



The Memoirs of Sherlock Holmes

Adventure XXII – The Adventure of the Crooked Man

Some thoughts to get us started on CROO this weekend...

This past week, we were treated to a discussion of whether it's cold enough for a fire in England in April. The opening words of CROO have Watson cozying up to his hearth in the summertime. Later, Henry Wood, "in spite of the warm weather," was crouching over his own fire. Is Nancy calling for tea because she's agitated, or just chilly?!

Holmes ventures out in the guise of a registration agent. Under the laws of the time, women could not vote, nor could all men. Who was eligible to be registered, and what sort of questions might a real registration agent have asked Henry's landlady about Henry?



In deducing Teddy's appearance, Holmes tells Watson that the creature is "not much less than two feet long — probably more if there is any tail." But don't most, if not all, climbing animals have tails?

In the Barclays' morning room, Nancy was found insensible on a couch. After she was removed to her room, suffering from (surprise!) "brain fever," the colonel's body is placed upon a sofa. Was this the same piece of furniture? The words "couch" and "sofa" are so often used synonymously, but is a distinction being drawn here?

Nancy's choice of volunteer service, the Guild of St. George, is wonderful and true-to-life. So many helping agencies were active in London in those days, and their volunteers provided vital services. Isn't the Guild a **real** charitable organization? What intrigues me is that St. George is the patron saint of soldiers, so it's a nice addition to the other military themes running through this story. St. George is also viddy proper as he's the patron of England and of the Order of the Garter. In all the canon, the only other person I can think of who undertakes service like this is Elsie Cubitt, who devoted her widowed years to caring for the poor. Why isn't there more evidence of charitable helpfulness in the canon?

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