

# The Return of SHERLOCK HOLMES

By A. CONAN DOYLE

Author of "The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes," "The Hound of the Baskervilles," "The Sign of the Four," "A Study in Scarlet," Etc.



ILLUSTRATED BY F. D. STEBLE

"Well, Mr. Holmes, it is difficult for me to refuse you anything, for you have been of use to the force once or twice in the past, and you owe you a good turn at Scotland Yard," said Lestrade. "At the same time I must remain with my prisoner, and I am bound to warn him that anything he may say will appear in evidence against him."

"I wish nothing better," said our client. "All I ask is that you should hear and recognize the absolute truth." Lestrade looked at his watch. "I'll give you half an hour," said he.

"I must explain first," said McFarlane, "that I knew nothing of Mr. Jonas Oldacre. His name was familiar to me, for many years ago my parents were acquainted with him, but they drifted apart. I was very much surprised, therefore, when yesterday about 3 o'clock in the afternoon he walked into my office in the city. But I was still more astonished when he told me the object of his visit. He had in his hand several sheets of a notebook, covered with scribbled writing—here they are—and he laid them on my table.

"Here is my will," said he. "I want you, Mr. McFarlane, to cast it into proper legal shape. I will sit here while you do so."

"I set myself to copy it, and you can imagine my astonishment when I found that, with some reservations, he had left all his property to me. He was a strange little ferretlike man, with white eyelashes, and when I looked up at him I found his keen gray eyes fixed upon me with an unsteady expression. I could hardly believe my own senses as I read the terms of the will, but he explained that he was a bachelor with hardly any living relation, that he had known my parents in his youth and that he had always heard of me as a very deserving young man and was assured that his money would be in worthy hands. Of course I could only stammer out my thanks.

"The will was duly finished, signed and witnessed by my clerk. This is it on the blue paper, and these slips, as I have explained, are the rough draft. Mr. Jonas Oldacre then informed me that there were a number of documents—building leases, title deeds, mortgages, scrip, and so forth—which it was necessary that I should see and understand. He said that his mind would not be easy until the whole thing was settled, and he begged me to come out to his house at Norwood that night, bringing the will with me, and to arrange matters. "Remember, my boy, not one word to your parents about the affair until everything is settled. We will keep it as a little surprise for them." He was very insistent upon this point and made me promise it faithfully.

"You can imagine, Mr. Holmes, that

"I will not be sure, but I believe that it was only half done. Yes, I remember how he pulled it up in order to swing open the window. I could not find my stick, and he said, 'Never mind, my boy. I shall see a good deal of you now, I hope, and I will keep your stick until you come back to claim it.' I left him there, the safe open and the papers made up in packets upon the table. It was so late that I could not get back to Blackheath, so I spent the night at the Anerley Arms, and I knew nothing more until I read of this horrible affair in the morning."

"Anything more that you would like to ask, Mr. Holmes?" said Lestrade, whose eyebrows had gone up once or twice during this remarkable explanation.

"Not until I have been to Blackheath."

"You mean to Norwood," said Lestrade. "Oh, yes; no doubt that is what I must have meant," said Holmes, with his enigmatical smile. Lestrade had learned by more experiences than he would care to acknowledge that that razorlike brain could cut through that which was impenetrable to him. I saw him look curiously at my companion.

"I think I should like to have a word with you presently, Mr. Sherlock Holmes," said he. "Now, Mr. McFarlane, two of my constables are at the door, and there is a four wheeler waiting. The wretched young man arose and with a last beseeching glance at us walked from the room. The officers conducted him to the cab, but Lestrade remained.

Holmes had picked up the pages which formed the rough draft of the will and was looking at them with the keenest interest upon his face.

"There are some points about that document, Lestrade, are there not?" said he, pushing them over.

The official looked at them with a puzzled expression. "I can read the first few lines and these in the middle of the second page and one or two at the end. Those are as clear as print," said he, "but the writing in between is very bad, and there are three places where I cannot read it at all."

"What do you make of that?" said Holmes.

"Well, what do you make of it?" "That it was written in a train. The good writing represents stations, the bad writing movement, and the very bad writing passing over points. A scientific expert would pronounce at once that this was drawn up on a suburban line, since nowhere save in the immediate vicinity of a great city could there be so quick a succession of points. Granting that his whole journey was occupied in drawing up the will, then

stains in the room and also on the stick are very slight. It is probable that he imagined his crime to be a bloodless one, and hoped that if the body were consumed it would hide all traces of the method of his death, traces which for some reason must have pointed to him. Is not all this obvious?"

"It strikes me, my good Lestrade, as being just a trifle too obvious," said Holmes. "You do not add imagination to your other great qualities, but if you could for one moment put yourself in the place of this young man would you choose the very night after the will had been made to commit your crime? Would it not seem dangerous to you to make so very close a relation between the two incidents? Again, would you choose an occasion when you are known to be in the house, when a servant has let you in? And, finally, would you take the great pains to conceal the body and yet leave your own stick as a sign that you were the criminal? Confess, Lestrade, that all this is very unlikely."

"As to the stick, Mr. Holmes, you know as well as I do that a criminal is often hurried and does such things, which a cool man would avoid. He was very likely afraid to go back to the room. Give me another theory, that would fit the facts."

"I could very easily give you half a dozen," said Holmes. "Here, for example, is a very possible and even probable one. I make you a free present of it. The older man is showing documents which are of evident value. A passing tramp sees them through the window, the blind of which is only half down. Exit the solicitor. Enter the tramp. He seizes a stick, which he observes there, kills Oldacre and departs after burning the body."

"Why should the tramp burn the body?" "For the matter of that, why should McFarlane?"

"To hide some evidence."

"Possibly the tramp wanted to hide that any murder at all had been committed."

"And why did the tramp take nothing?"

"Because they were papers that he could not negotiate."

Lestrade shook his head, though it seemed to me that his manner was less absolutely assured than before.

"Well, Mr. Sherlock Holmes, you may look for your tramp, and while you are finding him we will hold on to our man. The future will show which is right. Just notice this point, Mr. Holmes—that so far as we know none of the papers were removed, and that the prisoner is the one man in the world who had no reason for removing them, since he was heir at law and would come into them in any case."

My friend seemed struck by this remark.

"I don't mean to deny that the evidence is in some ways very strongly in favor of your theory," said he. "I only wish to point out that there are other theories possible. As you say, the future will decide. Good morning! I dare say that in the course of the day I shall drop in at Norwood and see how you are getting on."

When the detective departed my friend rose and made his preparations for the day's work with the alert air of a man who has a congenial task before him.

"My first movement, Watson," said he as he bustled into his frock coat, "must, as I said, be in the direction of Blackheath."

"And why not Norwood?"

"Because we have in this case one singular incident coming close to the heels of another singular incident. The police are making the mistake of concentrating their attention upon the second because it happens to be the one which is actually criminal. But it is evident to me that the logical way to approach the case is upon the first incident—the curious will, so suddenly made and to so unexpected an heir. It may do something to simplify what followed. No, my dear fellow, I don't think you can help me. There is no prospect of danger, or I should not dream of stirring out without you. I trust that when I see you in the evening I will be able to report that I have been able to do something for this unfortunate youngster who has thrown himself upon my protection."

It was late when my friend returned, and I could see by a glance at his haggard and anxious face that the high hopes with which he had started had not been fulfilled. For an hour he droned away upon his violin, endeavoring to soothe his own ruffled spirits. At last he flung down the instrument and plunged into a detailed account of his misadventures.

(To be continued.)



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**French Mothers.**  
There is one thing that French mothers do not do enough. That is to separate from their growing boys, to send them to the school of life outside the home and into situations where they must look after themselves. The mother's happiness is complete only with her children around her. Let life not keep them too much apart. From this arise too fearsome ideas of distance and a too timid attachment to the natal soil or the maternal city.

The difficulty is that it is very reluctantly admitted among the French that the time must come for the nestling to use its own wings. I have seen most excellent parents worry themselves nearly to death because a daughter will not acquiesce in their ideas or wish to accept the husband of their choice. To a son or a daughter very devoted but independent it is often said, "You love me no longer." But if we have touched here upon a somewhat delicate point the good will and love of the French mothers are above all praise, even if sometimes farsightedness and breadth of mind be somewhat lacking.—Charles Wagner in Cosmopolitan.

**Queer Hatching Processes.**  
The Chilean frog, known also as Darwin's frog, is unique in its method of hatching eggs. The female is not abnormal, but the male has a large pouch which underlies its whole body and is connected with its mouth by two openings, one on either side of its tongue. When his mate has laid her eggs this devoted parent takes them into his fore paws and places them inside his mouth, whence they presently pass by the two passages into the expectant pouch. Here they remain in warm and safe seclusion until they are hatched and emerge as newborn tadpoles to the light. The breeding habits of the midwife frog are not less singular. He winds the strings of new laid eggs round his hind legs and vanishes into a convenient hole till they are hatched. The Surinam toad places eggs one by one in hexagonal cells formed in the back of the mother toad, whence in due time they hop out, not tadpoles, but perfect toads.

**The Ease of Normal Death.**  
According to a scientist, the immediate cause of death in all but very exceptional cases, such as accident, is the poisoning of the nervous centers by carbonic acid, which accumulates in the blood owing to the failure of the arrangement for its removal. "This gas is an anaesthetic," he explains, "and has, indeed, been employed as such, both locally and otherwise. This property of carbonic acid may be termed a merciful provision of nature. Normal death is a painless occurrence, usually preceded by gradual loss of consciousness entailing no more suffering than going to sleep. The accumulation of this merciful gas often induces muscular contraction or spasms, which are preceded by loss of consciousness, but which may have suggested to uncritical observers that their moribund subject was in agony."

**Lucky.**  
A story that comes from Ireland relates to the custom among farmers there of depositing money in the bank in the joint names of husband and wife, so that when one dies the survivor can draw out the money without any legal formalities. To a farmer who recently made application for money deposited for himself and his wife the manager asked, "Why, Pat, how can this be? It is not much more than a year since you came with a similar application on the death of your wife." "Well, your honor," was the reply, "I'm a bit lucky wid women."—Harper's Weekly.

Read every page.

Mrs. Anthon Aldrich of Ute spent Monday in Denison.  
Rev. Father M. J. Farrelly spent yesterday in Logan.  
Mr. C. W. Payne of West Side was a Denison shopper on Tuesday.  
Hank Cummins got away from his strenuous duties at Arion long enough to give Denison a visit on Monday.

Mr. Ed. Brogden and wife left on Tuesday for a visit at Ainsworth, Nebraska.  
Miss Gertrude Hunter of Red Oak is in Denison visiting her sister, Mrs. D. W. McAhrea.  
Mr. W. J. Scriver purchased a fine driving horse from Charter Oak parties this week. It is a fine bay and is warranted to get over the country at a lively clip.

## Denver and Return \$12.05

### ILLINOIS CENTRAL

#### G. A. R. Special Service.

The Illinois Central has arranged Special Through Service to Denver for the accommodation of the friends and members of the Grand Army of the Republic, and auxiliary organizations. Through Standard Sleepers, Tourist Sleepers and Free Chair Cars will be run via the Illinois Central to Omaha, thence via the Rock Island direct to Denver. However tickets may be routed going via any direct route west of Omaha and returning the same, or via any other direct route to Omaha.

Tickets will be sold at the above very low rate from Denison to Denver and return from August 30th to September 4th, inclusive, limited to September 12th, for return, with privilege of extension until October 7th, on deposit of tickets and payment of fifty cent fee.

For those who wish to go early Through Tourist Sleepers will start from Iowa points on Wednesday, August 30th, arriving at Denver 11:50 a. m. August 31st.

For the accommodation of G. A. R. members and their friends, Through Standard and Tourist Sleepers and Free Chair Cars will leave Denison at 3:35 p. m., Monday, September 4th, and be run through to Denver on special train, arriving there 10:00 a. m. September 5th. The rate per double berth to Denver being only \$2.00 in Tourist Sleepers and \$4.00 in Standard Sleepers. Applications for reservations in these through sleepers should be made either direct or through your nearest Illinois Central agent to the undersigned, on or before September 1st. Illustrated folders descriptive of Denver and other Colorado resorts, and the route thereto, giving complete program of the National G. A. R. Encampment, and information concerning side trips will be mailed on application to

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### SARACHON SISTERS



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"HE TOOK OUT A MASS OF DOCUMENTS, WHICH WE WENT OVER TOGETHER."

I was not in a humor to refuse him anything that he might ask. He was my benefactor, and all my desire was to carry out his wishes in every particular. I sent a telegram home, therefore, to say that I had important business on hand and that it was impossible for me to say how late I might be. Mr. Oldacre had told me that he would like me to have supper with him at 9, as he might not be home before that hour. I had some difficulty in finding his house, however, and it was nearly half past before I reached it. I found him—

"One moment," said Holmes. "Who opened the door?"

"A middle aged woman, who was, I suppose, his housekeeper."

"And it was she, I presume, who mentioned your name?"

"Exactly," said McFarlane.

"Pray proceed."

McFarlane wiped his damp brow and then continued his narrative:

"I was shown by this woman into a sitting room, where a frugal supper was laid out. Afterward Mr. Jonas Oldacre led me into his bedroom, in which there stood a heavy safe. This he opened and took out a mass of documents, which we went over together. It was between 11 and 12 when we finished. He remarked that we must not disturb the housekeeper. He showed me out through his own French window, which had been open all this time."

"Was the blind down?" asked Holmes.

the train was an express, only stopping once between Norwood and London bridge.

Lestrade began to laugh.

"You are too many for me when you begin to get on your theories, Mr. Holmes," said he. "How does this bear on the case?"

"Well, it corroborates the young man's story to the extent that the will was drawn up by Jonas Oldacre in his journey yesterday. It is curious, is it not, that a man should draw up so important a document in so haphazard a fashion. It suggests that he did not think it was going to be of much practical importance. If a man drew up a will which he did not intend ever to be effective he might do it so."

"Well, he drew up his own death warrant at the same time," said Lestrade.

"Oh, you think so?"

"Don't you?"

"Well, it is quite possible, but the case is not clear to me yet."

"Not clear? Well, if that isn't clear what could be clear? Here is a young man who learns suddenly that if a certain older man dies he will succeed to a fortune. What does he do? He says nothing to any one, but he arranges that he shall go out on some pretext to see his client that night. He waits until the only other person in the house is in bed, and then in the solitude of the man's room he murders him, burns his body in the wood pile and departs to a neighboring hotel. The blood