## THE RED HEADED LEAGUE

BY SIR A. CONAN DOYLE.

In Three Parts.-Part I. HAD called upon my friend, Mr. began as a ship's carpenter." with flery red hair. With an apology ed." for my intrusion, I was about to, withdraw, when Holmes pulled me Freemasonry?" abruptly into the room and closed the door behind me.

at a better time, my dear Watson," he said, cordially.

"I was afraid that you were engag-

"So I am. Very much so." "Then I can wait in the next a vacancy in the League."

with a quick little questioning glance warmly on my success. from his small, fat-encircled eyes.

ventures."

served.

went into the very simple problem manager. presented by Miss Mary Sutherland, the writing?" that for strange effects and extra-

"A proposition which I took the liberty of doubting."

have listened to for some time. You even more simple have heard me remark that the strangest and most unique things are and occasionally, indeed, where there ling in it after all is room for doubt whether any posiever listened to Perhaps, Mr. Wil- Wilson' son, you would have the great kindness to recommence your narrative. friend, Dr. Watson, has not heard the peculiar nature of the story makes sir. me anxious to have every possible detail from your lips. As a rule, when I have heard some slight indication

little pride, and pulled a dirty and twenty-one years are eligible. Apply with his head thrust forward, and Street." the paper flattened out upon his knee, I took a good look at the man, and ejaculated, after I had twice read endeavored, after the fashion of my cver the extraordinary announcecompanion, to read the indications ment. which might be presented by his dress or appearance.

by my inspection. Our visitor bore every mark of being an average commonplace British tradesman, obese, pompous, and slow. He wore rather unbuttoned in the front, and a drab doctor, of the paper and the date." waistcoat with a heavy brassy Albert chain, and a square bit of metal April 27, 1890. Just two months dangling down as an ornament. A ago." frayed top hat and a faded brown overcoat with a wrinkled velvet collar lav upon a chair beside him. Altogether, look as I would, there was nothing remarkable about the man save his blazing red head and the expression of extreme chagrin and discontent upon his features.

Sherlock Holmes' quick eye took in my occupation, and he shook his keep two assistants, but now I only Street was choked with red-headed head with a smile as he noticed my keep one; and I would have a job to folk, and Pope's Court looked like a questioning glances. "Beyond the pay him but that he is willing to obvious facts that he has at some time done manual labor. Lat he takes snuff, that he is a Freemason, that he has been in China, and that he has done a considerable amount of writing lately, I can deduce noth-

ing else." chair, with his forefinger upon the and I know very well that he could tint. When I saw how many were me upon the amount that I had writ-

tune, did you know all that. Mr. ideas in his head?"

labor? It's as true as gospel, for I

"I won't insult your intelligence by telling you how I read that, especial-"You could not possibly have come ly as, rather against the strict rules compass breastpin."

"Not at all. This gentleman, Mr. it,' the other answered. 'He has ev- we do nothing more. Wilson, has been my partner and ery requirement. I cannot recall helper in many of my most successful when I have seen anything so fine.' hair until I felt quite bashful. Then per in his hand, and he says: The stout gentleman half rose from suddenly he plunged forward, wrung his chair and gave a bob of greeting, my hand, and congratulated me

"'It would be injustice to hesi-"Try the settee," said Holmes, re- tate, said he. 'You will, however, I vacancy on the League of the Red- ily? lapsing into his armchair, and put- am sure, excuse me for taking an Headed Men. It's worth quite a litting his finger-tips together, as was obvious precaution.' With that he tle fortune to any man who gets it, his custom when in judicial moods. seized my hair in both his hands, and I understand that there are more "I know, my dear Watson, that you and tugged until I yelled with the vacancies than there are men, so is very serious, indeed! I am sorry share my love of all that is bizarre pain. 'I perceive that all is as it that the trustees are at their wits' to hear you say that. The fund was, and outside the conventions and should be. But we have to be care- end what to do with the money. If of course, for the propagation and humdrum routine of everyday life. ful, for we have twice been deceived my hair would only change color spread of the red-heads as well as for You have shown your relish for it by by wigs and once by paint. I could here's a nice little crib all ready for their maintenance. It is exceedingly the enthusiasm which has prompted tell you tales of cobbler's which me to step into." you to chronicle, and if you will ex- would disgust you with human nacuse my saying so, somewhat to em- ture.' He stepped over to the win- You see, Mr. Holmes, I am a very bellish so many of my own little ad- dow and shouted through it at the stay-at-home man, and, as my busi-"Your cases have indeed been of filled. A groan of disappointment to go to it, I was often weeks on end the greatest interest to me," I ob- came up from below, and the folk all without putting my foot over the "You will remember that I re- until there was not a red head to be much of what was going on outside, marked the other day, just before we seen except my own and that of the

ordinary combinations we must go to that right cuff so very shiny for five asked, with his eyes open life itself, which is always far more inches, and the left one with the daring than any effort of the imagi- smooth patch near the elbow where ou rest it upon the desk."

Well, but China?" "The fish which you have tattooed "You did, doctor, but none the less immediately above your wrist could asked you must come round to my view, for only have been done in China. I down under them and acknowledges the literature of the subject. That me to be right. Now, Mr. Jabez Wil- trick of staining the fishes' scales of call upon me this morning, and to be- China. When, in addition, I see a

Mr Jabez Wilson laughed heavily 'Well, I never'" said he. "I thought very often connected not with the at first that you had done something larger but with the smaller crimes, clever, but I see that there was noth-

tive crime has been committed. As Holmes, "that I make a mistake in as I can make out, the League was far as I have heard, it is impossible explaining. Omne ignotum pro magfor me to say whether the present nifice, you know, and my poor little case is an instance of crime or not, reputation, such as it is, will suffer but the course of events is certainly shipwreck if I am so candid Can red-headed, and had a great symamong the most singular that I have you not find the advertisement. Mr.

"Yes, I have got it now," he answered, with his thick, red finger I ask you, not merely because my planted half-way down the column opening part, but also because the all You just read it for yourself, hair is of that color. From all I hear

I took the paper from him and do read as follows

"To the Red-Headed League" On of the course of events I am able to account of the bequest of the litguide myself by the thousands of Ezekiah Hopkins, of Lebarer, Part other similar cases which occur to S. A. there is now another we an w my memory. In the present instance open which entitles a member of the I am forced to admit that the facts League to a salary of four pounds a are, to the best of my belief, unique " | week for purely nominal services The portly client puffed out his All red-headed men who are sound in chest with an appearance of some body and mind and above the age of wrinklet newspaper from the inside in person on Monday, at eleven pocket of his greatcoat. As he glanc- o'clock, to Duncan Ross, at the offices ed down the advertisement column, of the League, 7 Pope's Court, Fleet

"What on earth does this mean?" I

Holmes chuckled and wriggled in his chair, as was his habit when in I did not gain very much, however, high spirits. "It is a little off the now. Mr. Wilson, off you go at scratch, and tell us all about yourself, your household, and the effect which baggy gray shepherd's check trous- this advertisement had upon your forers, a not over-clean black frock-coat, tunes. You will first make a note,

"It is The Morning Chronicle of

"Very good. Now, Mr. Wilson." ing you, Mr. Sherlock Holmes," said Jabez Wilson, mopping his forehead, 'I have a small pawnbroker's business at Coburg Square, near the City. It's not a very large affair, and of late come for half wages, so as to learn the business."

youth?" asked Mr. Sherlock Holmes. Mr. Jabez Wilson started up in his wish a smarter assistant, Mr. Holmes;

able as your advertisement."

"Oh, he has his faults, too," said ourselves in the office." Mr. Wilson. "Never was such a felrabbit into his hole to develop his statement." "Well, the snuff, then, and the pictures. That is his main fault; but, on the whole, he's a good work- but a couple of wooden chairs and a er. There's no vice in him.".

was that advertisement. Spaulding, cases and I have no doubt that he He took a step backward, cocked his he came down into the office just this will be of the utmost use to me in head on one side, and gazed at my day eight weeks, with this very pa-

> "'I wish to the Lord, Mr. Wilson, that I was a red-headed man.' "'Why that?' I asks.

"'Why,' says he, 'here's another

"'Why, what is it, then?' I asked. top of his voice that the vacancy was news came to me instead of my having trooped away in different directions, door-mat. In that way I didn't know and I was always glad of a bit of

Have you never heard of the "What else can be indicated by League of the Red-Headed Men?" he

"Why, I wonder at that, for you I have a business already, said I are eligible yourself for one of the

Oh, merely a couple of hundred otherwise I shall keep on piling fact have made a small study of tattoo a year, but the work is slight, and it asked. upon fact on you, until reason breaks marks, and have even contributed to need not interfere very much with

"Well, you can easily think that son here has been good enough to a delicate pink is quite peculiar to that made me prick up my ears, for Holmes, especially Thursday and Frithe business has not been over good gin a narrative which promises to be Chinese coin hanging from your for some years, and an extra couple one of the most singular which I watch-chain, the matter becomes of hundred would have been very

" 'Tell me all about it,' said I "Well said he, showing me the

advertisement, 'you can see for yourself that the League has a vacancy. and there is the address where you "I begin to think, Watson," said should apply for particulars. As far founded by an American millionaire, Ezekiah Hopkins, who was very peculfar in his ways. He was himself pathy for all red-headed men, so, so, when he died, it was found that he had left his enormous fortune in the hands of trustees, with instructions to apply the interest to the pro-"Here it is This is what began it viding of easy berths to men whose it is splendid pay, and very little to

> 'But, said I, 'there would be millions of red-headed men who would

" Not so many as you might think." he answered. You see it is really confined to Londoners, and to grown men. This American had started from London when he was young, and ne wanted to do the old town a good turn. Then, again, I have heard it is no use your applying if your hair is light red, or dark red, or anything but real, bright, blazing, firery red. Now, it you eared to apply, Mr. Wilson, you would just walk in; but perhaps it would hardly be worth your while to put yourself out of the way for the sake of a few hundred pounds.'

"Now it is a fact, gentlemen, as you may see for yourselves, that my hair is of a very full and rich tint, so beaten track, isn't it?" said he. "And that it seemed to me that, if there was to be any competition in the matter, I stood as good a chance as any man that I had ever met. Vincent Spaulding seemed to know so much must be some great hoax or fraud, about it that I thought he might though what its object might be I prove useful, so I just ordered him could not imagine. It seemed altoto put up the shutters for the day, and to come right away with me. He make such a will, or that they would stand, richer by some thirty pounds, was very willing to have a holiday, so we shut the business up, and started "Well, it is just as I have been tell- off for the address that was given us in the advertisement.

"I never hope to see such a sight as that again, Mr. Holmes. From north, south, east, and west every man who had a shade of red in his years it has not done more than just hair had tramped into the City to give me a living. I used to be able to answer the advertisement. Fleet coster's orange barrow. I should not everything was as right as possible. have thought there were so many in The table was set out ready for me, the whole country as were brought and Mr. Duncan Ross was there to "What is the name of this obliging together by that single advertisement. Every shade of color they "His name is Vencent Spaulding, were-straw, lemon, orange, brick, then he left me; but he would drop and he's not such a youth either. Irish-setter, liver, clay; but, as It's hard to say his age. I should not | Spaulding said, there were not many who had the real vivid flame-colored paper, but his eyes upon my com- better himself, and earn twice what I waiting, I would have given it up in am able to give him. But, after all, despair; but Spaulding would not "How, in the name of good for- if he is satisfied, why should I put hear of it. How he did it I could not

Sherlock Holmes, one day in the "Your hands, my dear sir. Your low for photography. Snapping entertaining one," remarked Holmes, in at all. Still, of course, I never autumn of last year, and found him right hand is quite a size larger than away with a camera when he ought as his client paused and refreshed his dared to leave the room for an inin deep conversation with a very your left. You have worked with it to be improving his mind, and then memory with a huge pinch of snuff. stant, for I was not sure when he stout, florid-faced elderly gentleman, and the muscles are more develop- diving down into the cellar like a "Pray continue your very interesting might come, and the billet was such

> "There was nothing in the office deal table, behind which sat a small "He is still with you, I presume?" man, with a head that was even red-"Yes, sir. He and a girl of four- der than mine. He said a few words of your order, you use an arc and teen, who does a bit of simple cook- to each candidate as he came up, and diligence that I might get on to the ing, and keeps the place clean- then he always managed to find some B's before very long. It cost me "Ah, of course, I forgot that. But that's all I have in the house, for I fault in them which would disquali- something in foolscap, and I had "'This is Mr. Jabez Wilson,' said am a widower, and never had any fy them. Getting a vacancy did not pretty nearly filled a shelf with my my assistant, 'and he is willing to fill family.' We live very quietly, sir, seem to be such a very easy matter the three of us; and we keep a roof after all. However, when our turn whole business came to an end." "'And he is admirably suited for over our heads, and pay our debts, if came, the little man was much more favorable to me than to any of the "The first thing that put us out others, and he closed the door as we entered, so that he might have a private word with us.

to their land -land H. "'My name,' said he, 'is Mr. Duncan Ross, and I am myself one of the pensioners upon the fund left by our noble benefactor. Are you a married man, Mr. Wilson? Have you a fam-

'I answered that I had not.

"His face fell immediately. "Dear me! he said, gravely, 'that unfortunate that you should be a

"My tace lengthened at this, Mr Holmes, for I thought that I was not to have the vacancy after all, but after thinking it over for a few minutes, he said that it would be all

the objection might be tatal, but we with such a head of hair as yours When shall you be able to enter upon your new duties?"

"Well, it is a little awkward, for

Wilson" said Vincent Spoulding. "I 'And what are they worth?' I shall be able to look after that for

What would be the hours? I

"Ten to two."

"Now a pawnbroker's business is mostly done of an evening. Mr day evening, which is just before pay day, so it would suit me very well to earn a little in the mornings. Besides, knew that my assistant was a good man and that he would see to anything that turned up

"'That would suit me very well,"

said! And the av? Is four pounds a week And the work?

Is purely nominal " What do you call purely nom!

well, you have to be in the office or at least in the building, the whole time If you leave, you forfeit your whole position forever. The will is very clear upon that point You don't comply with the conditions if you budge from the office during

" It's only four hours a day, and I should not think of leaving, said I. " No excuse will avail, said Mr. Duncan Ross, 'neither sickness, nor business, nor anything else. There you must stay, or you will lose your

billet. 'And the work?'

" 'Is to copy out the "Encyclopaedia Britannica. There is the first volume of it in that press. You must find your own ink, pens, and blottingpaper, but we provide this table and chair Will you be ready to-mor-

" Certainly,' I answered.

"Then, good-by, Mr. Jabez Wilson, and let me congratulate you once more on the important position which you have been fortunate enough to gain.' He bowed me out of the room, and I went home, with my assistant hardly knowing what to say or do, I was so pleased at my

own good fortune. "Well, I thought over the matter all day, and by evening I was in low spirits again; for I had quite persuaded myself that the whole affair simple as copying out the 'Encyclopaedia Britannica'. Vincent Spaulding did what he could to cheer me up, but by bed-time I had reasoned myself out of the whole thing. However, in the morning I determined to what their object was in playing this have a look at it anyhow, so I bought prank—if it was a prank—upon me. a penny bottle of ink, and with a It was a pretty expensive joke for quill pen and seven sheets of foolscap them, for it cost them two-and-thirty paper I started off for Pope's Court.

"Well, to my surprise and delight see that I got fairly to work. He started me off upon the letter A, and in from time to time to see that all was right with me. At two o'clock he bade me good-day, complimented ten, and locked the door of the office

"This went on day after day, Mr. imagine, but he pushed and pulled Holmes, and on Saturday the man-Holmes?" he asked. "How did you "Why, indeed? You seem most and butted until he got me through ager came in and planked down four know, for example, that I did manual fortunate in having an employee who the crowd, and right up to the steps golden sovereigns for my week's

comes under the full market price. which led to the office. There was a work. It was the same next week, Spaulding?" It is not a common experience among double stream upon the stair, some and the same the week after. Every employers in this age. I don't know going up in hope, and some coming morning I was there at ten, and his ways, no hair on his face, the that your assistant is not as remark- back dejected; but we wedged in as every afternoon I left at two. By de- he's not short of thirty. Has a wellwell as we could, and soon found grees Mr. Duncan Ross took to coming in only once of a morning, and "Your experience has been a most then, after a time, he did not come a good one, and suited me so well,

aat I would not risk the loss of it. "Eight weeks passed away like this, and I had written about Abbots, and Archery, and Armor, and Architecture, and Attica, and hoped with writings. And then suddenly the "To and end?"

morning. I went to my work as the subject in the course of a day or usual at ten o'clock, but the door was two. To-day is Saturday, and I hope shut and locked, with a little square that by Monday we may come to a of cardboard hammered onto the conclusion." middle of the panel with a tack. Here it is, and you can read for yourself."

He held up a piece of white cardboard, about the size of a sheet of note-paper. It read in this fashion:

'The Reed-Headed League is Dissolv-

Oct. 9, 1890."

Sherlock Holmes and I surveyed his curt announcement and the rueful face behind it, until the comical side of the affair so completely overtopped every consideration that we both burst out into a roar of laugh-

"I cannot see that there is anything very funny," cried our client, finshing up to, the roots of his flamng head. "If you can do nothing better than laugh at me, I can go -lsewhere

"No, no," cried Holmes, shoving him back into the chair from which he had half risen "I really wouldn't miss your case for the world. It is most refreshingly unusual. But there is, if you will excuse my saying so, something just a little funny about it. Pray what steps did you take when you found the card upon the door?"

"I was staggered, sir. I did not know what to do. Then I called at the offices round, but none of them reemed to know anything about it Finally, I went to the landlord, who is an accountant living on the ground floor,, and I asked him if he could tell me what had become of the Red-Headed League. He said that he had never heard of any such body. Then I asked him who Mr. Duncan Ross was. He answered that the name

was new to him "'Well,' said I, 'the gentleman at

"What the red headed man? "Yes.

"'Oh,' said he, 'his name was Wildam Morris He was a solicitor, and as using my room as a temporary co venience until his new premises were ready. He moved out yester-

Where, culd I find him?"

Oh, at h.. new offices. He did ell me the add, ss. Yes, 17 King Edward Street, near St. Paul's."

"I started off, Mr. Holmes, but when I got to that add ess it was a manufactory of artificial knee-caps, and no one in it had ever heard of either Mr. William Morris, or Mr. Duncan Ross

"And what did you do then?" and ed Holmes.

"I went home to Saxe-Coburg Square, and I took the advice of my assistant. But he could not help me in any way. He could only say that if I waited I should hear by post. But that was not quite enough, Mr Holmes. I did not wish to lose such a place without a struggle, so, as I had heard that you were good enough to give advice to poor folk

away to you."

"And you did very wisely," said Holmes. "Your case is an exceedingly remarkable one, and I shall be happy to took into it. From what you have told me I think that it is possible that graver issues hang from it than might at first sight appear." "Grave enough!" said Mr. Jabez Wilson. "Why, I have lost four

pounds a week." "As far as you are personally concerned," remarked Holmes, "I do not third. I have known something of see that you have any grievance against this extraordinary league. gether past belief that any one could On the contrary, you are, as I underpay such a sum for doing anything so to say nothing of the minute knowledge which you have gained on every subject which comes under the letter

A. You have lost nothing by them.' "No, sir. But I want to find out about them, and who they are, and rounds."

"We shall endeavor to clear up these points for you. And, first, one Square. Let us now explore the parts or two questions, Mr. Wilson. This assistant of yours who first called your attention to the advertisement

how long had he been with you?"

"About a month then.". "How did he come?"

"In answer to an advertisement." "Was he the only applicant?" "No, I had a dozen."

"Why did you pick him?" "Because he was handy and would

come cheap." " At half wages, in fact."

"Yes."

splash of acid upon his forehe siderable excitement. "I thought much," said he. "Have you ever o served that his ears are merced for parrings?"

"Small, stout-built, very

"Yes, sir. He told me that a gyper had done it for him when he was a

"Hum!" said Holmes, sinking back in deep thought. "He is still with you?"

"Oh, yes, sir; I have only just left him ' "And has your business been attended to in your absence?"

"Nothing to complain of, sir. There's never very much to do of a morning."

"That will do, Mr. Wilson. I shall "Yes, sir. And no later than this be happy to give you an opinion upon

> "Well, Watson," said Holmes, when our visitor had left us, "what do you make of it all?'

"I make nothing of it," I answered frankly. "It is a most mysterious business."

"As a rule," said Holmes, "the more bizarre a thing is the less mysterious it proves to be. It is your commonplace, featureless crimes which are really puzzling, just as a commonplace face is the most difficult to identify. But I must be prompt over this matter."

"What are you going to do, then? I asked.

"To smoke," he answered. "It is quite a three-pipe problem, and I ber that you won't speak to me for fifty minutes." He curled himself up in his chair, with his thin knees drawn up to his hawk-like nose, and there he sat with his eyes nose I and his black clay pipe thrusting out like the bill of some strange bird. I had come to the conclusion that he had dropped asleep, and indeed was nodding myself, when he suddenly sprang out of his chair with the goo ture of a man who has made up mind, and put his pipe down upon

the mantelpiece. "Sarasate plays at St. James' Hall this afternoon," he remarked. "What" do you think, Watson? Could your patients spare you for a few hours?" "I have nothing to do to-day. My

practice is never very absorbing." "Then put on your hat and come I am going through the City first and we can have some lunch on the way. I observe that there is a good deal of German music on the program, which is rather more to my taste than Italian or French. It is introspective, and I want to intro-

spect. Come along!" We traveled by the Underground as far as Aldersgao. Life . walk took us to Saxe-Coburg Square, the scene of the singular story waich we had listened to in the morning. It was a poky, little, chahby-go place, where four lines of dingy, twostoried brick houses looked out intera a small railed-in inclosure, where a lawn of weedy grass, and a few clumps of faded laurel bushes made a hard fight against a smoke-laden and uncongenial atmosphere. Three gilt balls and a brown board with Jabez Wilson in white letters, upon' a corner house, announced the place where our red-headed client carried on his business. Sherlock Holmes stopped in front of it with his head on one side, and looked it all over. with his eyes shining brightly between puckered lids. Then he walked slowly up the street, and then down again to the corner, still looking keenly at the houses. Finally he returned to the pawr broker's, and, having thumped vigorously upon the pavement with his stick two or three times, he went up to the door and, knocked. It was instantly opened by a bright-looking, clean-shaven young, who were in need of it, I came right

fellow, who asked him to step in-"Thank you," said Holmes, "I only wished to ask you how you would go from here to the Strand."

"Third right, fourth left," answered the assistant, promptly, closing the door.

"Smart fellow, that," observed Holmes as we walked away. "He is. in my judgment, the fourth smartest man in London, and for daring I am not sure that he has not a claim to be him before."

"Evidently," said I. "Mr. Wilson's assistants counts for a good deal in this mystery of the Red-headed League. I am sure that you might see him."

"Not him."

"What then?"

"The knees of his trousers." "And what did you see?" "What I expected to see."

"Why did you beat the pavement?" "My dear doctor, this is a time for observation, not for talk. We are spies in an enemy's country. We know something of Saxe-Coberg which lie behind it."

(To be continued.)

Falls Dead in Field.

Thomas J. Monts, Confederate veteran and prominent farmer, droppe dead while plowing in his field at his home about four miles from L ton Monday afternoon. Mr. 1 had been to his house about ten n utes before, and appeared to b the best of health. A few m after he returned to the fi found lying dead between "What is he like, this Vincent of his plow,