

A STUDY IN SCARLET.

BY A. CONAN DOYLE.

CHAPTER IV.

It was 1 o'clock when we left Lauriston Gardens. Sherlock Holmes led me to the nearest telegraph office, when 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 the 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 horse since the cab was there after the rain began, and was not there at any time during the morning—I have Oregon's word for that—it follows that it must have been 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 use my 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, or inscribes anything on a wall, or on the level of his own eyes. Now, that writing was just over six feet from the ground. It was child's play for me."

"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 serene and yellow. That was the breadth of a puddle on the garden walk which he had evidently walked across. Patent leather boots had gone around and around the puddle, and the water was clear. There was no mystery about it at all. I am simply accepting of ordinary life a few of those precepts of observation and deduction which I advocated in that article. In 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 glass allowed 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, from some scattered ash from the floor. It was dark in color and flaky—such ash as is only made by a Trichinopoly. I have made a special study of clear 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 Oregon and Lestrade type."

"And the lord's name?" I asked.

"Ah, that was a more daring shot, though I have no doubt that it was right. You must not ask me that at the present state of the affair."

I passed my hand over my brow.

"My head is in a whirl," I remarked; "the more one thinks of it, the more mysterious it grows. There were two men—there were two men—in an empty house? What has become of the cabman who drove them? How could one man compel another to take poison? Where did the blood come from? What was the object of the murder, since robbery had no part in it? How came the woman's ring there? Above all, why should the second man write up the German word *Rache* before decamping? I confess that I cannot see any possible way of reconciling all these facts."

"You sum up the difficulties of the situation succinctly and well," he said. "There is much that is still obscure, though I have quite made up my mind on the main facts. As to the Lestrade's discovery, it was simply a blind induced to put the police upon a wrong track, by suggesting socialism and secret societies. It was done by a German spy, and if you noticed, was printed, somewhat after the German fashion. Now a real German invariably prints in the Latin character, so that we may safely say that this was not written by one, but by a clumsy imitator, who could not write in Latin. It was a ruse, to divert inquiry into a wrong channel. I'm not going to tell you much more of the case, doctor. You know a conjurer gets no credit when one he has explained his trick, and if I show you too much of my method of working you will come to the conclusion that I am a very ordinary individual after all."

"I shall never do that," I answered; "you have brought detection as near an exact science as it ever will be brought in this world."

"My companion flushed up with pleasure at my words and the earnest way in which I uttered them. I had already observed that he was as sensitive to flattery on the score of his art as any girl could be of her beauty. "I'll tell you one other thing," he said. "Patent-leathers and Square toes came in the same cab and they walked down the pathway together as friendly as possible—arm in arm, in all probability. When they got inside they walked up and down the room—or rather, Patent-leathers stood still while Square-toes walked up and down. I can read that in the dust; and I could read that as he walked, he grew more and more excited. That is shown by the increased length of his strides. He was talking all the while, and working himself up, no doubt, into a fury. Then the tragedy occurred. I've told you all I know myself, now for the rest is mere surmise and conjecture. We have a good working basis, however, on which to start. We must hurry up, for I want to go to Hall's concert to hear Norman Neruda this afternoon."

"There's a half sovereign for you," my companion said, standing up and taking his hat. "I am afraid, Rance, that you will never rise in the force. That head of yours should be for use as well as ornament. You might have gained your sergeant's stripes last night. The man whom you held in your hands is the man who holds the key 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 she chops in she plays so magnificently, *Tristralia-lira-lira!*"

Leaning back in the cab, this amateur bloodhound carried 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 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 stern-wheel steamer, accoutred to play at sea, with its masts, rigging, and freight, which 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 Alviso tied up to 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 Eason 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, but the water had already gone down so low that his prow struck last in the mud when he got up steam and tried to turn the paddle wheels and move out into navigable water. And here he has stuck ever since, becoming resigned to his situation 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.

Several Kruger Sovereigns, the last issued by the ex-president of the Transvaal, and struck in his train near Machadoro in 1890, are now on view in Lausanne.

John Philip Sousa has sent to King Edward a copy of his march, "Imperial Edward," beautifully illuminated on vellum in antique fashion and enclosed in a gold-mounted morocco case.

The statue of the late Governor Roosevelt by F. Floner is to be unveiled in Waterbury, N. Y., on Labor day, Sept. 1. The statue is the work of St. Gaudens, one of the world's most famous sculptors.

As many as 7,287 men have been elected to the national house since the American congress was organized. The number does not include those who have occupied seats and been thrown out on contests.

Father Hartman, the young Austrian monk who composed in his monastery cell an oration which European critics pronounce a masterpiece, has been feted in Rome and St. Petersburg, and is now the hero of the hour at Vienna.

Sir George White, who would, in the ordinary course, have been retired from the British army this month, has been given an extension, and will retain the governorship and command-in-chief at Gibraltar until July 4, 1905.

Jonathan Littlefield, of Biddeford, Me., is one of the most persistent souvenir hunters in the United States. When Prince Henry was here he secured his autograph, which was sent directly under the name of President McKinley in his collection, and he has also splinters of the floor where the president stood when he was shot.

The announcement that King Oscar of Sweden is writing his memoirs hardly comes as a surprise, for the reason that he has so frequently and successfully ventured into literature that he might reasonably be expected to try his hand at state chronicles and personal reminiscences.

William Blair of River Edge, New Jersey, celebrated his sixtieth birthday on July 4. He was an intimate friend of General Winfield Scott, for whom he made a hammock to be used on his trip to Mexico, and paid Commodore Vanderbilt 25 cents to row him across the Hudson when the latter was a ferryman.

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Timber Land, Act June 3, 1892. NOTICE FOR PUBLICATION. U. S. Land Office. Vancouver, Wash., June 12, 1892. Notice is hereby given that in compliance with the provisions of the act of Congress of June 3, 1892, entitled "An act for the sale of timber lands in the States of California, Oregon, Nevada, and Washington Territory," as extended to all the Public Land States by act of August 4, 1892.

James K. Young, of Troutlake, county of Multnomah, State of Oregon, has this day filed in this office her sworn statement No. 258, for the purchase of the 1/4 sec. 24, Township 6 north, Range 11 east, W. M., and will offer proof to show that the land sought is more valuable for its timber or stone than for agricultural purposes, and to establish her claim to said land before the Register and Receiver of this office at Vancouver, Wash., on Thursday, the 15th day of September, 1892.

He names as witnesses: Frank C. Young, of Troutlake, county of Multnomah, State of Oregon; Andrew J. Derby, of Troutlake, county of Multnomah, State of Oregon; James F. Cox, of Troutlake, county of Multnomah, State of Oregon; and James F. Cox, of Troutlake, county of Multnomah, State of Oregon.

Andrew J. Derby, of Troutlake, county of Multnomah, State of Oregon, has this day filed in this office her sworn statement No. 259, for the purchase of the 1/4 sec. 24, Township 6 north, Range 11 east, W. M., and will offer proof to show that the land sought is more valuable for its timber or stone than for agricultural purposes, and to establish her claim to said land before the Register and Receiver of this office at