

# A STUDY IN SCARLET.

BY A. CONAN DOYLE.

## CHAPTER IV.

It was a quarter of eight when I left Lauriston Gardens. Sherlock Holmes led me to the nearest telegraph office, where he dispatched a long telegram. He then hailed a cab and ordered the driver to take us to the address given us by Lestrade.

"There's nothing like first-hand evidence," he remarked. "As a matter of fact, my mind is entirely made up upon the case, but still we may as well learn all that is to be learned."

"You amaze me, Holmes," said I. "Surely you are not as sure as you pretend to be of all those particulars which you gave."

"There is no room for mistake," he answered. "The very first thing which I observed on arriving there was that a cab had made two runs with its wheels close to the curb. Now, up to last night we have had no rain for a week, so that those wheels, which left such a deep impression, must have been made there during the night. There were the marks of the horse's hoofs, too, the outline of one of which was far more clearly cut than that of the other three, showing that there was a new shoe. Since the cab was there after the rain began and was not there at any time during the morning—I have Gregson's word for that—it follows that it must have been there during the night, and, therefore, that it brought those two individuals to the house."

"That seems simple enough," said I; "but how about the other man's height?"

"Why, the height of a man, in nine cases out of ten can be told from the length of his stride. It is a simple calculation enough, though there is no use my boring you with figures. I of this fellow's stride, both on the clay outside and the dust within. Then I had a way of checking my calculations. When a man writes on a wall, his instinct leads him to write about the level of his own eyes. Now, the writing was just over six feet from the ground. It was child's play."

"And his age?" I asked.

"Well, if a man can stride four and a half feet without the smallest effort, he can't be quite in the sere and yellow. That was the breadth of a puddle on the garden walk which he had evidently walked across. Patent leather boots had come around and square toes had hopped over. There is no mystery about it at all. I am simply applying to ordinary life a few of those precepts of observation and deduction which I advocated in that article. Is there anything else that puzzles you?"

"The finger nails and the Trichinopoly," I suggested.

"The writing on the wall was done with a man's forefinger dipped in blood. My companion asked me to observe that the plaster was slightly scratched in doing it, which would not have been the case if the man's nail had been trimmed. I gathered up some scattered ash from the floor. It was dark in color and flaky—such an ash as is only made by a Trichinopoly. I have made a special study of cigar ashes—in fact, I have written a monograph upon the subject. I flatter myself that I can distinguish at a glance the ash of any known brand of cigar or of tobacco. It is in just such details that the skilled detective differs from the Gregson and Lestrade type."

"And the forlaid face?" I asked.

"Ah, that was a more daring shot, though I have no doubt that I was right. You may ask me that at the present state of the affair."

said pointing to a narrow slit in the line of dead-colored brick. "You'll find me here when you come back."

Audley Court was not an attractive locality. The narrow passage led us into a quadrangle paved with flags and lined by sordid dwellings.

We picked our way among groups of dirty children and through lines of discolored linen until we came to No. 46, the door of which was decorated with the name Rance was engraved.

On inquiry we found that the constable was in bed, and we were shown into a little front parlor to await his coming.

He appeared presently, looking a little irritable at being disturbed in his slumbers.

"I made my report at the office," he said.

Holmes took a half sovereign from his pocket, and played with it pensively.

"We thought that we should like to hear it all from your own lips," he said.

"I shall be most happy to tell you anything I can," the constable answered, with his eyes upon the little golden disk.

"Just let us hear it all in your own way, as it occurred."

Rance sat down on the horsehair sofa and knitted his brows, as though determined not to omit anything in his narrative.

"I'll tell it from the beginning," he said. "My time is from eight at night to six in the morning. At eleven there was a light at the White Hart; but that, all was quiet enough on the beat. At one o'clock it began to rain, and I met Harry Murcher—a man who has the Holland Grove boat—and we stood together at the corner of Henrietta street—a talkin'. Presently—maybe about two, or a little after—I thought I would take a look round and see that all was right down the Britton road. It was precious dirty and lonely. Not a soul did I meet all the way down though a cab or two went past me. I was a-strollin' down, thinkin' between ourselves how uncommon handy a four of six hot would be, when suddenly a glint of light caught my eye in the window of that same house. Now, I know that them two houses in Lauriston Gardens was empty on account of him that owns them, who went have the drains seed to, though the very last tenant that lived in one of them died o' typhoid fever. I was knocked all in a heap, therefore, at seeing a light in the window, and I suspected as something was wrong. When we got to the door—"

"You stopped and then walked back to the garden gate," my companion interrupted. "What did you do that for?"

Rance gave a violent jump and stared at Sherlock Holmes with the utmost amazement upon his features.

"The man whom you hold in your hands is the man who holds the clue of this mystery, and whom we are seeking. There is no use of arguing about it now; I tell you that it is so. Come along, doctor."

We started off for the cab together, leaving our informant incredulous, but obviously uncomfortable.

"The blundering fool!" Holmes said bitterly, as we drove back to our lodgings. "Just to think of his having such an incomparable bit of good luck, and not taking advantage of it."

"I am rather in the dark still. It is true that the description of this man tallies with your idea of the second party in this mystery. But why should he come back to the house after leaving it? That it not the way of criminals."

"The ring, man the ring! That was what he came back for. If we have no other way of catching him we can always bait our line with the ring. I shall have him, doctor—I'll lay you two to one that I have him. I must thank you for it all. I might not have gone but for you, and so have missed the finest study I ever came across; a study in scarlet, eh? Why shouldn't we use a little art jargon? There's the scarlet thread of murder running through the colorless skein of life, and our duty is to unravel it, and isolate it, and expose every inch of it. And now for lunch, and then for Norman Neruda. Her attack and her bowing are splendid. What's that little thing of Chopin's she plays so magnificently? Tralalira-lira-lay!"

Leaning back in the cab, this amateur bloodhound caroled away like a lark, while I meditated upon the many-sidedness of the human mind.

## STRANDED IN THE DESERT.

Fully Equipped Steamer Rests on Sands Bordering the Colorado River.

There does not seem to be much use for a ship in the desert country of California, which borders on the Colorado river, yet travelers in that region may see there a veritable "ship of the desert." Far from any body of water capable of floating even a mud-sow, may be found a big steam-ship, accustomed to ply up and down the river, carrying passengers and freight. She has been lying there since last September, stranded high and dry on the sands a mile and a half from the stream's present course.

This strange condition of affairs has come about simply because the Colorado, a mighty stream, but one of the most treacherous of rivers, chose to cut a new channel for itself early in the fall without notice or warning.

One night last September the Alvirne tied up to the shore a couple of miles above Needles, awaiting telegraphic orders. She was loaded with passengers and supplies, and as travel is sometimes leisurely pursued on the Colorado, all hands turned in for a good night's sleep. Between 3 and 4 o'clock, Captain Babson was aroused by Indians, who warned him that for some reason the river was falling rapidly, and advised him to pull out into midstream as quickly as possible.

The captain tried to do so, but the water had already gone down so low that his prow stuck fast in the mud when he got up steam and tried to turn the paddle wheels and move out into navigable water. And there he has stuck ever since, becoming resigned to his situation perforce and hopefully awaiting the flood water that comes down at the times of the melting of the Colorado and Wyoming snows.

Things That May Interest You.

It is said that the flint that forms the substratum of London is nothing but petrified sponges. An examination of the fossil sponge shows its structure.

## NATIONAL PRINTERY.

GIGANTIC BUILDING IS NEARING COMPLETION.

Will Have a Floor Space of Over Fourteen Acres and Nearly 4,000 Persons Will Find Employment—127 Presses Will Be Running.

The new government printing office is approaching completion and will be a gigantic affair, writes Rene Bache, the well-known Washington correspondent. It will cost \$2,000,000, and will provide a total floor space of over fourteen acres—more than two and a half times the floor area available in the present establishment. As yet the building is entirely covered with scaffolding, but it is substantially finished, except for the interior woodwork and painting. It will be the greatest printing shop in the world, employing the services of nearly 4,000 people. Accurately speaking, 3,888 persons will toil under its mighty roof, nearly 1,000 of them being women and girls. Each year it will expend the enormous sum of \$4,000,000, nearly three-fourths of it for labor, and in its main composing-room 824 printers will be engaged in setting type. Eight hundred and eighty-five employees will be occupied in binding the books and documents produced, and an additional 965 will do nothing but fold the printed sheets.

Figures like these give a notion of the gigantic scale on which the shop will be conducted. Each twelvemonth it will consume for bindings the skins of 36,000 sheep and 11,000 goats, in addition to 75,000 square feet of "Russian leather," made from cowhide. It will use up in a like period 8,000 tons of white paper, 40,000 pounds of printing ink and 37,000 pounds of glue, together with 7,000 pounds of thread for sewing books and pamphlets, and 4,000 packs of gold leaf for the titles of volumes de luxe.

One hundred and twenty-seven presses will be constantly in operation in the great building, their total output in a working day of eight hours being just about 1,000,000 impressions. These presses are of every conceivable kind, one of them being capable of printing cards on both sides from a web of Bristol-board at the rate of 65,000 cards per hour, while four other machines turn out 40,000 printed envelopes every six minutes. The quantity of type actually employed will be approximately 1,300,000 pounds, or 750 tons.

No other government spends anything like the amount of money on public printing that is squandered by Uncle Sam. In this particular Congress is always disposed to a reckless extravagance, and hence the huge size of the plant required. Public documents are an important requisite of Senators and Representatives, who scatter them broadcast among their constituents. One hundred tons of a single report now in press will be issued and distributed in this manner, and the total number of volumes of various kinds of literature turned out by the office in a twelvemonth is about 1,000,000, representing a total cost of some what more than \$1,000,000.

Nowadays government books, like other kinds of publications, require illustrations, and the cost of these ran up to about \$300,000 last year. It is safe to say that ten years from now Uncle Sam's printing shop will spend pretty nearly half a million dollars for pictures. The most costly illustrations are for the reports for the Department of Agriculture and the bulletins of the Bureau of Ethnology, many of these being in color. Each Bureau furnishes its own pictures, but the printing office has them reproduced by firms in Boston, New York and elsewhere. These firms print the illustrations and return them to Washington, ready to be bound with the text.

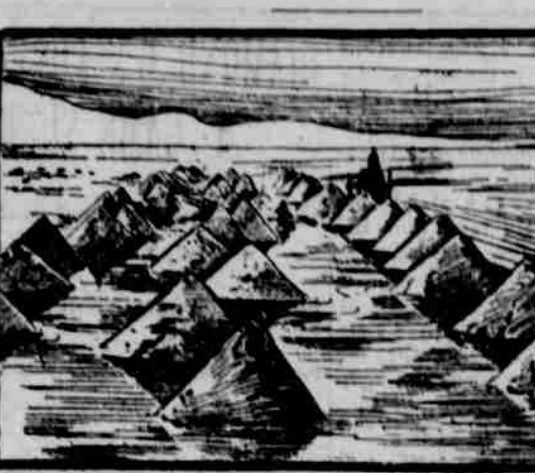
The most important job the big shop has to execute is the printing of the Congressional Record. This daily newspaper, which records nothing but the doings of the National legislature, is written from beginning to end by the official reporters of the House and Senate, who take down in shorthand every word that is said at either end of the Capitol. They dictate from their notes to typewriters, and the material thus reduced to typescript is sent over to the printing offices in batches by messengers. The Record is ready for distribution early next morning. One hundred compositors are employed exclusively in the business of setting type for it, one department of the printing office being devoted exclusively to this publication, which is "set up" and sent to press just like any newspaper, being delivered every day to about 9,000 subscribers. Each representative in Congress gets 22 copies daily, while a Senator is entitled to 42. Anybody may subscribe, the price being \$1.50 a month; but the paper is not directly profitable to Uncle Sam, inasmuch as it costs \$125,000 a year.

The printing of bills is another important feature of the work of the establishment. Though only a few hundred of the measures submitted to Congress in a year become laws, millions of copies of them have to be printed. A bill must go through a great many phases before it can become a law, and during the process of its evolution it has to be printed again and again—perhaps dozens of times. If finally passed, a single copy of it is printed on the finest parchment, and this goes to President Roosevelt for his signature.

MAN WITH A BIG VOICE.

Member of the "Spellbinders' Trust" Tells a Story on Himself.

## CURIOUS SALT DEPOSITS.



One of the unique sights of California is the remarkable salt deposits at Salton. This region lies in a depression some 300 feet below sea level, and is thought at one time to have been the bed of an ancient sea or lake. The tract of land looks like a vast snow field.

The rock salt deposits cover about 1,000 acres, and are now worked for commercial purposes. The output from this place is about 2,000 tons of salt annually, valued at from \$8 to \$34 per ton. The labor is done chiefly by Indians, who are able to withstand the intense heat of the desert (running up to 150 degrees in June) better than the white men.

The method employed is as follows: The salt is first collected by a peculiar plough having four wheels, in the center of which sits an Indian in guide it. This is run by a cable from a distant dummy engine. This machine cuts a broad and shallow furrow eight feet wide and three feet long, throwing up the ridges on both sides. Indians follow in the wake of the plough with hoes and pile up the salt in pyramids.

The rumbling when he speaks in the House.

"It was up in Buffalo in the '96 campaign," he continued. "A local lawyer and I had been assigned to a big meeting over on the tough side of the city. The local man, who was evidently making his first campaign appearance, was introduced first, and proceeded to draw from his inside pocket a manuscript, from which he started to read.

"It was a pretty hard crowd, taken all together, but at the same time they were a bright lot and up-to-date. My friend read on for some twenty minutes under great difficulty, and then the crowd began to cheer and shout in derision. Nothing like this, however, could stop him. All kinds of questions were fired at him, but he paid no attention and continued to read off long lists of statistics. At last the chairman of the meeting signaled the leader of the band to start up. The band played 'Home, Sweet Home,' as a gentle hint, but the speaker only waited until it finished and then continued. At the end of an hour of the worst sort I ever heard, my ambitious friend closed in what he thought was a blaze of glory.

"Three cheers for the speaker—for finishing!" some one yelled.

"The cheers were given, and then I was introduced. It was a tough proposition, but I jollied along with the crowd for some fifteen minutes, and then launched into what I thought was my best line of talk. I finished all right, and the chairman said I had made a hit.

"In driving to the hotel after the meeting the local speaker said to me: 'Mr. Littlefield, if I only had your voice, with what I have to say, I would be a wonder.'"

Just then a roll call was announced and the trust adjourned.—Washington correspondence New York Herald.

TOO MUCH PROVIDENCE.

Conclusion of the Deacon Who Refused to Sell His Fruit.

## DRESS COST \$40,000.

Gown Exhibited in Chicago Made for the Czarina, but Rejected.

The famous \$40,000 coronation robe made by the ambitious Mrs. Barutti, of Paris, for the Czarina of Russia was placed on exhibition in Chicago recently. The robe, which is the finest ever shown in America, and one of the finest ever seen at any time in the world's history, was viewed by thousands of people.

The costly gown is a wonderful creation of gold thread, ermine, white satin and royal purple velvet. Not a jewel was used on it, but \$10,000 worth of gold thread and \$7,000 worth of royal ermine were fashioned into the gown during the two years it took Mme. Barutti to complete it.

The history of the royal robe is as interesting as its folds are luxurious. Royalty never wore the gown, although it was made for the Czarina, but without her knowledge. When the old Czar of Russia died, Mme. Barutti announced that she had been commissioned to make the robe for the Czarina. She hastened to carry out her plans. After many months she began showing the gown to her creditors, who were harassing her, for she owed more than 6,000,000 francs. Ambitious to become the royal dressmaker for all the houses of Europe and hoping thus to recoup her lost fortunes and clear up her credit, Mme. Barutti convinced her tradesmen her day was coming and secured further credit from them.

The time arrived, however, when she saw the robe would not grace the coronation, and Mme. Barutti went to the room where the gown was displayed and killed herself. The gown and all she owned were sold at auction, and finally came into the possession of a New York firm.

The great mantle, twenty-seven feet long, is the main part of the gown. It is of royal purple velvet, trimmed with white satin ribbons and a wealth of gold thread, and lined with 1,500 royal ermine skins. The gown proper is ecruette, of double thickness of white satin. The train extends 100 inches from the waist, and is bordered with a gold fringe two inches wide. Every detail of the wonderful robe is elaborately wrought. The scattered gold decorations and scroll work, the rich laces and heavy satin make it a modiste's dream.—Chicago Inter Ocean.

PROFESSIONAL PRAYER.

The Odd Business of an Old Negro in New Orleans.

"In one of the more unique quarters of New Orleans I have found one of the most unique characters I ever saw, in an old negro washerwoman," said a man who has lately taken up his residence in one of the more popular avenues of the city. "And she seems to be proceeding along original lines in the main purpose of her life. Washing clothes seems to be a mere incident to the general plan she carries out. She is an interesting old character, and can quote copiously from the Bible. This seems to be a hobby with her. She has some kind of construction to put on every line she quotes, too. She can tell you just exactly what it means from her way of looking at it. But this is not the point I had in mind.

"Several days ago I got into conversation with the old woman, and she asked me if I didn't have some family washing to give her. I told her I did not, but encouraged the conversation, as I have a fondness for the negro of the ante-bellum type, finding them always very interesting. She finally threw a quotation from the Bible at me, and it was followed by another, and still another, and so on. 'Say, boss,' she said after a while, 'does you ever have anybody to do any prayin' for you?' I told her I did not, and, becoming more interested in the old woman, I got her to unfold her whole scheme to me. She did it without any sort of hesitation.

"She is a professional prayer, and makes no small sum out of it from what she told me. She told me she was praying once a week for the lady next door, who had employed her to pray for her husband to quit drinkin', although he is a very light drinker, to my own knowledge. The old woman seemed to be very proud of her calling, and whatever other people may say about it she is an enthusiastic believer in the efficacy of her own prayers."—New Orleans Times Democrat.

Taxes Were Too Onerous.

From Pottsville comes a story of an old chap who is proud to describe himself as the original anti-expansionist. Soon after the breaking out of hostilities with Spain and the passage of the war revenue act by Congress he began to orate against the new taxes as an exhibition of federal tyranny. He would fairly froth at the mouth as he denounced the war tariff and would darkly hint at the possibility of a latter day Patrick Henry and a new awakening of the people to a sense of the injustice. A severe cold laid him low, and his doctor, finding him asleep one day and thinking a little blistering would do him good, applied a fine large mustard plaster to the old fellow's back. The burning, stinging bite of the heated mustard awoke the crusty patient, he rolled over in agony for a minute or two, clapped one hand behind him, felt the plaster, and, frantically tearing it off, roared:

"Has it come to this, that an old man like me can't even die peacefully in his bed without having the government come along and clap a revenue stamp on him?"—Philadelphia Times.

He Ate "Innards."

An actor who was accustomed to spend his summers in Wilton, Me., noted when, as the custom was, a farmer "killed a critter," the liver, sweetbreads, kidneys, etc., were thrown away. He offered to purchase these delicacies, but, though he got the goods, the "sturdy farmer scorned his proffered gold." Not long after he observed as he walked through the village that he was the cynosure of all eyes, and was followed by a wondering, if not admiring, crowd, chiefly composed of the young. "Aha!" thought he, "I cannot escape my fame; my glory as an actor has followed me even to this obscure hamlet." And he was mightily puffed up till he overheard one of the feller what eats innards"—Boston Journal.