Blackmask Online −− The Case of Euphemia Raphash

Table of Contents

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The Case of Euphemia Raphash

M. P. SHIEL

Man's goings are of God: how can a man then understand his own way? Proverbs

"Oh, Mr. Parker, he is coming at last, sir!"

"Good heavens! you mean the Doctor?"

"The Doctor, sir−−saw him with my own eyes−−he is on foot−− must have passed through the north park gates, and is at this moment coming up the drive!"

I ran to the lawn; saw him slowly coming in the old frock−coat of thin stuff, his eyes studying the ground.

"Ah, Parker"−−he glanced up and held out a limp hand−−"that you? Well, I hope?"

"I am well enough, thank you, Doctor."

"And why the accented I? My sister, Parker?"

I was simply astounded.

"You have not then heard?"

"Heard? I have heard nothing."

"Merciful heavens! in what land have you then wandered?"

"Parker, in a land far away."

I said nothing more, nor he. For the first time in his life he felt fear−−fear to ask the question which I felt fear to answer.

We passed into the gloomy half−ruined pile, an ancient place, the home of a race most ancient. In the little room we called "study", he seated himself on the divan, and with perfect composure said:

"Now, Parker−−my sister."

"Miss Euphemia, Doctor, is no more."

His face was stone; but he sallowed. After a time I distinctly heard him mutter:

"I thought as much−−so it happened once before."

What? I was all wonder; but only added:

"Three weeks ago, Doctor."

"Of what?"

"She was −−−−"

"Go on."

"Doctor, she was −−−−"

"Say it, man−−she was murdered."

"She was murdered, Doctor."

I see him now; spare and small, mighty in forehead, which at the top was thinly covered with a cropped iron−grey scrub: thick, tight lips; sallow, shaven face; and those eyes, grey, so unquiet, never for an instant of life ceasing the internal inquisition in which they wandered fro and to, down, and up, and round.

A name high in the view of the world was his−−as an apostle of science, as hierophant among the arch−priests of learning. During the fifteen years I had acted as his secretary, we had produced nine books, each monumental in its way. His activities in the domain of thought were, in fact, immeasurable−−though I will not say that they were continuous; or, at least, not continuous so far as I was concerned; for the doctor would ever and anon leave me, perhaps in the midst of some work, and without warning snatch himself wholly for long weeks from Raphash Towers; nor could I then determine whether sarcophagi of old Egyptian dynasties had lured him overseas, or excavations at Mycenae, or the enticements of Khorsabad and Balbec. I knew only that he had quietly and mysteriously disappeared; that he as quietly returned in due course to his labours; and that his taciturnity was so inveterate as to seem brutish.

An old housekeeper and myself, beside the Doctor and Miss Euphemia, were the only inmates of the old mansion. We occupied an insignificant portion of the ground floor of one of the immense wings. Never visitor broke our solitude, except a gentleman whose calls always corresponded with the Doctor's absences. The lengthy tete−a−tetes of this personage with Miss Euphemia led me to suspect an old flame, to which the Doctor had had known objections.

Miss Euphemia was a lady of forty−five years, taller than her brother, but remarkably like him. She, too, had become learned by dint of reading the Doctor's books. For the life of me I cannot now say how it was, for they hardly ever exchanged a word, but I had gradually arrived at the conviction that each of these two lives was as necessary to the other as the air it breathed.

Yet for three weeks the newspapers had been discussing her singular disappearance, and he, of all others, knew not one word of the matter! He looked at me through half−closed lids, and said, with that utter dryness of tone which was his:

"Tell me the circumstances."

I answered: "I was away in London on business connected with your Shropshire seat, and can only repeat the depositions of old Mrs. Grant. Miss Raphash had, strange to say, been persuaded to attend the funeral of a lady, known to her in youth, at Ringlethorpe; and, staying afterwards with the mourning friends, did not return till midnight. She wore, it seems, some old family jewels. By one, however, the house was in darkness; and it was an hour later that a scream shrilled through the night. Mrs. Grant was able to light a candle, and had opened her door, when she dimly saw a man rushing towards her with some singular weapon in his hand

which flashed vividly in the half−dark−−a small, wiry man, she thinks. She had but time to slam her door, when he dashed himself frantically against it, where−upon she fancies she heard the angry remonstrance of another voice. Here, however, her evidence is vague; hours later when she woke to consciousness, she rushed to her mistress' room, and found it empty."

"Of the jewels?"

"Of Miss Raphash herself."

"And the jewels?"

"They lay on the dressing−table where they had been placed, untouched."

"Clearly the murderer was not a burglar."

"Clearly he was. He, or they, took other things, valuables from your room and mine to the amount of four hundred pounds."

"But some of these have been traced?"

"Not one. Some have been found−−none 'traced'."

"Where found?"

"In a clump of bushes immediately beneath the balcony of the south wing."

"They were singular burglars. And my sister's body was found −−−−"

"Nowhere."

"It was buried in the park."

"Quite certainly not. The park has been subjected to too minute a scrutiny for that."

"It was burned."

"Not in the house, and again not in the grounds. It was for some ghastly reason conveyed away."

"It is not now in the house, for instance?"

"No−−if the most recondite search in the darkest recesses of the mansion are of any value."

"There were blood−stains?"

"A few on the bed."

"No clue?"

"One. It would seem that the assassin, or one of them, before gaining entrance, drew off his boots, and on running away left them, for some undreamable reason, behind him."

"It is very simple. He went in a pair of yours or mine."

"No. Had his foot, as measured by his boot, been one−third as small, it could never have been urged into a boot of yours or mine."

"And yet Mrs. Grant says he was a small man; it is peculiar he should have so immense a foot."

"It is clear then that there were more than one."

"Yet I incline to the one−man theory; for through some failure of courage or memory, one might leave the jewels, but hardly two. Mrs Grant, distracted, may have mistaken his stature; and in the course of my anthropological experience, I have even come across that very discrepancy between man and foot−−an occasional survival of simian traits in human beings."

"There is another point," I said, "the boots were found to be odd."

"But that is a clue!" he said. "I have the man in my grasp. Have you now told me everything?"

"Except that a gentleman had called to see Miss Raphash that afternoon."

"Ah−−what sort of man?"

"Tall, black−dressed, middle−aged, with side−whiskers. I have seem him here when you have been away. Mrs. Grant says that Miss Raphash spoke to him with some show of anger, though no words could be made out."

"Ah!" said the Doctor, and resumed a restless walk.

"It is not impossible," he continued after a while, "that deeps, black to the eye of a policeman, may lighten to the eye of a thinker. Let us go over the house."

Science had taught the Doctor to labour without the stimulus of expectancy. On this hopeless search we spent several hours in the mouldy vastnesses of the house; in the solemn silence of old Tudor wings which perhaps no foot had set a−barking with echoes for centuries; deep down in the nitre−crusted vaults. We came at length to an old room on the second floor of the south wing overlooking a patch of garden, rank now with shrubs. The chamber was very damp and gloomy; its tapestries of Arras had mouldered to grey shreds. The Doctor had partly used it as a depository: here were stacked bones of mammoths, embrya in flasks, fossils, spongiadae, implements of stone, iron, and bronze. Along one side was a vast oaken chest, carved, black with centuries of age. It, as well as a secret recess behind a panel in the wall, contained piles of bones methodically labelled.

The lock of the door was of peculiar construction, and the Doctor had the key always about him. I could not therefore but smile, when on entering, I said to him:

"Here, at least, our search is fantastic."

He glanced at me, and passed in doggedly. Through the grime of the window light hardly entered. Here a piece of old armour, there a cinerary urn of Etruria showed in the gloom its grey freckles of fungus; a dank dust was over all.

"Some one has been here," said the Doctor.

"Doctor! "

"The catch of the window seems awry: notice the dust on the floor; does it not look −−−−"

"But if it is impossible, it is impossible, and there an end," I answered.

He opened the window. Below was the stone balcony of the first floor of the wing; and from it to a point near the window a tin rain− spout ran up. It was among the bushes of the garden beneath the balcony that the stolen valuables had been found.

"He climbed up, you see, by the spout," said the Doctor. "The feat seems superhuman: but there is the spout, and here is the turned window−catch. We must confront phenomena as we find them."

"But at least, Doctor, he did not climb up with a dead body in his arms?"

"No; you are right."

"And he did not enter by the door."

"No."

"Then our search here is absurd."

"Doubtless. You might look behind the panelling."

I looked and saw only the dust−grown bones of old monsters.

"She is not in here, now?" he said, and tapped the oaken chest with his knuckles.

I smiled.

"No, Doctor, she is not in there. The man does not live who could force the century−old secret of that riveted lid."

"Come then, Parker. Come−−we shall find her."

We went out, and he locked the old silences and solitudes within the room once more. Men of great minds undertake tasks which, from their very vastness, seem nothing less than silly to men of smaller gauge. The region of the impossible, indeed, is the true sphere−of−action of genius. But, on the other hand, the crowd may be excused if, observing this, they become sometimes incredulous, resentful, and even cachinatory.

And, I confess, it was not without resentment that I listened to Doctor Raphash as he said to me:

"Let us find him, Parker−−the murderer of my sister−−the secreter of her body. This is a task we must not leave to the crude intellects of the recognized authorities. Let us hunt him down−−and, after that, we shall resume our consideration of the science of Comparative Mythology."

But his method, at least, was singular. To acquire personal intimacy with the whole criminal class of London is an undertaking, if possible, at all events far from light. Yet this was his notion. In a few months we had learned a new language, become acclimatized denizens of a new world−−the language and the world of the East of London. Our dress was the dress of the "navvy"; our habits those of the ne'er−do−well.

And now most wondrously were revealed to me ineffable deeps in Doctor Raphash's character. The intensity of this hatred of an unknown man to me seemed hellish. "Let us hunt him down." His life became the incarnation of that sentence. It was the man of science turned beast of prey, but retaining the perfect scientific calm; an intensity bordering on lunacy shrouding itself behind the serenity of ocean−depths; the avenging angel without the flashing eye and flaming sword.

Days and nights we spent in public houses, gambling−hells, cells of pawnbrokers, with roughs at slum−corners, stormy crowds at music−hall doors. We were boon companions of men who related to one another without secrecy or shame−blush their achievements in every species of crime. In the morning we parted; to compare late at night notes of the day's haps. Then far into the morning hours I would hear the slow soft tread of that divine patience to and fro in his room near mine. This, and a heightened glare in his eyes, were all the indication of the mania fretting at his heart.

One day I heard something.

In a gin−palace two women, dissolute of face, stood at the bar.

"And how about your old man, then?" I heard.

"Oh, he must fish for hisself, he must. I took his boots, the last thing I've got, to the pawn this morning, and they wouldn't take them."

"Ain't they no good, then?"

"They're sound enough, but they're odd."

"Go on!"

"S'help me. I nearly tore his eyes out over them same boots. I buys my lord a seven−and−eleven pair in the summer and sends him hop−picking in them; two months ago he turns up with his own boot on the right foot and somebody else's on the other."

"And what accounts did he give of hisself?"

"There's where the provoking part of it comes in. Every time I asks him about it, it's 'Drop it, mate', and 'Drop it, I tell you, mate.' He was on the job, you may bet, got into some scrape, and now dursn't say nothink about it."

I need not mention the steps by which, in half−an−hour, I had become the bosom friend of these two women. The time, place, and circumstances of the boots profoundly impressed me, and when I parted from them I felt assured that the name and address I had obtained were those of the man we sought. When Doctor Raphash returned, haggard and pallid, to our little garret that night, I pressed his hand.

"You have news for me, Parker."

"I have heard something that may have some bearing on the case." I told him the incident.

"Undoubtedly−−it has some bearing. Let us go."

"You look tired tonight, tomorrow perhaps −−−−"

"Not at all! Tonight, man−−now−−now−−is the time to find what we seek"−−and he stamped on the floor.

I glanced, startled, at him. The action seemed like a sign of the break−up of that supernal serenity which characterized him.

We passed out, I taking the precaution to bring with me a Colt's revolver. When, by the way of endless labyrinths, we reached the address the Doctor at last spoke:

"There is no light, you see; he is, probably, still out. Suppose you wait till he comes; then speak, take him under the lamp there, see the boots, and ask him to drink with you. I, waiting at yonder corner, will then join you."

Flakes of snow drifted downwards. I walked sentinel−wise; the Doctor crouched still at his post. From a Swedish chapel I heard the strokes of twelve, and at the same moment a working−man approached me.

"Cold tonight, mate," I said, carelessly.

"Ah, that it is," he answered.

His teeth chattered−−his face wore a blue hue. Turned−up coat−collar, and buried hands, and forward pose, spoke of his shivering agonies.

"You look frozen. Come and have a drink along with me."

"I could do with one, mate. I haven't tasted grub this day."

"What−−broke?"

"Dead broke!"

"Come along then−−the 'Brown Bear'."

He followed me. Under the lamp I stopped.

"Do you like the 'Brown Bear'? If not −−−−"

The light fell upon him. A sense of contempt and disappointment overcame me at the sight of his weak face, sheepish blue eyes. But there, at any rate, were the counterparts of the odd boots I had handed over to the authorities.

The Doctor had slowly approached us, and was in the middle of the road when Hardy, glancing, saw him.

The change in the man's face was sudden and wonderful.

His eyes glared; he tottered, livid, against a railing; then, suddenly taking to his heels, fled, as for dear life, down a turning.

The Doctor followed, and then I. And now powers of physique, as unexpected as previously depths of soul in my old friend, stood visible to me. He distanced me. His feet grew winged. Hardy, indeed, had an advantage in his knowledge of the intricate grimy courts down which he dodged. Sometimes for a moment he disappeared. But the Doctor slowly gained upon him, "hunting him down'. The streets were all but deserted.

Suddenly Hardy dashed into a cul−de−sac. The house at the end was empty, every window broken. If the fugitive, then, could gain an entrance his escape by the back was safe. I judged that this was the house for which he had all along been making. On reaching it, Hardy dashed down the area steps to a basement below the street−level.

"Shoot!" cried the Doctor, looking back. "Shoot with the revolver−−shoot!"

This I was far from willing to do, but it was already too late; for Hardy had disappeared. A minute afterwards we, too, had rushed down the steps, and through a gate−like door passed into a low, wide, damp cellar of which the ground was a soft, powdery earth covering our ankles. There was no other visible means of egress, and I was looking about for Hardy, when the gate−door banged suddenly behind us, and a bar clanged down into a staple in the outer wall.

So that we were prisoners. That the man had entered the cellar was certain, and also that he had found some means of leaving it other than the door. But here our knowledge ended. The darkness was Erebus itself; whole clouds rose with every step and choked us; and the intensity of damp cold, after our run, hardly made speech possible. I groped round the walls, fired my revolver; but the flash revealed nothing but a portion of unhewn wall and low ceiling; I shouted at the door; but the neighbouring houses were ruins−−an echo answered me.

Towards the early morning I received, I confess, a thrilling shock of horror from Doctor Raphash. That he was not himself, that he suffered far more than I, became apparent. Once or twice only had he spoken through the night, sitting crouched in the dust of a corner, his knees bent up, his head buried in his arms. By palpation I knew him in this position.

Once I said in alarm:

"Doctor, do not sleep! This cold

The doctor laughed aloud.

"No, no," he said bitterly; "I won't sleep; small fear of that−−tonight."

I walked for warmth to and fro, treading warily on the dust. A deep groan drew me to him: my cold fingers touched his forehead with the sensation of contact with a heated plate.

"You are suffering greatly," I said.

"Leave me alone, Parker! Go from me!"

An hour, and I knew that he was stalking swiftly up and down the whole length of the cellar; swiftly! filling it with a continuous convolute reek of the brown incense of the dust. Long I stood, noting his faint sounds as he came near, losing them, following in fancy his cloudy progress, determining that now he was here, now there, now yonder. His disjointed mutterings guided me. He seemed oblivious of my presence.

When the air had finally become unbreatheable, I moved to go to him. My head came into contact with something, which on seizing I found to be a rope pendant from the ceiling. Unable to guess its purpose, I succeeded after many efforts in climbing it. My head struck the ceiling. Groping round with my hand, I encountered what seemed like the inner panels of a trapdoor. The means of Hardy's escape flashed upon me. I pushed with my knuckles, and a thin stream of light entered. In another minute I was free on the other side−−it was already day.

A strange, pallid face looked up at me, rolling wild eyes. I drew him up, and together we passed out to the street.

Here he suddenly seized my hand.

"Parker!"−−his breath came in gasps−−"be a leech in your tenacity−−as you love me, man! Hunt him down! Goodbye.... Madman! do not follow! Good−bye...."

And before I could surge from the depths of maze and stupor into which the hissed words had plunged me, he had rushed furiously down the street, and vanished into a passing cab.

After Dr. Raphash's mysterious desertion of our quest when success seemed near, I simply returned to the Towers, and waited. I now, in fact, considered my duty done when I had described to the police the fellow with the odd boots, who at this time was in hiding.

It was a month later that I observed one evening, as I walked about the grounds, that a man, hearing my approaching footsteps, had ducked his head from my sight in a clump of bushes−−the very bushes, by the way, in which the stolen articles had been discovered.

I was accompanied by a large mastiff. Coming closer to the spot, I said aloud:

"Do not run, simply rise, and hold your hands over your head. I happen to be armed−−and you see the dog."

The crack of a pistol would have much less surprised me than the hang−dog air with which he rose before me. I recognized at once the insipid face of Hardy.

"No offence, master," he said, touching his hat, trembling like an aspen.

"Ah, we have met before, Hardy."

He scrutinized my face, but shook his head.

"You know me better 'n I know you, sir."

"Well, Charles, you must come with me," I said. I led him by the arm into a room of the house, instructing Mrs. Grant at the entrance to send for a couple of the rather distant local police. I then closed the door, and proceeded to examine my prisoner. The creature wept!

"Now, Hardy," I said, "dry your tears, and tell me how came you in those bushes tonight."

"I was looking for the rings and things. It was hunger drove me−−they've been hunting me like an animal for the last month, and I give myself up."

"What rings?"

"The rings I dropped in those bushes. I thought that, anyway, one of them might by chance be left there still."

"You admit the burglary, then?"

"Yes, master, I admit it. It was my first, and it will be my last. I haven't had a moment's peace since. I even put up a rope in an old cellar to hang myself, only I'm a coward

"And you admit the murder?"

"Murder, master?" he cried with scared face−−"murder! Why, it wasn't me who did the murder, it was one of the other two, and didn't I nearly drop dead with fright when I see it done?"

"There were, then, two others?"

"Yes, sir, a working man such as myself, and an old gent."

"Tell me about it."

"I and a mate of mine, sir, came down hop−picking. He was a wild chap, and hops was too slow for him; so he says to me as how some of these country houses was mere child's play, with plenty to be got, and not much danger, besides. He was one of those chaps it's no use saying 'no' to, so one night here we stood behind the old shed on the other side, waiting till the old lady was well asleep, when all of a sudden, as if he'd sprung from the ground, this old gent stood between us. I started running; he looked like a spirit to me; but Jim, who was more bolder like than me, he stands his ground; soon he whistles to me, and when I come up, he ses, "Ere's a lark, Charlie,' ses he, 'the old chap's on the job hisself!' 'Partnership's a leaky ship, Jim,' ses I; but he only ses, 'Oh, bother, live and let live.' Well, pretty soon I and Jim take our boots off, and we all get inside. No sooner inside, than the old man takes the lead, showing the way, telling us what to do, and me and Jim does everything he tells us, quite nat'ral like. He knew every crick of the place; and first he takes us into a room, and ses he, quite wild like, 'Plunder now! raven and harry! to your souls' content!' And then he reaches down a case from a shelf, and takes out a strange, shiny knife, locks the case again−−I believe he had keys to every lock in the place−−and rushes out of the room into the one opposite. 'Queer chap, that,' ses Jim, looking queer hisself, 'makes me feel shivery all over', and before I could tell him I felt sure the man was a devil or a ghost, we hear a struggle in the opposite room−−a gasping for breath−−and then a long shriek which I ain't ever going to forget while I live. Immediately after, out he flies with blazing eyes, and dashes hisself against the other old woman's door yonder. Jim, sweating cold, plucks up courage to reason with him a bit, and at last he runs back to the murdered lady, and dashes out again with her in his arms, light as a feather, a gash showing right across her chest, her grey hair trailing on the ground. And now he comes up to us, and quite lofty like ses he, 'Marshal yourselves before me−−march! march! and I will lead you where trophies and treasures lie thick−heaped for yer 'arvesting!' His words is branded into my brain. And then he makes us walk before him right across the building into the other wing and up two flights of stairs, till we come to a dusty room with a lot of bones of dead people−−and there, oh great God! hide me! there−−there−−there he is! He will kill me, as he killed my mate−−he will kill you, too −−−−"

He started wildly about, rushed behind my chair, and crouched down there. The man's shriek of panic horror thrilled me through, and as the ponderous door swung slowly wide on its hinges, and Dr. Raphash calmly entered the room, I clung paralysed to my seat.

"Well, Parker," he said in the old callous dry voice, "here I am again, you see. But whom have we . . . the murderer caught at last, surely!" and triumph lighted his eyes as they rested on Hardy, who, pale and panting, now leaned against the tapestries.

"Yes, the murderer!" gasped Hardy, "but that's not me! Oh, there's plenty of proofs if it comes to that! That long coat is the very one you wore−−have you washed out the blood−splash on the sleeve yet?"

Dr. Raphash sat, barely smiling, examining the face of Hardy. Presently he looked at his arm.

"It is a remarkable thing," he said, speaking to himself: "I have noticed a stain here on my sleeve; it cannot be blood; Parker, see, it looks not like blood, man−−eh?"

But, as for me, a red mist hung thick before my eyes; I could see nothing.

"It is blood," continued Hardy, gaining courage from the Doctor's calm−−"you know it is, or perhaps you were too mad that night to know anything. Who but a madman would have carried the lady's body all the distance to that old chest; and there, didn't you chase Jim round and round the room and stab him like a dog, because you said one body wasn't enough to fill the chest? And if I hadn't slipped down to the balcony by a spout, wouldn't you have killed me, too; and didn't you look out of the window and tell me to prepare myself because you was coming, and didn't I have to jump from the balcony to the ground, rolling over, and dropping all the things I had; and didn't I just have time to draw on two of the boots when you came down and started after me?"

I was looking at Dr. Raphash; during this categorical charge, no sound had issued from his lips; gradually a yellow pallor as of death had overspread his features, and the muscles of his face became tense and fixed; his head drooped forward, and his arms and legs stretched stiffly from his body; the cold stony glare in his eyes lent to his face a look of rhadamanthine sternness awful to see.

I ran and seized the clammy fingers in mine; but he did not recognize me. So he remained for several minutes, no sound breaking the silence of the room.

Then, still rigid in all his limbs, he raised his head, and let it drop heavily over the back of the chair; and, with the action, there burst from his blanched lips−−higher and higher, peal on peal, in horrid articulation, in shrillest staccato−−a carillon of maniac laughter. When this had passed, his whole face slowly settled into the vacant smile of idiocy.

With creeping flesh, I seized Hardy by the arm, rushed−−faint−−from the room, and locked the door upon the ruin within.

In this way Dr. Arnot Raphash hunted down the murderer of his sister; and so, with him, fell the Jewish House of Raphash in the county of Kent.

Some days later I received a letter, of which the following are a few extracts:

> When I tell you that I am the proprietor of the private asylum from which this letter is dated, and a cousin of Dr. Raphash, you will at once conjecture that his (to you) unaccountable absences from home always corresponded with his voluntary sojourns in my establishment. He well knew the warning symptoms−−head pains, a high temperature, etc.−−and he usually had two or three days grace before the definite onset of the malady. Sometimes, again, the attack was more sudden, especially when preceded by any excitement; thus, when he reached my establishment a month ago he was already mad, and I at once guessed some previous violent agitation.... His first paroxysm occurred at the age of thirty, when he destroyed a just−married wife by locking her in a room filled by him with a poisonous gas. In the sane state he had no recollection of his insane acts, which were distinguished by their cunning and a strongly marked homicidal mania, directed chiefly against those for whom he most cared. He never knew of his wife's fate, for he was at once placed under my care, and on returning home found her buried.... When he was leaving me, "cured", after the death of his sister, I deemed it prudent to say nothing to him of the tragedy, preferring that the journey to the Towers should intervene before the shock of the news fell on his newly restored powers; hence his ignorance of the matter.... You have probably seen me on my visits to Miss Raphash when the Doctor was away from home; their object was to give that minute report of her brother which alone could satisfy her. On the very day of the tragedy I had a somewhat

angry dispute with her respecting the expediency of putting her brother into irons, she deprecating, I insisting. Unfortunately, I allowed her to influence me, and her death was the result.... It is now beyond all doubt that the Doctor escaped from my establishment on that night, though how he contrived to pass out of the house and grounds and into them again without detection is yet unexplained; but to his cunning, as I have hinted, there were positively no bounds.... I need only add that I shall soon have−−I may almost say the pleasure−−of announcing to you the death of Dr. Raphash. He may still, indeed, linger for a few weeks; but the end, in any case, cannot be distant.

Main Page.