

More Adventures of Sherlock Bones

By A. CONAN BOYLE.

No. 1—The Adventure of Lord Ormsby's Chickens.

I N reviewing the adventures and mysteries which in a great manner introduced Mr. Sherlock Bones to the world, not only as a detective, but as an artist who combined the subtle sciences of deduction and foresight to the more crude and, perhaps, less scientific duties of a sleuth-hound, it has always been the aim of the writer to present to the world those cases which portray the ability that my friend possessed in solving problems that seemed absolutely unintelligible to the casual observer, at the same time presenting those artistic and bizarre qualities that my friend delighted in.

Sherlock Bones and myself were, at the time of this happening, in the midst of the Southern States of America, in Carolina. My health had been steadily on the decline since my friend Sherlock had taken to bee-raising, and as I had been persuaded to travel south, Sherlock Bones offered to accompany me. So that at the time of which I write we were situated in the Hotel West-Lake, and were leisurely taking our ease on the beautiful verandahs, or piazzas, as the Southerners call them, which overlooked an exquisite view of still water.

We had remained thus, smoking and talking, for perhaps an hour, when a tall, wealthy-looking Englishman aroused my attention by asking Bones for a match.

"Fine climate this!" observed my friend to that worthy, as he offered him the required light.

"Yes; it suits the niggers, too," rejoined the stranger, with a touch of bitterness. "It suits them too well for my way of thinking!" And then and there he gave us his opinion of them, ending up with a thorough all-round abuse of all the black tribes on earth.

It seems he was an English noble-

man, by name Lord Ormsby, who had come out some ten years past, and owned a large plantation which had established for him a large yearly income.

"You seem to be down on the darkies, my Lord," began Sherlock Bones, "for one who has turned them to such good account."

"Bah!" snarled his Lordship. "They're a nation of thieves—yes, sir, thieves!"

"Thieves," whispered Bones. "Aha! this means crime."

"That's what they are, sirs, thieves!" Lord Ormsby went on. "I am rearing some prize bantams this season, and though the fowls were securely locked up last night, I discovered twelve of the finest birds missing this morning, stolen, no doubt, by some of those dastardly niggers. I would pay fifty guineas to catch the rascal!"

"Done, sir!" almost screamed Sherlock Bones, springing from his chair. "Done, sir! I'll undertake it, by three days from to-day, and I'll have your man."

Lord Ormsby stepped back in astonishment at this. Then, after eyeing my friend curiously a moment, extended his hand, and the deal was closed.

Lord Ormsby gave Sherlock Bones a few details as to location of the hen-coops, size of the area in which they were bred, and other necessary information, departing with a promise from my friend to begin operations the following evening.

"Well, Swatson, and what do you think of it all?" asked Bones, as he leaned far back in his chair, and placed the tips of his long white fingers together.

"I think it is as his Lordship says," I replied. "No doubt one of the colored laborers has stolen them. You know the darkies are fond of chickens."

"In that case," said Sherlock, "he will no doubt return to-night for more fowls, when I will be in hiding for him in the hen-coop."

"I don't quite see," I said, "why, if he took twelve hens one night he