into the character of parents by studying their children. This child's disposition is abnormally cruel, merely for cruelty's sake, and whether he derives this from his smiling father, as I should suspect, or from his mother, it bodes evil for the poor girl who is in their power."

"I am sure that you are right, Mr. Holmes," cried our client. "A thousand things come back to me which make me certain that you hit it. Oh, let us lose not an instant in bringing help to this poor creature."

"We must be circumspect, for we are dealing with a very cunning man. We can do nothing until seven o'clock. At that hour we shall be with you, and it will not be long before we solve the mystery."

We were as good as our word, for it was just seven o'clock when we reached the Copper Beeches, having put up our trap at a wayside public house. The group of trees, with their dark leaves shining like burnished metal in the light of the setting sun, were sufficient to mark the house even had Miss Hunter not been standing smiling on the doorstep.

"Have you managed it?" asked Holmes.

A loud thudding noise came from somewhere downstairs. "That is Mrs. Toller in the cellar," said she. "Her husband lies snoring on the kitchen rug. Here are the keys, which are the duplicates of Mr. Rucastle's."

"You have done well, indeed!" cried Holmes, with enthusiasm. "Now lead the way, and we shall soon see the end of this black business."

We passed up the stair, unlocked the door, followed on down a passage, and found ourselves in front of the barricade which Miss Hunter had described. Holmes cut the cord and removed the transverse bar. Then he tried the various keys in the lock, but without success. No sound came from within, and at the silence Holmes's face clouded over.

"I must that we are not too late," said he. "I think, Miss Hunter, that we had better go in without you. Now, Watson, put your shoulder to it, and we shall see whether we cannot make our way in."

It was an old rickety door, and gave it once before our united strength. Together we rushed into the room. It was empty. There was no furniture save a little pallet bed, a small table, and a basketful of linen. The skylight above was open, and the prisoner gone.

"There has been some villainy here," said Holmes, "this beauty has guessed Miss Hunter's intentions, and has carried his victim off."

"But how?"

"Through the skylight. We shall soon see how he managed it." He swung himself up onto the roof. "Ah, yes," he cried, "here's the end of a long ladder against the eaves. That is how he did it."

"But it is impossible," said Miss Hunter; "the ladder was not there when the Rucastles went away."

"He has come back and done it. I tell you that he is a clever and dangerous man. I should not be very much surprised if this were he whose step I hear now upon the stair. I think, Watson, that it would be as well for you to have your pistol ready."

The words were hardly out of his mouth before a man appeared at the door of the room, a very fat and burly man, with a heavy stick in his hand. Miss Hunter screamed and shrunk against the wall at the sight of him, but Sherlock Holmes sprang forward and confronted him.

"You villain!" said he, "where's your daughter?"

The fat man cast his eyes round, and then up at the open skylight.

"It is for me to ask you that," he shrieked, "you thieves! Spies and thieves! I have caught you, have caught you, have I? You are in my power. I'll serve you!" He turned and clattered down the stairs as hard as he could go.

"He's gone for the dog!" cried Miss Hunter.

"I have my revolver," said I.

"Better close the front door," cried Holmes and we all rushed down the stairs together. We had hardly reached the hall when we heard the baying of a hound, and then a scream of agony, with a horrible worrying sound which it was dreadful to listen to. An elderly man with a red face and shaking limbs came staggering out at a side door.

Holmes and I rushed out and round the angle of the house, with Toller hurrying behind us. There was the huge famished brute, its black muzzle buried in Rucastle's throat, while he writhed and screamed upon the ground. Running up I blew its brains out, and it fell over with its keen white teeth still meeting in the great creases of his neck. With much labor we separated them and carried him, living but horribly mangled, into the house. We laid him upon the drawing room sofa, and having dispatched the sobered Toller to bear the news to his wife, I did what I could to relieve his pain. We were all assembled round him when the door opened and a tall, gaunt woman entered the room.

"Mrs. Toller," cried Miss Hunter.

"Yes, miss, Mr. Ruscastle let me out when he came back before he went up to you. Ah, miss, it is a pity you didn't let me know what you were planning for I would have told you that your pains were wasted."

"Ha!" said Holmes, looking keenly at her. "It is clear that Mrs. Toller knows more about this matter than any one else."

"Yes, sir, I do, and I am ready enough to tell what I know."

"Then, pray sit down and let us hear it, for there are several points on which I must confess that I am still in the dark."

"I will soon make it clear to you," said she, "and I'd have done so before now if I could ha' got out from the cellar. If there's police court business over this, you'll remember that I was the one that stood your friend, and that I was Miss Alice's friend, too.

"She was never happy at home, Miss Alice wasn't, from the time that her father married again. She was slighted like, and had no say in anything; but it never really became bad for her until after she met Mr. Fowler at a friend's house. As well as I could learn, Miss Alice had rights of her own by will, but she was so quiet and patient, she was, that she never said a word about them, but just left everything in Mr. Rucastle's hands. He knew he was safe with her; but when there was a chance of a husband coming forward, who would ask for all that the law would give him, then her father thought it time to put a stop on it. He wanted her to sign a paper, so that whether she married or not, he could use her money. When she wouldn't do it, he kept on worrying her until she got brain fever, and for six weeks was at death's door. Then she got better at last, all worn to a shadow, and with her beautiful hair cut off; but that didn't make no change in her young man, and he stuck to her as true as man could be."

"Ah," said Holmes, "I think that what you have been good enough to tell us makes the matter fairly clear, and that I can deduce all that remains. Mr. Rucastle then, I presume, took to this system of imprisonment."

"Yes, sir."

"And brought Miss Hunter down from London in order to get rid of the disagreeable persistence of Mr. Fowler."

"But Mr. Fowler, being a persevering man, as a good seaman should be, blockaded the house, and, having met you, succeeded by certain arguments, metallic or otherwise, in convincing you that your interests were the same as his."

"Mr. Fowler was a very kind-spoken, free-handed gentleman," said Mrs. Toller, serenely.

"And in this way he managed that your good man should have no want of drink, and that a ladder should be ready at the moment when your master had gone out."

"You have it, sir, just as it happened."

"I am sure we owe you an apology, Mrs. Toller," said Holmes, "for you have certainly cleard up everything which puzzled us. And here comes the country surgeon and Mrs. Rucastle, so I think, Watson, that we had best escort Miss Hunter back to Winchester, as it seems to me that our locus standi now is rather a questionable one."

And thus was solved the mystery of the sinister house with the copper beeches in front of the door. Mr. Rucastle survived, but was always a broken man, kept alive solely through the care of his devoted wife. They still live with their old servants, who probably know so much of Rucastle's past life, that he finds it difficult to part from them. Mr. Fowler and Miss Ruscastle were married by special license in Southampton the day after their flight, and he is now the holder of a government appointment in the Island of Mauritius. As to Miss Violet Hunter, my friend Holmes, rather to my disappointment, manifested no further interest in her when once she had ceased to be the centre of one of his problems, and she is now the head of a private school at Walsall, where I believe that she has met with considerable success.

THE END.

Faith

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SHILOH

25c. with guarantee wherever medicine is sold.

THE RISE OF ARMSTRONGS

For over a mile and a half the steep banks of the Tyne and studded with the huge workshops and towering shafts of Elswick.

Rising in a series of terraces from the river the steel works cover twelve acres, the great ordnance works take up 72 acres, and alone employ 14,000 people; the famous Elswick shipyards and the engineering works form each end of the industrial city.

The shipbuilding yard at Walker, a few miles distant, is an ennex to Elswick, and close by is a new offshoot—the shell and fuse factory of Scotswood. All these engineering triumphs on the Tyne were organized by the commanding genius of the late Lord Armstrong, but do not represent the whole of the mammoth undertaking which bears the name of Sir W. G. Armstrong, Whitworth & Co. At Openshaw, Manchester, are the renowned Whitworth engineering works, with a new addition in the shape of the largest armor-plate factory in the country, and nestling in the Bay of Naples, near the ruins of Cicero's villa, is the flourishing Italian branch of the house. In all an army of over 25,000 workmen are employed, whose wages bill totals £40,000 a week.

25,000 Men: Wages £40,000 Weekly.

The firm of Sir W. G. Armstrong, Whitworth & Co. is more than a great business—it is a national institution. It has been bound up with the naval expansion and military history of the country for over half a century. The admiralty went to Elswick for its great naval architects—Sir William White, and his able successor, Mr. Philip Watts, who 16 years ago left the admiralty service to go to Elswick. On the other hand, Armstrongs indirectly drew from the army a talented captain of industry in the late Colonel Dyer, who laid down its steel works and organized the great Engineers' Federation. The present head of the great company—Sir Andrew Noble, the greatest of living authorities on artillery and explosives—was an artillery officer. Mr. George Rendell left a directorship in Armstrongs to be civil lord of the admiralty in 1883, and the founder of the firm himself was for five years in the service of the government.

The growth of the mammoth combination of engineering, ordnance manufacture and ship-building carried on by the firm is a stimulating example of courageous policy, inventiveness and resource. The works are probably the best equipped arsenal in the world, ready to turn out projectiles and guns of all kinds, make the steel, the armor-plate machinery, electrical plant, and everything else for the complete equipment of a warship, except marine boilers and gunpowder.

The Rise of Armstrongs.

The romantic story of how a Newcastle solicitor when at the age of 37, quitted his profession and almost at once became a leading engineer, is well known. After gaining a national reputation for his hydraulic machinery he invented the Armstrong gun. It marked the first great advance in artillery since the time of Waterloo. When thrown over by the government, to whom he had presented his invention, Armstrong looked for business abroad. The ordnance and the engineering works were amalgamated.

Soon afterwards the shipbuilding works of Charles Mitchell, lower down the Tyne, were annexed. Later on a branch was established in Italy, shipbuilding works started at Elswick, extensions made in other departments, and finally, in 1897, the historic house of Sir Joseph Whitworth was absorbed at a cost of about a million. The works were divided into seven great departments: engineering, ordnance, steel works, the Walker shipyard, the Elswick shipyard, the Italian branch and the Openshaw works, Manchester.

Never in the 60 years' history of this company has it shown more vigor or more determination to maintain its prominent position than it does to-day. Only a firm confident of its own strength and full of hope in the future could spend over a million within two years on remodelling its works and carrying out extensions.

The Elswick works are thoroughly modernized. Communication by rail and river is perfect. Inside the works a network of railways links all departments together. In the general engineering works the latest labor-saving machinery and machine tools are introduced.

In the adjoining steel works, hydraulic power is used to move huge masses of steel with the greatest ease, and propellers and shafts, 80 ft. in length and 80 tons in weight, are lifted about in response to the touch of a lever.

Developments of To-Day.

But the greatest department at Elswick is that devoted to ordnance, over which Sir Andrew Noble presides. The works contain over 4,000 machines of all kinds, from small ingenious contrivances to the Titanic machinery which moves with the greatest smoothness, doing the work of hundreds of men. The ordnance works turn out 6,500 tons of guns a year. The labor which this represents will be better understood when it is stated that a year is required to make a 10 in. gun, and eighteen months are spent on a 110-ton gun.

Between the ordnance works and the river are the Elswick shipyards, where some of the most celebrated warships of the world have been built from the designs of Sir William White and Mr. Philip Watts. Every detail of construction, from the designing to the perfect equipment of a warship ready for sea, is carried out at Elswick.

Among the notable ships which have left the yards are a number of battleships and cruisers for Japan; battleships for Norway; the New Orleans and the Albany, purchased by the United States; cruisers and battleships for Chili, the Argentine, Portugal, Brazil and other countries. The last two battleships executed for Japan are considered to be at least equal to any afloat, and the latest Elswick cruisers take the lead both in gunpowder and in speed.

The shipyard at Walker is devoted to general shipbuilding, and is responsible for some cleverly constructed vessels, such as the famous ice-breaker Ermak, constructed for the Russian government, and the boats which carry the trains across Lake Baikal on the Siberian route to Vladivostock.

New works have recently been erected at Scotswood, including a shell and fuse factory and a most perfect brass factory and joiners' workshops.

At the Whitworth works at Openshaw, Manchester, the greatest variety of machine tools, for which Sir Joseph Whitworth gained a world-wide reputation, are made, and the largest armor-plate works in the country are now completed. The firm found it necessary to spend £700,000 on armor-plate works in order to have always a supply for its shipyards.

The Italian works employ over a thousand men, and are chiefly occupied in building ships and executing armaments for the Italian government.

Combination Has Meant Strength.

The colossal and many-sided works of the company are in a state of perfect organization, due to the system of distributing responsibility and the presence of men of signal ability at the head of the different departments. Beginning with a man who combined great brain force with the power of application, Armstrongs have always sought and found the highest engineering talent. Their staff of experts are unequalled for ability. The head of every department possesses in some degree the characteristics of the founder. Every extension has added strength to the firm. The acquisition to the Walker shipyard was the first outlet for their engineering products, and gave them the necessary experience for starting the Elswick shipyard.

The accession of Mr. Vavasseur, the inventor of the copper band which gives the rotary movement to projectiles, and well known for his improvements in gun carriages, was another element of strength. The absorption of the Whitworth works was prompted partly by the fact that additional engineering plant was urgently required and partly to provide a new competition in armor-plate manufacture.

The Italian works enable the firm to become the chief shipbuilder and ordnance maker to the Italian government. The company has supplied warships to many countries, and ordnance to all. Its foreign trade in general engineering works and merchandise ships shows no sign of shrinking, and if it continues to adapt itself quickly to the changing condition of industry, its prosperity will remain unchecked.

The Danube flows through countries in which fifty-two languages and dialects are spoken.

Laplanders not infrequently cover 150 miles a day on their skates.

Paris has the biggest debt of any city in the world. It amounts to $400,000,000.

The most costly tomb in existence is that erected in honor of Mohammed.

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WAS ADAM A GIANT.

Some Interesting Remarks by a French Scholar.

The recent visit to Paris of the young Russian giant nine feet eight inches high has revived interest in giants in general, and a French savant (says the London Globe's Paris letter) has delivered himself of some interesting remarks on the subject. In 1718 it appears that a French scholar named Henzion published a work about giants, beginning with Adam, who, he asserts, was 123 feet 9 inches tall, while Eve was only 5 feet shorter. But Adam's descendants began to taper off from the beginning.

When they came to Noah they had sheared down that patriarchal navigator to the comparatively trivial stature of twenty-seven feet. Abraham was only twenty feet in height, and Moses stopped at thirteen, a dwarf in comparison. After the great law-giver the stature of mankind came down to its present average, in which there has been no marked change, except in individual cases, since the beginning of the historical and statistical period.

Now and then a Colossas arises out of a generation of pigmies, like the young Russian refered to, and a big skeleton is dug up, showing that nature has some obscure need of giants, and has never allowed the race entirely to run out. It seems, according to the savant referred to, that they are generally weak-minded, as well as frail of body, and, as a rule, they do not live long. Dwarfs, on the other hand, are often nimble-witted, and stand a good chance of longevity.

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SHERLOCK HOLMES STORIES

IN THE VICTORIA TIMES
Every Saturday.

Saturday, October 21st
WILL APPEAR
The Adventures of The Noble Bachelor

The exclusive right belongs to THE TIMES

The Best Ever Written
Each Detective Story Complete in Itself

Owing to the great popularity of the Sherlock Holmes Stories, arrangements have been made by the Times for the publication of a series by Sir Conan Doyle. When Sir Conan Doyle created the character of Sherlock Holmes, he founded an absolutely unique type and reconstructed the entire theory and nature of detective stories. Doyle made his detective a deductive genius, and the style and nature of his adventures set the world a talking. Thousands of people regard Holmes as a personal friend and they would not miss a single one of his adventures.

The following stories will appear, one each Saturday in the order given below:

Oct. 21—The Adventures of TheNoble Bachelor
Oct. 28—The Red Headed League
Nov. 4—A Case of Identity.
Nov. 11—Silver Blaze
Nov. 18—The Yellow Face
Nov. 25—The Stockbroker's Clerk
Dec. 2—The Gloria Scott
Dec. 9—The Musgrave Ritual