram to Lord Northallerton:—

"Very sorry, but I cannot leave town at present. Please ask me later. Will explain reason for postponement when we meet."

He had touched the dominant note in mankind.

"Surely!" cried the earl, "you have not already decided upon a course of action?"

"Not exactly. I am wiring to postpone a shooting fixture."

"What a beastly shame!" exclaimed the other, in whom the sporting instinct was at once aroused. "I'm awfully sorry my affairs should interfere with your arrangements in this way."

"Not a bit," cried Brett. "I make it a sacred rule of life to put pleasure before business. I mean," he explained, as a look of bewilderment crossed his hearer's face, "that this quest of ours promises to be the most remarkable affair I have ever been engaged in. That pleases me. Pheasant-shooting is a serious business, governed by the calendar and arranged by the head-keeper."

An electric bell summoned Smith. The barrister handed him the telegram and a sovereign.

"Read that message," he said. "Ponder over it. Send it, and give the change of the sovereign to Mrs. Smith's brother, with my compliments and regrets."

CHAPTER II

MEHEMET ALI'S NOTE

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Then he turned to Lord Fairholme.

"Just one question," he said, "before I send you off to bed. No, you must not protest. I want you to meet me here this evening at seven, with your brain clear and your nerves restored by a good, sound sleep. We will dine, here or elsewhere, and act subsequently. But at this moment I want to know the name of the person most readily accessible who can tell me all about Mr. Talbot's connection with the Sultan's agent."

"His sister, undoubtedly."

"Where can I find her?"

"At Ulster Gardens. I will drive you there."

The barrister smiled. "You are going to bed, I tell you. Give me a few lines of introduction to Miss Talbot."

The earl's face had brightened at the prospect of meeting his *fiancée* under the favourable conditions of Brett's presence. But he yielded with good grace, and promptly sat down to write a brief note explanatory of the barrister's identity and position in the inquiry.

The two parted at the door, and a hansom rapidly brought Brett to the residence of Sir Hubert Fitzjames.

A stately footman took Reggie's card and its accompanying letter, placed them on a salver with a graceful turn of his wrist, which oddly suggested a similar turn in his nose, and said:

"Miss Talbot is not at home, sir."

"Yes, she is," answered Brett, paying the driver of the hansom.

The footman deigned to exhibit astonishment. Here was a gentleman—one obviously accustomed to the manners of Society—who declined to accept the courteous disclaimer of an unexpected visit.

"Miss Talbot is not receiving visitors," he explained.

"Exactly. Take that card and the letter to Miss Talbot and bring me the answer."

Jeames was no match for his antagonist. He silently showed the way into a reception room and disappeared. A minute later he announced, with much deference, that Miss Talbot would see Mr. Brett in the library, and he conducted this mysterious visitor upstairs.

On rejoining Buttons in the hall he solemnly observed:

"That's a swell cop who is with the missus—shining topper, button-hole, buckskin gloves, patent leathers, all complete. Footmen ain't in it with the force, nowadays."

Jeames expanded his magnificent waistcoat with a heavy sigh over this philosophical dictum, the poignancy of which was enhanced by his knowledge that the upper housemaid had taken to conversing with a mounted policeman in the Park during her afternoons off.

The apartment in which Brett found himself gave ready indications of the character of its tenants. Tod's "Rajasthan" jostled a volume of the Badminton Library on the bookshelves, a copy of the Allahabad *Pioneer* lay beside the *Field* and the *Times* on the table, and many varieties of horns made trophies with quaint weapons on the walls.

A complete edition of Ruskin, and some exquisite prints of Rossetti's best known works, supplied a different set of emblems, whilst the room generally showed signs of daily occupation.

"Anglo-Indian uncle, artistic niece," was the barrister's rapid comment, but further analysis was prevented by the entrance of Miss Edith Talbot.

The surprise of the pair was mutual.

Brett expected to see a young, pretty and clever girl, vain enough to believe she had brains, and sufficiently well endowed with that rare commodity to be able to twist the good-natured Earl of Fairholme round her little finger.

Young, not more than twenty—unquestionably beautiful, with the graceful contour and delicately-balanced features of a portrait by Romney—Edith Talbot bore few of the marks that pass current as the outward and visible signs of a modern woman of Society. That she should be self-possessed and dressed in perfect taste were as obvious adjuncts of her character as that each phase of her clear thought should reflect itself in a singularly mobile face.

To such a woman pretence was impossible, the polite fictions of fashionable life impossible. Brett readily understood why the Earl of Fairholme had fallen in love with this fair creature. He had simply bent in worship before a goddess of his own creed.

To the girl, Brett was equally a revelation.

Fairholme's introductory note described the barrister as "the smartest criminal lawyer in London—one whose aid would be invaluable." She expected to meet a sharp-featured, wizened, elderly man, with gold-rimmed eye-

glasses, a queer voice and a nasty habit of asking unexpected questions.

In place of this commonplace personality, she encountered a handsome, well-groomed gentleman—one who won confidence by his intellectual face, and retained it by invisibly establishing a social equality. Fortunately, there is yet in Britain an aristocracy wherein good birth is synonymous with good breeding[1q]—a freemasonry whose passwords cannot be simulated, nor its membership bought.

Brett read the wonder in the girl's eyes, and hastened to explain.

"The Earl of Fairholme," said Brett, "thought I might be of some service in the matter of your brother's strange disappearance, Miss Talbot. I am not a professional detective, but my friends are good enough to believe that I am very successful in unravelling mysteries that are beyond the ken of Scotland Yard. I have heard something of the facts in this present affair. Will you trust me so far as to tell me all that is known to you personally?"

"My uncle, General Fitzjames, has just gone to Scotland Yard," she began, timidly.

"Quite so. Perhaps you prefer to await his return?"

"Oh, no, I do not mean that. But it is so hard to know how best to act. Uncle expects the police to accomplish impossibilities. He says that they should long since have found out what has become of Jack. Perhaps they may resent my interference."

"My interference, to be exact," said Reggie, with the pleasant smile that had fascinated so many women. Even Edith Talbot was not wholly proof against its magic.

"I, personally, have little faith in them," she confessed.

"I have none."

"Well, I will do as you advise."

"Then I recommend you to take me into your confidence. I know Scotland Yard and its methods. We do not follow the same path."

"I believe in you and trust you," said the girl.

So ingenuous was the look from the large, deep eyes which accompanied this declaration of confidence, that many men would have pronounced Miss Talbot to be an experienced flirt. Brett knew better. He simply bowed his acknowledgements.

"What is it that you want to know?" she continued. "We ourselves are no better informed than the newspapers as to what has actually happened, save that four men have been killed as the result of a carefully-planned robbery. As for my brother——"

She paused and strove hard to force back her tears.

"Your brother has simply vanished, Miss Talbot. If the criminals did not scruple to leave four dead men behind, they would not draw the line at a fifth. The clear inference is that your brother is alive, but under restraint."

"I can see that it is possible he was alive until some time after the tragedy at Albert Gate. But—but—what connection can Jack have with the theft of diamonds worth millions? These people used him as their tool in some manner. Why should they spare him when success had crowned their efforts?"

"We are conversing in riddles. Will you explain?"

"You know that my brother is an assistant Under-Secretary in the Foreign Office?"

"Yes."

"Well, early in September, his chief placed him in charge of a special undertaking. The Sultan had decided to have a large number of rough diamonds cut and polished by the best European experts. They were all magnificent gems, exceedingly valuable it seems, being rare both in size and purity; but one of them was larger than any known diamond. Jack told me it was quite as big as a good-sized hen's egg. Both it and the others, he said, had the appearance of lumps of alum; but the experts said that the smaller stones were worth more than a million sterling, whilst the price of the large one could not be fixed. No one but an Emperor or Sultan would buy it. His Excellency Mehemet Ali Pasha was the especial envoy charged with this mission, and he brought credentials to the Foreign Office asking for facilities to be given for its execution. He and the two secretaries who accompanied him have been killed."

"Yes?" said Brett, whose eyes were fixed intently on the hearthrug.

"Jack was given the special duty of looking after Mehemet Ali and his companions during their residence in London. It was his business to afford them every assistance in his power, to procure them police protection, obtain for them the best advice attainable in the diamond trade, and generally place at their disposal all the resources which the British Government itself could command if it undertook such a curious task. He had been with them about a month—not hourly engaged, you understand, as once the

preliminary arrangements were made, he had little further trouble—but he used to call there every morning and afternoon to see if he could render any assistance. Matters had progressed so favourably until the day before yesterday, that in another month he hoped to see the last of them. He was always saying that he would be glad when the business was ended, as he did not like to be officially connected with the fate of a few little bits of stone that happened to be so immensely valuable."

"Did your brother call there as usual on Monday afternoon?" said Brett.

"Yes; he came straight here from Albert Gate, and had tea with uncle and myself. He sat in the very chair and in the very position you now occupy. I can remember him saying: 'By jove! the hen's egg'—that is what he used to call the big diamond—'is turning out in fine style.' He even discussed the possibility of bringing us to see the collection when it was finished and before it left this country."

"Did your brother say why the diamonds were brought to this country in the first instance?"

"Yes; the Sultan and his advisers seemed to think the work of cutting them could be performed more safely and expeditiously here than anywhere else. Even the Turk has a high regard for the manner in which law and order are maintained in Britain. Yet the sequel has shown that the diamonds and their guardians were perhaps in greater danger here than they would have been in Constantinople."

"Was that the only reason?" said Brett, who had apparently made up his mind with reference to the pattern of the carpet, and was now gazing into the bright fire which

danced merrily in the grate, for the day though fine was chilly.

The girl wrinkled her brows in thought before she answered: "I think I do remember Jack saying that he believed there was some State business mixed up in the affair, but I am quite sure he did not know the exact facts himself."

"Can you recollect any of the special precautions taken to protect the gems? Your brother may have mentioned some details in conversation, you know."

"Oh, I think I know all about them. In the first instance, the house at Albert Gate had previously been tenanted by a rich banker, and it was well defended by all ordinary means against the attacks of ordinary burglars. But, in addition to this, before the diamonds left the safe at the Bank of England, the building was practically torn to pieces inside by workmen acting under the direction of the Commissioner of Police. It was absolutely impossible for anyone to enter except through the front door, unless they flew out of the second storey window. Servants and workmen, like everybody else, had to use this door alone, as the windows and doors in the basement had all been bricked up. Inside the entrance-hall there were always twelve policemen, and an inspector in charge.

"Every one who left the house was searched by the inspector on duty, and Jack used to say that he was very glad he invariably insisted upon this examination, although the police were at first disinclined to meet his wishes in the matter, he being, so to speak, their direct superior for the time. Beneath the entrance-hall were rooms occupied by

several Turkish and other servants. Mehemet Ali himself, in the presence of his secretaries, used to open the door leading to the suite of apartments in which the diamond cutters worked, and two of the Turkish gentlemen would remain there all day until the men left in the evening. The Envoy and both secretaries used to meet Jack when he visited the place, and for the last three weeks he had nothing to do but see the diamonds, count them, drink an excellent cup of coffee, and smoke a wonderful cigarette, made of some special Turkish tobacco, cultivated and prepared only for the Imperial household."

"Ah!" sighed Brett, with a note of almost unconscious envy in his voice. He knew exactly what that coffee and those cigarettes would be like. "I beg your pardon," he went on, perceiving that Miss Talbot did not understand his exclamation. "Will you tell me as nearly as you can the occurrences of Monday evening?"

"They were simple enough," said the girl. "My brother dined at home. We had one or two guests, and were all in the drawing room about 10 15, when a note came for him from Mehemet Ali. I know exactly what was in it. I looked over his shoulder whilst he read it. The words were: 'I wish to see you to-night on important business. Come, if possible, at once.' I have to tell you that it was in French, but this is an exact translation."

"Your brother was quite sure that it was from Mehemet Ali himself?" said Brett.

"Quite sure," was the reply. "He knew his handwriting well, having had several communications from him during the progress of the business."

solemn stateliness of his final appearance on earth.

“What!” cried Brett. “Do you mean to say that you have destroyed the documents deposited by the Japanese on the writing-desk?”

“Not exactly all,” was the cool reply. “We picked out those referring to Margaret, and made an end of them. We hope to be able to do the same with regard to papers discovered on Capella’s body or among his belongings. Those bearing on Ooma himself are here”—and he pointed to a small packet, neatly tied up, reposing on the mantelpiece.

“You have done a somewhat serious thing.”

“We don’t care a cent about that. Robert and I have both agreed that what Margaret has she keeps. There may, in course of time, be very good reason for this action. Anyhow, I have acted to please myself, and my father will, I am sure, approve of what I have done.”

Brett shook his head. No lawyer could approve of these rough-and-ready settlements of important family affairs.

“Has anyone telegraphed to Mrs. Capella?” he inquired.

“Yes,” said Robert, “I did. I just said ‘Ooma dead; Capella reported seriously ill. Remain in Whitby. I will join you to-morrow evening.’ That, I thought, was enough for a start.”

It certainly was.

Soon there came excited messages from both Margaret and Helen demanding more details, whereupon Brett, who knew that suspense was more unbearable than full knowledge, sent a fairly complete account of occurrences.

During the next few days there was the usual commotion in the Press that follows the opening up of the secret

records of a great and mysterious crime.

It came as a tremendous surprise to David Hume-Frazer to learn how many people were convinced of his innocence "all the time." Being the central figure in the affair, he was compelled to remain at Beechcroft until Capella and Ooma were interred, and the coroner's jury, at a deferred inquest, had recorded their verdict that the wretched Japanese descendant of the Scottish Jacobite was not only doubly a murderer, but guilty of the heinous crime of *felo de se*.

Brett, in the interim, saw to the despatch of the Italian witnesses back to Naples. These good people did not know why they had been brought to England, but they returned to their sunny land fully persuaded that the English were both very rich and very foolish.

Winter, in accordance with Brett's promise, secured a fresh holiday towards the close of August, and had the supreme joy of shooting over a well-stocked Scotch moor.

At last, one day in September, Brett was summoned to Whitby to assist at a family conclave.

He found that Margaret was firm in her resolve never again to live at Beechcroft. She and Robert intended to get married early in the New Year and sail forthwith for the Argentine, where, with the help of his wife's money, Robert Hume-Frazer could develop his magnificent estate.

Beechcroft would pass into the possession of David, and Helen and he, who were to be married in October, would settle down in the house after their honeymoon.

But on one point they were all very emphatic. That ill-fated library window should pass into the limbo of things that have been. Already builders were converting the library

into an entrance hall, and the main door would occupy its natural place in the front of the house.

Let us hope that the return of the young couple after their marriage marked a new era for an abode hitherto singled out for tragedy. Their start was auspicious enough, for true love, in their case, neither ran smoothly nor yielded to the pressure of terrible events.

Mr. and Mrs. Jiro went to Japan. With them they took the girl, Rose Dew, and the last heard of them was that the trio were running a boarding-house in Yeddo, where Mrs. Jiro advertised the excellence of the food she supplied, and Miss Dew sternly repressed any attempt on the part of the lodgers to obtain credit.

The last entry in Brett's note-book, under the heading of the "Stowmarket Mystery," is dated six months after the departure of Mr. and Mrs. Robert Hume-Frazer for the Argentine. It reads:

"To-day is the anniversary of David Hume's first visit to my chambers. This morning I discovered in a corner, dusty and forlorn, Ooma's walking-stick. It reminded me of a snake that was hibernating, so I gave it to Smith, and told him to light the kitchen fire with it. Then I telegraphed to old Sir David Hume-Frazer, saying that I gladly accepted his invitation for the 12th. His son, it seems, cannot go North, as he does not wish to leave his wife during the next couple of months. I suppose I shall be a godfather at an early date."

Memorable Quotes

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1q "Fortunately, there is yet in Britain an aristocracy wherein good birth is synonymous with good breeding"

2q "we will now proceed to business."

3q "a feeling of uncertainty which seldom characterised either his thoughts or his actions."

4q "I always yield to impulses."

5q "The best way to excite suspicion is to behave exactly as they are doing."

6q "the scent is hot"

7q "I hate to be beaten at the final stage,"

8q "That is because you have not accustomed yourself to analysis, he said."

9q "The fair-ground of Montmartre was in full swing when Brett arrived there."

10q ""We must not have any more tragedies," said Brett, "so proceed."

11q "Tout va bien."

12q "Marseilles is one of the most picturesque cities in the world."