

grassy footpath. For a brief second I regarded him with that peculiar fellow-feeling which a man who has risen extremely early is wont to exhibit towards another man who has risen extremely early. But finding no answering vanity in his undistinguished features I quickly put on an appearance of usualness, to indicate that I might be found on that spot at that hour every morning. The man looked shabby, and that Sherlock Holmes who lies concealed in each one of us decided for me that he must be a tailor out-of-work.

"Good morning, sir," he said.

"Good morning," I said.

"Do you want to buy a good recipe for a horse, sir?" he asked.

"A horse?" I repeated, wondering whether he was a lunatic, or a genius who had discovered a way to manufacture horses.

"Yes, sir," he said, "They often fall sick, sir, you know. The saying is, as I daresay you've heard, 'Never trust a woman's word or a horse's health.'"

I corrected his quotation.

"I've got one or two real good recipes," he resumed.

"But I've got no horse," I replied, and that seemed to finish the interview.

"No offence, I hope, sir," he said, and passed on towards the Delectable Mountains.

He was a mystery; his speech disclosed no marked local accent; he had certainly had some education; and he was hawking horse-remedies in