SECOND SECTION.

SIR NIGEL By A. CONAN DOYLE. Author of "The White Company," "The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes." Etc.

INTRODUCTION.
Dame History is so austers a lady in the intervent of some of management of the continuity and seem at the one and contension. Events have been transposed to the extent of some for management of the continuity and seem in this narrative. In order to the science and style of their talk, and to the moment before I happily discretion in the continuity and seem in the continuity and seem in the continuity and seem is solved to the extent of some for the continuity and seem is solved to the extent of some is to catch there are that there are the continuity and seem is solved to the extent of some is to continuity and seem is solved to the story. I hope so small a divergence may seem a venial error after so many centurity. For the solved to the story of the continuity and seem in the solved to the story. I hope so small a divergence may seem a venial error is code of morality, especially in a fit of the upper classes still poke Norman French, though they were just is as accurate as a good deal or intervent classes still poke Norman French, though they were just is been to condeseend to English, the would be considerably more discover classes spoke the English, they were classes still poke Norman for the subled to the building of this one. I was a start were the discretion in an and redeemed only by elemental passions, and there subtor is have lived for months, in the same at the would be considerably more than their superiors' French.

Ohmlotte

unk low over the corker, with his Learning and art ns with the Cister-

were not traditions with the Cister-clans as with the parent Order of the Benedictines, and yet the library of Waverley was well filled with pre-clous books and with plous students. But the true glory of the Cister-clan lay in his outdoor work, and so ever and anon these passed through the cloister some sun-burned monk, soiled mattick or shovel in hand, with his gown looped to his knee, fresh from the fields or the garden. The lush green water-meadows speckled with the heavy-fleeced sheep, the acres of corn-land re-claimed from heather and bracken, the vineyards on the southern slope

the vineyards on the southern slope of Crooksbury Hill, the rows of Hankley fish-ponds, the Frensham marshes drained and sown with vegetables, the spacious pigeon-cotes, all circled the great Abbey round with the visible labors of the order.

The Abbot's full and florid face shone with a quiet content as he looked out at his huge but well-ordered household. Like every head of a prosperous Abbey, Abbot John, the fourth of the name, was a man of various accomplishments. Through his own chosen instruments he had to minister a great estate and to keep order and decorum among a large body of men living a cellbate life. He was a rigid disciplinarian toward

He was a rigid disciplinarian toward all beneath him, a supple diplomatist to all above. He held high debate with neighboring abbots and lords, with bishops, with papal legates, and

The Abbot sighed wearily, for he, affored much at the hands of his tremuous agent. "Well, Brother amuel, what is your will?" he ask-

oserver.

o-morrow.

ed. "Holy father, I have to report that I have sold the wool to Master Bald-win, of Winchester, at two skillings a bale more than it fetched last year, for the murrain among the sheep has raised the price." "You have done well, brother." "You have done well, brother." "T have also to tell you that I have distrained Wat, the warrener, from his cottage, for his Christmas rent is still unpaid, nor the hen-rents of last year."

year.

"He has a wife and four children, brother." He was a good, easy man, the Abbot, though liable to be over-borne by his sterner subordinate. "It is true, holy father; but if I should pass him, then how am I to ask the rent of the foresters of Puttenham, or the hinds in the village? Such a thing spreads from house to house, and where then is the wealth The Abbot was red with anger at of Waverley?"

"What else, Brother Samuel?" "There is the matter of the fishponds.'

The Abbot's face brightened. It was a subject upon which he was an authority. If the rule of his Or-der had robbed him of the softer joys of life, he had the keener zest for those which remained.

"How have the char prospered, brother?'

"They have done well, holy father, but the carp have died in the Abbot's pond.'

"Carp prosper only upon a gravel bottom. They must be put in also in their due proportion, three milters to one spawner, brother sacrist, and the spot must be free from wind, stony and sandy, an ell deep, with willows and grass upon the banks. Mud for tench, brother, gravel for carp.

The sacrist leaned forward with the ace of one who bears tidings of wee. face of one who bears tidings of woe. "There are pike in the Abbot's pond," said he.

"Pike!" cried the Abbot in horror. "As well shut up a wolf in our sheepfold. How came a pike in the pond? There were no pike last year. deed full." and a pike does not fall with the rain nor rise in the springs. The pond must be drained, or we shall spend next Lent upon stockfish, and have the brethren down with the great sickness ere Easter Sunday has come to absolve us from our abstinence." "The pond shall be drained, holy father; I have already ordered it. Then we shall plant pot-herbs on the mud bottom, and after we have gathdecorum of their well-trained flock. when there came a swift step upon ered them in return the fish. and water once more from the the stair, and a white-faced brother lower pond, so that the may fatten among the rich stubble. they the room. "Good!" cried the Abbot. "I would

have three fish-stews in every well-ordered house-one dry for herbs, one shallow for the fry and the yearlings, and one deep for the breeders and the table-fish. But still, I have not heard you say how the pike came in the Abbot's pond."

A spasm of anger passed over the In those simple times there was a fierce face of the sacrist, and his keys rattled as his bony hand clasped them more tightly. "Young Nigel Loring!" Man walked in fear and solemnity, "He swore that he would do us scathe, and in this way he has done it."

questions of building, points of for-estry, of agriculture, of drainage, of feddal law, all came to the Abbot for settlement. He held the scales of which stretched over many a mile of fampehire and of Source. To the which stretched over many a mile of fampehire and of Source. To the Weith a bund of the state of the

them ere they can meet them. With-in three days I will have them at our mercy." "They are an ancient family and of good repute. I would not treat them too harshly, brather." "Bethink you of the pike in the carp pond!" story by the hanging ruins

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with have the from werk from w said under the shelter of his own said under the sneller of his own tent. I took him in discharge of the debt, and I ordered the variets who had haltered him to leave him alone in the water-meadow, for I have heard that the beast has indeed a this new offense. "I will teach him that the servants of Holy Church, even though we of the rule of Saint Bernard be the lowliest and hum-blest of her children, can still de-fend their own against the froward most evil spirit, and has killed more men than one." and the violent! Go, cite this man

"It was an ill day for Waverlay before the Abbey court. Let him ap-pear in the chapter-house after tierce that you brought such a monster within its bounds," said the Abbot. "If the subprior and Brother John

But the wary sacrist shook his head. "Nay, holy father, the times are not yet ripe. Give me three be indeed dead, then it would seem that if the horse be not the devil, he is at least the devil's instrument." days, I pray you, that my case against "Horse or Devil, holy father, I him may be complete. Bear in mind

that the father and the grandfather heard him shout with joy as trampled upon Brother John, and had you seen him tossing the subprior as of this unruly squire were both famous men of their day and the foremost knights in the King's own sera dog shakes a rat you would pervice, living in high honor and dying chance have felt even as I did."

in their knightly duty. The Lady "Come then," cried the Abbot, "let Ermyntrude Loring, was first lady to the King's mother. Roger FitzAlan, of Farnham, and Sir Hugh Walcott, us see with our own eyas what evil has been done."

And the three monks hurried down the stair which led to the cloisters.

They had no sooner descended and sib to him on the distaff side than their more pressing fears were set at rest, for at that very moment, Already there has been talk that we have dealt harshly with them. Therelimping, disheveled and mud-stained, fore, my rede is that we be wise and the two sufferers were being led in wary and wait until his cup be inamid a crowd of sympathizing breth-

The Abbot had opened his mouth ren. Shouts and cries from outside showed, however, that some further to reply, when the consultation was drama was in progress, and both Abinterrupted by a most unwonted buzz of excitement from among the monks bot and sacrist hastened onward as fast as the dignity of their office in the cloister below. Questions and answers in excited voices sounded would permit, until they had passed from one side of the ambulatory to the gates and gained the wall of the the other. Sacrist and Abbot were meadow. Looking over it, a remarkable sight presented itself to their gazing at each other in amazement at such a breach of the discipline and eyes.

Fetlock deep in the lush grass there stood a magnificent horse, such a horse as a sculptor or a soldier flung open the door and rushed into might thrill to see. His color was a light chestnut, with mane and tail of a more tawny tint. Saventeen alas! Brother John is dead, and the hands high, with a barrel and holy subprior is dead, and the devil haunches which bespoke tremendous strength, he fined down to the most delicate lines of dainty breed in neck and crest and shoulder. He was indeed a glorious sight as he stood there, his beautiful body leaning back from his wide-spread and propreat wonder and mystery in life. ped fore legs, his head craned high, his ears erect, his mane bristling, his with heaven very close above his red nostrils opening and shutting head, and hell below his very feet. with wrath, and his flashing eyes God's visible hand was everywhere, turning from side to side in haughty



In the month of July of the year high turret nor cunning moat could veins, still at the age of two and even on occasion with the King's 1348, between the feasts of St. Ben-keep out that black commoner who twenty, wasted the weary days re-majesty himself. Many were the claiming his hawks with leash and subjects with which he must be conthing came upon England, for out of slackened for want of those who lure or training the alans and span-the east there drifted a monstrous could enforce them, and once slack-cloud, purple and pled, heavy with ened could never be enforced again. big earthen-floored hall of the manorcloud, purple and pled, heavy with evil, climbing slowly up the hushed beaven. In the shadow of that strange cloud the leaves drooped in the trees, the birds ceased their call-ing, and the 'cattle and the sheep should be free men, name their own is true, but with muscles of steer and purchased their call-ing and the 'cattle and the sheep should be a slave no long-beaven. In the shadow of that the trees, the birds ceased their call-ing and the 'cattle and the sheep should be free men, name their own is true, but with muscles of steer and is true.

ACUS

versant. Questions of doctrine, questions of building, points of for-estry, of agriculture, of drainage, of feudal law, all came to the Abbot for

monks his displeasure might mean a soul of fire. From all parts, from fasting, exile to some sterner comthe warden of Guildford Castle, from munity, or even imprisonment in the tilt-yard of Farnham, tales of his chains. Over the layman also he prowess were brought back to her, could hold any punishment save only of his daring as a ride ; if his debonair courage, of his skill with all weahad in hand the far more dreadful pons; but still she, who had both weapon of spiritual excommunica-

A gloom fell upon all the land, and men stood with their eyes upon the strange cloud and a heaviness upon their hearts. They crept into the churches where the trembling people blessed and shriven by the trembling priests. Outside no bird flew, and there, came no rustling from woods, nor any of the homely sounds of Nature. All was still, and nothing moved, save only the great cloud which rolled up and onward, with fold on fold from the black horizion. To the west was the light summer sky, to the east this brooding creeping ever slowly cloud-bank, across, until the last thin blue gleam faded away and the whole vast sweep of the heavens was one great leaden arch.

Then the rain began to fail. it rained, and all the night and all the week and all the month until folk had forgotten the blue heavens and the gleam of the sunshine. Jt was not heavy, but it was stady and cold and unceasing, so that the people were weary of its hissing and its splashing, with the slow drip from the eaves. Always the same thick evil clour flowed from east to west with the rain beneath it. None see for more than a bow-shot from their dwellings for the drifting vell of the rain-storms. Every morning the folk looked upward break, but their eyes rested always upon the same endless cloud, until at last they ceased to look up, and their hearts despaired of ever seeing the change. It was raining at Lammastide and raining at the Feast of the Assumption and still raining at Michadmas. The crops and the hay, sodden and black, had rotted in the fields, for they were not worth the garnering. The sheep had died, and enough for splendor. the calves also, so there was lillie to kill when Martinmas came and it was time to salt the meat for the winter. They feared a famine, but it was worse than famine which was in store for them.

For the rain had ceased at last, and a sickly autumn sun shone upon a land which was soakes and sodden with water. Wet and rotten leaves estate between them. reckd and festered under the foul which rose from the woods. The fields were spotted with monstrous fungi a size and color never matched before-scarlet and mauve and liver and black. It was as though the sick earth had burst into foul puntules; mildew and lichen motted bronzes in the little chapel the walls, and with that filthy crop death spring also from the water-soaked earth. Men died, and women and children, the baron of the casthe the franklin on the farm, the monk in the abbey and the villein in wattle-and-daub cottage. A11 T sthed the same polluted reek and by died the same death of corrup-tion. Of those who were stricken in peace. none recovered, and the illness was none recovered, and the illness was ever the same—arrows boils, ravit mame to the disease. All through the whiter the dead rotice by the vaylide for want of some one to bury them. In many a village no Chage man was left alive. Then at last the spring came with sumahine and health and lightness and langing tor-the greenest, sweetest tenderes spring that England had ever known how it. The other half had passed away with the great purple cloud. Tet is was there in that stream of that the brighter and free England to nit hat freek of corruption, that the brighter and free England to hard start stream of the first streak of the new dawn was ston born. There in that dark hour the first streak of the new dawn was ston on break away from that ters ton break away with the start free of corruption. The barons were dead in swaths. No ever the same-gross boils, raving, and the black blotches which gave its

gathered cowering under the hedges. price, and work where and for whom they would. It was the black death which cleared the way for that great rising thirty years later which left the English peasant the freest of his class in Europe.

But there were few so far-sighted that they could see that here, as ever, husband and son torn from her by a good was coming out of evil. At the bloody death, could not bear momant misery and ruln were brought into every family. The dead cattle, the ungarnered crops, the untilled lands-every spring of wealth had dried up at the same moment. Those who were rich became poor; but those who were poor already, and especially those who were poor with the burden of gentility upon their shoulders, found themuncle should die and leave money selves in a perilous state. A11 for his outfit, or any other through England the smaller gentry with which she could hold him to were ruined, for they had no trade her side. save war, and they drew their living

And indeed, there was need for from the work of others. On many man at Tilford, for the strife bemanor-house there came evil times, twixt the Abbey and the manorand on none more than on the Manor house had never been appeased, and of Tilford, where for many generastill on one pretext or another the tions the noble family of the Lorings monks would clip off yet one more had held their home. slice of their neighbor's land. Over There was a time when the Lor-

the winding river, across the green ings had held the country from the meadows, rose the short square tower and the high gray walls of the grim Abbay, with its bell tolling by day North Downs to the lakes of Frensham, and when their grim castlekeep rising above the green meadows, and night, a voice of menace and of which border the river Wey had been dread to the little household. It is in the heart of the great Cisthe strongest fortalice betwixt Guildtercian monastery that this chronicle ford Castle in the east and Winof old days must take its start, as we chester in the west. But there came

that Barons' War, in which the King trace the feud betwixt the monks and the house of Loring, with those used his Saxon subjects as a whin events to which it gave birth, ending with which to scourge his Norman with the coming of Chandos, the barons, and Castle Loring, like so many other great strongholds, was strange spear-running of Bridge and the deeds with swept from the face of the land. From that time the Lorings, with es-Nigel won fame in the wars. tates sadly curtailed, lived in what had been the dower-house, with where, in the chronicle of the White Company, it has been set forth what manner of man was Nigel

Those who love him may read herely And then came their lawsuit with those things which went to his mak Waverley Abbey, and the Cistercians laid claim to their richest land, with ing. Let us go back together and gaze upon this green stage of Enand peccary, turbary and feudal rights. gland, the scenery, hill, plain and over the remainder. It lingered on river even as now, the actors in for years, this great lawsuit, and much our very selves, in much also when it was finished the men of the so changed in thought and act that Church and the men of the law had they might be dwellers in another dividel all that was richest of the

There Was still left the old manor-house from How the Devil Came to Waverley. which with each generation there The day was the first of May, which was the Festival of the Blessed Aposcame a soldier to uphold the credit of the name and to show the five scarlet roses on the silver shield ties Philip and ames. The year was the 1,349th from man's salvation From tierce to sext, and then again from sext to nones. Abbot John, of the House of Waverley, had been sextwhere Matthew, the priest, said mass every morning, all of men of the house of Loring. Two-lay with their legs the many high duties of his office. crossed, as being from the Crusades. Six others rested their feet upon Hone, as having died in war. Four ishing estate of which he was the only lay with the effigy of their master. In the centre lay the hounds to show that they had passed Abbey buildings, with church and of this famous but impoverished and frater-house, all buszing with

family, doubly impoverished by law busy life. Through the open windo and by pestilence, two members were came the low hum of the voices of voices of

tion. that Such were the powers of the Ab this the last of the Lorings, the final bud of so famous an old tree, should bot, and it is no wonder that there share the same fate. With a weary vere masterful lines in the ruddy heart, but with a smiling face, features of Abbot John, or that the bore with his uneventful days, while brethren, glancing up, should put on an even meeker carriage and more demure expression as they saw the she would ever put off the evil time until the harvest was better, until watchful face in the window above the monks of Waverley should give up what they had taken, until his them.

A knock at the door of his studi recalled the Abbot to his immediate duties, and he returned to his desk. Already he had spoken with his cellarer and prior, almoner, chaplain and lector, but now in the fall and

gaunt monk who obeyed his summons to enter he recognized the most im portant and also the most importunate of his agents, Brother, Samuel, the sacrist, whose office, corresponding to that of the layman's bailiff. placed the material interests of the monastery and its dealings with the outer world entirely under his control subjects only to the check of the Abbot. Brother Samuel was a gnarl-

ed and stringy old monk, whose stern and sharp-featured face reflected no did workaday world toward which it the country-side. There are thirty was forever turned. A huge book of years' claims of escurage unsettled, accounts was tucked under one of his and there is Sergeant Wilkins, the and lay brothers could testify.

Well, I wot that the straw ner, was wet and that a live pike lay and twisted the in within it."

The Abbot shook his head. have heard much of this youth's wild ear, while above him there hovered porporal death, instead of which he ways; but now indeed he has passed an angel of grace, who pointed to to the safety of the wall, while the the steep and narrow track. How all bounds if what you say be truth. could one doubt these things, when It was bad enough when it was said that he slew the King's deer in Wool- Pope and priest and scholar and mer Chase, or broke the head of King wrre all united in balleving them, Hobbs, the chapman, so that he lay with no single voice of question in for seven days betwixt life and death the whole wide world?

in our infirmary, saved only by Brother Peter's skill in the pharmacles of seen, every tale heard from nurse or herbs; but to put pike in the Abbot's mother, all taught the same lesson. pond-why should be play such a And as a man traveled through the devil's prank?" world his faith would grow the firm-

"Because he hates the House of Waverley, holy father; because he swears that we hold his father's each with its holy relic in the centre, land.

"In which there is surely some truth."

"But, holy father, we no more than the law has allowed." "True, brother, and yet between

ourselves, we may admit that the him from the awful denizens of the heavier purse may weigh down the unseen world. scales of justice. When I have passed the old house and have seen that the frightened monk seemed terrible aged woman with her ruddled cheeks rather than incredible to those whom and her baleful eyes look the curses he addressed. The Abbot's ruddy she dare not speak. I have many a face paled for a moment, it is true, time wished that we had other neighbut he pluckel the cricifix from his bors." desk and rose valiantly to his feet. "That we can soon bring "Lead me to him!" said he.

holy father. Indeed, it is of it that I wished to speak to you. Surely it light from above, but only that sor- is not hard for us to drive them from arms, while a great bunch of keys lawyer of Guildford, whom I will hung from the other hand, a badge warrant, to draw up such arrears of of his office, and also on occasion of dues and rents and issues of hidage and humble heart we may show front impatience a weapon of offense, as and fodder-corn that hese folk, who many a scarred head among rustics are as beggarly as they are proud,

will have to sell the roof-tree over



DOUDCed of the epileptic. A foul fiend slunk ever by a man's "I side and whispered villainies in his

er, for go where he would

to all the powers of darkness."

on the penance-stool in the chapter-

house this very hour!"

of his inward tremors.

ley, cutting bracken for the

bring

to come.

"Father Abbot!" he cried. "Alas,

is loos in the five-virgate field!"

III.

The Yellow Horse of Crooksbury.

and swerve and plunge, the creature would turn upon one of his would-be captors, and with outstratched head, flying mane and flashing teeth, would chase him screaming others would close swiftly in behind and cast their ropes in the hope of catching neck or leg, but only their turn to be chased to the nearest refuge.

Had two of these ropes settled up Every book read, every picture on the horse, and had their throwers found some purchase of stump bowlder by which they could them, then the man's brain might have won its wonted victory over there swiftness and strength. were the endless shrines of the saints. brains were themselves at fault which imagined that one such rope would and around it the tradition of incesserve any purpose save to endanger sant miracles, with stacks of desertthe thrower.

ed crutches and silver votive hearts Yet so it was, and what to prove them. At every turn he was have been foreseen occurred at the made to feel how thin was the vell, very moment of the arrival of the and how easily rent, which screened monks. The horse, having chased one of his enemies to the wall, re-Hence the wild announcement of mained so long snorting his contampt over the coping that the others were able to creep upon him from behind. Several ropes were flung, and one noose settled over the proud crest and lost itself in the waving mane. In an instant the creature had turned and the men were flying for their "Show lives: but he who had cast me the foul fiend who dares to lay the rope his grip upon brethren of the holy lingered, un ertain what use to make house of Saint Bernard! Run down of his own success. That moment of my chaplain, brother! Bid him doubt was fatal. With a yell of disthe exorcist with him, and also may, the man saw the great creature the blessed box of relics, and the rear above him. Then with a crash bones of Saint James from under the the fore feet fell upon him and dashaltar. With these and a contrite ad him to the ground. He TOSE screaming, was hurled over more, and lay a quivering, bleeding But the sacrist was of a more critheap, while the savage horse, the ical turn of mind. He clutched the most cruel and terrible in its anger monk's arm with a grip which left of all creatures on earth, bit its five purple spots for many a day shook and trampled the writhing body.

"Is this the way to enter the Ab-A loud wail of horror rose from bot's own chamber, without knock or the lines of tonsured heads which reverence, or so much a a 'Pax vobis-cum?'" said he sternly. "You were suddenly died away into a long hushed wont to be our gentlest novice, of silence, broken at last by a rapturous lowly carriage in chapter, devout in | cry of thanksgiving and of joy.

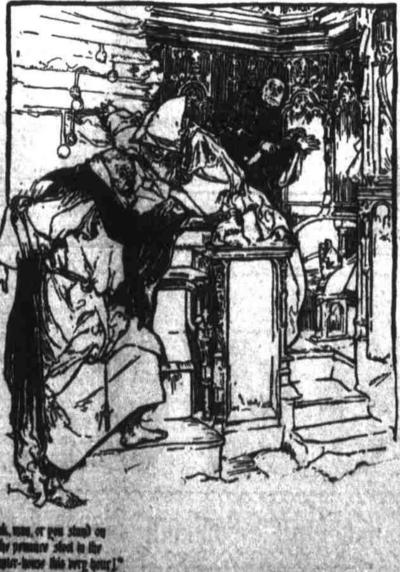
psalmody and strict in the cloister. On the road which led to the old Pull your wits together and answer dark manor-house upon the side of me straightly. In what form has the the hill a youth had been riding. His foul fiend appeared, and how has he mount was a sorry one, a weedy, done this grievous seathe to our shambling, long-haired colt, and h brethren? Have you see him with patched tunic of faded purple with your own eyes, or do you repeat from stained leather belt presented no very hearsay? Speak, man, or you stand smart appearance; yet in the bearing of the man, in the poise of his head,

in his easy graceful carriage, and in Thus adjured, the frightened monk the hold glance of his large blue eyes, grew calmer in his bearing, though there was that stamp of distinction his white lips and his startied eyes, and of breed which would have given with the gasping of his breath, told him a place of his own in any as

"If it please you, holy father, and but his frame was singularly elegant you, reverend sucrist, it came about in this way. James, the subprior, and graceful. His face, though tanned with the weather, was and Brother John and I had spent in features, and most eager and alert in expression. A thick fringe of crisp yellow curls broke from under our day from sext onward on Hankcowhouses. We were coming back over houses. We were coming back over the dark flat cap which he was wear-the five-virgate field, and the holy ing, and a short golden beard hid the subprior was telling us a saintly tale outline of his strong square chin. from the life of Saint Gregory, when there came a sudden sound like a rushing torrent, and the foul flend sprang over the high wall which skirts the water-meadow and rushed sprang over the man skirts the water-meadow and rushed upon us with the speed of the wind. The iny brother he struck to the ground and trampled into the mire. Then, setzing the good subprior in his teath, he rushed round the field, swinging him as though he were a fardel of old clothes. The such a sight, I stood

emory left behind. Such was the youth his whip joyously, m half a score of dogs, rude pony down the and thence it was the

"Amazed at such a sight, I stood "Amazed at such a sight, I stood without movement and had said a credo and three aves, when the Devil dropped the subprior and sprane up-on me. With the help of Saint Ber-nard I clambered over wall, but not before his teeth had found my leg, and he had form away the whole is back skipt of my sown. As he whole is skirt of my gown. As he



Tilford which Else Loring