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DETECTIVES IN FICTION.

Sherlock Holmes Dissected by Scotland Yard Chief.

Sherlock Holmes confided to Dr. Watson so many times his unreserved opinion of the official detectives, or Scotland Yarders, that Conan Doyle's readers will be especially interested in what Sir Robert Anderson, head of London's criminal investigation department, has just written—apropos of Holmes' "return" concerning the estimation which the "regular men" hold of the amateur sleuthhound of Baker street.

Perhaps it will be best to give Sir Robert's views, as a practical criminal agent, upon certain details of the "Adventures" before quoting what the famous ex-commissioner of police has to say regarding Holmes' gibes at the methods of the regular force.

"It implies no disparagement of Dr. Doyle's art," he says, "that in the 'Adventures of Sherlock Holmes' the element of exaggeration is seldom wanting. 'The Final Problem' exemplifies this in a notable way. To an expert, at all events, the story of Moriarty's tracking Holmes to Switzerland is preposterous."

Sir Robert goes on: "In this country an accused person must, without the slightest delay, be brought before a magistrate. But in the 'Study in Scarlet' we are told that Jefferson Hope was to be 'put before the magistrate in the course of a week.' In 'The Man With the Twisted Lip,' the police at Bow street 'hushed the thing up,' apparently without the intervention of a magistrate at all.

"And in 'The Sign of Four,' the closing scene reminds us of one of Dickens's bagmen stories. Johnathan Small makes a quartette with our two friends and the Bow street officer, whose prisoner he is, in the Baker street lodgings we know so well; and ensconed in a comfortable chair, with a glass of spirits and water at hand he spends a pleasant hour in telling of his crimes. and even this is capped by Dr. Watson's being allowed to carry away the treasure chest, the corpus of the crime, which is supposed to contain jewels of priceless value. He conveys it in a cab to the house of his fiancee, and in her presence he breaks it open with a poker!" And thus the practical detective goes on at some length.

Evidently, however, Sir Robert Anderson does not take Holme's jibe at the expense of Scotland Yard with great seriousness. "There is a wide difference," he says, "between the work of the responsible police officer, whose business it is to bring criminals to justice, and in the work of the 'private detective,' who has merely to ascertain the facts and to solve seeming mysteries. But the difference is not so vital as that which distinguishes the fancies of the novelist from the facts of real life.

"He must be a poor sort of creature who cannot solve his own problems. And it is delightful to notice how accurately the Sherlock Holmes keys invariably fit the Sherlock Holmes locks, and how invariably his two and two makes four. But in real life keys are apt to get missed or mislaid, and two and two have sometimes a way of making twenty-two; all of which might be quite unpreventable and is always most embarrassing.—London Letter to Washington Post.

Old Maids as Listeners.

The good listeners, on the other hand, are the old maid to whose speech nobody pays any attention, yet to whom everybody talks. And I wonder, considering how many confidences men have poured into their ears, and how many other things men have found to say about them, that not a gentleman has yet been found good and generous enough to pay trlbute to this surpassing excellence in spinsters—an excellence so dear to the masculine mind. How many old-maid sisters have not opened their ears to the self-praise of their unsuccessful brothers who have missed a hearing at the bar, or in the pulpit, or wherever there was competition among men?

Patient souls, these old maids, listening to each of us as a mother only listens to her own, and who have listened so long that at last they have the air of never expecting anyone to pay attention to them. They venture into speech on their own account, as timid mice into parlors, ready on the instant to whisk about and seek cover again. These, though, are the old maids for whom corners are never lacking, so eager as the very least among men to assure themselves of a hearing somewhere.—Miss Lillie Hamilton French in the Century.

The present plan for increase of the metropolitan water supply provides for an expenditure of about $50,000,000 for bringing to New York 200,000,000 gallons daily from the Wappingers Creek and Esonus regions.

His Own Trouble.

Mr. Subbubs—There, dear, I guess I've brought all the groceries and things.

Mrs. Subbubs—Why, you've forgotten the stuffed dates.

Mr. Subbubs—Well, well! I always did have a bad memory for dates.

RECIPES.

Cheese Drops.—Put three-fourths of a cupful of boiling water over the fire; add one tablespoonful of butter and three heaping tablespoonfuls of flour; remove, add a pinch of salt and three eggs, one of one, beating well after adding each; beat thoroughly and drop by the teaspoonful on buttered pans; brush with a little beaten egg; sprinkle with grated cheese and a dash of cayenne; bake in a quick oven fifteen minutes; these should be hollow when baked.

Tomato and Rice Soup.—Put one can of tomatoes in a saucepan over the fire; add to it one pint of hot water, one tablespoonful of salt, one tablespoonful of sugar, three cloves, three peppercorns and one-third cup of well washed rice; fry one slice of onion in a little hot butter for five minutes, being careful not to brown it; add it to the tomato and rice; when the rice is tender rub all through a strainer; add more seasoning if needed.

Date Gems.—Separate too eggs; add to the yolks, beaten a little, one cupful of milk; add this to one and one-half cupful of entire wheat bread, one tablespoonful of melted butter, half a teaspoonful of salt, one cupful of chopped dates, two level teaspoonfuls of baking powder and one-half cupful of boiled rice; beat well; then add the whites of the eggs, beaten stiff; fill greased gem pans two thirds full and bake in a moderate oven thirty minutes.

Short Biscuit.—Sift into a bowl three cupfuls of sifted flour; rub into it with the tips of the fingers one-third of a cup of butter; add two and one half level teaspoonfuls of baking powder; one teaspoonful of salt and one cupful of cold water; mix with a spoon, then toss the dough on a floured board; roll out half an inch thick, cut in rounds with a biscuit cutter; place them on a greased pan and bake in a quick oven twenty-five minutes.

Depends on Kind of Girl.

"When a tidy looking girl seeks work in the holiday season," said the employment superintendent of a big store, she is not turned away because there is no vacancy in the department she wants to get into or because she is a flat failure in that department after one day's trial. Not one girl out of five can wrap up small parcel so that it is fit to be taken out of the store. A customer gets sore if she has to carry a parcel that looks as though it has beeh wrapped up by a girl with nothing but a thumb on each hand. But some salesgirls, as well as some men, canuot tie the string straight to save their skins.

"One of these clumsy unfortunates that the floorwalker wanted discharged I put into the toy department. Well, what that girl did not know about toys wasn't worth inquiring. She just jumped right into business and didn't want to stop for lunch. Her first day's sales cinches her job so long as she wants it. Another girl, who was so foolish that she cried over her blunders at the cut-glass counter, made a howling success when we sent her to sell books. Cash girls? They are a thing of a forgotten age, like the Broadway 'buses. Machinery does that now."

Unique Family Circle.

A small town in Bavaria can boast of what may be described as a unique family circle. A shopkeeper resident there includes among his household three living mothers-in-law, each with a mother of her own, his own mother, his third wife, and four daughters in their teens. The twelve women are reported to live on terms of the greatest amity, and the shopkeeper himself, who is fortunately in good circumstances, professes to be perfectly contented, notwithstanding that he is thus the thirteenth of the family. The incessant banter to which he is subject he philosophically welcomes as tending toward the better advertisement of his business.

Gratitude.

The snake was trying to shed his skin.

"Help me off with this, will you?" he said to a frog that happened to be passing.

The frog kindly complied with the request, and presently the discarded skin lay stretched along the ground.

"Now," observed the frog, "I suppose you will do with that as I do with my cast-off garments—eat it."

"No said the snake. There is something better in sight.

Thereupon he ate the frog.

The moral of this, my dears, is that there is more than one kind of skin game, and some kinds are meaner than others.

Matter of Grammer.

"Why do you persist in saying 'widow woman' all the time?" asked the expedagogue. "Why not 'widow alone?"

"That's all right if she happens to be a plain widow," explained the party of the other part, "but if she's young, handsome and wealthy you'll seldom find her alone."

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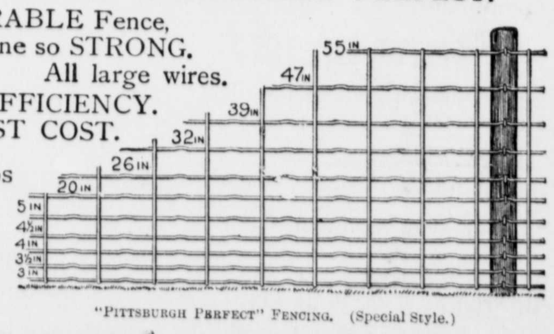

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