

## MURDER WILL OUT.

### The Ghastly Discovery of a Farm Hand.

### A Girl's Skeleton Found in a Floating Skiff.

### The Strange and Sad Story of a Beautiful Belle.

### A Chapter of Crime that Reads Like Romance.

In the early part of the month of July in 1872, Julie Le Blanc, a young lady eighteen years of age, and the daughter of Francois Le Blanc, a farmer of Jefferson county, Missouri, and the descendant of a noble family of France, mysteriously disappeared from home. She had dressed herself with the intention of attending a party to be given at a neighbor's house, and was last seen by her mother and father in the garden plucking flowers for a bouquet.

The family supposed that a Mr. James Leonard, the most favored of her many admirers, who was her intended escort to the party, had called and she had gone away with him and had not told her parents, either through carelessness or thinking it would be a good joke to play on them. Her parents were not seriously alarmed that night, but on finding that she was still absent next morning they became anxious about her.

The persons who gave the party were visited, and, on being questioned,

IMPARTED THE INTELLIGENCE to Mr. Le Blanc that his daughter had not been at his house, although Leonard had been there the entire evening, having escorted his sister instead of Miss Le Blanc. Other neighbors were visited, but everywhere the same reply was given—they had neither seen nor heard of Julie. Companies of men searched the woods, and there they found traces of the footsteps of a man and a woman. The latter were the imprint made by shoes of the same size as those worn by the missing girl, as was found by comparing the tracks with one of her shoes. These tracks led to a creek where a boat, the property of Mr. Le Blanc, had been moored. This boat was missing.

Search was made for several miles down the bank of the creek and along those of Crystal, or as it was then known, Platin Creek, a large stream of water flowing into the Mississippi River, into which the small creek emptied, but without success. The despairing parents gave up their daughter as one lost forever to them. The mother, like Rachel, "mourned and could not be comforted." All those who knew the dark-eyed, rosy-checked, merry Julie, sympathized with her parents in their hour of bereavement.

A SUSPICION finally entered the father's mind that one of her many admirers might have had something to do with her mysterious disappearance. His suspicions rested on Philip Kenealy, who had been an ardent admirer of Julie's ever since her childhood, and who had been dismissed for the favor of Leonard. But this idea was considered preposterous by his wife, who refused to let him have Kenealy arrested. The suspected man went to Le Blanc a few days after Julie's disappearance, and informing him of his love for her, and how little he cared to remain in the neighborhood since she had been missing, told him of his intention of going to New Orleans, where he had been offered a permanent situation at a good compensation in a large wholesale store. That same evening he quietly departed and has never more been seen nor heard of since. When too late Mr. Le Blanc resolved to have Kenealy arrested on suspicion of knowing something of the whereabouts of his daughter or what had become of her. Two good detectives were put to work on the case; they could neither obtain traces of Kenealy nor of the mystery surrounding the fate of Julie Le Blanc. But

"MURDER WILL OUT," and it appears after all these intervening years the dark mystery has been cleared up at last. Benjamin F. Aiken, a colored hand, who is in the employ of Ferdinand Maher, a farmer of New Madrid county, Missouri, near Point Pleasant, while shooting snipe along the river bank, last Monday morning, saw an object having the appearance of a skiff, slowly floating with the current down the river toward him. His curiosity was aroused, and procuring a long pole he waited for the object's approach. As it was carried down stream it was taken by the current farther in towards the shore, and as it came nearer Aiken's supposition that it was a skiff was proven true. When the skiff was directly opposite him Aiken caught it by means of the pole and drew it to shore. Lying in the bottom of the boat was a horrible ghastly, grinning skeleton. The bones had been bleached by the sun and rain until they were of a pure snowy whiteness, and as the sun shone down on them so polished were they that it was painful to look at them.

The skeleton was that of a woman. Not a particle of flesh was on the bones, but on the right side of the skull was a piece of skin dried and shriveled by the heat of the sun. Three teeth in the upper part of the mouth were filled with gold, and two of

THE LOWER TEETH were missing. By her side, in the bottom of the boat, lay a piece of jewelry having some resemblance to a breastpin, but it was so worn by the action of water that it was hard to tell for what use it had been made. On the wrists of the skeleton were fine golden bracelets. The bracelets were of a very fine quality of gold and had some peculiar marks on them which at that time could not be distinguished, but when more carefully examined subsequently proved to be the figures of animals. In the skiff were portions of a tarpaulin which had decayed before the ravages of rain and heat during a lapse of many years. The boat was about eight feet in length, and three and a half in width in the middle, sloping gradually to a point at each end, and was of the class known as life boats. The outside was covered with copper, closely riveted together; the inside was composed of wood and copper, with iron supports or braces. It was well made and had probably stood the test of many a severe storm. The boat contained water to the depth of ten inches, which had accumulated from many rains, and had two inches more of water been in the boat it would have sunk, and with it the only possible chance of ever bringing to light a dark mystery. As the ropes on the bow and stern of the boat were rotten Aiken was compelled to moor it as best he could, using poles to secure it. He thought it would not be safe

TO LEAVE THE JEWELRY, even if it were on the skeleton of a woman, so he unclasped the bracelets and placing them and the breastpin in his pockets started in haste toward home. Mr. Maher and family were eating dinner when the dining-room door was burst open and the burly form of Aiken appeared. He was perspiring from every pore and almost breathless, but he finally succeeded in imparting the facts already given to Mr. Maher, who immediately sent a servant for the County Coroner, Isaac Tebbets. On the arrival of that official he and Mr. Maher, followed by a crowd of wondering darkies and guided by the negro Aiken, went down to the river. The Coroner simply viewed the skeleton, not thinking it necessary to hold an inquest on the bones of a person who had

apparently been dead for a number of years. The bracelets and breastpin were given to the Coroner by Aiken. The bones were buried on the river bank.

Subsequent developments connected the skeleton with the

DISAPPEARANCE OF JULIE LE BLANC and the father of that lady was informed of the circumstances.

Mr. Le Blanc visited New Madrid county in person. He went down on the train last Thursday to Morley station, on the Iron Mountain Railroad, and from there took a hack to Point Pleasant, through New Madrid. Mr. Maher was found, and conducted him to the Coroner. The bracelets were shown him, and on examining them he at once identified them as the property of his long lost daughter. The figures on the bracelets were those of lions rampant on azure fields, the heraldic arms of his family when in France. It was by this means he recognized them. The skiff was also identified as the one which had been his property. He made immediate preparations for removing the bones of his daughter to his home.

A COFFIN WAS BOUGHT, and men hired to dig them up. The river bank was vainly searched for the place of sepulcher; it could not be found. Imagine Mr. Le Blanc's horror and amazement when he was told how near the river the bones had been buried, and that the bank had either caved in or the river washed them away. He was forced to leave for home without the remains of his daughter, but the mystery with her disappearance was cleared up. Mr. Le Blanc has no doubt but that his daughter was abducted from the garden the night she disappeared by Kenealy, who strangled her to death and placed her body in the boat, covering it with a tarpaulin and intending to make way with it at some other more favorable time. The boat was securely fastened to the creek bank at a place where the undergrowth was so thick it could not be detected without exceedingly close inspection, and as Kenealy could not visit the place alone without exciting suspicion, the boat remained there until the ravages of time made the ropes decay and thus loosened the boat which floated down the creek into the Platin or Crystal creek, and thence to the Mississippi, being found in the manner already stated. "Time makes all things clear."