## No. IX. THE MYSTERY OF THE THREE

STUDENTS

T was in the year '95 that a combina on of events, into which I need not enter, caused Mr. 'Sherlock Holmes and myself to spend some weeks in one of our great university towns, and it was during this time that the small but instructive adventure which I am about to relate befell us. It will be obvious that any details which would help the reader exactly to identify the college or the criminal would be injudicious and offensive. So painful a scandal may well be allowed to die out. With due discretion the incident itself may, however, be described, since it serves to Illustrate some of those qualities for which my friend was remarkable. I will endeavor, in my statement, to avoid such terms as would serve to limit the events to any particular place, or give a clue as to the peo concerned.

We were residing at the time in furnished lodgings close to a library where Sherlock Holmes was pursuing some laborious researches in early English charters-researches which led to results so striking that they may be the subject of one of my future narratives. Here it was that one evening we received a visit from an acquaintance, Mr. Hilton Soames, tutor and lecturer at the College of St. Luke's Mr. Soames was a tall, spare of a nervous and excitable temperament. I had always known him to be restless in his manner, but on this parcasion he was in such a state of uncontrollable agitation that it was clear something very unusual had oc-

I trust, Mr. Holmes, that you can smare me a few hours of your valuable time. We have had a very painful inci-dent at St. Luke's, and really, but for he happy chance of your being in town, I should have been at a loss what to do."
"I am very busy just now, and I desire no distractions," my friend answered." I should much prefer that you called in the aid of the police."

"No, no, my dear sir; such a course is utterly impossible. When once the law is evoked it cannot be stayed again, and this is just one of those cases where, for the credit of the college, it is most es-sential to avoid scandal. Your discretion as well known as your powers, and you are the one man in the world who can help me. I beg you, Mr. Holmes,

to do what you can.

My friend's temper had not improved since he had been deprived of the congenial surroundings of Baker street. Without his scrap-books, his chemicals, and his homely untidiness, he was an afortable man. He shrugged his shoulders in ungracious acquiescence, while our visitor in hurried words and ich excitable gesticulation poured forth his atory.

I must explain to you, Mr. Holmes, that tomorrow is the first day of the exmination for the Fortescue S am one of the examiners. My subject is Greek, and the first of the papers con-sists of a large passage of Greek trans-lation which the candidate has not seen. This passage is printed on the examina-tion paper, and it would naturally be an advantage if the candidate could prepare it in advance. For this reason, great care is taken to keep the

paper secret.
"Today, about 2 o'clack, the proofs of this paper arrived from the printers. The exercise consists of half a chapter of Thucydides. I had to read it over carefully, as the text must be absolutely correct. At 4:30 my task was not yet court of the old college. A Gothic completed. I had, however, promised to arched door led to a worn stone stair-take tea in a friend's rooms, so I left case. On the ground floor was the tuthe proof upon my desk. I was absent tor's room. Above were three sturather more than an hour.
"You are aware, Mr. Holmes, that our ready twilight when we reached the

college doors are double—a green baize one within and a heavy oak one without. As I approached my outer door, I was amaged to see a key in it. For an in-stant I imagined that I had left my own there, but on feeling in my pocket I found that it was all right. The only duplicate which existed, so far as I knew, was that which belonged to my servant, Bannister—a man who has looked after my room for ten years, and honesty is absolutely above sus-I found that the key was indeed his, that he had entered my room t ow if I wanted tea, and that he had very carelessly left the key in the door when he came out. His visit to my room ist have been within a very few minutes of my leaving it. His forgetfulness about the key would have mattered little on any other occasion, but on this one day it has produced the most deploral

"The moment I looked at my table, I "The moment I booked at my table, I was aware that someone had rummaged among my papers. The proof was in three long slips. I had left them all together. Now, I found that one of them was lying on the floor, one was on the side table near the window, and the third was where I had left it."

Holmes stirred for the first time. Holmes stirred for the first time.

"The first page on the floor, the sec-nd in the window, the third where you left it," said he. "Exactly, Mr. Holmes. You amaze me How could you possibly know that?"

"Pray continue your very interesting

"For an instant I imagined that Banmister had taken the unpardonable liberty of examining my papers. He denied it, however, with the utmost earnestness, and I am convinced that he was speaking the truth. The alternative was that some-one passing had observed the key in the coor, had known that I was out, and had entered to look at the papers. A large sum of money is at stake, for the scholarship is a very valuable one, and an un-scrupulous man might very well run a risk in order to gain an advantage over

"Bannister was very much upset by the incident. He had nearly fainted when we found that the papers had undoubtedly been tampered with. I gave him a little brandy and left him collapsed in a chair, while I made a most careful examination of the room. I soon saw that the in-truder had left other traces of his presence besides the rumpled papers. On the table in the window were several shreds from a pencil which had been sharpened. A broken tip of lead was lying there also. Evidently the rascal had copied the paper in a great hurry, had broken his pencil, and had been compelled to put a fresh point to M."

"Excellent!" said Holmes, who was reevering his good-humor as his attention ecame more engrossed by the case. "Fortune has been your friend."

This was not all. I have a new writingwith a fine surface of red and unstained.

you that he had been there. You were not aware of any hurrying feet on the stair as you entered the outer door?"
"No, I can't say I was."

SHERIOCK HOLMES

"Well, he wrote so furiously that he broke his pencil, and had, as you ob-serve, to sharpen it again. This is of interest, Watson. The pencil was not interest, Watson. The pencil was not an ordinary one. It was above the usual size, with a soft lead, the outer color was dark blue, the maker's name was printed in silver lettering, and the piece remaining is only about an inch and a half long. Look for such a pencil, Mr. Soames, and you have got your man. When I add that he possesses a large and very blunt knife, you have

Mr. Soames was somewhat overwh elmed by this flood of information. "I can follow the other points," said he, "but really, in this matter of the

Holmes held out a small chip with the letters NN and a space of clear wood after them.

"You see?"

door lead to?"

came straight round to put the matter into your hands. Do help me, Mr.

Holmes. You see my dilemms. Either I must find the man or else the exam-

ination must be postponed until fresh papers are prepared, and since this cannot be done without explanation,

there will ensue a hideous scandal, which will throw a cloud not only on

the college, but on the university. Above all things, I desire to settle the

"I shall be happy to look into it and give you such advice as I can," said

Hoimes, rising and putting on his overcoat. "The case is not entirely de-

void of interest. Had any one visited

you in your room after the papers came

"Yes, young Daulat Ras, an Indian student, who lives on the same stair,

came in to ask me some particulars about the examination."

"And the papers were on your table?"

"To the best of my belief, they were

"But might be recognized as proofs?

"Did any one know that these proofs

"For which he was entered?"

"No one else in your room?"

one save the printer."

such a hurry to come to you."

"You left your door open?"
"I locked up the papers first."

"Did this man Bannister know

"No, certainly not. No one knew."
"Where is Bannister now?"

"Then it amounts to his, Mr. Soames

hat, unless the Indian students recog-

nised the roll as being proofs, the man

who tampered with them came upon them accidentally without knowing

Holmes gave an enigmatic smile. "Well," said he, "let us go round. Not one of your cases, Watson—mon-

tal, not physical. All right; come if

oponed by a long, low, latticed win-

one pane," said our learned guide

Now, Mr. Soames at

said Holmes, and he

ould be there?"

that they were there."

The sitting-room

looked into the room.

"Dear me!"

door.

you want to.

So it seems to me."

matter quietly and discreetly.

to you?

No, I fear that even now-Watson, I have always done you an injustice. There are others. What could this NN be? It is at the end of word. You are aware that Johann Faber is the most common maker's name. Is it not clear that there is just as much of the pencil left as usu-ally follows the Johann?" He held the small table sideways to the electric "I was hoping that if the paper on which he wrote was thin, some trace of it might come through upon this polished surface. No. I see nothing. I don't think there is anything more to be learned here. Now for the centra table. This small pellet is, I presume the black, doughy mass you spoke of. Roughly pyramidal in shape and hollowed out, I perceive. As you say, there appear to be grains of sawdust in it. Dear me, this is very interesting. And the cut—a positive tear, I see. It be-gan with a thin scratch and ended in a jagged hole. I am much indebted to you for directing my attention to

"To my bedroom "Have you been in it since your ad venture?

case, Mr. Soames. Where does that

"No. I came straight away for you." "I should like to have a glance round. What a charming, old-fashioned room! Perhaps you will kindly wait a minute, until I have examined the floor. No. I see nothing. What about this curtain? You hang your clothes behind it. If any one were forced to conceal himself in this room he must to it there, since the bed is too low and the wardrobe too shallow. No one there, I suppose?"
As Holmes drew the curtain I wa

aware, from some little rigidity and alertness of his attitude, that he was prepared for an emergency. As a matter af fact, the drawn curtain disclosed nothing but three or four suits of clothes hanging from a line of pegs "He was very ill, poor fellow. I left im collapsed in the chair. I was in Holmes turned away, and stooped sudmly to the floor. "Halloa! What's this?" said he

It was a small pyramid of black, putty-like stuff, exactly like the one upon the table of the study. Holmes held it out on his open palm in the glare of the electric light. Your visitor seems to have

traces in your bedroom as well as in your sitting-room, Mr. Soames." What could he have wanted there? "I think it is clear enough. You came back by an unexpected way, and so he had no warning until you were at the very door. What could be do? He caught up everything which would

betray him, and he rushed into your bedroom to conceal himself."
"Good gracious, Mr. Holmes, do you mean to tell me that, all the time I was talking to Bannister in this room, we had the man prisoner if we had only known it?"
"Ho I read it."

Surely there is another alternative. Mr. Holmes. I don't know whether you observed my bedroom window?" "Lattice-paned, lead framework, scene of our problem. Holmes halted and looked earnestly at the window. three separate windows, one swinging on hinge, and large enough to admit Then he approached it, and, standing on tip-toe with his neck craned, he

"Exactly. And it looks out on an angle of the courtyard so as to be partly invisible. The man might have effected his entrance there, left traces "He must have entered through the coor. There is no opening except the as he passed through the bedroom, and

finally, finding the door open, have es-caped that way."

Holmes shook his head impatiently. "Let us be practical," said he. "I understand you to say that there are three students who use this stair, and are in the habit of passing your door

Yes, there are. "And they are all in for this examination?

"Have you any reason to suspect any one of them more than the others?" Soames hesitated.

"It is a very delicate question," said a. "One hardly likes to throw suspicion where there are no proofs." "Let us hear the suspicions. I will look after the proofs."

"I will tell you, then, in a few words the character of the three men who in-habit these rooms. The lower of the three is Gilchrist, a fine scholar and athlete, plays in the rugby team and the cricket team for the college, and got his blue for the hurdles and the long jump. He is a fine, manly fellow. His father was the notorious Sir Jabez Glichrist, who ruined himself on the turf. My scholar has been left very poor, but he is hard-working and in-

dustrious. He will do well.

"The second floor is inhabited by Daulat Ras, the Indian. He is a quiet. inscrutable fellow, as most of those Indians are. He is well up in his work, though his Greek is his weak subject. e is steady and methodical.
"The top floor belongs to Miles Mc-

Laren. He is a brilliant fellow when he chooses to work—one of the bright-est intellects of the university; but he is wayward, dissipated, and unprinci-pled. He was nearly expelled over a card scandal in his first year. He has been idling all this term, and he must-look forward with dread to the examination.

Then it is he whom you suspect? dare not go so far as that. of the three, he is perhaps the least

Exactly. Now, Mr. Soames, let us have a look at your servant, Bannis-He was a little, ,white-faced, cleanshaven, grizzly-haired fellow of 50. He was still suffering from this sudden disturbance of the quiet routine of his

His plump face was twitching his nervousness, and his fingers ould not keep still. "We are investigaing this unhappy siness, Bannister," said his master.

"Yes, sir," understand," said Holmes, "that you left your key in the door?"

"Yes, sir."
"Was it not very extraordinary that you should do this on the very day when there were these papers inside?"
"It was most unfortunate, sir. But I have occasionally done the same thing at other times." When did you enter the room?" "It was about half-past four. That Mr. Soames' tea time." "How long did you stay?"

"Did you look at these papers on the

"No. sir-certainly not." "How came you to leave the key in "I had the tea tray in my hand. I

ought I would come back for the "Has the outer door a spring lock?"
"No, sir." Then it was open all the time?"

"Yes, sir."
"Any one in the room could get out?" Yes, mir.

"When Mr. Soames returned and called for you, you were very much disturbed?" "Tes, sir: Such a thing has never expensed during the many years that have been here. I nearly fainted,

So I understand. Where were you hen you began to feel bad?"
"Where was I, sir? Why, here, near

"That is singular, because you sat



down in that chair over yonder near the corner. Why did you pass these other chairs?"

"I don't know, sir, it didn't matter to me where I sat." "I really don't think he knew much about it, Mr. Holmes. He was looking very bad—quite ghastly." You stayed here when your mas-"Only for a minute or so. Then I

locked the door and went to my room." Whom do you suspect?" "Oh, I would not venture to may sir. I don't believe there is any gentleman in this university who is capable of profiting by such an action. I'll not believe it."

Thank you, that will do," said Holmes, "Oh, one more word. You have not men-tioned to any of the three gentlemen whom you attend that anything is amiss?" 'No, sir: not a word.'

"You haven't seen any of them?" "Very good. Now, Mr. Soames, we will take a walk in the quadrangle, if you

Three yellow squares of light shone

above us in the gathering gloom.
"Tour three birds are all in their nests,"
said Holmes, looking up, "Halloa!
What's that? One of them seems restless

It was the Indian, whose dark silhouette appeared suddenly upon his blind. He was pacing swiftly up and down his room. "I should like to have a peep at each of

them," said Holmes, "Is it possible?" "No difficulty in the world," Soames answered. "This set of rooms is quite the

oldest in the college, and it is not unusual for visitors to go over them. Come along, and I will personally conduct you."
"No names, please!" said Holmes, as we knocked at Glichrist's door. A tall, flaxen-haired, slim young fellow opened it, and made as welcome when he understood. and made us welcome when he understood our errand. There were some really curi ture within. Holmes was so charmed with one of them that he insisted on drawing it in his notebook, brown his pencil, had to borrow one from our host, and finally borrowed a knife to sharpen his own. The same curious accident happened to him in the rooms of the Indian—a silent, little, hooknosed fellow, who eyed us askance, and was obviously glad when Holmes architectural studies had come to an end. I could not see that in either case Holmes had come upon the clew for which he was searching. Only at the third did our visit prove abortive. The outer door would not open to our knock, and nothing more substantial than a torrent of bad language came from behind it. "I don't care who came from behind it. "I don't ca you are. You can go to blazes!" "Tomorrow's the exam, the angry voice. and I won't be drawn by anyone."
"A rude fellow," said our guide, flushing with anger as we withdrew down the

"Of course, he did not realize that it was I who was knocking, but none the less his conduct was very uncourteous, and indeed, under the circumstances,

Holmes' response was a curio "Can you tell me his exact height?" he asked. "Really, Mr. Holmes, I cannot under

take to say. He is taller than the Indian, not so tall as Gilchrist. I suppose five foot six would be about it." "That is very important," said Holmes "And now, Mr. Boames, I wish you goodnight." Our guide, cried aloud in his astonish

ment and dismay.
"Good gracious, Mr. Holmes, yo surely not going to leave me in this ab-rupt fashion! You don't seem to realize Tomorrow is the examina the position. tion. I must take some definite action to-night. I cannot allow the examination to be held if one of the papers has been

"You must leave it as it is. I shall drop round early tomorrow morning, and chat the matter over. It is possible that I may be in a position then to indicate some urse of action. Meanwhile, you change nothing-nothing at all."
"Very good, Mr. Holmes."

tampered with. The situation must be

"You can be perfectly easy in your mind. We shall certainly find some way out of your difficulties. I will take the black with me, also the pencil cuttings.

When we were out in the darkness the quadrangie, we again looked up at the windows. The Indian still paced his room. The others were invisible. Well Watson what do you think of

it?" Holmes asked, as we came out into the main street. "Quite a little parlor game-sort of three-card trick, is it not? There are your three men. It must be one of them. You take your choice. Which is yours?". The for foul-mouthed fellow at the top,

the is the one with the worst record. And yet that Indian was a sly fellow also. Why should be be pacing his room all the "There is nothing in that. Many men

to it when they are trying to learn any-

"He looked at us in a queer way."
So would you, if a flock of strangers came in on you when you were proparing for an examination next day, and every moment was of value. No, I see nothing Pencils, too, and knives-all was satisfactory. But that fellow does puzzle

"Why, Bannister, the servant. What's his game in the matter?" .
"He impressed me as being a perfectly

"So he did me. That's the puzzling part. Why should a perfectly honest man-well, well, here's a large stationer's. We shall egin our researches here."

There were only four stationers of any

onsequence in the town, and at each Holmes produced his pencil chips, and bid high for a duplicate. All were agreed that one could be ordered, but that it was not a usual size of pencii, and that it was seldom kept in stock. My friend did not appear to be depressed by his failure, but rugged his shoulders in half-humorous

"No good, my dear Watson. This, the best and only final clew, has run to noth-ing. But, indeed, I have little doubt that we can build up a sufficient case without it. By Jove! my dear fellow, it is nearly 9, and the landlady babbled of green peas at 7:29. What with your eternal tobacco. Watson, and your frregularity at meals, I expect that you will get notice to quit, and that I shall share your downfall—not. however, before we have solved the prob-lem of the nervous tutor, the careless servant and the three enterprising students.

Holmes made no further allusion to the



matter that day, though he sat lost in matter that day, though he sat took in thought for a long time after our belated dinner. At 8 in the morning, he came into my room just as I finished my tollet. "Well, Watson," said he, "it is time we went down to St. Lake's. Can you do

without breakfast?" "Certainly. 'Soames will be in a dreadful fldget intil we are able to tell him something "Have you anything positive to tell

"I think so." You have formed a conclusion?" "Yes, my dear Watson, I have solved

"But what fresh evidence could you have got?"
"Aha! It is not for nothing that I have turned myself out of bed at the untimely hour of 6. I have put in two hours'

hard work and covered at least five miles, with something to show for it. Look at He held out his hand. On the palm were three little pyramids, of black, doughy clay. "Why. Holmes, you had only two yes-

terday. "And one more this morning. fair argument that wherever No. 3 came from is also the source of Nos. 1 and 2. Watson? Well, come along and put

friend Soames out of his pain. The unfortunate tutor was certainly in a state of pitiable agitation when we found him in his chambers. In a few hours the examination would commence, making the facts public and allowing the culprit to compete for the valuable schol-arship. He could hardly stand still, so great was his mental agitation, and he the examination. I have been offered a ran toward Holmes with two eager hands commission in the Rhodesian police, and

outstretched.

"Thank Heaven that you have come! I feared that you had given it up in despair. What am I to do? Shall the exam-

ination proceed?"
"Yes, let it proceed, by all means."
"But this rascal—?"

"He shall not compete."

You know him?" "I think so. If this matter is not to you please, Soames! Watson, you e! I'll take the armchair in the middle. I think that we are now sufficiently imposing to strike terror into a guilty

reast. Kindly ring the hell!"
Bannister entered, and shrank back in Bannister entered, and sarans back in evident surprise and fear at our judicial had known, but, with all your eleverness, it was impossible that you could know "You will kindly close the door," said Time was, sir, when I was butler to old

Holmes "Now, Bannister, will you please tell us the truth about yesterday's inci-The man turned white to the roots of his hair.

"I have told you everything, sir."
"Nothing to add?" 'Nothing at all, sir."

"Well, then, I must make some sugges-tions to you. When you sat down on that chair yesterday, did you do se in order to conceal some object which would have shown who had been in the room?" Bannister's face was ghastly. "No, sir, certainly not."

"It is only a suggestion," said Holmes mavely. "I frankly admit that I am unable to prove it. But it seems probable enough, since the moment that Mr. Soames' back was turned you released the man who was hiding in that bed-Bannister licked his dry lips.

"There was no man, sir."
"Ah, that's a pity, Bannister. Up to now you may have spoken the truth, but now know that you have lied."
The man's face set in sullen defiance.

"There was no man, sir."

"No. sir, there was no one." "In that case, you can give us no further information. Would you please re-main in the room. Stand over there near the bedroom door. Now, Scames, going to ask you to have the great kind-ness to go up to the room of young Gil-christ, and to ask him to step down into

An instant later the tutor returned, bringing with him the student. fine figure of a man, tall, lithe and agile, with a springy step and a pleasant, open face. H's troubled blue eyes glanced at each of us, and finally rested with an expression of blank dismay upon Bannis-

alone here, and no one need ever know one word of what passes between us. We

"No, but you have now," said Holmes,

"Now, sir, you must see that after Ban-nister's words your position is hopeless,

tures. The next he had thrown himself on his knees beside the table, and bury-ing his face in his hands, he had burst into a storm of passionate sobbing.

"Come come," said Holmes kindly "it is human to err, and at least no one can accuse you of being a callous criminal Perhaps it would be easier for you if I were to tell Mr. Soames what occurred, and you can check me where I am wrong. Shall I do so? Well, well, don't trouble to answer. Listen, and see that I do you no injustice.

"From the moment, Mr. Soames, that you said to me that no one, not even Bannister, could have told that the papers were in your room, the case be to take a definite shape in my mind. printer one could, of course, dismiss. He ould examine the papers in his own of-ce. The Indian I also thought nothing If the proofs were in roll, he could the other hand, it seemed an unthinkable coincidence that a man should dare to enter the room, and that by chance on that very day the papers were on the I dismissed that. The man who table. entered knew that the papers were there. How did he know?

"When I approached your room I exam-ined the window. You amused me by supposing that I was contemplating the possibility of someone having in broad daylight, under the eyes of all these op-posite rooms, forced himself through it. Such an idea was absurd. I was measur-ing how tall a man would need to be in order to see, as he passed, what papers were on the central table. I am six feet high, and I could do it with an effort. No one less than that would have a chance. Already you see I had reason to think that, if one of your three students was a man of unusual height, he was the most worth watching of the three most worth watching of the three

"I entered, and I took you into my con-dence as to the suggestions of the side fidence as to the suggestions of the side table. Of the center table I could make nothing, until in your description of Gil-christ you mentioned that he was a longdistance jumper. Then the whole thing came to me in an instant, and I seded certain corroborative proofs, which I speedly obtained.

"What happened was this. This young fellow had employed his afternoon at the athletic grounds, where he had been practicing the jump. He returned carrying his jumping shoes, which are provided, as you are aware, with several sharp spikes. As he passed your window he saw, by means of his great height, these proofs upon your table, and conjectured what they were. No harm would have been done had it not been that, as he passed your door, he perceived the key which had been left by the carelessness of your servant. A sudden impulse came over him to enter, and see if they were indeed the proofs. It was not a danger-ous exploit, for he could always pretend that he had simply looked in to

Well, when he saw that they were indeed the proofs, it was then that he yield-ed to temptation. He put his shoes on the table. What was it you put on that chair near the window?" "Gloves," said the young man

Holmes looked triumphantly at Bannis ter. "He put his gloves on the chair and he took the proofs, sheet by sheet, to copy them. He thought the tutor must return by the main gate, and that he would see him. As we know he came back by the side gate. Suddenly he heard him at the very door. There was no possible escape. He forgot his gloves, but he caught up his shoes and darted into the bedroom. bserve that the scratch on that table to slight at one side, but deepens in the di-rection of the bedroom door. That in it-self is enough to show us that the shoe had been drawn in that direction that the culprit had taken refuge there. The earth round the spike had been left on the table, and a second sample was loosened and fall in the bedroom. add that I walked out to the athletic grounds this morning, saw that ter black clay is used in the jumping-pit, and carried away a specimen of it, together with some of the fine tan or sawdust which is strewn over it to prevent the athlete from slipping. Have I told the truth, Mr. Glichrist?"

The student had drawn himself erect. "Yes, sir, it is true," said he. "Good Heavens! have you nothing to

"Yes, sir, I have, but the shock of this disgraceful exposure has bewildered me. I have a letter here, Mr. Soames, which wrote to you early this morning. I knew that my sin had found me out

you change your purpose?"
Gilchrist pointed to Bannister. "There is the man who set me in the right path," said he. "Come now, Bannister," said Holmes.
"It will be clear to you, from what I have become public, we must give ourselves said, that only you could have let this certain powers, and resolve ourselves into a small private court-martial. You there, room, and must have locked the door when you went out. As to his escaping by that window, it was incredible. Can you not clear up the last point in this mystery, and tell us the reasons for your action?"

"It was simple enough, mir, if you only Sir Jabez Gilchrist, this young gentle man's father. When he was ruined man's father. When he was ruined I came to the college as servant, but I never forgot my old employer because he was down in the world. I watched his son all I could for the sake of the old days. Well, sir, when I came into this room yesterday, when the alarm was given, the very first thing I saw was Mr. Gilchrist's tan gloves a lying in that chair. I knew those gloves well, and I understood their message. If Mr. Soames saw them, the game was up. I flopped down into that chair and nothing would budge me until Mr Soames he went for you. Then out came my poor young master, whom I had dan-dled on my knee, and confessed it all to me. Wasn't it natural, sir, that I should save him, and wasn't it natural, also, that I should try to speak to him as his dead

father would have done, and make him understand that he could not prefit by such a deed? Could you blame me. sir? "No, indeed," said Holmes, epringing to his feet. "Well, Soames, I think we have cleared your little problem up, and our breakfast awaits up at home. Come Wat. breakfast awaits us at home. Come, Wat-son! As to you, sir I trust that a bright future awaits you in Rhodesia. For once you have failen low. Let us see, in the future, how high you can rise." (Copyright, 1904, by A. Conan Doyle and Coltier's Weekly. Copyright, 1905, by Clure, Phillips & Co.)

## Automobiles in Madagascar.

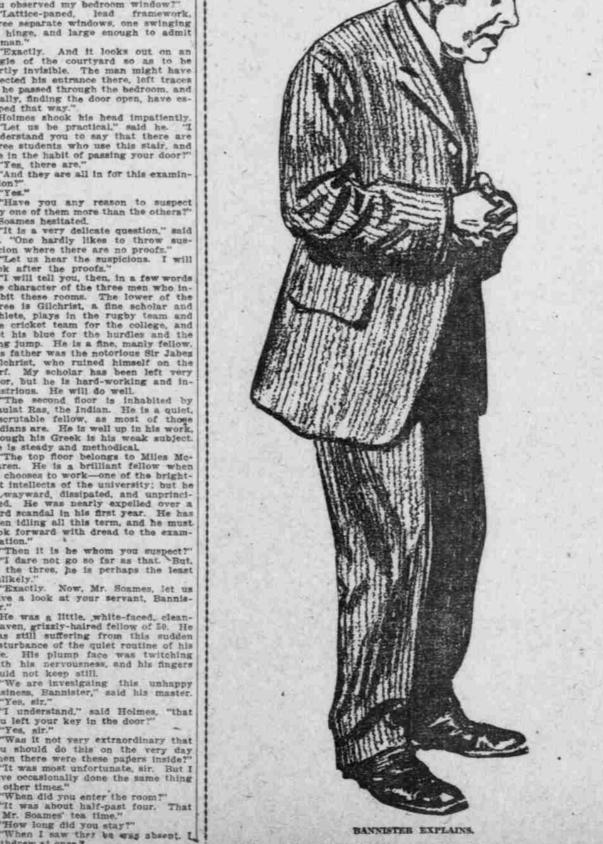
L Perisse, in Engineering Magazine. The road followed between Mahatsara and Tananarive is 155 miles long and runs through mountainous country, with many curves, but with maximum grades of 3 per cent only. The "rolling stock" consists of six automobile trucks of 15-horsepower, and two 12-horsepower brakes, all expression of blank disking of state of Fannard of Fannard to the farther corner.

"Just close the door," said Holmes.

"Now, Mr. Gilchrist, we are all quite the French mail attains a weight of 5500 pounds and the eight automobiles assertings overloaded and require along here, so one word of what passes between us. We can be perfectly frank with each other. We want to know. Mr. Glichrist, how you, an honorable man, ever came to commit such an action as that of yester-commit such an action as that of yester-commit such an action as that of yester-commit such as affely trusted to the one operator be safely trusted to the one operator.

The unfortunate young man staggered back, and cast a look full of horror and reproach at Bannister.

"No, no, Mr. Glichrist, sir, I never said a word—never one word!" cried the servest. power vehicles are arranged to carry four passengers, and in addition to officers and officials, many persons apply for passage nister's words your position is hopeless, on the automobiles, although the two-day and that your only chance lies in a frank trip to Tananarivo costs 122 francs, while the same journey may be made in native For a moment Gilchrist, with upraised vehicle (pousse-pousse) in five days at a hand, tried to control his writhing fea- cost of only 150 francs.





smiled in a singular way as he glanced at our companion. be learned here, we had nothing to

best go inside.' The lecturer unlocked the outer doc and ushered us into his room. We stood at the entrance while Holmes made an examination of the carpet. "I am afraid there are no signs here,"

"One could hardly hope for any upon so dry a day. Your servant seems to have quite recovered. You left him in a chair, you say. Which chair?" "By the window there."
"I see. Near this little table. You

can come in now. I have finished with the carpet. Let us take the little table first. Of course, what has happened is very clear. The man entered and took the papers, sheet by sheet, from the contral table. He carried them over to the window table, because from there ne could see if you came across the courtyard, and so could effect an es-

cape. "As a matter of fact he could not," said Soumes, "for I entered by the side

am prepared to swear, door."

Sannister, that it was smooth "Ah, that's good! Well, anyhow, ned. Now I found a clean that was in his mind. Let me see the cut in it about three inches long-not three strips. No finger impressions-u mere scratch, but a positive cut. Not no! Well, he carried over this one first, only this, but on the table I found a and he copied it. How long would it small ball of black dough or clay, with take him to do that, using every posspecks of something which looks like sawdust in it. I am convinced that these marks were left by the man who and seized the next. He was in the midst of that when your return caused marks and no other evidence as to his identity. I was at my with ends, when very hurried since he had not time to uddenly the happy thought occurred renlace the papers which would tell