

THE FIFTH TABLET CARRIED A BOBE THAT WAS FATAL

Why the Doctor Had a Premonition That Misfortune Had Overtaken a Wealthy Planter—How the Story of the Crime Unfolded

The story was told by a police commissioner of another city who was in New Orleans recently on a visit.

"The most ingenious murder I ever knew anything about," he said, "was committed by a young physician. He was a rising practitioner at a place where I formerly lived, and, with your permission, I will speak of him simply as Dr. Smith.

"About a dozen years ago, as nearly as I remember, this young man went on a visit to a relative in a neighboring city, and one afternoon, on the third or fourth day of his stay, he started a lady member of the household by remarking that he had a feeling that some misfortune had overtaken a wealthy planter whom they both knew very well, and whom I will call Colonel Jones.

"On the day of Smith's singular premonition he was on one of those tours of inspection, but failed to come back, and the following morning his corpse was found lying in a cornfield. It had evidently been dead about 24 hours, and from the appearance of the body seemed to have been seized with some sort of fit or convulsion.

"Of course the affair created a great stir, and the police made a pretty thorough investigation, but the only thing they found that merited any special attention was a small, round vial in the dead man's vest pocket. It was about the diameter of a lead pencil by four inches long, and had originally contained a couple of dozen medicinal tablets, which, lying one on top of the other, filled the little bottle to the cork. A few still remained in the bottom.

"Upon inquiry it was learned without trouble that the tablets were a harmless preparation of soda, and that Jones himself had bought them at a local drug store. That ended suspicion in that quarter, and, for lack of anything better, the coroner returned a verdict of death from sunstroke. There was no autopsy.

"Some time after Jones had been buried," continued the police commissioner, "I learned accidentally of Dr. Smith's curious prophecy, and it set me to thinking. Eventually I evolved a theory, but it was impossible at the time to sustain it with proof, and for five or six years I kept it pigeonholed in my brain, waiting for something to happen. Meanwhile, to everybody's surprise, Dr. Smith went to the dogs. He began by drinking heavily, gradually lost his practice, and finally skipped out to avoid prosecution for a fake draft. After his flight I happened enough to absolutely confirm my theory as to Jones' death. What really happened was this:

"Dr. Smith owed the old man a considerable sum of money and had given a note, upon which he had forged his father's name as indorser. The planter was pressing him for payment and had threatened suit, which meant inevitable exposure. One day, while they were conversing, Jones pulled out a little glass vial and swallowed one of the tablets it contained, remarking that he took one daily, after dinner, for sour stomach.

"That suggested a diabolical scheme of assassination, which the doctor proceeded to put into execution. Repairing to his office, he made up a duplicate tablet of strychnine, and, encountering the colonel next day, asked him to let him have the vial for a moment, so he could copy the address of the makers from the label.

"Jones handed it over, unsuspectingly, and while his attention was briefly diverted elsewhere Smith put in the prepared tablet. He placed it under the top four, thus making it reasonably certain that his victim would take it on the fifth day from that date. Next morning he left town, so as to be far away when the tragedy was consummated, and some mysterious, uncontrollable impulse evidently led him to make the prediction that first excited my suspicion.

"When I made certain of all this, I located Smith in Oklahoma and was on the point of applying for an extradition warrant when he anticipated me by contracting pneumonia and dying. I thereupon returned the case to its mental pigeonhole, where it has remained ever since."

"Pardon me for asking," said one of the listeners, "but is that really a true story, or are you entertaining us with interesting fiction?"

"It is absolutely true," replied the narrator. "But how did you learn the particulars?"

"Well," said the police commissioner, smiling, "Smith was like most clever criminals—he had one weak spot. He was fool enough to tell a woman. She blabbed."—New Orleans Times-Democrat.

DRUNKENNESS AN IMPEDIMENT TO NATIONAL PROGRESS.

Steps Taken by the Government to Control the Liquor Traffic—Penalties For Selling on Credit—Temperature Restaurants.

ing in a public house until he had spent his last farthing, but often pawned his clothes, furniture and future crops. The public houses were acknowledged to be the most powerful agents of ruin and disorganization in the economic life of the Russian people and threatened the impoverishment of the whole agricultural population.

"One of the first steps toward preventing the unrestricted sale of liquor was to confine its sale to places where food was required to be furnished with each order for liquor, in order to prevent taking one drink after another without food. Severe penalties were also provided for selling on credit, for receiving articles in pawn for drinks, or for bartering spirits for produce or future labor, etc. The receiving of stolen property entailed the loss of license, and provision was made for closing public houses that evaded or violated the laws.

"The government established a number of shops in various parts of cities for the sale of vodka, brandy and spirits in corked bottles. It is not permitted to be drunk on the premises, but thirsty customers purchase small bottles and step outside of the door, draw the cork, drink the contents and return the empty bottle, for which they receive a few kopecks. The number of these shops is regulated by the population. The license was increased from \$77 to \$500 for public houses, which reduced the number one-half.

"It was first proposed in 1883 that the government should assume control of the sale of liquor, but the revenue from the sale of liquor amounted at that time to \$174,900,000 per year, and it was argued the government monopoly would reduce this so materially as to affect the revenues. Hence it was delayed until the famine of 1891, and the lamentable state of things it revealed hastened the reform, since which time the new system has been organized and introduced in half of the empire, including 35 provinces, covering 1,320,000 square miles, with a population of 61,000,000.

"Under the present system the government dictates the quantity and quality of spirits manufactured, purchases a very large percentage of the output and permits the sale of the surplus under proper regulations for manufacturing purposes, with the intention of furnishing the consumer with pure spirits, thus mitigating and preventing such abuses as are directly attributable to the excessive use of bad liquor and improving the morality and prosperity of the masses. The minister of finance has repeatedly declared that the purpose of the government in controlling the liquor business was not intended to produce any direct increase of the revenue; whatever increase there might be would come in consequence of the prevention of abuses which could be avoided only by government control.

"The official report for 1898 has just been made public and states that the amount of capital employed during that year was \$148,200,000. There were 1,381 brandy distilleries, 252 spirit distilleries and 27,120 places where distilled liquors were sold. Besides this, fermented liquor was sold at 14,000 saloons. The sales amounted to 84,003,752 gallons, the gross receipts being \$117,326,270, the expenses \$36,594,870 and the excise duty \$64,117,500. The net income to the government from sales was \$16,737,500.

"In governments where the sale of liquor is controlled by the government temperance societies have been organized, with Prince Oldenburg, a distinguished philanthropist of St. Petersburg, as president. These have opened reading rooms with libraries and restaurants near public gardens and squares, where large numbers of working people congregate, and sell cheap and good food with such temperance drinks as tea, milk and kvass made from cranberries and black bread. One of these societies has constructed two 'floating restaurants,' one of which will seat 600 people and the other 300. These boats are towed to points on the Neva, where workmen are employed or congregate. An open theater has been established on Petrovsky Island, where a good class of plays is given at a nominal price. Some of the public parks are also supplied with apparatus to encourage open air sports.

"The government is encouraging these societies, having appropriated large amounts to aid in the prosecution of their work. The appropriation for 1900 was \$1,200,719.

"It is expected that by the end of 1902 every one of the 78 provinces of Russia, including Siberia, will have been included in the sphere of activity of these societies.

"The leading newspaper of Russia has repeatedly stated that the most important impediment in the way of Russia's rapid progress lies in those 'twain relics of barbarism'—illiteracy and intemperance among the peasant classes, which comprise 75 per cent of the population."

Artificial Diamonds.

It is well known that in the manufacture of carbon steel microscopic diamonds are formed, and the curious fact is stated by The Scientific Press that from the examination of a number of steels from a variety of processes identical results were given. A piece weighing 300 grams was cut from a lump of steel and treated with nitric acid, the insoluble residue collected being mainly graphic carbon. After being washed with water it was boiled three times with fuming nitric acid, which partially dissolved the residue, hydrofluoric acid and then fuming sulphuric being used, there then remaining nothing but graphite, which, after being washed, was melted with chlorate of potash. The insoluble residue obtained fell to the bottom of a vessel filled with iodide of methylene, the little transparent octahedrons visible through a microscope, which burned on a sheet of platinum without any ash, being the diamonds.

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Table with columns for Southward and Northward routes, listing stations like New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Washington, etc., and corresponding train numbers and times.

Table with columns for Southward and Northward routes, listing stations like Memphis, Nashville, Atlanta, etc., and corresponding train numbers and times.

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Trains leave Charlotte, N. C.: 6:00 a. m.—No. 8, daily, for Richmond; connects at Greensboro for Raleigh, Goldsboro, Morehead City, Norfolk also Winston.

9:45 a. m.—No. 10, daily, New York and Florida Express for Columbia, Savannah, Jacksonville, New York to Tampa and New York to Augusta.

12:25 p. m.—No. 11, daily, for Atlanta and local stations. (Close connection at Spartanburg for Hendersonville and Asheville.)

3:00 p. m.—No. 78, daily, except Sunday. Freight and passenger for Statesville and local stations.

6:30 p. m.—No. 12, daily for Richmond, Raleigh, Goldsboro and local points. Connects at Salisbury for Asheville, Knoxville, Chattanooga, Memphis and Nashville.

8:18 p. m.—No. 88, daily, Washington and Southwestern Limited for Washington and all points North. Pullman sleeper New Orleans to New York, Memphis to New York. Pullman observation car Mason to New York.

9:20 p. m.—No. 84, New York and Florida Express for Washington and points North. Pullman sleepers Jacksonville to New York, Augusta to New York, Charlotte to Richmond, Charlotte to Norfolk.

10:00 p. m.—No. 86, daily for Atlanta and Charlotte Air Line Division, and all points South and Southwest. Carries through Pullman drawing-room buffet sleepers between New York and New Orleans, Charlotte and Birmingham.

9:55 p. m.—No. 85, daily, Columbia and C. & A. local stations; Augusta, Savannah and Jacksonville. Carries through Pullman drawing-room buffet sleeper between New York and Miami. Also Pullman sleeper, Charlotte to Augusta, Columbia to Charleston.

First sections of all freight trains carry passengers between points at which they are scheduled to stop.

JOHN M. OULF, Traffic Manager, Gen'l Pass. Ag't, FRANK S. GANNON, Washington, D. C., 8d Vice-President and Gen'l Manager, Washington, D. C.

DIRECTORY OF THE SYNOD OF ALABAMA

OFFICERS FOR '98-'99

Moderator—Rev. P. G. Drayton, Mobile, N. C. Stated Clerk—Rev. W. R. Cole, Aiken, S. C. The Synod stands adjourned to meet in the L. Dean Presbyterian Church, Columbia, S. C. on Wednesday, October 18th, 1899, at 7:30 o'clock, p. m.

Board of Aid for Colleges and Academies—Rev. B. L. Glenn, Newnan, Ga. Sabbath Observance—Rev. Wm. L. Metz, Sumter, S. C.

Sabbath School Synodical Missionary—Rev. G. T. Hillard, D. D., 917 Washington St., Columbia, S. C.

WALLINGFORD ACADEMY, CHARLESTON, S. C.

BRAINERD INSTITUTE, CHESTER, S. C., Prof. JNO. S. MARQUIS, JR., Principal.

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HAINES' INSTITUTE, AUGUSTA, GA., Miss LUCY C. LAFFEY, Principal.

THE SYNOD'S ORGAN, THE AFRICO-AMERICAN PRESBYTERIAN, Address, CHARLOTTE, N. C.

SCOTIA SEMINARY, Concord, N. C. This well known school established by the Presbyterian Board for Freedmen for the higher education of colored girls will open for the next term Thursday, Oct. 12th. Students are advised not to come earlier than the 11th.

DIRECTORY OF THE SYNOD OF CATAWBA

OFFICERS FOR '98-'99

Moderator—Rev. W. A. Byrd, Newbern, N. C. Stated Clerk—Rev. D. I. Sanders, Chatham, N. C. The Synod will meet at Newbern, N. C. on Wednesday in November, 1899, at 7:30 o'clock, p. m.

Board of Aid for Colleges and Academies—Rev. B. L. Glenn, Newnan, Ga. Sabbath Observance—Rev. Wm. L. Metz, Sumter, S. C.

Sabbath School Synodical Missionary—Rev. G. T. Hillard, D. D., 917 Washington St., Columbia, S. C.

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