

"MURDERERS I HAVE MET," BY DR. FORBES L. WINSLOW

Famous English Authority on Insanity Writes Interesting Recollections of Trials in Which He Took Part as an Expert, Including the Hannigan Case in New York.

DR. FORBES L. WINSLOW was the founder of the British Hospital for Mental Disorders in London. He is Vice President of the Medico Legal Congress, New York, and Chairman of the psychological department.

He engaged in the principal lunacy investigations during the last quarter of a century in England; and he has also been engaged in a similar way in the United States, being retained as expert in several cases.

Among his chief cases in England may be mentioned the Penge mystery, the Balham mystery, the Old Kent murder, the Taylor case, the murder of the Rev. Dr. Douwell, who shot at the Master of Rolls, the Whitechapel crimes, Mrs. Dyer's case, Mrs. Maybrick's case, having the charge of the medical petition, and presented it in person; Devereux's case, and the Lord-Townsend lunacy inquiry.

In America he was engaged in such cases as Hannigan, Holmes, Durant, and Mrs. Fleming, all charged with murder.

This article by Dr. Winslow tells of some of his most interesting experiences.

By Forbes L. Winslow, M. D.

MY friend's cablegram sent from New York read: "Hannigan probably insane. Can you take up the case?" My reply, handed in here, in London, was: "Yes. Coming."

So in a few minutes were woven the introductory threads of one of the most interesting cases. A Summer evening it was, I remember, and as far back as 1894, but the tale has never been told. Before I retired that night I had made up my mind to add one more to my list of personal experiences with life-takers by sailing as soon as possible.

The murder, of which I had heard already through the newspapers was—If you will permit the term—a popular one. David Hannigan's sister, a pretty girl, had told him on her deathbed that Solomon Mann, her employer, had encompassed her end. Pressed by her mother to explain, she had called for a photograph and a pen. Then—

"That—that's him," the dying girl muttered.

Her stiffening fingers clutched the pen tighter, and she drew it across a face in the photographic group which her mother held before her. It was Mann's.

David found him, shot him dead, and was arrested. And on the day they laid his sister in her grave the murderer was taken to the Tombs Prison; and I, full of the story, stepped from the Fuston boat train at Liverpool and boarded the St. Louis bound for New York.

On my arrival permission was granted me to visit David Hannigan in the Tombs Prison. I spent many a day there. The homicidal gallery is one of the most extraordinary places in the world. Every few yards you come across either a murderer who is awaiting his trial, a murderer who is awaiting the executioner's chair, or one who is living through the agonies of the various appeal courts.

It was here that the Governor, laughing, and cheerily puffing at a cigar, pointed out Hannigan to me.

"That's the man," he said. "Stay as long as you like," and he was gone. Not another word did he utter on the subject of my visit.

And I passed into the cell. When I passed out, an hour afterward, I was confident that Hannigan would be discharged.

The interest taken in this and other crimes—and incidentally in me—was a revelation to me. While the Hannigan trial was pending I was commissioned by solicitors to examine Mrs. Fleming, who was accused of having poisoned her mother. Also, photographs of two other alleged murderers were brought to me, and I was asked to examine the heads—as far as was possible in the pictures—psychologically, and write out my conclusions for the papers. I had the satisfaction of learning afterward that in every case the verdict of the jurists coincided with my own opinions as expressed in the articles.

All the time the murder was daily absorbing more and more attention, and dozens of people were displaying a mild insanity on the subject. They flocked to the courthouse. On the morning of the trial a man, elderly, with a wild eye and a grayish-red beard, stopped the prison doctor in the corridor.

"I want to be called as an expert on insanity in this trial," he said. "I am the only man who can save Hannigan."

"Go home," said the doctor.

"No," the man continued, "to make a practical demonstration that there is such a thing as homicidal mania, by killing Justice Ingraham and District Attorney McIntyre. I will kill them right here in court, so as to impress the jury."

"Who's Winslow?" he called, as they hustled him away. "Who's Winslow? I'm the man to save Hannigan. I'm the man!"

"David Hannigan to the box!" the clerk cried. As the son stepped forward his father did the same. The fashionable women sitting at the side looked on the meeting and burst into tears. Several of the jurymen also wept, and the Judge left his seat and paced the bench to suppress his emotions.

As I mentally contrasted the scene with the grim, emotionless one I had witnessed so often at the Old Bailey, the trial opened—with a quarrel. The district Coroner was accused of having held an inquest on the girl before she died. There was a scene. Then: "Don't do it again," the Judge observed, in effect, and the trial and the sketching, and snapp-shooting and gum-chewing, and talking, and bookmaking—on the result—proceeded.

The tale told by the witnesses was of the type which make the most disgraceful pages in New York's history. Mann was the girl's murderer. Of that there was no doubt.

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see me that night at my hotel, I remember, that a few of the guests and I became engaged in conversation with the trial, on the subject of long life.

"Ah! Dr. Winslow," remarked one, a Mr. Thompson; "if only you could discover the elixir of life, eh? I mean the way to bring the dead to life, your fortune would be made. Why not try?"

We all laughed, and Mr. Thompson, rising to retire after a time, called out: "Don't forget, Dr. Winslow, elixir of life. Good night!"

A few hours afterward they found him dead in his bath, and it was my unpleasant duty to assist at a post-mortem examination of my jovial, good-natured friend.

The death shadows were falling quickly. A day or two later news came that Hannigan's father was seriously ill. He died a few hours before his son was acquitted of the charge of murder, and declared insane—on my evidence. And while a handful of people were gazing at the father's funeral 10,000 were morbidly watching his son's removal to an asylum.

I left New York the same afternoon. The last item of interest I noticed was a newspaper contents bill on the quay.

"Departure of Dr. Forbes Winslow," I read. "Most fêted man of the season!"

"What is it to have an ancestor who was a Pilgrim Father?" a fellow-passenger remarked with a smile.

"Or to travel 5,000 miles to help save a life and be bullied," I rejoined.

"But look," he added; "there's one person who is thankful to you."

I followed his finger to where a woman was frantically waving a handkerchief. It was Hannigan's sister.

Material for my recollections has been growing and growing around me for years. Nearly every murder of note has contributed its paragraph or its page.

One of the most interesting examples was the case of Dougal, murderer of the Moat Farm. Every day while public interest was centered in the crime, a postal bombardment was in progress at my front door.

"For heaven's sake take up the case, and save the wretch!" some of the writers said. "Save him! He's as mad as a March hare!" Others were warnings to leave the case alone. "If you don't," I read, "well, your own life will not be worth much. The murderer is a fiend. He ought to be drawn and quartered."

One afternoon—it was a few days before Dougal was arrested—a man, middle-aged and of aristocratic bearing, walked into my consulting room, shook me warmly by the hand, and congratulated me on being able to clear up the mystery. I was dumfounded, because, excepting for the letters received, the case had brought me very little work.

"What do you mean?" I inquired, handing my visitor a chair. "I do not understand."

"Mean?" he laughed. "What do I mean? I mean that I am the murderer, and you have an opportunity to help Justice to see that the crime is expiated."

Now, I was convinced from casual observations that the man was not a lunatic, and notwithstanding a little uneasiness, I contrived to maintain my self-possession, and questioned him closely. It appeared that some years before I had successfully treated a relative of his who had been driven temporarily mad by business worries. "I have not forgotten," my visitor added, "and here I am, ready and willing to do what little I can to repay you."

"And you really wish me to give you in charge?" I asked.

"Certainly," he replied. "Certainly!"

"Very well," I said. "Very well. If you wish it," and I left the room, apparently with the intention of summoning a policeman.

When I returned a minute or two later it was to find my visitor in a state of collapse on the couch. He begged me to let him go. "I was mad!" he said. "I was mad!"

I still believed him to be sane, however, but after a time I offered to allow him to leave on condition that he gave me his address. This he did, and, all smiles, bade me good-day. A day or two afterward, just when I was deciding to investigate the matter further, the man wrote, confessing that his visit was the result of a bet that he could deceive me



into believing he was a lunatic, and begging me to let the matter drop. Yes, murder has some strange sequelae. As I gazed through the smoke, at Carruth, who killed his best friend years and

years ago outside the Canterbury Theatre of Varieties, and hear him shrieking out at me, "God Almighty told me to do it!" I am reminded of a visitor, a girl I saw recently.

She is a young mother, and she is afraid that her momentary desire to kill her child will overcome her love for it. She had another child as well, and while the young mother was incarcerated in an

asylum it was deemed wiser to put the infant in charge of a nurse. The mania was developed by the nurse herself, and a day or two later she did what the mother would have done—she killed the child.

And as I ponder what, to the world, is mystery, memory stages crime's romance again. One morning, while a village policeman was proceeding on his rounds, a few miles out of London, he espied a mounted superior galloping toward him.

"Why on earth are you wasting your time like this?" cried the horseman. "Don't you know a murder has been committed on your ground!"

"Murder!" the constable muttered. "Murder! By whom?"

"By Mary B.," came the reply.

"What! the constable queried. "What! My-my—" But the other was galloping away, and "Sweetheart" went unheard.

Hardly was the rider out of sight than the constable was fleeing by a short cut to the girl's home. His warning was too late, however. Just as his sweetheart was leaving the gate up came the man on horseback, and the constable, leaping from behind a neighboring hedge, did his duty.

The girl was insane. Her old mother, who consulted me, died heartbroken. Her lover left the district, and the question: "Did you know your sweetheart was a murderer?" has followed him unanswered.

But no crime, I believe, has brought me such a succession of thrills as the notorious "Jack-the-Ripper" murders. Scores of correspondents advised me to wash my hands of the affair, but I was too fascinated to listen, and I honestly believe that had I been rendered the requisite assistance, I should have captured "Jack" on the steps of St. Paul's Cathedral. He was a religious man.

Do you remember the famous threatening letter I received? "This week," it read, "you will hear from me. Signed Jack the Ripper."

It was an exciting week. My pockets were picked in Whitechapel twice, and I am wondering still who were the two men who insisted on dogging my footsteps while I was trying to dog the murderers. And the woman, too, who implored me to minister to her sick child. Who was she? She hadn't a child at all.

Was she in league with my shadow? And were the three in league with the "Ripper" and was it really "Jack-the-Ripper" who wrote me, or was the writer a poor, deluded friend of mine?

And I wonder, too, in passing, whether the little boy, the son of a murderer you all heard of, who, while unconcernedly playing with his toys, one afternoon, told the full story of his father's crime.

The scene—the lad with tiny hobblehoose and picture books—was a touching one; one of those scenes that will live with me forever. But the newspapers never heard of it, and now the boy, the boy whose story was that he had helped his parent to complete a heinous crime, well, he plays on, as boys will.

One night a few years ago, when legal London was racking its brains to discover the murderer of a young woman who had been found in an outlying suburb with her throat cut, a letter was handed to me informing me that if, when the murderer was arrested, I took any professional interest in the case, I should be treated as the victim had been. A few days afterward the arrest was made, the criminal being a youth, insane.

I went for a stroll that evening, and had not proceeded far when a middle-aged man accosted me, and inquired whether I was Forbes Winslow. I told him. He thereupon launched into a discussion of the much-talked-of crime, and incidentally asked my opinion as to the state of the prisoner's mind. At that moment I noticed a peculiar gleam in the man's eye, and—the spot where we stood was lonely—in a second I was inviting him to my house, and we walked home together.

"You must forgive me for saying it," he remarked, puffing at a choice cigar of mine, "but, really, if I thought you believed the murderer insane I should have no hesitation in killing you."

"Quite right to," I jerked. "Quite right. Help yourself to the soda. But, my dear fellow, I am of the same opinion

as you are yourself. The murderer is perfectly sane."

We chatted for a few minutes. Suddenly my companion's sanity returned. He stared strangely around the room for a moment, then picked up his hat and walked out without speaking another word. Whether it was he who sent the warning letters I do not know. Nor do I care. I look for them.

They help to make the spice of my profession, like the cell, and the murderers' homes, and the requests I receive from persons who believe I can arrange for free seats at executions.

And such cases, too, as that of Taylor, who shot his infant child dead in his wife's arms at Otley in 1888, and afterward shot the detective who came to arrest him. Acting on my testimony, the jury found Taylor insane, and he was sent to Broadmoor. Hardly was the case over when a stream of anonymous letters began to pour into my house, threatening me with death if I ventured into the open. But I took no notice, and when, a few months afterward, Taylor plucked both his eyes out while under the same delusion which had induced him to commit the crime, several of the writers sent me their profound apologies.

King, who killed his wife in the Old Kent Road, was not so fortunate. He was a lunatic. Still, they hanged him. He was being "fed up" for the gallows when I examined him in a cell at the Old Bailey. Poor idiot! In a flash of sanity he apologized with a look for lying down to eat. It was the wound in his throat. He had attempted suicide, and could only take food in a recumbent position.

Relatives of murderers always betray a keen anxiety to prove that the accused ones are insane. One young woman—she is alive now, and it is obviously impossible to give her name—invented a wonderful string of incidents with a view to prove the lunacy of her husband. Another woman, a mother of the murderer on trial, would apologize profusely when I called because she did not happen to have any stimulants to offer me, while a third, I recall, gave me a Bible to hold the while I was making my inquiries. Why I did not discover for a time. Then she called upon me and begged me to mention the incident to press interviewers. "And say," she sobbed, "that the Bible was his—the murderer's—and that he knows it from beginning to end."

And I am convinced, as again and again I review this ghastly array of forgotten murderers, that despite every assertion to the contrary, this dear old world of ours loses none of its sentiment. Murders prove it. Never a murder is committed, a crime, of course, in which I interest myself, but brings to my door some man or woman who knew the accused person when he or she was a paragon of perfection, who taught the prisoner Scripture in a Sunday school.

Listen to the descriptions given me: Mrs. Dyer, the Reading baby farmer—a former church choir leader.

Fowler and Millsom, the Muswell Hill murderers—Fowler prayed his well. Millsom was "the best boy his mother had."

The brothers Davis, who killed their father in Leeds—two model sons.

The brothers Stratton, who slew the oilman and his wife at Deptford—got more "stars" for Biblical knowledge than any other scholars in their Sunday school.

Devereux, the trunk murderer, loved his wife—one of the victims—to distraction, and killed her to save her from want.

Stark, starting mad; my callers would cry: "Look at the records! Murderers! Impossible! Save him, and cover yourself with glory, if not here, in the hereafter!"

Also I am mistaken for a rich philanthropist. Invited to educate—and sometimes adopt—a murderer's offspring, and that kind of thing. When the notorious prisoner, Nell Cream, was awaiting his trial, a chemical crank pestered me for an opinion as to what he called his remarkable constitution. He said it was impervious to all kinds of poisons, and he wanted to give a practical demonstration in my sitting room. The part I was playing in the murder trial, he explained, would render any testimonial I cared to give him very valuable. In view of his intention to go on the stage as a freak.

"Maybe," he argued, "Nell Cream possesses similar powers, and has been trying to discover whether the power is general. Who knows?"

I wonder what happened to him, also whether any one can tell me how many Mrs. Maybricks there have been. Several called to see me at the time of her trial. The effect of the case upon the minds of some women was extraordinary. One lady asked me to place her somewhere in hiding. She had slipped her captors, she said, and if only I would keep quiet and lend her money to enable her to reach her friends in America, she would repay me a thousandfold.

The case of Mrs. Dyer, the baby farmer, too, had a remarkable effect on many otherwise quite sane women. Women wrote to me from all over the country stating that they had lost their children and would I be so good as to inform them whether the murderer had ever had in her charge a child like this. Then followed a description—a lengthy description. Purely out of curiosity I made inquiries in several cases, and discovered that the loss of a child was simply a delusion brought on by reading the accounts in the papers.

Quite as remarkable are those reminiscences which show me to what extent some persons will go in order to gain notoriety. I remember particularly when the murder of Mr. Davies by his sons, a man calling upon me one afternoon and making a dramatic confession of the crime. I thought, of course, that he was insane, but I have since come to the conclusion that his sanity was not impaired at all, but that he simply wished to become famous or notorious, whichever you like.

The case of Crossman, the trunk fiend, who committed suicide, also supplies several instances of this nature. Other men, out-and-out lunatics for the time, called on me and begged that I would send for them; but, of course, I took no notice, simply numored them, and asked them to call again.

And so as I sit and smoke they come, and they go, like the memories. I can see Mary Ansell, smiling like Summer, as she awaits execution for a murder she did not remember. I can see Richardson, the murderer of Ramsgate, performing funny antics on the floor of his cell, and hear him telling me that he is about to take a lengthy holiday in the Canary Islands.

There, in the smoke, too, the smoke that curls about my murderer's relics in this little chamber of horrors, are dozens more.

All gone!

As I said of their sanity.