

MONSTER OF ISSOIR.

MYSTERY OF THE FOURTEENTH ARRondissement OF PARIS.

Singular Disappearance of Many Inhabitants of the Quarter, Ending in Victim With Music—Death of the gigantic spider.

For many years it is undeniably stated that in the fourteenth arrondissement of Paris—called the tomb of Issoir—a number of persons living in that quarter had mysteriously and periodically disappeared. The most careful researches, the most minute inquiries, the most skillful agents of the police had failed to discover the least trace of them.

Every year successively some inhabitants of this quarter would suddenly disappear, leaving their friends overwhelmed with grief and anxiety. It is also stated that these strange, inexplicable facts always occurred in the early spring—from the 20th to the last of March—and without regard to age or sex.

First a notary disappeared. It was thought he had used his client's funds and fled to parts unknown. Then an old woman, returning late one night from market, was the next victim, then a laborer going home from work. The last victim had been a young girl—a flower maker on late delivering her goods.

This peculiar fact was accounted for in this way. These mysterious disappearances always occurred late at night, when the children were at home asleep. As the time was drawing near for one of these periodical mysteries the chief of police became very anxious and instituted a strict surveillance, confiding the matter to a number of the most skillful of his assistants, hoping the combined efforts of so many zealous agents would surely be crowned with success.

One night—the fact can be verified by applying to the office of the prefect—a policeman about 3 o'clock in the morning heard a distant musical song, which seemed to come from the bowels of the earth. He listened and fancied the sounds came from an opening in the center of the street, at the foot of an enormous rock called the tomb of Issoir, or the Giant's cave.

It may be interesting to state that this rock derived its name from a legend, that a great giant had been buried here many years before the Christian era, and this rock had been placed there to mark the tomb.

Surprised at this strange discovery—for the opening had never been noticed before—the policeman waited, listening to this peculiar song, when he suddenly saw a young man approaching. He knew from his costume that he was a countryman lately arrived in the city.

This young man also seemed to hear the subterranean sounds, first walking slowly with a peculiar wavering step, then faster and faster as he drew near the fatal rock, until he ran with such velocity that in spite of the warning cries of the policeman he was swallowed up in this mysterious opening. Without taking a moment to consider the policeman recklessly followed, first firing his revolver and giving one or two vigorous blasts on his whistle.

At this signal several of his comrades quickly arrived. The musical chanting had ceased, but they could hear in the dark cavernous depths the muffled sounds of a desperate struggle.

By the aid of ropes and ladders they succeeded in entering this mysterious chasm. The light of their lamps revealed a sickening sight.

The countryman was lying on his back writing in the grasp of an unknown monster, whose horrible aspect froze the agents of police with terror.

It was with great difficulty they succeeded in removing the two bodies and the unknown monster from the cavern. The poor countryman was dead, but the policeman was soon restored to life.

The agents immediately sent for the commissioner of police, who summoned a naturalist in great haste.

The first established the identity of the victim; the second declared the creature lying before him was a gigantic spider. The species had been considered extinct for centuries—ever since the days before the deluge. It was called "Arachne gigans" and was said to have the power of enticement by a peculiar musical song. None had been seen or heard of for ages, but it is now believed some of these sanguinary beasts still exist in the deepest galleries of the catacombs.

The dead body of the spider was conveyed to the Museum of Natural History, where it was carefully prepared and stuffed and is now on exhibition.—Once a Week.

DETECTIVE AND TRAMP.

The Other Feeds a Famine-Stricken and Gets No Thanks.

There was in the tramp's appearance a suggestion of the lethargy that follows a going with free lunch and copious libations of beer that belied his pitiable story of not having had anything to eat "since yesterday morning." The shades of night were falling fast, and that may have to some extent accounted for the mistake of the man in selecting, as the object of his whining appeal, McClusky, one of the best known of the Central office detectives, who was "slouching it" along the Bowery.

"You are shy dinner and supper for yesterday and breakfast, dinner and supper today. Come with me," said McClusky, and he led the way into a greasy little beanery from the door of which hung a dingy sign announcing "regular meals, 8 cents." Had the tramp would have never crossed the threshold except under forcible persuasion.

"Give this man his yesterday's dinner," said McClusky. A slice of boiled beef, a boiled potato, two slices of bread and a cup of muddy coffee were soon set up. Slowly the tramp attacked the meal, and McClusky waited. When the fishes were clean, the detective beckoned to the waiter and said: "Bring the gentleman last night's supper."

The order was repeated. The tramp began to suspect something, but he thought it better to act his part. Perhaps his eccentric benefactor would give him the price of a bed. Vainglorious, the gentleman's breakfast.

"See here, pardy, I never eat but one meal a day," the latter demurred. "It is not enough. You told me you were starving, and of an officer."

"See here, pardy, I couldn't eat any more, not if I got two years for it," he pleaded in genuine distress.

McClusky had had his fun, and he crossed the street, at the foot of an enormous rock called the tomb of Issoir, or the Giant's cave.

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Table with columns: Station, Time, and Direction. Includes stations like Patton, Clearfield, and various times for different routes.

P. R. R. Time Tables, In effect May 27th, 1894. Main Line, Leave Clearfield—Eastward.

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