

The Arncliffe Puzzle

By GORDON HOLMES, Author "A Mysterious Disappearance."

CHAPTER XIV.

Bradshaw Takes Hobson in Hand. William L. Bradshaw had made a friend of the detective. He had, indeed, made a friend of every person with whom he came in contact, being gifted with a calmly persuasive manner which inspired confidence in all men, not to mention women. A reckless prodigality in the matter of half-crowns, too, caused the villagers to imagine that the millennium was imminent, if not already in their midst. So far as Hobson was concerned, he took special pains to establish good relations, because he saw that the detective was endowed with infinite capabilities, though wrapped in the red tape of Scotland Yard.

The American was deeply interested in the mystery of Lord Arncliffe's death. The sentimental aspect appealed little to him, since he had never set eyes on the man. But it was clear that influences had been at work which had caused great injury to his own personal prospects. Lord Arncliffe would certainly have taken the claims of so near a relative into consideration, but for the fact of his wealth, had not the fact of the existence of a nephew been kept from him.

It was impossible to avoid the doubt that Edith might have been responsible, at least for the expression of Bradshaw's letters. Yet, from the first, the hard-headed American had resolutely refused to regard her as guilty in the smallest degree. There was a mystery, and that mystery he intended to solve. In all his friendly visits to the Hall he kept his eyes open for the slightest clue tending to throw light upon the subject. The first thing essential was to win the trust of the detective, and now he had so far succeeded that the inspector was installed in his private sitting-room at the "Fisherman's Rest" ready to discuss developments and to impart his latest news.

The quaint old room, with its carved wainscoting and its time-enslaved beams, exercised a restful influence over the nervous American. After he had pushed a tray laden with whisky and cigars—cigars which were real Havanas and not doped imitations—across the table to the detective, he sat for a long time silently meditative, with something of that red Indian imperturbability which seems to be the natural inheritance of men born in the great natural land.

Hobson was quiet, too. He was not a waster of words, nor was it part of his policy to hurry any man's thoughts. At length Bradshaw took his cigar from between his lips.

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"Partner," he said, "you are weeping over the wrong grave."

The other looked at him with an expression of blank inquiry.

"Great Scott!" exclaimed Bradshaw, testily, "can't you understand plain language? You are barking up the wrong tree."

"But what the dickens do you mean?" asked Hobson, still only half comprehending.

"Well, now, you are wasting your time trying to find the things on to that poor little girl, Edith Holt, when you know she is the last person in the world to have committed so cold-blooded a crime. There is the bustle-purse of that check for three hundred pounds she says the old man gave her—"

"I withdraw that," interrupted Hobson, hastily. "I have every reason now to believe that Lord Arncliffe did give her the money. But there is something inexplicable in connection with those letters of yours. It is all very well for the young lady to say she never had the least idea of inheriting Lord Arncliffe's money; but let us suppose, for the sake of our inquiry, that she did know the terms of his will. She, or some one acting in her behalf, might very well decide to put him away before your arrival on the scene caused him to change his mind. Probably he would have treated her handsomely in any case; yet I do not think there can be much doubt you would have been the heir instead of Miss Holt."

"Neither do I," agreed Bradshaw, "but that does not prove Miss Holt to be a fraud. There is something in that girl's face—"

"I know," smirked Hobson, with an insoluble wink. "She is a perfect little angel to look at, and her soul is mirrored in her eyes. Bless you! I know ladies who are doing their 'ten years' penance' at this moment who could give Miss Holt points—"

"Sometimes you talk like a perfect idiot," broke in Bradshaw, speaking with icy deliberation. "You British policemen are not taught anything, except the regulation of traffic. You don't know enough, I'll admit, but when it comes to a delicate case like this you are not in the same catalogue as the French detectives, or, as far as that goes, the American. Why, man alive, a New York headquarters sleuth would have discovered the murderer a week ago; and unless he coughed up handsomely, would have delivered him to the inexorable clutches of the law, there to be held until the jury disagreed on the twenty-first appeal, and then all the interested parties were dead."

"That is all very pretty, Mr. Bradshaw," was the self-sufficient reply; "but if you come down to real results, I think you will find that English detectives secure more successes in the long run than all your Frenchmen or Americans put together. If we find a woman with her head cut off, we don't look up the antecedents of the two-year-old baby, simply because the most unlikely person to have committed the crime. As a rule, the most likely person is the person, and anyway, I am not such a 'perfect idiot' as to allow myself to be thrown off the scent by the simpering of a pretty face."

"Say," exclaimed the American in accents of deepest disgust, "you give me a pain in the neck. I have met you, and I have met women with pretty faces, but they have not taken in any man worth a cent. You want to read up Lombroso, my friend—you should study criminology in its physiological and physiological aspects. Show me that Miss Holt's head is too flat, and her eyes too close together, that her ears are pointed, that the angle of her jaw is too wide or too narrow—show me even that her mouth is too large or too small—confound you!—and I will say: 'Let us by all means watch Miss Edith Holt.'"

"I must admit that she is an uncommonly fine girl," growled Hobson. "And I don't mind the further admission to you, sir, that I am not quite so sure as I was even about her complicity in the affair. As I told you, I am quite satisfied regarding the three hundred pounds. And I am pretty well certain, too, that she had nothing to do with the attack on Angier. At the same time, there is something very queer about it all, and more than once I have been near arresting her upon my own responsibility."

"And a pretty pickle you would be in when she was proved innocent."

"I know that," and the detective's instant candor revealed his deadly earnestness. "That is what held me back. It would have been a grand feather in my cap to convict a woman with forty thousand a year, but if I had failed there would have been an end to the career of yours truly. Still, I see I must make some move. It does not redound to my credit that the murder of a man like Lord Arncliffe should remain a mystery, and if I don't clear it up the authorities will supersede me for a certainty."

"There was not any money stolen when Angier was attacked?" asked the American, irrelevantly.

"Not a halfpenny, so far as we can make out. The only thing missing was a pocket book, on which he was working. And—there you are again—Miss Holt knew all about Lord Arncliffe's accounts. If there was anything wrong, it is only reasonable to suppose her to be the person most interested in suppressing the tell-tale figures."

"Well," continued Bradshaw, still apparently without reference to the subject under discussion, "I have been spending quite a lot of my time lately in the bar downstairs. I do not mean the parlor, but right among all the horny-handed sons of toil who come here to measure their wages against Jones' beer. They are quite an interesting lot of men and remarkably fond of strong drink."

"So they are, but I don't think you will pick up much information from those yokels."

"Perhaps not. Anyway, a chap they call Leigh, a sort of poacher and never-work, seems to have struck it pretty rich lately. The old landlady tells me that this fellow used not to have two cents to rub together, and was always cadging from one or other. Now he has taken to setting up drinks for the crowd and changing gold right and left."

"Ah," exclaimed Hobson, with a nod of comprehension. "That was a situation which came within his province. 'We will just keep an eye on this gentleman who has become rich so suddenly. I can see, sir, you have got the makings of a first-class detective in you. Of course it would be easy enough for the young lady to bribe a fellow like that to do any sort of crooked work.'"

"Why in thunder can't you leave the young lady out of your calculations?" cried Bradshaw with renewed impatience. "If she is guilty, you can always lay your hands on her when the proper time comes. Judging by the way you are going on, you will end by letting the real murderer slip through your fingers."

"I suppose I shall have to telegraph to the Yard for another man," said Hobson, ruefully. "I hate to do it. You get a case like this all cut and dried, with only one little thing lacking to make the chain of evidence complete. And then a new man comes along, hits on the clue by accident, and takes all the credit while you have done all the work."

"Still, you have the local policeman to help, haven't you?"

"Don't talk to me about the local policeman!" exclaimed the Scotland Yard official, in tones of intense disgust. "Fox is no more. It is ought to have been Goose. The night Angier was attacked I found some splendid footprints on the soft ground outside the study window, and I set Fox to guard over them until I could take a proper cast. It appears that Fox had heard of taking a cast too—read it in 'Sherlock Holmes' or somewhere—and when I returned I found he had saved me the trouble. He sent for some pressed paper, and he did, and poured it, thin as sea soup, over the ground. Of course, when you are dealing with soft dry ground you must oil it very carefully before doing anything like that. The result was that the impressions of the footprints had been made by anything from Man Friday to an elephant. No, sir; the better we have to do with P. C. Fox the less."

"See here," said Bradshaw, "I have nothing particular to say to you at present, and I fancy I would like to take a hand in the game myself. Supposing I were to take care of this 'got-rich-quicker' gentleman?"

"Well, sir," said Hobson, doubtfully, "it is rather against the rules of the force to have anything to do with amateurs, but as a special favor to you—"

"Oh, come off the fence, and don't talk that kind of nonsense to me," interrupted Bradshaw. "So far as I can gauge the situation you want to secure all the credit for this business and any dollars attached to it—and you don't care to apprehend the rules hanging in the process. Anyway, the thing interests me, and I am going to see it through. And, believe me, Hobson, I am not worrying any whether it is according to the rules of the force or not. Have another drink?"

The whisky was good, and the quietly expressed determination of Bradshaw unanswerable, so Hobson helped himself discreetly and awaited the developments which he fancied lay behind this offer of help.

It appeared strange that a detective of his standing at Scotland Yard—no man of the criminal investigation department—should discuss things so freely with a comparative stranger. But the American had quietly intimated to him that he was prepared to make a handsome reward—without any undesirable publicity and entirely apart from Lord Arncliffe's strange bequest—should Hobson succeed in securing the murderer of Lord Arncliffe's murderer. The police regulations about the fees, or personal remuneration, and five hundred pounds passing as a mere private matter between gentlemen was a sum of money not to be thrust aside with lofty indifference.

Bradshaw did not give any further opening, so Hobson resumed the conversation.

(To Be Continued.)

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An announcement of no small importance to those contemplating a trip to historic Quebec to witness the Tercentenary celebrations, has just been received by the passenger department of the Grand Trunk Railway System, to the effect that they are officially advised by the directors of the Tented City Company, Quebec, that there will be plenty of accommodation for visitors provided they book early. The excursion fares that are offered by the Grand Trunk Railway System, and the comfort and dispatch which pass-angers using that line are assured of, will no doubt be the means of enabling all, even those of limited means, of enjoying one of the best educational and pleasant outings that has heretofore been provided for them.

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BEARS PRISONERS IN PUBLIC CELLS

Three Trained Animals Locked Up With Italians Who Owned Them.

New York, July 19.—Three performing bears, taken into custody with their Italian owners, were placed in the same cells with the men, in the West Brighton Police Station, Staten Island. They kept up such howls all night that residents of the vicinity found sleep an impossibility. Along with their masters, the bears were led to the police court today.

Just what to do with the animals, after he had taken them in, was the source of much thought on the part of Acting Capt. Cobb. No one seemed to want to take the responsibility for housing them, and, after trying in vain to find a place outside the station, the captain decided to put them in the cells of the three Italians.

Scarcely had the custodian locked the doors of the cells when there arose noises that would have done credit to an animal show. The policemen on reserve, rudely awakened by the howls, had visions of all manner of tragedies as they ran from their dormitories, half-clad, to the desk. When they returned to bed, but not to

Citizens living close to the station stood the noise as long as possible, and then began to use the telephone to ascertain the cause. All night the noisy bear headquarters was kept busy answering questions.

Capt. Cobb was in Magistrate Hadley's court early in the morning with the Italians and the bears. He said he had arrested the men for permitting the bears to perform in the park at Port Richmond. The men had no licenses.

Warning the Italians that, if they or their bears were found again in the park, they would receive jail sentences and see the bears destroyed, the magistrate fined each of them \$1, and the six erstwhile prisoners were soon on their way to the Elizabeth ferry.

UNCLE SAM LEARNS FROM CANADA

The Lemieux Act Endorsed by U. S. Commissioner of Labor Bureau.

Washington, July 18.—That the Canadian industrial disputes investigation act for the prevention of strikes affecting public utilities has accomplished the main purpose for which it was passed, is the conclusion drawn after a special investigation of the workings of the law by Dr. Victor S. Clark, for the bureau of labor, in a report made public today.

From March 22, 1907, when the act went into effect, to June 15, 1908, 30 disputes became subject to investigation, and in 28 cases strikes were averted or ended. The law prohibits a cessation of industry, under penalty of imprisonment, and the investigation of an official board of the public is officially informed of the grounds of the controversy, reliance being placed on public opinion to prevent or shorten such disturbances. The law provides for boards of conciliation and investigation.

Dr. Clark reports that no employer was found who was not favorable to the law, as better than no legislation, and that as it applied to railroads, and to the coal mines, it was a great favor among the rank and file of the workers, though some representative labor leaders are opposed to it. Among the public most of those who are practical familiar with labor matters approve the act. Its effect has been to cause the public to take an interest in many industrial disputes quite as immediate and important as that of the conflicting parties. Apparently the condition of workmen or of industries were applied.

AGAINST ANTI-AUTO LAW

Prince Edward Island Court Decides It Is Ultra Vires.

Charlottetown, P. E. I., July 20.—Another step in the legal fight against the automobile bill was taken when the automobile interest moved for a rule to set aside the conviction made recently by Stipendiary Magistrate McDonald, whereby the defendant, who openly ran an automobile to test the act, were fined \$200. The grounds on which certiorari were asked for were that a bill of this kind invades the criminal law, which the Dominion Parliament alone can enact, and is therefore ultra vires of the Provincial Legislature. A rule absolute was granted. The argument was set down for the November term.

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UNCLE SAM DEALS MOST WITH CANADA

Goods Exported to Dominion During the Year Worth \$222,582,000.

Washington, July 20.—Canadian progress is outlined in the introduction to the annual series of consular reports on the Dominion just published by the bureau of manufactures, department of commerce and labor.

The total trade for the calendar year 1907, according to the Canadian statistics, was \$646,150,000, of which \$372,825,000 were imports and \$273,325,000 exports. The increase in imports over the previous year was \$2,758,000, and in exports \$3,849,000. The figures for the Canadian fiscal year, which ended March 31, 1908, make approximately the same showing.

The United States exported to Canada in the calendar year goods to the value of \$222,582,000, which was an increase of \$26,455,000 over the previous year. This increase was maintained in the face of the preferential tariff which gives the United Kingdom an advantage of about 30 per cent in the customs duties. The exports from the United States to Canada are more than to all the rest of North America, including Cuba and the West Indies; more than twice the amount to South America or Asia, and four times that to Oceania.

The imports from the United Kingdom were \$96,849,000, an increase of \$19,204,000 over the previous year. Exports to the United Kingdom decreased \$8,458,000.

Canada from the United States has been invested in Canada in 150 important industries since 1897. The emigration from the United States during 1907 was 58,000, and the estimated property brought by these emigrants was \$49,000,000.

The mineral production in 1907 was \$86,183,000, an increase of \$6,183,000 over 1906. There was a loss of \$4,000,000 in gold production, a slight increase in copper, and an increase in coal from \$19,845,000 to \$24,560,000.

The wheat crop now averages approximately 100,000,000 bushels annually. In 1907 1,500 miles of railway were constructed and the total mileage in operation at the beginning of the present year was a little short of 28,000. It is estimated that \$75,000,000 will be spent during 1908.

In electrical development the present plans contemplate 400,000 horsepower on Niagara on the Canadian side, as compared with 300,000 horsepower on the United States side. About \$80,000,000 is involved in an important electric light and power enterprise to transmit the power 119 miles to London, Ont. Substantially all the imports of electrical apparatus are from the United States, this country having sent \$3,341,000, as against \$74,000 from the United Kingdom. In dutiable machinery other than agricultural, the United States supplied \$6,273,000 out of a total of \$6,800,000.

The United Kingdom has better success in holding the market against the United States for textiles. The United States only supplies 12 per cent of the textile imports. The imports of woollen goods from the United Kingdom increased from \$10,000,000 in 1900 to \$21,000,000 in 1905. Coincidentally the number of Canadian woollen mills declined from 157 to 103.

As an illustration of the increased cost of living it is said that the royal commission has recommended an increase for the civil service employees of 12½ to 15 per cent in Eastern Canada and 20 to 25 per cent in Western Canada.

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SIX AUTOISTS WERE KILLED

Train Hits Car—Father, Mother and Three Girls Were Victims.

Warsaw, Ind., July 20.—Six lives were crushed out in an instant near Columbia City Saturday, when a Pennsylvania Railroad train smashed an automobile in which were Mr. and Mrs. Charles Sherman King, their two daughters, Miss Fayma Bradshaw and Carl Timmins, the chauffeur, all of Port Wayne.

The machine was stopped about a half-mile west of Columbia City at a railroad crossing by a freight train and the chauffeur drove onto the second track, waiting for the freight to pass. He failed to see the Manhattan Limited passenger train which came around the curve at a high rate of speed. The automobile was destroyed and the bodies of its six occupants were flung along the track for a distance of a hundred feet and terribly mangled. Skulls were fractured, arms and legs broken, chests crushed and clothing stripped off.

So great was the force of the collision that the huge locomotive of the passenger train was derailed, but was replaced on the tracks with the aid of the wrecking train.

The party was in Mr. King's automobile and was going from Fort Wayne to Lake Wawasee. It is said that when the party started on the trip Mr. King ordered the chauffeur to make the run in two hours and a half, which is about half an hour less than the usual time.

Mr. King was agent for the Prudential Life Insurance Company, and formerly was a member of the Indiana Legislature from Wabash County, being chairman of the ways and means committee. He was a member of the Columbia Club at Indianapolis and well known throughout the state.

He was one of the best-known Republicans of Indiana and had taken a prominent part in public affairs. His

daughters were Katherine, aged 16, and Josephine, aged 12. Miss Bradshaw was 16 years of age and was a neighbor of the King family, whose guest she was to have been over Sunday at the King cottage at Lake Wawasee. She was a daughter of Robert F. Bradshaw, general agent of a range company at Fort Wayne.

The six bodies were taken to Columbia City and will be sent to Fort Wayne.

SWEEP CLIMBS MT. BLANC

Prince, General and Two Barons Also in the Number.

Geneva, July 18.—Statisticians have just been published showing that during last year 130 Alpinists climbed to the summit of Mont Blanc and received certificates. Twenty of the climbers were English, eight were Americans, fourteen of the climbers were women, the majority being English. The Hon. Miss Sybil and Miss Florence Amherst ascended the mountain in the quickest time for women.

The ages of the Alpinists varied from 15 to 75 years, and among them were a prince, a general, two barons, a priest, several doctors, lawyers, and a Swiss chimney sweep of means.

Here are some interesting figures given by the New York Herald for the users of gas meters: In three months, out of 2,805 meters tested, after complaint, 624 were correct, 1,820 were fast and 661 were slow.

