

## The Sign of Four.

### CHAPTER VII.—Continued.

The east had been gradually whitening, and we could now see some distance in the cold gray light. The square, massive house, with its black, empty windows and high, bare walls, towered up, sad and forlorn, behind us. Our course led right across the grounds, in and out among the trenches and pits with which they were scarred and intersected. The whole place, with its scattered dirt-heaps and ill-grown shrubs, had a blighted, ill-omened look which harmonized with the black tragedy which hung over it.

On reaching the boundary wall Toby ran along, whining eagerly, underneath its shadow and stopped finally in a corner screened by a young beech. Where the two walls joined several bricks had been loosened and the crevices left were worn down and rounded upon the lower side, as though they had frequently been used as a ladder. Holmes clambered up, and taking the dog from me, he dropped it over upon the other side.

"There's the print of wooden-legs' hand," he remarked, as I mounted up beside him. "You see the slight smudge of blood upon the white plaster. What a lucky thing it is that we have had no very heavy rain since yesterday! The scent will lie upon the road in spite of their eight-and-twenty hours' start."

I confess that I had my doubts myself when I reflected upon the great traffic which had passed along the London road in the interval. My fears were soon appeased, however. Toby never hesitated or swerved, but waddled on in his peculiar rolling fashion. Clearly, the pungent smell of the creosote rose high above all other contending scents.

"Do not imagine," said Holmes, "that I depend for my success in this case upon the mere chance of one of these fellows having put his foot in the chemical. I have knowledge now which would enable me to trace them in many different ways. This, however, is the readiest, and, since fortune has put it into our hands, I should be culpable if I neglected it. It has, however, prevented the case from becoming the pretty little intellectual problem which it at one time promised to be. There might have been some credit to be gained out of it, but for this too palpable clew."

"There is credit, and to spare," said I. "I assure you, Holmes, that I marvel at the means by which you obtain your results in this case, even more than I did in the Jefferson Hope murder. The thing seems to me to be deeper and more inexplicable. How, for example, could you describe with such confidence the wooden-legged man?"

"Pshaw, my dear boy! it was simplicity itself. I don't wish to be theatrical. It is all patent and above-board. Two officers who were in command of a convict guard learn an important secret as to buried treasure. A map is drawn for them by an Englishman named Jonathan Small. You remember that we saw the name upon the chart in Captain Morstan's possession. He had signed it in behalf of himself and his associates—the sign of the four, as he somewhat dramatically called it. Aided by this chart, the officers—or one of them—gets the treasure and brings it to England, leaving, we will suppose, some condition under which he received it unfulfilled. Now, then, why did not Jonathan Small get the treasure himself? The answer is obvious. The chart is dated at a time when Morstan was brought into close association with convicts. Jonathan Small did not get the treasure because he and his associates were themselves convicts and could not get away."

"But this is mere speculation," said I. "It is more than that. It is the only hypothesis which covers the facts. Let us see how it fits in with the sequel. Major Sholto remains at peace for some years, happy in the possession of his treasure. Then he receives a letter from India which gives him a great fright. What was that?"

"A letter to say that the men whom he had wronged had been set free."

"Or had escaped. That is much more likely, for he would have known what their term of imprisonment was. It would not have been a surprise to him. What does he do then? He guards himself against a wooden-legged man—a white man, mark you, for he mistakes a white tradesman for him, and actually fires a pistol at him. Now, only one white man's name is on the chart. The others are Hindoos or Mohammedans. There is no other white man. Therefore we may say with confidence that the wooden-legged man is identical with Jonathan Small. Does the reasoning strike you as being faulty?"

"No; it is clear and concise."

"Well, now, let us put ourselves in the place of Jonathan Small. Let us look at it from his point of view. He comes to England with the double idea of regaining what he would consider to be his rights and of having his revenge upon the man who had wronged him. He found out where Sholto lived, and very possibly he established communications with someone inside the house. There is this butler, Lal Rao, whom we have not seen. Mrs. Bernstone gives him far from a good character. Small could not find out, however, where the treasure was hid, for no one ever knew, save the major and one

faithful servant who had died. Suddenly Small learns that the major is on his death-bed. In a frenzy lest the secret of the treasure die with him, he runs the gauntlet of the guards, makes his way to the dying man's window, and is only deterred from entering by the presence of his two sons. Mad with hate, however, against the dead man, he enters the room that night, searches his private papers in the hope of discovering some memorandum relating to the treasure, and finally leaves a memento of his visit in the short inscription upon the card. He had doubtless planned beforehand that, should he slay the major, he would leave some such record upon the body as a sign that it was not a common murder, but, from the point of view of the four associates, something in the nature of an act of justice. Whimsical and bizarre conceits of this kind are common enough in the annals of crime, and usually afford valuable indications as to the criminal. Do you follow all this?"

"Very clearly."

"Now, what could Jonathan Small do? He could only continue to keep a secret watch upon the efforts made to find the treasure. Possibly he leaves England and only comes back at intervals. Then comes the discovery of the garret, and he is instantly informed of it. We again trace the presence of some confederate in the household. Jonathan, with his wooden leg, is utterly unable to reach the lofty room of Bartholomew Sholto. He takes with him, however, a rather curious associate, who gets over this difficulty, but dips his naked foot into creosote, whence come Toby, and a six mile limp for a half-pay officer with a damaged tendo Achilles."

"But it was the associate, and not Jonathan, who committed the crime."

"Quite so. And rather to Jonathan's disgust, to judge by the way he stamped about when he got into the room. He bore no grudge against Bartholomew Sholto, and would have preferred if he could have been simply bound and gagged. He did not wish to put his head in a halter. There was no help for it, however, the savage instincts of his companion had broken out, and the poison had done its work: so Jonathan Small left his record, lowered the treasure-box to the ground, and followed it himself. That was the train of events as far as I can decipher them. Of course as to his personal appearance he must be middle-aged, and must be sun-burned after serving his time in such an oven as the Andamans. His height is readily calculated from the length of his stride, and we know that he was bearded. His hairiness was the one point which impressed itself upon Thaddeus Sholto when he saw him at the window. I don't know that there is anything else."

"The associate?"

"Ah, well, there is no great mystery in that. But you will know all about it soon enough. How sweet the morning air is! See how that one little cloud floats like a pink feather from some gigantic flamingo. Now the red rim of the sun pushes itself over the London cloud-band. It shines on a good many folk, but on none, I dare bet, who are on a stranger errand than you and I. How small we feel with our petty ambitions and strivings in the presence of the great elemental forces of nature! Are you well up in your Jean Paul?"

"Fairly so. I worked back to him through Carlyle."

"That was like following the brook to the parent lake. He makes one curious and profound remark. It is that the chief proof of man's real greatness lies in his perception of his own smallness. It argues, you see, a power of comparison and of appreciation which is in itself a proof of nobility. There is much food for thought in Richter. You have not a pistol, have you?"

"I have my stick."

"It is just possible that we may need something of the sort if we get to their lair. Jonathan I shall leave to you, but if the other turns nasty I shall shoot him dead."

He took out his revolver as he spoke, and, having loaded two of the chambers, he put it back into the right-hand pocket of his jacket.

We had during this time been following the guidance of Toby down the half-rural villa-lined roads which lead to the metropolis. Now, however, we were beginning to come among continuous streets, where laborers and dockmen were already astir, and slatternly women were taking down shutters and brushing door-steps. At the square-topped corner public-houses business was just beginning, and rough-looking men were emerging, rubbing their sleeves across their beards after their morning wet. Strange dogs sauntered up and stared wonderingly at us as we passed, but our inimitable friend Toby looked neither to the right nor to the left, but trotted onwards with his nose to the ground and an occasional eager whine which spoke of a hot scent.

We had traversed Streattham, Brixton, Camberwell, and now found ourselves in Kennington Lane, having borne away through the side streets to the east of the Oval. The men whom we pursued seemed to have taken a curiously zigzag road, with the idea probably of escaping observation. They had never kept to the main road if a parallel side-street would serve their turn. At the foot of Kennington

Lane they had edged away to the left through Bond street and Miles street. Where the latter street turns into Knight's Place, Toby ceased to advance, but began to run backwards and forwards with one ear cocked and the other drooping, the very picture of canine indecision. Then he waddled round in circles, looking up to us from time to time, as if to ask for sympathy in his embarrassment.

"What the deuce is the matter with the dog?" growled Holmes. "They surely would not take a cab, or go off in a balloon."

"Perhaps they stood here for some time," I suggested.

"Ah! it's all right. He's off again," said my companion in a tone of relief.

He was indeed off, for after sniffing round again he suddenly made up his mind, and darted away with an energy and determination such as he had not yet shown. The scent appeared to be much hotter than before, for he had not even to put his nose on the ground, but tugged at his leash and tried to break into a run. I could see by the gleam in Holmes' eyes that he thought we were nearing the end of our journey.

Our course now ran down Nine Elms until we came to Broderick and Nelson's large timber-yard, just past the White Eagle tavern. Here the dog, frantic with excitement, turned down through the side gate into the inclosure, where the sawyers were already at work. On the dog raced through sawdust and shavings, down an alley, round a passage, between two wood-piles, and finally, with a triumphant yelp, sprang upon a large barrel which still stood upon the hand-trolley on which it had been brought. With lolling tongue and blinking eyes, Toby stood upon the cask, looking from one to the other of us for some sign of appreciation. The staves of the barrel and the wheels of the trolley were smeared with a dark liquid, and the whole air was heavy with the smell of creosote.

Sherlock Holmes and I looked blankly at each other, and then burst simultaneously into an uncontrollable fit of laughter.

### CHAPTER VIII.

#### THE BAKER STREET IRREGULARS.

"What now?" I asked. "Toby has lost his character for infallibility."

"He acted according to his lights," said Holmes, lifting him down from the barrel and walking him out of the timber-yard. "If you consider how much creosote is carted about London in one day, it is no great wonder that our trail should have been crossed. It is much used now, especially for the seasoning of wood. Poor Toby is not to blame."

"We must get on the main scent again, I suppose."

"Yes. And, fortunately, we have no distance to go. Evidently what puzzled the dog at the corner of Knight's Place was that there were two different trails running in opposite directions. We took the wrong one. It only remains to follow the other."

There was no difficulty about this. On leading Toby to the place where he had committed his fault, he cast about in a wide circle and finally dashed off in a fresh direction.

"We must take care that he does not now bring us to the place where the creosote barrel came from," I observed. "I had thought of that. But you notice that he keeps on the pavement, whereas the barrel passed down the roadway. No, we are on the true scent now."

It tended down towards the riverside, running through Belmont Place and Prince's street. At the end of Broad street it ran right down to the water's edge, where there was a small wooden wharf. Toby led us to the very edge of this, and there stood whining, looking out on the dark current beyond.

"We are out of luck," said Holmes. "They have taken to a boat here."

Several small punts and skiffs were lying about in the water and on the edge of the wharf. We took Toby round to each in turn, but, though he sniffed earnestly, he made no sign.

Close to the rude landing-stage was a small brick house, with a wooden placard slung out through the second window. "Mordecai Smith" was printed across it in large letters, and, underneath, "Boats to hire by the hour or day." A second inscription above the door informed us that a steam launch was kept—a statement which was confirmed by a great pile of coke upon the jetty. Sherlock Holmes looked slowly round, and his face assumed an ominous expression.

"This looks bad," said he. "These fellows are sharper than I expected. They seem to have covered their tracks. There has, I fear, been preconcerted management here."

He was approaching the door of the house, when it opened and a little curly-headed lad of six came running out, followed by a stoutish, red-faced woman with a large sponge in her hand.

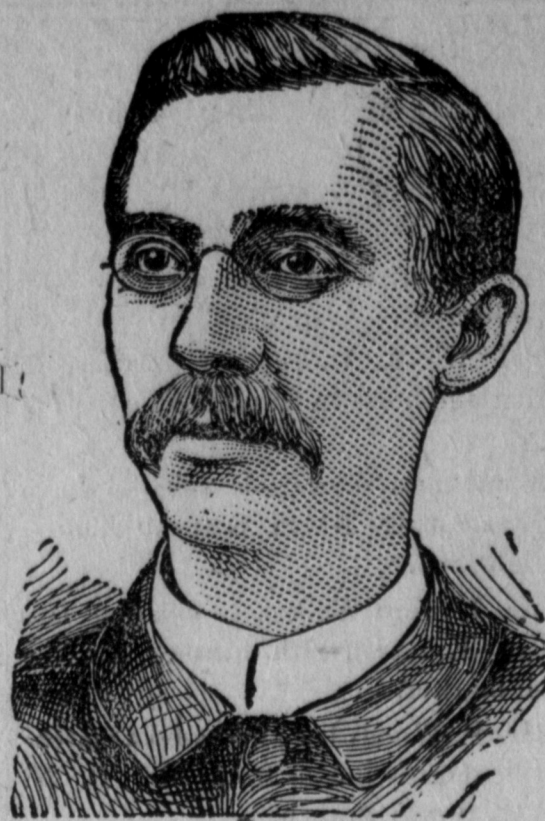
"You come back and be washed, Jack," she shouted. "Come back, you young imp; for if your father comes home and finds you like that, he'll let us hear of it."

"Dear little chap!" said Holmes strategically. "What a rosy-cheeked young rascal! Now, Jack, is there anything you would like?"

The youth pondered for a moment.

"I'd like a shillin'," said he.

"Nothing you would like better?"



Rev. William Hollinshead  
Of Sparta, N. J., voluntarily says:

"To Whom it May Concern:  
"Unasked I deem it my duty to a suffering humanity whose bodies and souls I would have healthy, to tell them of the value of Hood's Sarsaparilla. While living in Ohio one of my children was greatly

#### Afflicted With Boils

having 30 on her limbs, and being unable to walk. I had heard of Hood's Sarsaparilla, and bought a bottle, half of which cured entirely. Two years after, another child was afflicted as badly. I used the other half bottle of Hood's Sarsaparilla with like results. About four years after, the child first afflicted was again tormented like Job, and I bought a bottle (on Sunday at that) and again a cure. I gave some of the medicine to a poor woman and two children; they were helped as were mine. Through a testimonial sent to C. I. Hood & Co., inquiries came from all the country, asking if it was a 'bona fide' testimonial, and of course I wrote all that it was, and have the knowledge of

#### Scores and Scores

Of persons helped or cured by Hood's Sarsaparilla. Mild cases of rheumatism have yielded to it. Biliousness and bad liver have been corrected in my own family. This is the only patent medicine I have felt like praising. I speak not for C. I. Hood, but for the Jobs who are impatient and are tormented beyond endurance. Nothing I know of will cleanse the blood, stimulate the liver, or clean the stomach so perfectly as

#### Hood's Sarsaparilla

Any person wishing to know more, enclosing a stamp will be informed. Yours for the health, happiness and virtue of humanity.  
WILLIAM HOLLINSHEAD, pastor of Presbyterian church, Sparta, N. J.  
Hood's Pills cure habitual constipation.

GOOD  
COMMERCIAL  
AND OTHER  
PRINTING  
AT  
THE REVIEW  
OFFICE

W. C. PITFIELD, General Partner.  
S. HAYWARD, Special Partner.  
W. C. PITFIELD & CO.  
IMPORTERS AND JOBBERS OF  
BRITISH, FOREIGN and  
DOMESTIC

Dry Goods,  
TEAS, &c.,

CANTERBURY STREET, ST. JOHN, N. B.

FIRST-CLASS  
Livery Stable!

I am prepared to furnish  
FIRST-CLASS TEAMS  
to accommodate the travelling public, at short notice to any part of the country.

ISAAC TRENHOLM,  
Buctouche, June 16, 1892. (6m)

## SPRING GOODS!

### TO WHOLESALE BUYERS

We now have the most complete stock to be had in the LOWER PROVINCES.

BY LATE ARRIVALS WE HAVE RECEIVED:—

5960 Cases Window Glass.	5960 Cases Polished Plate Glass.
2250 bbls. Portland Cement.	25 tons Zinc and Spelter.
20 tons Iron Wire.	3000 boxes Tin Plates.
10 tons Pig Lead.	2 tons Pig Tin.
2 car loads White Leads.	12 cars Manila Cordage.
100 bbls. Linseed Oil.	100 bbls. Whiting.
1200 packages General Shelf Goods.	46 bales Net and Fishing Twines.

W. H. THORNE & CO.

ST. JOHN, N. B.

JOHN HANNAH,

—MANUFACTURER OF—

Woven Wire Mattresses,

Of Different Grades for the Trade only. Warranted not to sag.

To be had from all the principal furniture and general dealers in the Maritime Provinces.

Repairing promptly done. 105 CITY ROAD, ST. JOHN, N. B.

Millers' Tanning Extract Co.  
(LIMITED).

—WORKS AT—

Millerton and Mortimore, N. B.

Cable Addresses—"Hypotan," London; and "Miller," Miramichi.

A very complete stock of General Goods, cheap for Cash or Trade, at OUR MORTIMORE STORE.

## NEW GOODS!

Nearly every day brings in new additions to stock. We buy nothing but the Plums in the trade. Our expenses are light, and therefore we can and will give our patrons the advantages of our purchases every time. We mean to sell goods and mean that our prices will do it. Those who want best value for their money should not fail to come to us. We will make it to their interest to do so. We are having much of a run now on for Chambrays for ladies' house Wrappers. They are only 8c a yard, worth twice the money.

J. FLANAGAN

90 MAIN STREET, MONCTON, N. B.

RICHARD SULLIVAN & CO.

—WHOLESALE—

Wine and Spirit Merchants,

—IMPORTERS AND DEALERS IN—

TEAS, TOBACCOS and CIGARS,

54 DOCK STREET, ST. JOHN, N. B.

Bonded Warehouse No. 8.

NEAT! STYLISH! SERVICEABLE!

THIS IS WHAT IS REQUIRED IN A SUIT OF CLOTHES.

MURDOCK McLEOD'S

TAILORING ESTABLISHMENT,

113 MAIN STREET,

MONCTON,

IS THE PLACE TO GET A SUIT OF CLOTHES MADE.

A Fine Stock of Cloths on hand to select from.

DO YOU WANT A GOOD GARMENT AT A SMALL PRICE?

The subscriber has just received a full assortment of

Scotch and Canadian Tweeds, Ladies' Figured and Plain Mantle Cloths, Men's Felt Hats, &c., which will be sold 20 per cent lower than the regular retail prices.

L. J. REDDIN,  
BUCTOUCHE.

Subscribe for THE REVIEW.

Only \$1.00.