

The BOWLING GREEN

The Red and White Girdle

II. "BAGAGE ACCOMPAGNÉ"

THE label of the P. L. M. Railway, affixed to the trunk, showed that its journey had been "effectuated" (delightful to greet again our old friend M. Chaix's constant phrase) as *Bagage Accompagné* from Paris on July 27. The condition of the trunk immediately suggested some connection with the unknown corpse. On the road, above the embankment, a small key was discovered; it fitted the lock of the trunk. The Paris police now began to get busy, for this obviously might have some bearing on a disappearance that had been bothering them in the capital. By August 17 the Marseilles newspapers were full of the story.

It was time to be moving. The pair returned to Paris on August 18th. With great coolness the girl went straight to the rue Tronson-Ducoudray to retrieve the forgotten hat. Then to London, a city familiar to them. They tarried there long enough for her to have her hair cut off and provide herself with boy's clothes. They sailed from Liverpool to New York, where she resumed her sex, passing as her companion's daughter. From New York, following French instinct, they went North to Quebec where they arrived September 7. As far as anyone could humanly predict, they had got clear away from whatever it might be that was troubling them.

If this unpleasant narrative has any hero, it can only be Dr. Lacassagne of Lyon who examined the gruesome remains found on the Rhone embankment. Decomposition was too far advanced for any outward recognition, but the expert proceeded, as our much-admired Dr. Thorndyke would have done, to study the skeleton. He noted an "atrophy" in the bones of the left heel, traces of gout in the right foot, and an old water-on-the-knee in the right leg. These coincided with information given by the family of the man missing in Paris. There were certain peculiarities about the teeth. Identification began to seem probable. The hatter who kept records of his customers' head-measurements produced his files, and these also tallied. The Bailiff's daughters in the rue Montrouge were startled when an agent of the Sûreté called to ask for their father's comb and hairbrush. The comparison of hairs left in the comb with those on the skull in the mortuary at Lyon brought final certainty. The victim was our easy-going Gouffé, whom we last saw admiring a red and white silk girdle.

The delay in identification had made the task of the police sufficiently difficult; now the investigation was further confused by a half-crazed cab-driver in Lyon who, apparently for the sake of notoriety, told a cock-and-bull story about his having transported the famous trunk. It proved to be mere fantasy, but by the time this invention had been exploded the trail was cold. But suspicion pointed plainly toward those who were accustomed to see the huissier waving money at his favorite brasserie. A friend of Gouffé called Rémi Launée, a pallid person with a waxed blond mustache and an uncertain eye, was discovered in a strange state of nerves. A detective who called on him unexpectedly found him in the act of trying on a wig at the mirror. There was also a queer thing that happened the night of Gouffé's disappearance. About nine o'clock the concierge on the rue Montmartre heard someone moving about in Gouffé's office. Thinking it was the bailiff himself who had returned, he went to speak to him; but a man burst out of the room, rushed past him on the stairs, shielding his face, and fled away. Going into the office, the concierge found the safe undisturbed, but the desk had been ransacked and the floor was littered with burnt matches. Was Launée this mysterious visitor? But Launée was able to prove a credible alibi, and the searchlight turned upon Eyraud. The latter was known to be in various kinds of trouble, and Launée's anxiety was due to the fact that it was he who had introduced Eyraud to Gouffé, and had given Eyraud the notion that the bailiff was a man of substance. Launée admitted that he and Eyraud had dined together at the Taverne de Londres on the evening of July 25, when Eyraud asked a great many pointed questions about Gouffé and his habits. Now Eyraud had disappeared, and his doxy with

him. He had cajoled 500 francs from his wife on the morning of July 27, said he was leaving on an important business trip, and hadn't been seen since. By the time these facts had been painfully collated, Eyraud and Gabrielle were off to Canada. We leave them making their way from Quebec to Vancouver in September, 1889. The details of that long journey must remain one of the world's many untold stories. By what shifts did they get money for their fares? The gamine of the Parisian boulevards, what did she think of the Rockies in their autumn colors? Probably it occurred to her that for a winter in Canada she would need some warmer clothing. But we must fill in a little more background.



Michel Eyraud had had a lively career. Born about 1842, he served as corporal with the French invasion in Mexico in 1863. He was said to have deserted under fire, but he claimed to have left the campfire for the tender light of a Mexican señorita's eyes. He was too gallant, he claimed, to make war on a nation that had such beautiful women; he was always "grand amateur de jupons." Returned to France, he married a wealthy woman who brought him a dowry of \$8,000, which he rapidly squandered. He was a clever linguist and travelled in the South Americas for an English firm. He was a captain of militia during the siege of Paris. After the Franco-Prussian war he became a distiller of cognac at Sèvres, but apparently he relished his own products too much. The business failed with a resounding crash and liabilities of nearly half a million francs. Toward the end of 1888 we find him acting as manager for a business house in Paris. It was then that he met Gabrielle. By her account, she answered an advertisement for a position; according to Eyraud, she gave him the eye on the street. Either way, it was unlucky for them both. When the judge expressed a virtuous disgust at her having become the mistress of this unsavory swindler, old enough to be her father, Gabrielle's reply was simple. "La misère fait faire bien des choses."

Bataille makes no attempt to sentimentalize Gabrielle. He does not find her as pretty as the newspapers had described, though he admits her chic. When he saw her at the trial (December, 1890) she was wearing a fur cap, a dotted veil, a winter cloak "coquettishly épaulé," and "gloves with four buttons." (The fur cap, I venture, was a souvenir of the trip to Canada.) Her hair was freshly waved. He calls her a Sainte-Nitouche, viz., a demure hypocrite, but subject to fits of temper. Angered by the prosecution she would sulk like a scolded child and turn her back on the court. She had been recalcitrant from earliest childhood. Bataille maintains that her intimacy with Eyraud brought her to a state of "complete cynicism." Poor gamine! It was her father's amour with the governess that had sent her out to hunt her fortune. There was odd irony in that, for perhaps a good governess a few years earlier might have made much difference. Her liaison with Eyraud caused much amazement among the learned jurists; so much so that a theory of hypnotic influence was later advanced to account for it. At any rate it was complete. When his various stratagems were rapidly boomeranging, she shared with him the proceeds of her own personal merchandise. But even among daughters of the game her recklessly pungent language scandalized the madams.

In July 1889 Eyraud's situation was serious; in the euphemism of one of the lawyers he was "reduced to expedients." Threatened with a prosecution for fraud, he went to London to think things over. They had resolved upon a little high-class blackmail to recoup the exchequer. On July 7 Gabrielle joined him there; it was her first view of perfidious Albion, I should love to know her impressions. They had not yet chosen a victim for their plot, but Gabrielle claimed to have a rich prospect who had promised her large sums If, As, and When. But their preparations for the simple art of blackmail were curiously intricate. It was all, as Eyraud afterward explained, in case of accidents. At a shop which the testimony calls "Peters and Robinson" (I take it to be Peter Robinson's) Gabrielle bought a rope girdle of red and white silk, a very strong one. In that fatal twist of white and scarlet perhaps the symbolist may see some emblem of the story. Eyraud meanwhile provided himself with a false beard, twelve feet of rope, and a block and tackle. In London they also bought the trunk which became famous. I see them, in some dingy lodging (probably near the British Museum?) looking over their purchases. Gabrielle says that the trunk was intended

for her clothes, but the relentless Bataille insists that at that time she had only one dress to her back.

The revenues of the cross-Channel services that month must have shown some small but reckonable improvement by the migrations of this uneasy pair. Gabrielle celebrated Bastille Day (July 14) by crossing to Paris alone with the ominous trunk, but on July 17 she rejoined Eyraud in London. On Saturday, July 20, they returned to France together. Undoubtedly they agreed that they could not endure another London Sunday. Neither perfidious Albion nor temperamental Marianne paid any attention to these inconspicuous travellers. Queen Victoria and Mr. Gladstone were figuring out how the Prince of Wales might be allowed a larger stipend, and Lord Salisbury's government was making preparation to receive a state visit from a young sovereign who had lately become Kaiser. In Paris the approaching trial of General Boulanger was the scandal of the moment. Beneath these effective smoke-screens the adventurers continued their cold-blooded plan.

On July 21 they went together to the department store poetically named *Pygmalion* (I seem to remember that it still exists?) to choose some canvas. Their purpose, however, was the exact opposite of the classic myth. They bought 7 meters of sail-cloth, which Gabrielle took to a hotel-room in the rue Prony (near the Parc Monceau). A chambermaid saw her there with the material spread on the bed, sewing it into a sack. Eyraud took the trunk to a luggage-maker and had it reinforced; at a hardware shop he bought a large hook and a swivel. On July 24 Gabrielle, under the name of Mlle Labordière, rented the apartment at 3 rue Tronson-Ducoudray and paid 150 francs in advance. The plant account of the enterprise was mounting.



But now all was ready except the choice of a victim. Perhaps the opulent suitor of whom Gabrielle had spoken was out of town for a long week-end. If so, it was the luckiest exodus of his life. The session with Launée at the Taverne de Londres decided the matter. Gouffé was rich; he would do. When the bailiff met La Petite on the pavement near his office that Friday noon it was not romantic chance. She was patrolling for him.

That afternoon was spent in preparations. In true detective stories there are usually some uncertainties, and I may not be too positive about Eyraud's alleged literary compositions. Aided by Gabrielle's memories of feuilleton fiction, he drew up numerous drafts of a letter—intended to be signed by the victim—that Gouffé had been kidnapped and would be held under duress until his family delivered funds for ransom. But the more the author struggled with these simple declarative statements the less credible they seemed. He proceeded to more practical arrangements. We can almost say that Gouffé was murdered because homicide was easier than prose composition.

The archway of the sleeping alcove was surmounted by a large beam. To this he fastened the hook; not an easy job, reaching upward from a chair; it must be done without any hammering which would arouse the anxieties of the patronne. So they were on their guard; if the landlady had come in she might have thought it a pleasant domestic scene; a little ménage à deux installing itself, Gabrielle holding the chair while Eyraud adjusted the drapes across the alcove. From the hook he hung the block and tackle, concealed behind the curtain. The loose end of the rope hung down on this side of the curtain, and Gabrielle ingeniously wrapped it in a strip of dark cloth so it was not noticeable. To the end of the rope they attached a snap-swivel which hung just below the back of the chaise-longue. The other chair was placed behind the curtain, beneath the pulley.

By six o'clock all was ready. They went out and dined with appetite at a little café just behind the Madeleine. It renews one's sense of improbability to think of them sitting on that quiet pavement where many of us have eaten and drunk peacefully on summer evenings. The Swiss waiter remembered later that Gabrielle took champagne and seemed in gay spirits. Eyraud was more pensive: his mind was occupied with the mechanics of pulleys; with his fingernails he sketched on the table-cloth a plan of his arrangement of forces.

It was a pleasant time for lingering at table, but by 7:30 they were back at the apartment. Eyraud tested his mechanism once more. They closed the blinds, and Gabrielle put on her kimono and practised the slip-knot in the red and white girdle. Eyraud took his position on the chair behind the curtain.

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Seven Devils of Science

IT was once a common belief that a man might be possessed by demons which drove him wild, as shown in the New Testament story of the legion of evil spirits that were dismissed from a demoniac and rushed two thousand swine to their death in the Sea of Galilee. So it is a common superstition nowadays that science is infested by a host of devils which are dangerous in civilization. I have selected seven fiends that are typical of the whole swarm, and am going to submit them to clinical examination.

The accusation that science tends to atheism is somewhat antiquated and need not be rebutted once more in a journal of modern thought. But it is well to record here the concise refutation that Huxley made:

Of all the senseless babble I have ever had occasion to read, the demonstrations of these philosophers who undertake to tell us all about the nature of God would be the worst, if they were not surpassed by the still greater absurdities of the philosophers who try to prove that there is no God.

The only reasoners against God that I can learn of today are certain theologians. One of many examples is Gerald Birney Smith, an ordained Baptist minister and professor of Christian theology at the University of Chicago, who says in his "Current Christian Thinking": "The appeal to God occupies a decreasing place in modern religion. . . . It is no wonder that men are beginning to ask whether the doctrine of God is not too difficult and too vague to furnish the best basis for religion." But a large number of scientists have stoutly insisted that scientific method cannot deal with theology and that God is an experienced reality. Truly it is comical to accuse science of encouraging atheism.

The devil which is most commonly supposed to inhabit the body of science is the negative theory that there is nothing in the universe except matter. All the activities of matter, in nebulae or living creatures, are supposed to be a sort of machine which was never created, derives its force from nowhere, and keeps on running because there is nothing to stop it. Hence the theory is called "materialism" or "mechanism."

The mechanistic philosophy has always seemed to me the most incomprehensible product of the human brain. And to most scientists it has appeared to be a blind and monstrous explanation—as if a clam should aver that the universe consists of nothing but mud. There are indications that materialism was the creed of several scientists in the nineteenth century, but I have advertised in vain for any example of it written in the twentieth century by a scientist under fifty years of age. The only profession of materialism that I have ever seen is "Modern Science and Materialism," by Hugh Elliot, an English writer on philosophical subjects, not a scientist. But even this philosopher concedes "the whole foundation of knowledge to idealism," and he remarks, "I do not for a moment defend materialism in a metaphysical sense, as if I were to affirm that matter is an ultimate fact." He is not concerned with ultimates. He is merely showing that all the scientific knowledge we have comes from a study of matter and force.

The reputable scientist has never denied the possibilities that lie beyond the reach of our senses; he has only denied that science can tell anything about what lies beyond. A modern scientist who preached materialism—granted that there could be such an animal—would be a laughing-stock to his colleagues. The judgment of W. C. D. Dampier-Whetham on this point represents the overwhelming majority of scientific opinion: "At the beginning of the twentieth century the majority of men of science held unconsciously a naive materialism. . . . The old materialism is dead."

It is sheer superstition to impute materialism to the science of this century.

If the universe were a machine, there could be no freedom of the human will; for all our actions would be determined in advance by the grinding cogs of the immutable laws of nature. It is popularly supposed that science insists upon this determinism of our conduct, or even that it gloats upon the spectacle of the soul as an automaton.

Probably the vast majority of psychologists do incline to think that the will is not free; for freedom

would mean that an action could be produced without any physical cause. So it is true that a vote of all the scientists might be in favor of determinism. But this fact is not at all disheartening to the person who has a good digestion and a true curiosity about the fascinating world in which he lives. Two considerations will bring good cheer to any sorrowing mind.

In the first place, we must realize that science refuses to go beyond its very restricted domain of physical observation. "Within this region of the senses," it says, "we cannot detect any action which might not have had a material cause." But is there any scientist who maintains, as a dogma, that there cannot be an undetermined source of activity beyond the reach of observation? I have never heard of one.

In the second place, no sensible reasoner about the will *desires* to prove that he is chained to matter. He is only inquiring into probability. He does not trust in pride or hope or speculation, but examines the evidence. Within the past three years the mathematicians have found some curious indications that electrons may perhaps not be subject to any known law of cause and effect, and it has been interesting to see how eagerly a few physicists have proceeded to argue from this wantonness of the infinitesimal to the possible liberty of the human will. Science is not committed to determinism. It wants freedom as much as the rest of us do. It is simply more resolute than most of us not to be deluded by false hopes.

When all the philosophy has been argued through, there remains a homely fact of more significance than all the theories—to wit: Even the most dogmatic scientists live on the assumption that they are free to commit crime or not to commit crime; most of them assume, in the management of their daily life, that they refrain from bad conduct by the use of will power; they regard themselves as free moral agents. Even Watson, the renowned behaviorist, is confident that he can build any kind of character in any normal child, and he tries to inspire the will of his classes by "a verbal stimulus which will gradually change the universe." There is no need of being disturbed about the determinism of the Watsons. Determinism is a spook.

"Sigmund Freud," says Rabbi Feinberg, "influences more lives than all the saints in heaven." His statement applies to thousands of warm-hearted people who have a literary bent. They are offended in their heart of hearts by the different brands of the psychological reasoning that reduces the soul to chemical formulas. They suppose that they are reading science, and therefore they rail at science. Why does it never occur to them to inquire about the credentials of Freudianism? A fair sample of what they would learn can be seen in a few sentences of "The Sciences and Philosophy," by J. S. Haldane, a physiologist who has learned in a long and rigorous life what one department of science is:

The discussion of conscious behavior has shown that it is a very different thing from what Freud imagines, and that science also is a very different thing. . . . Psychology as a branch of science is still on about the same level as chemistry was in the days of the alchemists. It has still no generally acknowledged guiding principles, so that the chaotic literature which is at present poured forth in the name of psychology has come to be regarded by educated persons with the very utmost suspicion, though it appeals to an ill-educated multitude, especially among the well-to-do. . . . The sort of organism which Freud imagines is thus a mere product of his imagination. . . . Of the characteristic features of conscious activity his conception gives no account at all. . . . The whole structure of any such psychology rests on bad physics and bad physiology, besides being hopelessly inadequate from the special standpoint of psychology. It misrepresents our actions, because it misrepresents both our perceptions and our passions. . . . If I speak strongly on this subject, I mean every word of what I say; and perhaps these words, coming as they do from a physiologist, may be more heeded than if they came from a philosophical teacher by profession, or from one tied by the creed of a church.

LEST Haldane's denunciation should seem prejudiced because it is such a broadside at all psychology, hear the words of J. B. Watson: "I venture to predict that twenty years from now (i. e., from 1925) an analyst using Freudian concepts and Freudian terminology will be placed upon the same plane as a phrenologist."

If there is a soul in man, it can never be injured by a million psychologists. The scientists are such merciless hunters of error that they can be counted

on to slaughter any false theory of the soul, and their execution will never be long delayed.

The most severe indictment of science that has been made by a non-religious author is a book called "Science the False Messiah." It closes with a list of twenty-three "Theses to Be Nailed to the Laboratory Door," the last of which, the climax of the book, is this: "When Science has become supreme, any attempt to rectify its formulas will be persecuted as heresy." This fear that science will set up an inquisition is uncommon and strikes most of us as absurd. Yet it is worth notice. For men are all by nature tyrannical, greedy for power, eager to impose their convictions on others, eager in proportion as their convictions tend to purity and righteousness. If, for example, I wish to free men from the curse of rum or infidelity, I shall try to subject them to a prohibition law or to a religious creed.

The present intentions of scientists may be ever so pure and meek, but these virtues might not prevent the setting up of a dominant cult. There are millions of intelligent people who feel that science is already beginning to exercise a merciless supervision over all our thoughts. There are theologians who assert that the religion of the future must be made by science, sociologists who declare that laws must be framed by science, educational experts who insist that all teaching should be directed by scientific techniques. A man is hardly to blame if he suspects that science may become a tyrant.

The fact is, however, that science can never become a dominating cult or institution—any more than humor or industry or any other useful trait of mind could form itself into a governing body and compel men to obedience. Science (as I shall show below) is not a dogma and has no faith whatever. Science is a method by which our curiosity explores nature. If the human greed for power has made tyrannies out of religion and temperance, it may conceivably make a tyranny out of our desire to learn facts. Our greed is always ready to use any name for its despotism. But science must forever be the foe of tyranny. The scientific attitude of mind is the only defense that the race has discovered against tyranny.

EVERY man who tries to think straight knows that his most important duty is to challenge the meanings of the words he uses. Every reasoner tells us this; we tell ourselves unceasingly. Yet we are perpetually veered away from truth by a word that has two meanings. The most powerful demon supposed to animate science is the ambiguous term *experience*.

All recent theology teems with *experience*. Professor William Ernest Hocking gives a fair example of this use in his preface to "The Meaning of God in Human Experience": "Religion inquires what, in terms of experience, its God means; for surely religion rises out of experience." If you care for a view of the most amazing mental arena in the world, attend closely to a few more brief quotations of a similar purport from Hocking.

Religious truth is founded upon experience. . . . The chance for finding God of general human value is built on the prospect that God may be found *in experience*, experience being the region of our continuous contact with metaphysical reality. . . . Our first and fundamental social experience is an experience of God.

If you consider that this philosopher's reliance on a word is not significant in an age when metaphysics is a waning subject, hear what use has been made of the word by the most brilliant mathematician in England, the most gifted expounder of the new physics, the most attractive human being who deals with science today, Arthur Stanley Eddington. In "The Nature of the Physical World" he tells of "our mystical experience of God":

There are some to whom the sense of a divine presence irradiating the soul is one of the most obvious things of experience. We may try to analyze the experience as we analyze humor. . . . but let us not forget that theology is symbolic knowledge, whereas our experience is intimate knowledge.

Hocking and Eddington—so different in their mental make-ups and ways of life—are agreed in affirming that they have a direct experience of God which is as valid as their apprehension of sunshine or