



His Last Bow

Adventure XLV – The Disappearance of Lady Frances Carfax

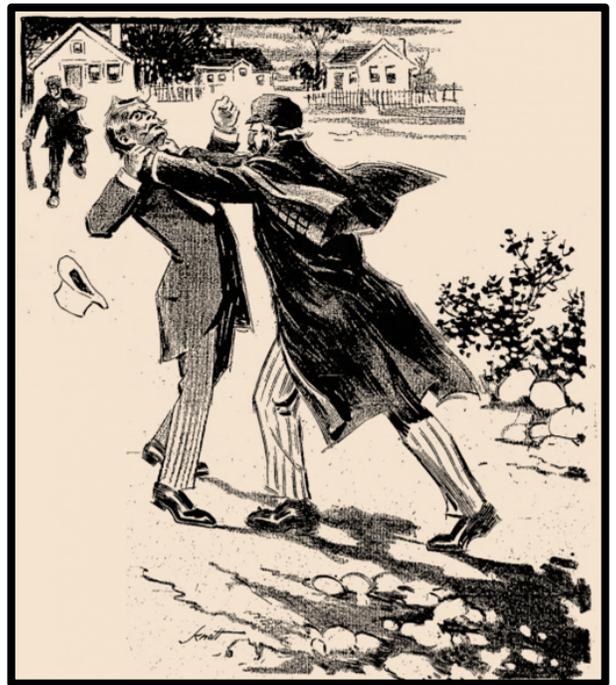
From Baden to Brixton...from the Langham to the workhouse...from an English earldom to a Biblical kingdom...the story we start this weekend is a real study in contrasts! It's that intriguing tale called *The Disappearance of Lady Frances Carfax*. My questions and comments:

Watson says a Turkish bath “is what we call an alternative in medicine — a fresh starting point, a cleanser of the system.” I originally read this as “an alternative in medicine.” Based on his personality, do you think Watson would advocate the alternative treatments practiced these days? Is he the type of person (and doctor) to go in for things like acupuncture, aromatherapy, colon cleansing, hypnosis, and so on?

Isn't Holmes unfairly blaming the victim when he says that the single woman is “the inevitable inciter of crime in others?”

Can we try and figure out who is Peters' confederate in London?

Watson's detective skills are belittled once again, while the Hon. Philip Green's sleuthing gets high marks. Is Holmes' assessment of each man fair?



Lady Frances was very fond of some “remarkable” old Spanish jewelry she’d inherited. The most remarkable thing about old Spanish jewelry is how precious little of it actually remains in Spain. To view a good collection of old Spanish jewelry, you must travel to France, to the Musee de Cluny. Many, many jewels owned by wealthy Spaniards were sold, divided, lost, or plundered over the years — a sparkling exodus to other lands. Not even the Spanish royal collection was spared: “Crown jewels and princely jewels completely vanished in the nineteenth century between Napoleon’s invasion, civil wars and brutal changes of rulers,” wrote Prince Michael of Greece, in his 1983 book *Crown Jewels*. The lack of old jewelry in Spain was so acute that when King Juan Carlos was enthroned, in 1975, it was a real challenge to find enough jewels for the coronation ceremony. A crown was finally located for the new king, but Prince Michael lamented that it wasn’t even made of real gold! It’s not surprising that several remarkable pieces would turn up in the jewel case of an English lady. It would be most interesting to know the history of those Spanish jewels Lady Frances possessed — how and when they came into her family, and whether Philip eventually recovered them for her from Bovington’s.

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January 23, 1998