

(dubbed “our Vidocq”) that the first three detectives were added to the public payroll. Lane assesses the influence of the memoirs of French detective and Sûreté chief Eugène-François Vidocq on American crime journalism and detective memoirs. According to Lane, American detective memoirs, like Vidocq’s, were “heavily inclined to romance, to disguises, deduction, lost heiresses, and missing jewels” (153).

Lane sees the “creation of a professional, preventive police” as “both a result and a cause of the inability of citizens to deal with [the business of maintaining order] on their own.” Among problems dramatizing the need for a strong police function were riots, felonious crimes (including sophisticated crimes for profit), and drunkenness.

L.8 Lang, Andrew *Historical Mysteries*. London: Smith Elder, 1904.

■ This is a superb collection of essays on historical mysteries, a genre of which Andrew Lang was a master. The titles and subjects of the chapters dealing with crime or fraud are as follows:

- “The Case of Elizabeth Canning”: Lang agrees with Henry Fielding (see F.8) that Canning told the truth when she explained her mysterious disappearance on New Year’s Day 1753 by a story of imprisonment by a gang attempting to force her into prostitution. He explains the rejection of her account: “In my opinion Elizabeth Canning was a victim of the common sense of the eighteenth century. She told a very strange tale, and common-sense holds that what is strange cannot be true.”
- “The Murder of Escovedo”: Lang is unable to propose a motive for Philip II’s order to assassinate Juan de Escovedo, the secretary of the king’s illegitimate brother, the famous Don John of Austria.
- “The Campden Mystery”: Lang suggests that there is only one rational explanation for the “Campden wonder,” the execution of Joan Perry and her two sons for the murder of Will Harrison, who had disappeared from Chipping Campden in 1660. After the Perrys’ hangings, Harrison returned home, very much alive, with an exotic tale of being attacked and kidnapped (see M.13). It is Lang’s thesis that Harrison’s two-year absence was due to his knowledge of “some secret of the troubled times: he was a witness better out of the way.” He “may conceivably have held a secret that bore on the case of one of the Regicides.” See also *The Campden Wonder*, ed. Sir George Clark (London: Oxford Univ. Press, 1959).
- “The Case of Allan Breck”: Lang returns to the so-called Appin Murder, which Robert Louis Stevenson wove into the narrative of *Kidnapped* (see S.52). At the beginning of his article, he refers to reports from two descendants of the Stewart faction that the hated victim nicknamed the “Red Fox,” a pro-English factor seeking to evict loyal Scots tenants of forfeited estates, was shot with the participation of Allan Breck and an accomplice whose name Lang declines to repeat. His reticence was dictated by loyalty to his sources and by doubt as to whether Allan in fact had an accessory.
- “The Cardinal’s Necklace”: This article recounts briefly the theft of the diamond necklace that Cardinal Louis de Rohan intended to present to Marie Antoinette (C.12). Lang

rejects the line of speculation that Rohan was in love with the queen, believing instead that his gift was proposed “in obedience to his dominating idea—the recovery of the Queen’s good graces.”

- “The Mystery of Kaspar Hauser: The Child of Europe”: The saga of Kaspar Hauser, the “Child of Europe,” arose when “a boy, apparently idiotic, . . . appeared, as if from the clouds, in Nuremberg (1828), divided Germany into hostile parties, and caused legal proceedings as late as 1883.” According to the romantic theory of the case, the mysterious youth “was the Crown Prince of Baden, stolen as an infant in the interests of a junior branch of the House, reduced to imbecility by systematic ill-treatment, turned loose on the world at the age of sixteen, and finally murdered, lest his secret origin might be discovered.”

Lang regards Kaspar as a humbug and believes it likely that the young man inflicted the fatal knife wound to ensure continued attention, but that the weapon pierced more deeply than he had intended. See also M.14.

- “The Gowrie Conspiracy”: It is Lang’s conclusion that the slaughter of the Earl of Gowrie and his brother at Perth, Scotland, by the forces of their guest, King James VI, arose from the victims’ plot against the throne, “as the King could not possibly invented and carried out the affair.” Lang had earlier discussed the matter at full length in his *King James and the Gowrie Mystery* (London: Longmans, 1902).
- “The Strange Case of Daniel Dunglas Home”: Lang describes the great lengths to which Victorian scientists went in unsuccessful efforts to prove that Scottish spiritualist Home was a fraud. Robert Browning, who, with his wife, had attended a séance with Home, presented him as an American impostor in his narrative poem *Mr. Sludge, the Medium*. For full-length studies of Home, see Elizabeth Jenkins, *The Shadow and the Light: A Defence of Daniel Dunglas Home the Medium* (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1982); and Horace Wyndham, *Mr. Sludge, the Medium: Being the Life and Adventures of Daniel Dunglas Home* (London: Geoffrey Bles, 1937), of which the Borowitz True Crime Collection owns the author’s corrected page proof.
- “The Chevalier d’Éon”: Lang states that the mystery of this transvestite secret agent was not his sex (he was clearly a man) but why he assumed feminine attire at age forty-two and continued to wear it for forty years. Lang’s answer: “he was obliged to clutch at some mode of keeping himself in the public eye.”
- “Saint-Germain the Deathless”: A remarkable charlatan, Comte de Saint Germain, sometimes claimed to have lived many centuries before he became the intimate and secret emissary of Louis XV. He peddled an elixir that restored youth and purported to remove the flaw from a diamond. Nobody knows when he died, and, if we are to credit his wildest assertions of longevity, he never did! Lang states, perhaps figuratively, that Saint-Germain may be the historic original of the romantic characters who pass through the ages in Bulwer Lytton’s *The Haunters and the Haunted* and Thackeray’s “The Notch on the Axe” in *Roundabout Papers*.
- “The End of Jeanne de la Motte”: This brief concluding piece compares conflicting accounts of the escape from the Salpêtrière prison by Jeanne de la Motte, the central

figure in the theft of a diamond necklace intended for Marie Antoinette. The mode of Jeanne's death seems less open to dispute: in 1791 she succumbed to serious injuries suffered when she jumped out of a window to escape from creditors.

The literary career of Andrew Lang (1844–1912) is astounding both for accomplishment and versatility. He studied folklore and produced a dozen fairy-tale books; translated Homer; composed a four-volume history of his native Scotland; and wrote books on subjects as diverse as the identity of Pickle the Spy (who kept the English informed on the activities of the defeated Bonnie Prince Charlie), Joan of Arc, Mary Stuart, Dickens's *The Mystery of Edwin Drood*, the history of the St. Andrews golf course, and the eighteenth-century London furor over the Cock Lane Ghost. He devoted other volumes to historical mysteries of Britain and continental Europe that influenced the writings of William Roughead. Unlike Roughead, who savored domestic murders, Lang preferred to study crime and intrigue that were intertwined with political events or circumstances.

L.9 ——— *The Valet's Tragedy, and Other Studies*. London: Longmans Green, 1903.

■ In the title essay and its companion piece, "The Valet's Master," Lang argues persuasively that the Man in the Iron Mask was Martin (who became known in his prisons as Eustache Dauger), the valet of Roux de Marsilly. Dauger's master was broken on the wheel by the French after his capture on Swiss soil; his alleged crime of plotting to assassinate Louis XIV was trumped up, but he seems to have attempted to draw England into a Protestant league against France. Lang believes that Dauger may not have known what dark secret he was supposed to harbor and that his jailers over time may well have forgotten, if they ever understood, why he was to be kept masked.

In his scrupulous consideration of the murder of Protestant magistrate Sir Edmund Berry Godfrey in the course of the "Popish Plot" madness, Lang does not "propose to unriddle the mystery," contenting himself with the remarks: "We cannot deny that Godfrey may have been murdered to conceal Catholic secrets, of which, thanks to his inexplicable familiarity with Coleman [secretary of the Duchess of York], he may have had many. But we have tried to prove that we do not *know* him to have had any such Catholic secrets, or much beyond [Titus] Oates's fables; and we have probably succeeded in showing that against the Jesuits, as Sir Edmund's destroyers, there is no evidence at all."

Among the subjects of his other studies are the tennis-playing impostor who successfully impersonated Joan of Arc after her death, apparently persuading St. Joan's own brothers of her asserted survival; and Amy Robsart, whose mysterious death from a fall, according to Lang, was not compassed by either her husband, Lord Robert Dudley, or Queen Elizabeth I: "It might be a mere half-sportive attempt by rustics to enter a house known to be, at the moment, untenanted by the servants, and may have caused to Amy an alarm, so that, rushing downstairs in terror, she fell and broke her neck. . . . Or a partisan of Dudley's, finding poison difficult or impossible, may have, in his zeal, murdered Amy, under the disguise of an accident."