

## HARP OF IRELAND.

BY KIL COURTLAND.

Oh! could we hear those tones again  
Over Erin's gleaming meadows?  
Methinks 'twould clear the mists from stains  
And lift the gloom from shadows.  
Hark! 'tis not now that ringing swell  
From castle, rock and river;  
'Tis echoed back from fuchsia-bell—  
Our Ireland's harp a-quiver!

It floats down the mountain pass,  
That music of the ages;  
The shamrock sleeps amid the grass,  
All closed the day-book's page.  
Soft roses hide the garden slips,  
The birds have ceased their singing,  
And near the land sail silent ships,  
For the harp of Ireland's ringing.

It comes again, and yet once more,  
The golden beams fan the dim light;  
14 fingers on the wave-washed shore,  
Then wanders up the starlight.  
And bells in tune for vesper chime  
Have caught that music only.  
For it died away like an old rhyme  
And left the midnight lonely.

ANDERSON, S. C.

## A WEIRD MYSTERY

—OR—

### Tracing a Dark Crime.

BY ALEXANDER ROBINSON, M. D.

#### CHAPTER I.

Rat-Tat-Tat.  
I am a doctor, and usually a light sleeper, but on this night I must have overdone myself, for, having failed to arouse me by jerking the office bell, the party outside had resorted to this violent means of pounding upon the door.

Springing up, and now fully awake, I hurriedly slipped on my clothes.

In the meantime, the party outside had given another series of scientific raps on the inoffensive panels of my door.

"Be easy, there; I am coming," I called, tugging at a refractory boot.

Finally equipped, I struck for the door and opened it, having first turned up the flame of the night lamp, which had been left burning behind a screen.

A man stood on the steps.

He was muffled up from the chill night air so that his face was hardly visible.

"Doctor, I want you."

I bent forward to gain a better view of his countenance.

"What you, Mr. Ketcham?"

"He nodded his head.

This man, Abner Ketcham, was one of the shrewdest detectives in the whole city of New York.

His name was a household word.

Under many an alias the detective had figured in the most important cases of the times.

I knew him because we had had some little business a month before, when I was fresh from my foreign travel and researches into the mysteries of the materia medica of the ancient Egyptians.

At that time I had been enabled to do Mr. Ketcham a great favor, and he had taken a fancy to me.

Possibly this might account for his calling me up at 3 o'clock in the morning, as I had learned it was.

"Allow me one minute to put on my hat and coat, sir, and I am with you."

"Bring your case along, also every known antidote for poison," he said.

I did as he requested.

We were soon outside, and for the first time I noticed that a carriage stood near the curb.

"And with you, Doctor. Back again, driver, and don't care horse-flesh."

I began to be interested.

The words of the detective together with certain other things that could be taken into consideration, seemed to foreshadow some event beyond the ordinary.

We started off at a round pace.

Though bursting with curiosity, I would not say a word, knowing Mr. Ketcham too well for that.

At last he spoke.

"I have a case for you, Doctor, that will try your skill."

"You're welcome to it, sir."

"Have you ever met Dr. Seabury?"

"I have seen him, but have no personal acquaintance with him, but have no personal acquaintance."

He had mentioned the name of a physician noted for his knowledge in the line of toxicology.

There never yet had been any case in the line of poisons, present or ancient, which solved.

Mr. Ketcham said no more.

I was left to take it for granted that I was to be a co-laborer with the great Doctor Seabury upon some intricate case.

The thought flattered me.

Though I had never had any personal acquaintance with the old gentleman, I was following in his footsteps, having made toxicology or the science of poisons in their relation to the human body my life study.

He must have heard of me, then, and needing assistance on some point of which he was not positive, had sent for me.

I could see Mr. Ketcham's eyes upon me, as every little while.

No doubt he wondered why I refrained from asking questions; but I had read my man before, and knew that the easiest way to his regard was silence and self-possession at all times.

Hence, I determined to be surprised at nothing, no matter what might happen.

The rattle and bang caused by such rapid progress over the stony streets was far from being conducive to comfort, even if one were inclined to talk.

At length the vehicle drew up close to the curb.

"Here we are, Doctor," said the detective, as he opened the door he was having nervously fingered and leaped out.

I followed more sedately, as I had a couple of small cases to look after.

Glancing up, I discovered that we were before a house that was peculiar, not only in itself, but because its class is almost cossolate in New York, where every foot of ground is worth a great deal of money.

The house fronted on the street, but it had a side yard, which was, I had no doubt, a garden, although a high wall prevented me from making sure of this.

I could just catch a glimpse of a stable in the rear.

We walked up the steps.

Mr. Ketcham opened the front door in a free and easy manner that told he was perfectly familiar with its working.

There was not a soul in the hall.

The gas burned dimly.

A glance around showed me that it was the abode of one who certainly possessed wealth, and who had traveled a great deal, for there was not a spot of space seemed to have some valuable ornament, painting or bit of bric-a-brac, such as a man of taste and unlimited means would pick up during years spent abroad.

"Up-stairs, Doctor," said the detective.

The feet sank into the softest of Persian carpets upon the stairs. I was puzzling my brain to determine the nature of the peculiar Eastern odor that

seemed to steal so softly upon one's senses, and could imagine myself once more in an Oriental house with a Turkish host.

Mr. Ketcham opened a door and stood there to allow me to enter first.

The chamber was apparently a bedroom, though the curtains and draperies hung around hid the bed and bewildered me at first.

A soft light was diffused through the apartment by a lamp of strange construction, that stood upon a table, the legs of which were made of long elephants' tusks.

Around me were a thousand things reciting the tastes of the man who had fitted the room up.

These did not draw my attention now beyond a sweeping glance.

I turned to Mr. Ketcham, who had silently entered the room, closing the door, and stood beside me.

"You are wondering why I brought you here, Doctor?"

"I admit it, sir."

"Before we go any further I wish to say a few words. In my experience you can well understand I have seen some strange things, many of which bordered on the impossible, and yet, Doctor, I can solemnly assure you, that in this room I have come across one, which all things considered, promises to be the most profound mystery that has ever crossed my path."

I started at his words.

Their impressiveness lent a new interest to the affair.

The lamp flickered, as a light draught from an open window struck it.

I took a step in that direction, with the intention of closing the window, but, comprehending my intention, the detective laid a hand on my arm.

"Leave it open, Doctor. I have a reason for such a thing. It affords me a clue to the crime."

Then some evil deed had been done—murder perhaps?

I set my satchels down, ready for business when the detective close to act.

He dropped into a chair.

"Turn the lamp up, Doctor."

I examined the remarkable lamp, that certainly had been imported, for it had never been seen in this country before, and finding out that a touch on a little silver ball was all that was necessary, I soon accomplished his desire.

"Leave it open, Doctor. I have a reason for such a thing. It affords me a clue to the crime."

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"Before I do so, you must tell me what you know of this strange thing, for I cannot work in the dark."

"I do not mean you shall, Doctor. There are a few little things which you may not care to hear, but the main part of the story shall be yours. Sit down again. There is time enough for work."

I settled myself in the easy chair, and prepared to listen.

The old detective was a good storyteller. His voice was low and impressive, and he brought out the strong points in his line with an emphasis that forced them upon my consideration.

"I have known Dr. Seabury for some months. He came to my office one day, and made my personal acquaintance. Before that time I had made use of him in his professional capacity on several occasions, and had come to respect him highly."

"On the occasion of his visit to me, he told me to understand that he had an enemy of whom he was in mortal fear, a party who had once followed him from India to England, seeking his life, and lost track of him there."

"Of late the old Doctor had been time to whether the poison had time to kill him. Please be so kind as to look for the dark traces above his heart, of which I spoke."

"I jumped to my feet, feeling that there was a hidden meaning in his words. A minute later I gave vent to a low cry that told of amazement. I had made a discovery."

"Mr. Ketcham did not leave his chair. His positive gaze was fastened upon the ceiling, as though the mystic lines and writhing serpents held him enthralled."