The RETURN of SHERLOCK HOLMES

By A. CONAN DOYLE

Illustrated by F. D. STEELE

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THE ADVENTURE OF THE MISSING THREE-QUARTER

(Continued.)

"My dear Watson, can you doubt that it was to him that I first applied? I do not know whether it came from his own innate depravity or from the promptings of his master, but he was rude enough to set a dog at me. Neither dog nor man liked the look of my stick, however, and the matter fell through. Relations were strained after that, and further inquiries out of the question. All that I have learned I got from a friendly native in the yard of our own inn. It was he who told me of the doctor's habits and of his daily journey. At that instant, to give point to his words, the carriage came round to the door."

"Could you not follow it?"

"Excellent, Watson! You are scintillating this evening. The idea did cross my mind. There is, as you may have observed, a bicycle shop next to our inn. Into this I rushed, engaged a bicycle, and was able to get started before the carriage was quite out of sight. I rapidly overtook it, and then, keeping at a discreet distance of a hundred yards or so I followed its lights until we were clear of the town. We had got well out on the country road, when a somewhat mortifying incident occurred. The carriage stopped, the doctor alighted, walked swiftly back to where I had also halted, and told me in an excellent sardonic fashion that he feared the road was narrow, and that he hoped his carriage did not impede the passage of my bicycle. Nothing could have been more admirable than his way of putting it. I at once rode past the carriage, and, keeping to the main road, I went on for a few miles, and then halted in a convenient place to see if the carriage passed. There was no sign of it, however, and so it became evident that it had turned down one of several side roads which I had observed. I rode back, but again saw nothing of the carriage, and now, as you perceive, it has returned after me. Of course, I had at the outset no particular reason to connect these journeys with the disappearance of Godfrey Staunton, and was only inclined to investigate them on the general grounds that everything which concerns Dr. Armstrong is at present of interest to us, but now that I find he keeps so keen a lookout upon anyone who may follow him on these excursions, the affair appears more important, and I shall not be satisfied until I have made the matter clear."

"We can follow him tomorrow."

"Can we? It is not so easy as you seem to think. You are not familiar with Cambridgeshire scenery, are you? It does not lend itself to concealment. All this country that I passed over tonight is as flat and clean as the palm of your hand, and the man we are following is no fool, as he very clearly showed tonight. I have wired to Overton to let us know any fresh London developments at this address, and in the meantime we can only concentrate our attention upon Dr. Armstrong, whose name the obliging young lady at the office allowed me to read upon the counterfoil of Staunton's urgent message. He knows where the young man is — to that I'll swear, and if he knows, then it must be our own fault if we cannot manage to know also. At present it must be admitted that the odd trick is in his possession, and, as you are aware, Watson, it is not my habit to leave the game in that condition."

And yet the next day brought us no nearer to the solution of the mystery. A note was handed in after breakfast, which Holmes passed across to me with a smile.

"Sir," it ran, "I can assure you that you are wasting your time in dogging my movements. I have, as you discovered last night, a window at the back of my brougham, and if you desire a twenty-mile ride which will lead you to the spot from which you started, you have only to follow me. Meanwhile, I can inform you that no spying upon me can in any way help Mr. Godfrey Staunton, and I am convinced that the best service you can do to that gentleman is to return at once to London and to report to your employer that you are unable to trace him. Your time in Cambridge will certainly be wasted.

"Yours faithfully,
"LESLIE ARMSTRONG."

"An out-spoken, honest antagonist is the doctor," said Holmes, "Well, well, he excites my curiosity, and I must really know before I leave him."

"His carriage is at his door now," said I. "There he is stepping into it. I saw him glance up at our window as he did so. Suppose I try my luck upon the bicycle?"

"No, no, my dear Watson! With all respect for your natural acumen, I do not think you are quite a match for the worthy doctor. I think that possibly I can attain our end by some independent explorations of my own. I am afraid that I must leave you to your own devices, as the appearance of two enquiring strangers upon a sleepy countryside might excite more gossip than I care for. No doubt you will find some sights to amuse you in this venerable city, and I hope to bring back a more favorable report to you before evening."

Once more, however, my friend was destined to be disappointed. He came back at night weary and unsuccessful.

"I have had a blank day, Watson. Having got the doctor's general direction. I spent the day in visiting all the villages upon that side of Cambridge, and comparing notes with publicans and other local news agencies. I have covered some ground. Chesterton, Histon, Waterbeach, and Oakington have been each explored, and have each proved disappointing. The daily appearance of a brougham and pair could hardly have been overlooked in such Sleepy Hollows. The doctor has scored once more. I's there a telegram for me?"

"Yes, I opened it. Here it is: 'Ask for Pompey from Jeremy Dixon, Trinity College.' I don't understand it."

"Oh, it is clear enough. It is from our friend Overton, and is in answer to a question from me. I'll just send round a note for Mr. Jeremy Dixon, and then I have no doubt that our luck will turn. By the way, is there any news of the match?"

"Yes, the local evening paper has an excellent account in its last edition. Oxford won by a goal and two tries. The last sentences of the description say: 'The defeat of the Light Blues may be entirely attributed to the unfortunate absence of the crack International, Godfrey Staunton, whose want was felt at every instant of the game. The lack of combination in the three-quarter line and the weakness both in attack and defence more than neutralized the efforts of a heavy and hard-working pack.'

"Then our friend Overton's forebodings have been justified," said Holmes. "Personally I am in agreement with Dr. Armstrong, and football does not come within my horizon. Early to bed tonight, Watson, for I foresee that tomorrow may be an eventful day."

I was horrified by my first glimpse of Holmes next morning, for he sat by the fire holding his tiny hypodermic syringe. I associated that instrument with the single weakness of his nature, and I feared the worst when I saw it glittering in his hand. He laughed at my expression of dismay, and laid it upon the table.

"No, no, my dear fellow, there is no cause for alarm. It is not upon this occasion the instrument of evil, but it will rather prove to be the key which will unlock our mystery. On this syringe I base all my hopes. I have just returned from a small scouting expedition, and everything is favorable. Eat a good breakfast, Watson, for I propose to get upon Dr. Armstrong's trail today, and once on it I will not stop for rest or food until I run him to his burrow."

"In that case," said I, "we had best carry our breakfast with us, for he is making an early start. His carriage is at the door."

"Never mind. Let him go. He will be clever if he can drive where I cannot follow him. When you have finished, come downstairs with me, and I will introduce you to a detective who is a very eminent specialist in the work that lies before us."

When we descended I followed Holmes into the stable yard, where he opened the door of a loose-box and led out a squat, lop-eared, white-and-tan dog, something between a beagle and a foxhound.

"Let me introduce you to Pompey," said he. "Pompey is the pride of the local draghounds — no very great flier, as his build will show, but a staunch hound on a scent. Well, Pompey, you may not be fast, but I expect you will be too fast for a couple of middle-aged London gentlemen, so I will take the liberty of fastening this leather leash to your collar. Now, boy, come along, and show what you can do." He led him across to the doctor's door. The dog sniffed round for an instant, and then with a shrill whine of excitement started off down the street, tugging at his leash in his efforts to go faster. In half an hour, we were clear of the town and hastening down a country road.

"What have you done, Holmes?" I asked.

"A threadbare and venerable device, but useful upon occasion. I walked into the doctor's yard this morning, and shot my syringe full of aniseed over the hind wheel. A draghound will follow aniseed from here to John o' Groat's, and our friend, Armstrong, would have to drive through the Cam before he would shake Pompey off his trial. Oh, the cunning rascal! This is how he gave me the slip the other night."

The dog had suddenly turned out of the main road into a grass-grown lane. Half a mile farther this opened into another broad road, and the trail turned hard to the right in the direction of the town, which we had just quitted. The road took a sweep to the south of the town, and continued in the opposite direction to that in which we started.

"This detour has been entirely for our benefit, then?" said Holmes. "No wonder that my inquiries among those villages led to nothing. The doctor has certainly played the game for all it is worth, and one would like to know the reason for such elaborate deception. This should be the village of Trumpington to the right of us. And, by Jove! here is the brougham coming round the corner. Quick, Watson—quick, or we are done."

He sprang through a gate into a field, dragging the reluctant Pompey after him. We had hardly got under the shelter of the hedge when the carriage rattled past. I caught a glimpse of Dr. Armstrong within, his shoulders bowed, his head sunk on his hands, the very image of distress. I could tell, by my companion's graver face, that he also had seen.

"I fear there is some dark ending to our quest," said he. "It cannot be long before we know it. Come, Pompey! Ah, it is the cottage in the field!"

There could be no doubt that we had reached the end of our journey. Pompey ran about and whined eagerly outside the gate, where the marks of the brougham's wheels were still to be seen. A footpath led across to the lonely cottage. Holmes tied the dog to the hedge, and we hastened onwards. My friend knocked at the little rustic door, and knocked again without response. And yet the cottage was not deserted, for a low sound came to our ears—a kind of drone of misery and despair, which was indescribably melancholy. Holmes paused irresolute, and then he glanced back at the road which he had just traversed. A brougham was coming down it, and there could be no mistaking those grey horses.

"By Jove, the doctor is coming back!" cried Holmes. "That settles it. We are bound to see what it means before he comes."

He opened the door, and we stepped into the hall. The droning sound swelled louder upon our ears until it became one long, deep wail of distress. It came from upstairs. Holmes darted up, and I followed him. He pushed open a half-closed door, and we both stood appalled at the sight before us.

A woman, young and beautiful, was lying dead upon the bed. Her calm, pale face, with dim, wide-opened blue eyes, looked upwards from amid a great tangle of golden hair. At the foot of the bed, half sitting, half kneeling, his face buried in the clothes, was a young man, whose frame was racked by his sobs. So absorbed was he by his bitter grief, that he never looked up until Holmes' hand was on his shoulder.

"Are you Mr. Godfrey Staunton?"

"Yes, yes, I am—but you are too late. She is dead."

The man was so dazed that he could not be made to understand that we were anything but doctors who had been sent to his assistance. Holmes was endeavoring to utter a few words of consolation, and to explain the alarm which had been caused to his friends by his sudden disappearance, when there was a step upon the stairs, and there was the heavy, stern, questioning face of Dr. Armstrong at the door.

"So, gentlemen," said he, "you have attained your end, and have certainly chosen a particularly delicate moment for your intrusion. I would not brawl in the presence of death, but I can assure you that if I were a younger man your monstrous conduct would not pass with impunity."

"Excuse me, Dr. Armstrong, I think we are a little at cross-purposes," said my friend, with dignity. "If you could step downstairs with us, we may each be able to give some light to the other upon this miserable affair."

A minute later, the grim doctor and ourselves were in the sitting-room below.

"Well, sir?" said he.

"I wish you to understand, in the first place, that I am not employed by Lord Mount-James, and that my sympathies in this matter are entirely against that nobleman. When a man is lost it is my duty to ascertain his fate, but having done so the matter ends so far as I am concerned, and so long as there is nothing criminal, I am much more anxious to hush up private scandals than to give them publicity. If, as I imagine there is no breach of the law in this matter, you can absolutely depend upon my discretion and my co-operation in keeping the facts out of the papers."

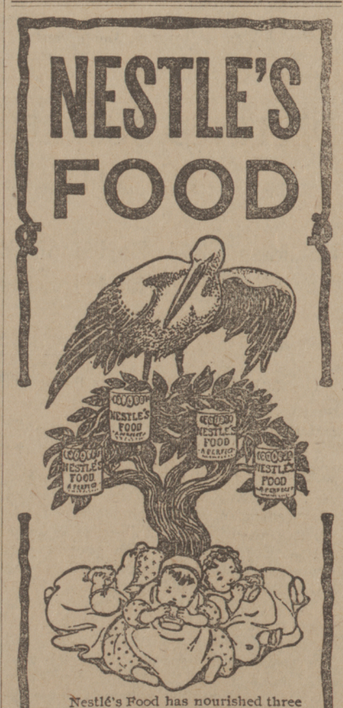
Dr. Armstrong took a quick step forward and wrung Holmes by the hand.

"You are a good fellow," said he. "I had misjudged you. I thank Heaven that my compunction at leaving poor Staunton all alone in his plight caused me to turn my carriage back, and so to make your acquaintance. Knowing as much as you do, the situation is very easily explained. A year ago Godfrey Staunton lodged in London for a time, and became passionately attached to his landlady's daughter, whom he married. She was as good as she was beautiful, and as intelligent as she was good. No man need be ashamed of such a wife. But Godfrey was the heir of this crabbed old nobleman, and it was quite certain that the news of his marriage would have been the end of his inheritance. I knew the lad well, and I loved him for his many excellent qualities. I did all I could to help him to keeu things straight. We did our best to keep the thing from everyone, for, when once such a whisper gets about, it is not long before everyone has heard it. Thanks to this lonely cottage and his own discretion, Godfrey has up to now succeeded. Their secret was known to no one save to me and to one excellent servant, who has at present gone for assistance to Trumpington. But at last there came a terrible blow in the shape of dangerous illness to his wife. It was consumption of the most virulent kind. The poor boy was half crazed with grief, and yet he had to go to London to play this match, for he could not get out of it without explanations which would expose his secret. I tried to cheer him up by wire, and he sent me one in reply, imploring me to do all I could. This was the telegram which you appear in some inexplicable way to have seen. I did not tell him how urgent the danger was, for I knew that he could do no good here, but I sent the truth to the girl's father, and he very injudiciously communicated it to Godfrey. The result was that he came straight away in a state bordering on frenzy, and has remained in the same state, kneeling at the end of her bed, until this morning death put an end to her sufferings. That is all, Mr. Holmes, and I am sure that I can rely upon your discretion and that of your friend."

Holmes grasped the doctor's hand.

"Come, Watson," said he, and we passed from that house of grief into the pale sunlight of the winter day.

(To be continued).



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TRIED FOR ASSAULT

A story from the golf links occupied Judge Ritchie's attention yesterday afternoon when E. F. Jones was charged with assault by a lad named Frank Curran and was fined $20. The trouble arose on the links last Thursday afternoon. Mr. Jones ordered Curran off the grounds as he had not a caddy's badge.

Six boys appeared as witnesses and said that Curran was walking away when Mr. Jones jumped off the verandah of the club house and seized him by the neck and pushed him. They all agreed in saying that Mr. Jones also struck Curran in the face and kicked him. A young lady, who is a prominent member of the club, was also mentioned as being present and encouraging Mr. Jones. The latter practically admitted the assault but pleaded provocation.

Judge Ritchie said it was apparent that more than the necessary amount of force had been used in putting Curran off private grounds. C. J. Coster appeared for the defence.

Sea Gull Surprises Cigarette Smoker

While a number of people were recently watching the antics of the seagulls, which rise continually to the parapet of London Bridge, in search of food which several of the spectators were throwing to them, one gentleman gave a large bag of sprats to the gulls, who eagerly took the fish from his fingers one at a time. Standing close by was another spectator, who held an unlighted cigarette in his lips Judge of the latter's surprise when one daring bird, finding no sprat awaiting him, suddenly swooped down on the cigarette and deftly removed it from the owner's mouth. The seagull evidently knew that the smoker was using a Sweet Caporal cigarette, which, according to the Lancet, is "the purest form in which tobacco can be smoked."

OUTING FOR AUGUST

During the fierce heat of August we try—if not bodily, at least mentally — to get away from frenzied finance, political strife, and all other nerve racking influences, and to do this we must read such matter as deals with the healthier side of life.

The Outing Magazine is pre-eminent in this field. The opening superbly illustrated article, "When the River Calls," by L. D. Sherman recounts the pleasures of a canoe trip down the Connecticut and informs the thousands of would-be campers, who are going into the woods at this season of the year, just how it should be done. But those, and by far the vast majority, who cannot escape from glaring streets, are not forgotten.

What an important institution the free public bathing houses along New York's water-front are, can be realized after reading "The Bathers of the City," by Ralph D. Paine. Nearly three million baths were taken in three months last year at the absurdly small cost to the city of a trifle more than one cent a bath.

"The Romance of Red Fox," like wine, grows better as it grows older and is one of the strongest pieces of fiction Charles G. D. Roberts has yet done. The excitement, the charm and the dangers of mountain climbing are all vividly described by George D. Abraham, who also has many useful hints for the novice on where and how to climb and what kind of equipment is necessary.

All those who followed the events of the great international yacht race will be interested in reading Wilson Marshall's story of "How the Emperor's Cup was Won," as told to Arthur Goodrich, the Outing Magazine's representative in England. Mr. Marshall, owner of the Atlantic went over as a passenger on his boat and made careful notes of the voyage.

Edwyn Sandys, under the punning title "A Fit of the Blues," pictures a day with two old salts and the gamy bluefish, ending up with a chaotic storm and a rescue.

In the great middle-west a veritable old-time miracle is being wrought on the great deserts where millions of acres of once barren sand wastes are transformed by irrigation into fertile farms and orchards. "The Winning of the Desert," by Day Allen Willey gives some idea of what this work means to the farmer in increased output per acre.

Automobiles, according to H. P. Burchell, are the greatest incentive to good roads that we have, as every year their importance as a means of country travel is becoming more evident. This article is illustrated by Edward Penfield in pen and ink.

This number of the Outing Magazine also contains a piece of humor by Crayton McCants, and a piece of tragedy by Wm. Macleod Raine — "The Apache Kid" — and the "Regular School and College World," by Ralph D. Paine.

"The Editor's View-Point" is both timely and extensive, treating of the second expedition headed by Delon Wallace and sent by the magazine into Labrador. "College and International Sports" and other important topics.

How to work and feed your dog in summer; make poles, slings and chump rafts for bathers, and take photographs at the sea-shore, are some of the practical articles that go to make up this most complete and fascinating number.

The time given by the liquor license commissioners for J. W. Roop, James Nixon and F. Mundee to close their saloons has expired, and both Messrs. Roop and Nixon's places were closed yesterday. Mr. Mundee, however, had his store open, not for the sale of liquor, but beer. When asked, he said that he was opened under his beer license.

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MR. McISAAC'S VEIWS

He Says the G. T. P. will go Where the Engineers Direct.

C. F. McIsaac, M. P. for Antigonish, was in the city yesterday on his way to Ottawa. He was in conference here with Hon. Mr. Fielding.

On being asked by a reporter with reference to his appointment to the railway commission, he laughingly replied that he had not as yet been officially informed of his appointment, but intimated that he would probably take his seat in a day or two. Asked what he thought of the stand taken by the two Halifax papers, the Recorder and Chronicle, regarding the St. John valley route, Mr. McIsaac said: "Well, as one of the eighteen members from Nova Scotia, I have heard nothing of any such action. For my own part I think that I would be governed by the report of the engineer as between the valley and central routes, and I think ultimately that is the way it will be settled."

He further said that, while he could not speak for the other members from Nova Scotia, he thought outside of the Halifax members that the view he expressed would be generally shared by them. "I think," said the member for Antigonish, "that there is entirely too much sectional feeling stirred by the newspapers of both Halifax and St. John. The question should be looked at from the standpoint of which route is for the general good of Canada.

IN NEW QUARTERS

Board of Fire Underwriters Now Occupying Splendid Offices.

The Board of Fire Underwriters will move into their fine new offices, corner of Church and Canterbury streets, today. For more than three months carpenters and painters have been engaged in remodelling and painting the ground floor of the building formerly occupied by the Gazette newspaper and more latterly by the Evening Times, and as a result the underwriters will have as fine a suite of offices of this kind as there are in Canada.

In the front of the building there are two large plate glass windows, and here is situated the secretary's office. The room which is 20x18, is finished in golden oak, with side railing to match; the floor is of hard pine polished. The walls are rubbed finish and painted a light blue.

On the Church street side is a desk built to the wall the entire length of the room and in front facing the window is a massive roller top desk, which, with the other furniture, corresponds with the finishing.

Immediately to the rear is the board room, 37x19, which is a marvel of the carpenters' and painters' art. The room, which is laid out in antique English style, is finished in mahogany. The walls are panelled four feet from the floor. The ceiling, which is arranged to represent old cross beam idea, is also panelled, and as all the panelling is veneered, some idea of the pains taken and the splendid appearance presented can be had. The floor is of Michigan maple, the bordering being laid in black with three strips of cherry inlaid going all the way round. On the Church street end and to the right is an old fashioned mantel piece of brick, surmounted by a mahogany shelf. The walls are also rubbed and painted to correspond with the front room. The furniture, which corresponds with the finishings, consists of a table, also of a very antique pattern, size 11x4, and the chairs of the old English arm chair style, finished in leather. The room is lighted from seven side windows and two end ones.

Running off the board room on the right is the cabinet room, 14x19, which is finished in oak, with two large cabinets, one on each side, running the full length of the room. The floor is of birch polished. The lavatories are off this room. The carpentering, finishing and part of the painting, besides the furnishing was done by the Howe Woodworking Co., the work being in charge of their foreman, C. E. Bettinson, and the other portion of the painting was done by Willard H. Reid.

Thomas Murray, formerly clerk in the Victoria, has resigned his position and left yesterday for his home in Fredericton, where he will spend a short time before going to the Canadian west. The new clerk is Wallace Hill, formerly with the Queen hotel, Charlottetown (P. E. I.) Mr. Hill, who is a P. E. Islander—his home being in Murray Harbor—previous to his position at the Queen was at the Victoria, more familiarly known as the Davis House, in the island capital. He arrived last night, and immediately assumed his duties.

J. J. Anslow, editor and proprietor of the Hants Journal, Windsor (N. S.), has been in the city for a couple of days as part of a well earned vacation. He has visited Campbellton and other North Shore points, and is now returning home taking in a number of places en route.

The board of health report fifty-three deaths for the month of July.

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