-By BII LY DE BECK

"I feel that I owe you a great many pologies for my abrupt departure yeserday, doctor, said my patient. "I confess that I was very much

surprised at it, said I. Well, the fact is,' he remarked, that when I recover from these ateks my mind is always very clouded to all that has gone before. I woke in a strange room, as it seemed to e and made my way out into the reet in a sort of dazed way when you

"'And I,' said the son, 'seeing my ather pass the door of the waitingom, naturally thought that the conmitation had come to an end. It was not until we had reached home that I negan to realize the true state of af-

Well, said I, laughing, there is no harm done except that you puzzled me ribly so if you, sir, would kindly en into the waiting-room I shall be was brought to so abrupt an

"For half an hour or so I discussed and then, having prescribed for im I saw him go off upon the arm of

"I have told you that Mr. Blessingfor his exercise. He came in shortafterwards and passed upstairs. An lown, and he burst into my consultinglike a man who is mad with

'No one,' said L It's a lie!' he yelled. 'Come up and

passed over the grossness of his mage, as he seemed half out of his ith him he pointed to several footnts upon the light carpet.

"D'you mean to say those are mine?" They were certainly very much ger than any which he could have de, and were evidently quite fresh. rained hard this afternoon, as you now, and my patients were the only ople who called. It must have been case, then, that the man in the iting-room had, for some unknown ason, while I was busy with the her, ascended to the room of my resi-

nt patient. Nothing had been touchor taken, but there were the footints to prove that the intrusion was undoubted fact. "Mr. Blessington seemed more ex-

ave thought possible, though of was enough to disturb anyy's peace of mind. He actually sat an arm-chair, and I could dly get him to speak coherently. It his suggestion that I should come you, and of course I at once the propriety of it, for certainly incident is a very singular one, igh he appears to completely overits importance. If you would only back with me in my brougham. would at least be able to soothe though I can hardly hope that will be able to explain this rekable occurrence.

harlock Holmes had listened to this narrative with an intentness ch showed me that his interest was nly aroused. His face was as imas ever, but his lids had more heavily over his eyes, his smoke had curled up more ckly from his pipe to emphasize curious episode in the doctor's As our visitor concluded, Holmes ang up without a word, handed me hat, picked his own from the table, followed Dr. Trevelyan to the door thin a quarter of an hour we had dropped at the door of the physiresidence in Brook street, one of sombre, flat-faced houses which ssociates with a west-end pracsmall page admitted us, and we at once to ascend the broad,

carpeted stair. a singular interruption brought a standstill. The light at the was suddenly whisked out, and the darkness came a reedy, quavmy word that I'll fire if you come

is really grows outrageous, Mr. gton." cried Dr. Trevelyan. then it is you, doctor," said the with a great heave of relief. hose other gentlemen, are they ere conscious of a long scrutiny

s, yes, it's all right," said the at last. "You can come up, and sorry if my precautions have an-

elit the stair gas as he spoke, we saw before us a singular-looknan, whose appearance, as well as oice, testified to his jangled Wes. He was very fat, but had apently at some time been much fatthat the skin hung about his n loose pouches, like the cheeks loodhound. He was of a sickly and his thin, sandy hair seemed motion. In his hand he held a pisthe thrust it into his pocket as

d-evening, Mr. Holmes," said he.

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hurt a bit! Drop a little on an aching corn, inthat corn stops hurting, then You lift it right off with fingers.

druggist sells a tiny bottle of for a few cents, sufficient night." without soreness or irritation. his waiting-room.









happy to continue our consultation you for coming round. No one ever ing," he cried. "The police are already as my friend entered, "I am delighted needed your advice more than I do. I upstairs. It has shaken me most to see you." suppose that Dr. Trevelyan has told dreadfully." old gentleman's symptoms with you of this most unwarrantable intrusion into my rooms."

these two men, Mr. Blessington, and generally chose this hour of the why do they wish to molest you?"

tient, in a nervous fashion, "of course estant later I heard him running it is hard to say that. You can hardly expect me to answer that, Mr. Holmes." "Do you mean that you don't know?" Who has been in my room?" he

"Come in here, if you please. Just have the kindness to step in here." He led the way into his bedroom, which was large and comfortably fur-

"You see that," said he pointing to a big black box at the end of his bed. and with fear. When I went upstairs Mr. Holmes—never made but one in-"I have never been a very rich man, vestment in my life, as Dr. Trevelyan would tell you. But I don't believe in bankers. I would never trust a banker, Mr. Holmes. Between ourselves, what appearance. The neck was drown out "Hum!" said Holmes, "have you got little I have is in that box, so you can like a plucked chicken's, making the his cigar-holder?" understand what it means to me when rest of him seem the more obese and unknown people force themselves into my rooms.

Holmes looked at Blessington in his questioning way and shook his head. "I cannot possibly advise you if you try to deceive me," said he. "But I have told you everything."

Holmes turned on his heel with a gesture of disgust. "Good-night, Dr. frevelyan," said he. "And no advice for me?" cried Bless-

ngton, in a breaking voice. "My advice to you, sir, is to speak the truth."

A minute later we were in the street and walking for home. We had crossed Oxford street and were half way down Harley street before I could get a word from my companion.

"Serry to bring you out on such a fool's errand, Watson," he said at last. "It is an interesting case, too, at the bottom of it." "I can make little of it," I con-

"Well, it is quite evident that there are two men-more, perhaps, but at least two-who are determined for some reason to get at this fellow Blessington. I have no doubt in my mind that both on the first and on the second occasion that young man penetrated to Blessington's room, while his confederate, by an ingenious device, kept the doctor from interfering."

"And the gatalepsy?" "A fraudulent imitation. Watson, though I should hardly dare to hint as much to our specialist. It is a very easy complaint to imitate. I have done

"And then?" "By the purest chance Blessington was out on each occasion. Their reason for choosing so unusual an hour for a consultation was obviously to insure that there should be no other patient in the waiting-room. It just happened, however, that this hour coincided with Blessington's constitutional, which seems to show that they were not very well acquainted with his daily routine. Of course, if they had been merely after plunder they would at least have made some attempt to search for it. Besides, I can read in a man's eye when it is his own skin that he is frightened for. It is inconcrivable that this fellow could have made two such vindictive enemies as these appear to be without knowing of it. I hold it, therefore, to be certain that he does know who these men are and that for reasons of his own he suppresses it. It is just possible that tomorrow may find him in a more communicative mood."

"Is there not one alternative," I suggested, "grotesquely improbable, no doubt, but still just conceivable? Might the whole story of the cataleptic Russian and his son be a concootion of Dr. Trevelyan's' who has, fer his own purposes, been in Blessington's rooms?"

I saw in the gaslight that Holmes wore an amused smile at this brilliant departure of mine. "My dear fellow," one of the first solutions which occuristle up with the intensity of red to me, but I was soon able to corroborate the doctor's tale. This young man has left prints upon the stair carpet which made it quite superfluous for me to ask to see those which he sure I am very much obliged to had made in the room. When I te you that his shoes were square-toed instead of being pointed like Blessington's, and were quite an inch and a third longer than the doctor's, you will acknowledge that there can be no doubt as to his individuality. But we may sleep on it now, for I shall be sur-prised if we do not hear something further from Brook street in the morn-

> Sherlock Holmes's prophecy was soon fulfilled, and in a dramatic fashion. At half-past seven next morning, in the first glimmer of daylight, I found him standing by my bedside in his dress-

ing-gown. There's a brougham waiting for us, Watson," said he. "What's the matter, then?"

"The Brook street business." Any fresh news? "Tragic, but ambiguous," said he, pulling up the blind. "Look at this—a sheet from a note-book, with For God's sake come at once-P. T., scrawled upon it in pencil. Our friend, the doctor, was hard put to it when he wrote this. Come along, my dear fellow, for it's an urgent call.'

In a quarter of an hour or so we were back at the physician's house. He came running out to meet us with a face of horror.

"Oh, such a business," he cried, with his hands to his temples. "What then?" "Blessington has committed suicide!" Holmes whistled.

"Yes, he hanged himself during the between the toes, and the preceded us into what was evidently

"I really hardly know what I am do-

"When did you find it out?" early every morning. When the maid the events which led up to this affair?" "Quite so," said Holmes. 'Who are entered, about seven, there the unfortunate fellow was hanging in the middle of the room. He had tied his cord to the hook on which the heavy lamp been driven out of his senses by fright. "Well, well," said the resident pa- used to hang, and he had jumped off The bed has been well slept in, you see, from the top of the very box that he There's his impression, deep enough. showed us yesterday." Holmes stood for a moment in deep

thought. last, "I should like to go upstairs and very deliberate affair. look into the matter."

It was a dreadful sight which met "Noticed anything peculiar about the us as we entered the bedroom door. I room?" asked Holmes. fled until he was scarce human in his that I picked out of the fireplace." unnatural by the contrast. He was clad only in his long night-dress, and his swollen ankles and ungainly feet protruded starkly from beneath it. Be- single cigar which it contained. side him stood a smart-looking police- "Oh, this is an Havana, and these inspector, who was taking notes in alothers are cigars of the peculiar sort

"Ah, Mr. Holmes," said he, heartily.

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"Good-morning, Lanner," answered Holmes; "you won't think me an in-"He has a cup of tea taken in to him truder, I am sure. Have you heard of "Yes, I heard something of them."

"Have you formed any opinion?" It's about five in the morning, you know, that suicides are most common. That would be about his time for hang-"With your permission," said he at ing himself. It seems to have been a

We both ascended, followed by the about three hours, judging by the rigidity of the muscles," said I.

have spoken of the impression of fiab- "Found a screw-driver and some biness which this man Blessington screws on the wash-hand stand. Seems conveyed. As he dangled from the to have 'smoked heavily during the hook it was exaggerated and intensi- night, too. Here are four cigar-ends

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way naturally blames the operator for the

Holmes opened it and smelled the

"As far as I can see, the man has

"I should say that he has been dead

"His cigar-case, then?" "Yes." it was in his coat-pocket."

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