

THE BEST FOOTBALL STORIES!

The BOYS' HERALD

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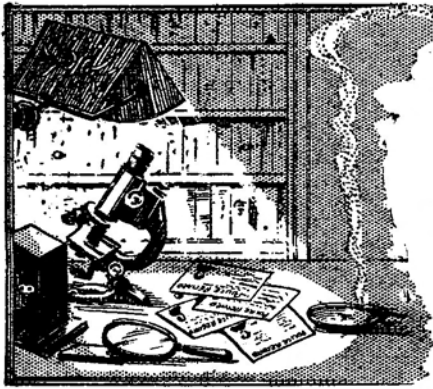
Sept. 17, 1921.



THE PLOT AGAINST NORCHESTER F. C.

Stringer grasped the so-called president of the "Down With Football" League, and raised the fellow high above his head. "Crabapple, old killjoy," he cried, "you're going to leave this ground by the emergency exit! Now then! One—two—three!" Up, up he soared, a mass of kicking arms and legs. How the Norchester boys roared.

COMPLETE IN THIS NUMBER.



THE STOLEN INHERITANCE

A Grand, Long Complete Detective Story introducing Ferrers Locke and Jack Drake.

BY OWEN CONQUEST.

Ferrers Locke, the Wonderful Detective, Solves Another Big Mystery.

A Strange Story.

MY life is threatened, Mr. Locke," Ferrers Locke raised his eyebrows slightly. Jack Drake, the famous detective's boy assistant, glanced round from the desk where he was seated, quietly but keenly.

The visitor who had entered Ferrers Locke's consulting room in Baker Street was a young man, not more than twenty-nine, with a sun-tanned face and keen, clear blue eyes. He made his startling statement in quiet tones, without a trace of nervousness, but evidently very earnestly.

"That is why you have come to me?" asked Ferrers Locke.

"Yes, Mr. Locke. It's a queer matter, and I think it ought to interest you from what I have heard of you."

"Surely, Mr. Lennox, if your life is threatened, the proper quarter to apply for protection is the official police."

Arthur Lennox shook his head.

"It's not protection I'm after," he said. "I can protect myself, I hope. But I want to know what it all means, and why some unknown skunk is trying to pot at me. Look at that!"

He held out his bowler hat.

Through both sides of it was a tiny round hole, close to the top. The double hole had evidently been made by a bullet.

"That went pretty close," said Lennox. "It cut some of my hair away. An inch lower and it would have gone through my head. A man doesn't want to go closer to death than that, Mr. Locke. I never had a narrower shave at the front, and I had nearly five years in Flanders."

"You were fired at—?"

"Exactly."

"By whom?"

"I don't know."

"But you can guess who has some reason for wishing to take your life?"

"That's what beats me," said Lennox. "I can't! So far as I know I haven't an enemy in the world—I mean, from my own knowledge. I've been told that I have an enemy, but I never believed it—till now. But a bullet going as close as that looks like it, Mr. Locke."

"It does, certainly," said Ferrers Locke. "When was the shot fired?"

"Last night."

"Where?"

"In the open street."

"And you did not see who fired?"

"No; he was gone before I could spot him."

Ferrers Locke looked very keenly and curiously at the young man. It was evident that the detective's interest was aroused.

"You had better tell me the whole story," he said. "You say you have been warned that you have an enemy?"

"Yes!"

"By whom?"

"My cousin, Dick Vandeleur."

"When was the warning given?"

"Six months ago."

"And your cousin did not tell you who your enemy was?"

"No."

"A very odd state of affairs," said Ferrers Locke. "Have you reported the attempt on your life to the police?"

"No; I don't mean to."

"Why not?"

"You see, I'm not supposed to be in London at all," said Lennox, with some embarrassment. "If I kicked up a fuss about this, Cousin Dick would hear of it, of course, and all the fat would be in the fire. I don't want to offend him,

and, besides, I'm under obligations to him. But I'd better spin the yarn from the beginning."

"Certainly you had," said Ferrers Locke rather drily.

"You are talking in riddles, so far, Mr. Lennox."

"I suppose it must sound like that to you, Mr. Locke," said Lennox ruefully. "It's a riddle to me—no end of a puzzle. But to begin at the beginning, I had better tell you something about myself. I'm an orphan, with no near relations excepting my cousin Dick, and an uncle of whom I haven't heard for twenty years—not since I was a kid—old Uncle Stone. He's Dick's uncle, of course; we're the sons of his two sisters. He went to South America long ago, and seems to have disappeared there; though a long time ago he sent some money home to my people, then living, which made us think that he had done well financially. But he never cared much about his relations, and we weren't surprised not to hear from him further. Well, shortly before the war I was pretty hard up, and, thinking that where old Uncle Stone had done well I might do well, too, I went out to South America. I got a berth in a nitrate office in Chile, with an English company, and I was there when the Huns started on the warpath."

"And then?"

"Well, then I wanted to come back and join up with the other fellows, but I was rather down and out financially. Then I got a letter from my cousin, Dick Vandeleur. He was much better off than I was, and, as a matter of fact, we'd never been great friends—it was a bit of a bar between us that we didn't know which would inherit anything Uncle Stone might leave behind him, if he left anything. Vandeleur was a bit of a dog in his way—given to sport and betting, and making the fur fly in a lot of ways, and that wasn't much in my line. But he played up this time in a way that made me ashamed of having been down on him. He sent me fifty quids, saying that it would help me if I wanted to come home for the war."

Locke nodded.

"Of course, in ordinary circes, I wouldn't have dreamed of touching his money," continued Lennox; "but it was a special case, you see. I accepted it with thanks, and came home, and joined up as a private. Vandeleur was a bit more lucky. He got a commission, and one soft job after another, and never saw the fighting at all. I used to envy him a bit when I was squatting in mud, with the whizz-bangs going overhead, I can tell you. But I came through all right, as you see—not a scratch in about five years of it; well, not more than a scratch or two. Jerry wasn't able to get me."

And the young man laughed genially.

"Well, then came the demobbing," he continued, "and after that I was fairly up against it. I couldn't raise the wind to get back to Chile—not that there was much going on there. I muddled along somehow, sometimes getting a job, and losing it again—I couldn't somehow keep still on an office stool, after the war. I was fairly down to bedrock last March, when Dick came in to see me. I was in pretty shabby diggings at that time, in Holland Park—24, Pitt Street, to be exact. I owed some weeks' rent; I was out of a berth, and I'd answered advertisements till I was sick of the sight of a daily paper. Then Dick dropped in. He was rather a swell, as usual, and was very friendly. He said he'd come to give me a tip. A man was after me to knock me out, he told me."

"Which rather surprised you, I suppose?"

"Well, rather; I was feeling pretty knocked out already. But, according to what Dick told me, he'd heard some talk between a couple of Germans in a café, and one mentioned my name. He was the brother of a Hun I had finished off in Flanders, in a scrap between the lines, and he knew me and was after my scalp. It sounded a pretty tall story, an'

I couldn't quite swallow it. But Vandeleur was quite serious about it. He asked me how I stood, and I told him I was on my uppers, and he thought it out. To make a long story short, he told me that he had bought a little estate in Jersey, and wanted a man to put in charge of it. What I don't know about growing early potatoes for the London market would fill volumes." Lennox grinned. "But Dick said that I could learn, and he offered me a hundred a year, and a house thrown in, to go over to Jersey, manage his little potato-patch for him, and settle down there to live out of danger."

"You accepted the offer?"

"I jumped at it, of course," said Lennox. "I didn't quite believe in the danger he spoke of, and, anyhow, I'd got pretty used to danger in war-time. But a hundred a year, a house, and an open-air life appealed to me, in the place of lodgings in a back street and answering advertisements that never came to anything. But Vandeleur laid down rather strict conditions. He said that I was his only living relation, and that though we hadn't been the best of friends, he would feel awfully hard hit if anything happened to me, leaving him without blood relations in the world. I'd never suspected Vandeleur of anything like sentiment, and I was a bit touched by it."

"Naturally."

"In fact, I was jolly well ashamed that somehow or other I couldn't like the chap," said Lennox, colouring. "He was awfully decent. He made me agree, for my own sake, to settle down in Jersey, and never to cross over into England. That was a bit stiff; but the alternative was to starve in my lodgings, and tramp the streets looking for a job that wasn't there! So I agreed. It wasn't exactly a promise—if I'd promised I shouldn't be here now. But I agreed to take the job he offered me, and to settle down in Jersey and stay there, agreeing to give him a month's notice if I wanted to chuck it. Well, that being settled, Dick advanced the money off my screw for my outfit, and off I went to Jersey."

"And now—"

"Well, after six months in that little island I had a sort of feeling that I wanted to see the lights of London again," said Lennox half-apologetically. "As for that dashed Hun who was after my scalp, according to Dick, I'd almost forgotten that. I didn't want to give up the job—I liked the life, and I was learning no end about potato-growing and so on. I decided to run over for a few days' holiday, without saying a word to Cousin Dick. Least said soonest mended, you know."

"I see."

"Dick was so alarmed at the idea of my being potted by his blessed Hun avenger that I wouldn't worry him, you see," explained Lennox, "and I never really believed in the Hun, so it didn't alarm me. I thought I'd have a few days in London, quietly, and see the sights, and then slip back to Jersey without Cousin Dick being any the wiser. I had to keep out of the way of old acquaintances, but I didn't mind that; I thought I ought to consider Dick first of all, after what he'd done for me. Well, I've been in London three days now, and on the second day I ran, in the street, against a man I'd noticed at Newhaven when I landed, and noticed again on the railway. It came into my head that I was being watched. But the man wasn't a German—he was a shabby little beast who looked like one of those inquiry agents you hear about—"

"What did you do?"

"Asked him what the thunder he was following me for, and told him I'd wring his neck if I saw him again," said Lennox. "Well, I never saw him again. But last night—I was going home from the theatre, to a quiet room I'd taken in a street near Russell Square—this happened." He tapped the perforated hat. "I was passing a dark corner, and there was a shot—so sudden that I hadn't the faintest idea it was coming. My hat was knocked off my head. I fairly jumped round, and just caught sight of a shadow vanishing down a passage. I was after him quick enough, but never spotted him again."

Ferrers Locke compressed his lips a little.

"What did you do then?"

"I went on home, and thought it over," said Lennox. "Of course, it brought Dick's warning back to my mind. I stood up to plenty of Huns in Flanders with a rifle and bayonet in my hands, and don't remember feeling weak in the knees; but it's a bit different to be potted at from dark corners at night by a man I don't know by sight. Why, I might sit at the same hotel table with the rascal, and never know him. I figured it out that I couldn't go to the police without making a fuss, which would let Cousin Dick know I was back in London. Besides, it's not protection I want—I want to know who the skunk is, and what it means. So there you are, Mr. Locke. That's how the matter stands."

And Arthur Lennox leaned back in his chair, regarding the thoughtful face of the famous detective in the chair opposite.

A Mysterious Case.

JACK DRAKE, seated at his desk, was quietly pasting Press-cuttings into a large volume. But he was giving attention at the same time to the strange story told by Arthur Lennox, and not a word of it escaped him. Drake stole a glance at Ferrers Locke's face for a moment; but it expressed nothing but a slight shade of thoughtfulness.

Locke snipped the end from one of his favourite black cheroots, and lighted it. A thin dark stream of smoke was ejected from his lips, and he smoked on for several minutes without speaking. Arthur Lennox watched him rather curiously, content to wait, and smoked a cigarette while he waited. Ferrers Locke broke the silence at last.

"You have told me a very strange story, Mr. Lennox!"

"I know it's jolly queer, sir. But there you are! That's how it stands."

"I must have a little more light on some details of your story," Ferrers Locke made a sign to Jack Drake, who laid aside Press-cuttings and paste-brush at once, and took up notebook and pencil. It was Drake's duty very often to make notes during the famous detective's talk with his clients.

"Go ahead, sir," said Lennox. "I want you to have the whole thing straight."

"It appears beyond doubt that you have an enemy who seeks your life," said Ferrers Locke. "You think so, at least?"

"A bullet-hole through my hat looks like it."

"It does—though it is not so certain an indication as a bullet-hole through the head," said Ferrers Locke with a slight smile. "You have never, to your knowledge, made a bitter enemy?"

"Never, unless some Hun has got it up against me for wiping out some of his dashed relations in the war."

"You don't think that probable?"

"Well, it's jolly unlikely," said Lennox. "War is a mix-up rather, you never can tell who kills whom. But for my cousin's positive statement I should think such an idea all moonshine. But Dick Vandeleur believes it, and he was very earnest in warning me—indeed, I half suspected that he invested his money in the potato-farm in Jersey specially to get me out of danger, as he considered it."

"Out of London, you mean?"

"Yes; the danger was in London, according to what he believed."

"And now that you have actually been attacked, what do you think of your cousin's warning?"

"Well, I suppose it must be well-founded, tall as it sounds."

"That a German is seeking your life on account of your having killed a relative of his in Flanders?"

"If it isn't so, Mr. Locke, I simply can't imagine why anybody should want to put a bullet through my head. And Dick Vandeleur was positive he heard a Hun in a café mention my name, with threats."

Ferrers Locke nodded.

"What kind of man is your cousin, Richard Vandeleur?"

"Well," Lennox coloured a little, "I owe him a lot, Mr. Locke, as you've seen from what I've told you. I can't say anything against him, can I?"

Jack Drake smiled quietly. Lennox's words were a sufficient answer to the detective's question.

"I think you said he was of a sporting nature?" said Locke.

"Yes, he always went in for a lot of betting and painting the town red. I daresay he meant no real harm."

"How old is he?"

"Just my age—twenty-nine."

"It may be necessary for me to see Mr. Vandeleur—"

Lennox started.

"I say," he exclaimed, in dismay. "I don't want him to know I've come to you, or that I'm in London at all. You catch on to that?"

"He shall learn nothing from me—at all events, without your sanction," said Locke. "Describe him to me, please."

Lennox smiled.

"No need for that," he said. "Looking at me is enough! We're as alike as two peas from the same pod."

"Ah!" Ferrers Locke's glance became fixed intently upon Arthur Lennox. "You did not mention that before, Mr. Lennox."

"It's not important, is it?" asked Lennox, puzzled. "I don't see how it affects the matter."

"We shall see! You are sure that Richard Vandeleur is exactly like yourself in looks?"

"Well, there's differences, of course, when we're together," said Lennox. "I'm half an inch taller, perhaps, and a little broader in the shoulders, and we dress very differently. Dick is rather a nut. But when we're apart, we've been taken for each other. I was hailed by a fat bookmaker once, who took me for Dick, who had bets on with him, and I could hardly make him believe that I wasn't Dick." Lennox grinned. "And a friend told me once he'd seen me walking down Bond Street dressed to kill, and, of course, it wasn't me he had seen, it was Dick. Our

maters were twin sisters, you know, and I daresay that accounts for it. Anyhow, it's there."

Ferrers Locke nodded.

"And when I got to Jersey," added Lennox, "Dick's manager there took me for his employer at first, and was surprised to find that I was only his employer's cousin. I could have passed myself off there as Dick Vandeleur as easily as anything."

"Where does Mr. Vandeleur live?"

"He has—or had—chambers in Jermyn Street. Number 101b."

"When did he come to you in your lodgings at Holland Park?"

"Last March."

"The date?"

"The third."

"When did you leave for Jersey?"

"The sixth of March."

"You gave up your rooms?"

"Yes: there were a few days to run of the last week when I left."

"You took your belongings with you?"

"I had precious few," grinned Vandeleur. "I took them, such as they were, excepting my old clothes."

"What became of them?"

"Vandeleur advanced the money for a new outfit, as I told you, and he said he'd give my old things to his servant, if I'd let him have them. Of course, I let him have them."

"So your old clothes remained in Vandeleur's possession?"

"Yes, until he gave them away."

"Do you know that he gave them away?"

Lennox stared.

"I suppose he did," he answered. "My shabby old duds wouldn't be of much use to a nut like Dick."

"Did anyone see Mr. Vandeleur when he called on you at your lodgings?"

"My landlady let him in."

"It was at night?"

Lennox raised his eyebrows a little. He was evidently surprised by this curious series of questions.

"I don't know how you guess that it was at night that Dick called," he answered. "But, as a matter of fact, it was."

"Had he a cold?"

Lennox jumped.

"A—a cold?"

"Yes," said Locke, "answer the question."

"You are a wizard, Ferrers Locke!" exclaimed the young man, in blank amazement. "He had a cold, but how the thump you know it beats me hollow."

Locke smiled grimly.

"Doubtless he was muffled up when he came, and had his handkerchief to his nose when your landlady showed him in."

A look of something like dread came over Lennox's face. It was as if he suddenly felt himself in the presence of black magic.

"It's true," he said. "You might have been there, Mr. Locke. I—I say, I—I can't get on to this! How do you know so much, when you've never even heard of Dick Vandeleur until to-day?"

"I did not know it until you told me," answered Locke calmly. "I was simply making a deduction from what you had already stated."

"Dashed if I can see it. I never said that Dick had a cold, or anything, when he called on me, and I never mentioned that it was at night, either. You must be a wizard."

Locke waved his hand slightly.

"Never mind that. But for the circumstances I have referred to, your landlady would doubtless have noticed the resemblance between your cousin and yourself?"

"Of course—it would have struck her at once if she'd seen his face clearly."

"But, as it happened, she did not?"

"No."

"Have you communicated with your former landlady since leaving for Jersey?"

"Naturally not. It was agreed that I should break off all connection with London, and never write to anyone there. I didn't like that, of course, but it was a strict condition laid down by my cousin. He felt that if I had any communication with London, my enemy would find me out. I had to give in to his conditions—and I was rather more willing to do it, of course, because it was on my account that he was so anxious."

"His anxiety on that account surprised you?"

"Well, yes. I—I hadn't ever supposed him to be such a jolly affectionate relation. I was grateful, of course."

"You have written to Mr. Vandeleur since you have been at Jersey?"

"It was a condition that I should write every week."

"Where did you address your letters—to his chambers in Jermyn Street?"

"No, to his club—the Majestic, in Sloane Street."

"Is he to be found there?"

"He used to be there very often. He must still be a member, as his letters go there."

"Quite so. Now, with regard to your uncle in South America, the Mr. Stone you have mentioned," said Ferrers Locke, "you have not heard from him since you were a child?"

"No!"

"You did not hear of him when you were in Chile?"

"Not a word."

"When did your people hear of him last?"

"I believe it was about 1900. He sent five hundred pounds to my mater."

"And your aunt—Vandeleur's mother—"

"A hundred pounds to her."

"Then your mother, apparently, was the favourite sister?"

"Yes, and I was the favourite nephew, I believe," said Lennox, with a smile. "We used to think that if Uncle Stone left anything, it would come my way. That made rather a feeling between my cousin and me at one time. We thought the old boy must be well off. But we never heard of him again—at least, I did not."

"Did your cousin, Vandeleur?"

"Not that I know of."

"In case of your death, anything left by your Uncle Stone would go to Mr. Vandeleur, I suppose?"

"Certainly. I thought of that when he was so anxious for my safety, and I thought it jolly decent of him," said Lennox.

"You do not know whether your uncle is alive or dead?"

"Not for certain; but I don't really expect ever to hear of him again," said Lennox. "It's a jolly long time ago, and no doubt he's long since forgotten his relations in England."

"But the probability is that he is, or was, well-to-do?"

"Yes, from the money he handed out twenty years ago. That's all we had to go upon."

"Your cousin, Dick Vandeleur, is a sporting man, you say. Does he go in for shooting?"

"Yes, lots."

"Is he a good shot?"

"Topping. He can get the centre of the bull's-eye nine times in ten. I've seen him at it, with rifle and revolver."

Ferrers Locke nodded. There was a short silence before the Baker Street detective spoke again.

"Now that an attack has been made upon your life, Mr. Lennox, doubtless you realise that your cousin's advice to you was good, and that you would be well-advised to keep out of London?"

"Well, yes," said Lennox. "You see, I'm not a funk, but this sort of thing is rather thick. A man I don't know by sight—potting at me in the dark. If I could see the brute I'd deal with him fast enough. But this kind of thing is liable to get on a chap's nerves. Besides, my business is in Jersey, of course. If you can't help me, Mr. Locke, I think I shall go right back to Jersey, and sha'n't be in a hurry to come to town again, either."

"Naturally," said Ferrers Locke. "I expected that. But I hope, Mr. Lennox, that I may be able to help you, and you must put off your return to Jersey for a few days, at least."



"Now, will you answer this question," said Ferrers Locke. "Had your cousin a cold when he came to visit you?" "You are a wizard, Ferrers Locke!" exclaimed the young man, in blank amazement. "He had a cold, but how you know it beats me hollow!"

"I'll do anything you say, of course."
 "One question more. Have you any regular solicitor?"
 Lennox grinned.
 "No—never wanted one. There was a firm that used to act for my people, but I've never had anything to do with them."
 "And the firm?"
 "Tooks, of Bolter's Court, Chancery Lane."
 "Your Uncle Stone knew of them?"
 "Yes, his letter twenty years ago came through them. You see, we'd been on the move, and he didn't know our address, as we never wrote to him."
 "Any fresh communication would naturally come by the same avenue?"
 "I suppose so, if there was any."
 "Well, Mr. Lennox, I will only say that I will take the matter in hand," said Ferrers Locke. "Return to your quarters now, and be prepared to hear from me. You will keep on your guard; but I do not think you are in any danger at present. If you remain long in London, it is possible that a bullet may go through your head instead of your hat—but that is not an immediate danger. I shall see you again shortly."
 "You think you can spot the merchant who fired at me?"
 "Yes."
 "Without a clue of any kind?" exclaimed Lennox.
 Locke smiled.
 "You have given me half a dozen clues," he answered.
 "But we will not go into that now. Good-morning, Mr. Lennox."
 And Ferrers Locke shook hands with his client, and Arthur Lennox, in a very puzzled frame of mind, went down the steps of the house in Baker Street, and was lost to sight in the traffic.

Ferrers Locke Investigates.

"JERMYN Street, 101B," said Ferrers Locke to his chauffeur.
 "Yes, sir."
 Locke entered the car, and Jack Drake followed him in. Wootton the chauffeur, toolled his way down the thronging traffic of Baker Street.
 Drake looked inquiringly at his chief.
 "We are going to see Mr. Dick Vandeleur," he asked.
 "We are going to call at his chambers," said Locke. "I shall be very much surprised if Mr. Vandeleur is there."
 He said no more, and Drake remained in rather perplexed silence until the car drew up in Jermyn Street.
 Ferrers Locke alighted, and entered a large imposing building that was let in blocks of chambers. He was not more than ten minutes in the building.
 When he returned to the car, he spoke a few words to the chauffeur, and sat down by Drake again. The car glided on, and turned into Sloane Street and stopped at the Majestic Club.

Here Ferrers Locke was occupied for a quarter of an hour, and there was a slight smile on his calm face as he stepped into the car again.
 "Twenty-four, Pitt Street, Holland Park!" he said to Wootton. And the car glided on its way again.
 Jack Drake did not venture to question his chief, but his look was very keen and curious. Locke caught it, and smiled.
 "The case is a simpler one than it appeared to our young friend Lennox, Drake," he said. "I find that Mr. Vandeleur gave up his chambers in Jermyn Street last March."
 "At the same time that Lennox went to Jersey!" exclaimed Drake.
 "Precisely. And although he was once a frequent habitué of the Majestic Club, he has not been seen there for the last six months," said Ferrers Locke. "He is still a member, but does not come there. His letters are called for by a servant."
 Drake looked perplexed.
 "Then you won't be able to see him, sir," he said. "He seems to have disappeared pretty completely."
 "Nevertheless, I expect to see him quite soon," said Ferrers Locke. And he leaned back in his seat, and did not speak again.
 The car threaded the streets to Holland Park, and entered Pitt Street, a decidedly shabby thoroughfare.
 The house at which it stopped was one of the shabbiest and most forlorn-looking in the street. It was evidently let in lodgings of the cheapest kind. Ferrers Locke alighted, and signed to Drake to follow him, and they mounted the ill-kept steps of the lodging-house. Locke knocked at the door, and it was opened after some delay by a slatternly-looking woman of middle age. She had evidently come up from her kitchen in a far from amiable temper, and her look was anything but welcoming.
 "Good-morning," said Ferrers Locke, politely. "I think Mr. Arthur Lennox lives here?"
 "No, he don't!" answered the woman shortly.
 "Has he left?"
 "Months ago!" snapped the woman, "and I don't know where he's gone, neither." And she made a movement to shut the door. Evidently she was not interested in her former lodger.
 But Ferrers Locke had already stepped into the opening.
 "One moment, please," he said. "I am sorry to take up your time, madam, but I want very particularly to see Mr. Lennox."
 "He ain't 'ere."
 "I should be willing to pay liberally for information on the subject," said Locke, and a pound note appeared in his hand.
 The woman's expression changed.
 "I don't want to be disobliging," she said; "but I'm that busy, and worried with the children, too—but you can come

(Continued on next page.)

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in, sir. Not that I can tell you anything about Mr. Lennox. But come in if you want."

Ferrers Locke and Drake stepped into the shabby passage of the house. The woman closed the door.

"If you will tell me all you know about Mr. Lennox, that will be sufficient, madam," said Locke. "He was your lodger for some time, I believe?"

"Arl a year or so, sir. A good young man he was, too," said the landlady, "and down on his luck cruel. That's 'ow I came to let the rent run a bit, though it's not my 'abit. It's a 'ard world."

"When did he leave you?"

"Last March, sir."

"You remember the date?"

"No, I don't, sir—'ow's a body to remember, with lodgers coming and going all the time, and some of 'em bilking a poor woman for the rent?"

"Was it early or late in the month?"

"Near on to the end, sir. I know that, that's all."

Drake started a little. He remembered Lennox's statement that he had left his lodgings on the sixth of March.

"Are you aware that he went to Jersey, madam?"

"That's what he told me at first," said the landlady.

"He started off, I know that, but he came back the next day, and stayed on another fortnight. Then he left for good."

"He told you, early in the month, that he was going to Jersey?"

"Yes, he mentioned it, after a gentleman had called on him."

"A gentleman who had a cold in the nose?"

"Yes, sir," said the landlady with a stare. "I remember he had—he was blowing his nose and sniffing all the time I was showing him in to see Mr. Lennox."

"What was he like?"

"'Ow was a body to see, when he had his hank'cher over his face all the time?" asked the landlady.

"Ah, quite so. Then you would not know him again?"

"Course I wouldn't."

"Did you show him out?"

"No. Mr. Lennox let him out 'isself later."

"That was at the beginning of March?"

"Yes."

And the next day Mr. Lennox mentioned that he was going to Jersey, and paid your account?"

"Jest so, sir."

"And he left?"

"He did, sir."

"And came back the following day?"

"That's so, sir."

"Was he wearing the same clothes?"

"That he wasn't," said the landlady. "When he started off he was in a brand-new outfit; but when he came back the next day he was wearing his old clothes just the same as afore. He said it was all off with the Jersey job, and he stayed on, looking for a place as usual. Then suddenly he give me a week's rent instead of notice, and left—and that's the last I've 'eard of 'im, sir."

"Was it the sixth of March when he first left?"

"I dessay it was; I know it was the first week in March."

"Then it would be in the third week that he left for good?"

"Yes, sir."

"Did you notice any difference in him—in the fortnight he stayed with you at the end?"

The landlady stared.

"Now you mention it, sir, yes. He'd quite forgotten the names of the children, sir—he had always had a kind word for young Jim, and Sammy, and Amelia, and Ann, and Katie. But he seemed quite to 'ave forgotten their names, and he never spoke to them 'ardly again, and he wasn't the same affable in his manner, neither. I remember that."

"Thank you very much, madam. You cannot tell me where he is at present?"

"Sorry I can't, sir. Haven't any idea."

The pound note changed hands, and the detective and his boy assistant left the house, and returned to the car.

"Tocks, Bolter's Court, Chancery Lane," said Ferrers Locke to the chauffeur. And he sat in the car with Drake, and Holland Park was left behind.

Figuring it Out!

"WAS—was Lennox telling us the truth, sir?" blurted out Drake, as the car glided through the streets eastward. "It beats me! He stated plainly that he left on the sixth of March for Jersey, and never came back till a few days ago."

"But that poor woman was telling the truth, sir."

"She was!" said Ferrers Locke.

"Then Lennox couldn't have been?"

"On the contrary, he was telling the truth also, Drake."

Drake looked bewildered.

"Both can't be true, sir."

"Both can be, and are, quite true, Drake," said Ferrers Locke quietly. "When I called in Pitt Street I fully ex-

pected to hear that Mr. Lennox had returned to his lodgings and stayed there for some time."

"But he was in Jersey?"

"True."

"Then how—"

"You forget, Drake, that his cousin, Richard Vandeleur, is exactly like him in appearance, and that he was in possession of Lennox's old clothes."

Drake jumped.

"Then—then—then it was—" he stammered.

"It was Vandeleur who returned to the lodgings in Pitt Street, in Lennox's name, and in Lennox's clothes," said Ferrers Locke quietly. "His resemblance to his cousin made the trick an easy one. Follow my line of reasoning, my boy." Ferrers Locke tapped off the points on his knee. "Vandeleur, for some reason, desired to clear his cousin out of London—out of England. Never having been an affectionate relative, he suddenly developed a deep regard for Lennox's safety, and pitched him a cock-and-bull story of a vengeful Hun seeking his life, and found him the means of leaving England, and provided for him in a distant island. It was his first act of kindness."

"Not the first, sir," said Drake. "You forget that he sent Lennox fifty pounds, in Chile, to enable him to come home for the war."

Locke smiled slightly.

"That was an act of peculiar kindness, Drake. It gratified Lennox, certainly—and it placed him in incessant danger of death."

"Oh!" ejaculated Drake.

"If Vandeleur desired to rid himself of a rival for any inheritance that might come from a rich relative, it was evidently to his interest that Lennox should join up for the war. The Germans might have saved him any further anxiety with regard to the inheritance."

"Oh!" said Drake again.

"Lennox, fortunately, came safely through the war. Vandeleur at that time had no definite news of his uncle in South America, evidently, for Lennox, after being demobbed, remained a long time in London without seeing his cousin or hearing from him. Then suddenly Vandeleur calls on him at his lodgings, spins him an incredible story of an avenging Hun, and goes to considerable expense to get him out of England. His regard for Lennox's safety is quite touching—especially after his kindness had once landed the young man into five years of deadly danger."

Drake nodded slowly.

"I think that, without being unduly distrustful, we may conclude that Mr. Vandeleur had his own reasons for wishing to clear Lennox suddenly and quietly out of England," said Ferrers Locke. "I suggest that he had heard some news—perhaps of the death of a rich relative whose fortune was left to Lennox—"

"I—I see."

"Lennox, suspecting nothing, fell into the trap, and vanished—and Master Dick Vandeleur took his name and his place."

"Oh!" exclaimed Drake, "and that is why he pretended a cold when he called upon him—so that the landlady should suspect nothing!"

"Exactly. I was prepared to find that, with this scheme in his mind, he had taken some measures to prevent anyone in Lennox's lodgings observing his startling resemblance to Lennox. A cold, which gave him the excuse of keeping his handkerchief to his face, was the easiest device—therefore I asked Mr. Lennox the question that surprised him so much. For the same reason, Vandeleur made his call after dark."

"I see!" muttered Drake.

"Vandeleur's keen desire to clear his cousin out of England, added to the fact of his close resemblance, suggested the scheme of an impersonation at once to my mind," said Ferrers Locke. "All that followed confirmed that theory. Now we have found that Vandeleur disappeared from his usual haunts early in March—at the same time that Arthur Lennox left for Jersey. A man whom the landlady took to be her lodger, Lennox, returned to the lodgings—and it could, of course, only have been Vandeleur. Our young friend, Lennox, is not of a suspicious nature." Locke smiled. "But it is obvious, now, that he was got out of the way while Vandeleur took his name and place—evidently for some very important object. It is obvious, too, that Lennox was kept under watch—he was watched in London, as he told us—and the spy was, of course, in Vandeleur's employ. Vandeleur knew immediately that Lennox was in London."

Drake caught his breath.

"Then the man who fired at Lennox last night—"

"You have guessed it."

"Good heavens!" exclaimed Drake. "As he failed to keep Lennox out of England by a trick, he attempted to murder him."

"Not quite so bad as that," said Ferrers Locke. "You forget that I learned from Lennox that his cousin is a dead shot. Mr. Vandeleur could have sent that bullet through his head if he had chosen. He sent it through his hat. It was

to convince him of his danger, and drive him back to the safety of Jersey."

The car stopped in Bolter's Court, Chancery Lane. Jack Drake followed the Baker Street detective into the dusky, dusty building where Messrs. Tooks' offices were situated.

Ferrers Locke's card secured him admission at once. He was shown, with his boy assistant, into a dusky inner office, where a bald, dry-looking old gentleman rose to greet him. It was Mr. Took.

"I have called on behalf of Mr. Arthur Lennox," he said; "the name is known to you?"

Mr. Took smiled.

"One of our clients," he said. "We acted for him in the matter of his uncle's will, Mr. Locke. In what way—"

"His uncle!" said Ferrers Locke. "Are you referring to Mr. Stone, of South America?"

"Yes; he died last year," said Mr. Took.

"He left money?"

"He left a very large fortune," said Mr. Took. "Upwards of sixty thousand pounds."

"To his nephew Lennox?"

"Precisely."

"He had another nephew, a Mr. Richard Vandeleur."

"It was rather unfortunate for that young gentleman that he was not mentioned in the will," said Mr. Took. "But what is your interest in the matter, Mr. Locke?"

"A very deep interest," said Ferrers Locke. "I take it that the inheritance has now passed into the possession of your client?"

"Naturally."

"Whom you are satisfied is Mr. Arthur Lennox?"

The solicitor started.

"There was no doubt about his identity," he answered.

"Whatever do you mean, Mr. Locke? This affair is quite above board in every way."

"I fear not, Mr. Took. May I ask how you got into communication with Lennox when you received the news from South America?"

"That was a somewhat difficult matter," said Mr. Took.

Young Lennox had completely disappeared after leaving the Army. Fortunately, his cousin Richard Vandeleur's address was known, and we communicated with him. Mr. Vandeleur was very sympathetic. He telephoned in reply that he had had a letter from his cousin Lennox, from a poor quarter of London, and that he would look for it and let us have Lennox's address as soon as he could."

Ferrers Locke smiled.

"That was how he knew that Mr. Stone's fortune came

to Lennox, and that Lennox was ignorant of the fact!" he remarked. "I quite see. And when did he send you Lennox's address?"

"It was about a fortnight later that he telephoned again," said Mr. Took. "He told us he had found the old letter, and gave us Mr. Lennox's address—No. 24, Pitt Street, Holland Park. We immediately wrote to that address, and Mr. Lennox called upon us."

"With proofs of his identity?"

"Proofs were easy enough," said Mr. Took with a smile.

"We were, of course, very careful in the matter; the law makes us so. We had a photograph of Mr. Lennox, and, besides, a number of his old friends recognised him positively."

"Where is Mr. Lennox now?"

"He lives in his new house at Hyde Park Gate," said Mr. Took. "He is a very wealthy man now."

"Does he expend his wealth to the best advantage?" asked Ferrers Locke ironically.

"I fear that he is rather a reckless young man. But that, of course, is not the business of his solicitors."

"But this is your business, Mr. Took—the undoubted fact that the man you have taken to be Arthur Lennox is not Arthur Lennox at all, but his cousin, Richard Vandeleur, who has impersonated him and intercepted his inheritance."

"Mr. Locke! You are not serious!"

"I am quite serious—so serious that I am proceeding at once to Scotland Yard to request my friend, Inspector Riley, to call at Hyde Park Gate with a warrant for Mr. Vandeleur's arrest on the charge of conspiracy, impersonation, and theft!" said Ferrers Locke.

Ferrers Locke hurried from the office, followed by Drake.

The arrest of Richard Vandeleur, alias Arthur Lennox, caused a sensation. The most surprised person was not the impostor himself, but the real Arthur Lennox—who learned in amazement that he was the heir to sixty thousand pounds—minus several thousands that his rascally cousin had already expended on his favourite occupation of "painting the town red." When the facts were made known to him, Arthur Lennox wrung Ferrers Locke's hand with fervent gratitude. And later on, when he was in possession of his inheritance, the handsome cheque that arrived at Baker Street was an ample reward for the famous detective's work on the case of the Stolen Inheritance.

THE END.

Another splendid detective story next week.

OUR TUCK HAMPER COMPETITION!

PRIZES FOR ALL CONTRIBUTIONS PRINTED ON THIS PAGE.

For the best storyette printed on this page a hamper crammed full of delicious tuck will be awarded. Money prizes will be given for all other contributions used. When more than one reader sends in the same acceptable storyette, the prize is awarded to the first read. Remember your joke should be written plainly on a postcard, and addressed to "Boys' Herald," Gough House, Gough Square, London, E.C.4.—Editor.

THIS WINS OUR TUCK HAMPER.

WOOD-HEAD!

The village butcher was batting, and a ball, hitting him on the head, enabled the wicket-keeper to make an excellent catch.

"How's that?" yelled the wicket-keeper.

"How!" said the umpire shortly.

"But it hit me on the head!" protested the batsman.

"I don't know where it hit you!" responded the umpire.

"But I know's the sound of wood all right, so you're howl!"

—Tuck Hamper filled with delicious tuck has been awarded to E. Johnson, 43, Stratford Street, Dewsbury Road, Leeds.

Quite Innocent.

Husband (to servant): "Look here, Jenkins, why the merry deuce did you tell my wife what time I came home last night, when I especially asked you not to do so?"

Servant: "I didn't do anything of the sort, sir. All I said when she started asking questions was that I was too busy laying the breakfast to notice!"—Money Prize awarded to "A Loyal Reader," P.O. Box 391, East London, South Africa.

Artful Youth.

A little boy was sent to a shop by his mother. Having a great desire to get back to play, he made all the haste he could. To his dismay, he found the shop was full of customers when he arrived.

By dexterous shoving and elbowing he managed to get to the front, and bawled out:

"I say, grocer, will you serve me next? It's for father's dinner."

"Well, what is it you want?" asked the grocer, giving way.

"Two pennyworth of soft soap and a packet of washing-powder," whispered the lad.—Money Prize awarded to James Firth, 8, South Craven Street, Cheetham, Manchester.

A Good Substitute.

Small Willie (at the seaside): "Oh, mummy, can't I have a ride on a donkey?"

Mother: "No, Willie; because father says not."

Small Willie: "But why does father say I can't have a ride on a donkey, mummy?"

Mother (to husband): "Oh, Jack, for goodness' sake give him a ride on your back to keep him quiet!"—Money Prize awarded to Frederick Wiften, Bridge End, Church Street, Bocking, Essex.

Untactful Tom.

Captain (to clumsy cabin-boy): "Ah, well, I suppose it's the same old story—the fool of the family was sent to sea?"

Cabin-boy (solemnly): "Oh, not at all, sir! All that sort of thing's changed since your day!"—Money Prize awarded to Tom Wright, 11, Inchaffray Street, Perth, N.B.

Quite So.

Census Officer: "Have you any brothers, miss?"

Miss Skipitt: "Yes, three."

C. O.: "What are their respective trades, professions, or callings?"

Miss Skipitt: "Oh, one is a sailor, one is a tailor, and the other is a doctor!"

C. O. (promptly): "Oh, yes, I see! One is on the Channel, the other's on the flannel, and the third's on the panel."—Money Prize awarded to Thomas B. Wiles, 9, Regent Street, Gloucester.

Correct!

Teacher: "What is a quadruped, James?"

James: "A thing with four legs, sir."

Teacher: "Name one, James."

James: "A horse, sir."

Teacher: "Quite correct. Are there any feathered quadrupeds?"

James: "Yes, sir."

Teacher (grimly): "Oh, are there! Well, let me hear you name one?"

James: "A feather bed, sir!"—Money Prize awarded to A. R. Greenlaw, 4, Jameson Place, Leith.