



Dit is het boek waaraan ik in een hotelkamer uit verveling begon omdat er niets anders te lezen was. Ik verwachtte iets oubolligs, eind 19e eeuw, wat wil je. Maar het bleek vlot geschreven, spannend en met gevoel voor humor.

In een tijd waar de hogere klasse niet eens door de politie ondervraagd mocht worden, komt Conan Doyle met een speurder die in negen van de tien de adel als de schuldige ontmaskert. Wat niet weinig tot zijn populariteit zal hebben bijgedragen in het klassengekke Engeland van die dagen.

Arthur Conan Doyle, Sherlock Holmes, Complete short stories.
John Murray, London 1931

'My first glance is always at a woman's sleeve. In a man it is perhaps better first to take the knee of the trouser.' Holmes p21 SIGN

..we might say that the best hypothesis is one that is simplest and most natural, is the easiest and cheapest to test, and yet will contribute to our understanding of the widest possible range of facts. Holmes' guesses about Watson's actions are the most reasonable under the circumstances.

They enable him with the minimum of logical baggage, to reach a point from which he may, through further observation, test some of the predictions drawn from the hypothesis and thus greatly reduce the number of possible conclusions. (...)
from Sebeok and Umiker-Sebeok , You know my method

When several explanations are possible "one tries test after test until one or other of them has a convincing amount of support." BLAN p22

'You know my methods, It is founded upon the observation of trifles.' BOSCO p23

There is nothing more deceptive than an obvious fact.
the Boscombe Valley mystery

The most difficult crime to track down is the one that seems purposeless.
Naval Treaty Jeremy Brett BBC-series 26:27

"Sentiment," he tells us, "is a chemical defect found in the losing side." Benedict Cumberbatch as Sherlock Holmes in BBC-series nr 4, A scandal in Bohemia

(Q14) "Winwood Reade is good upon the subject," said Holmes. "He remarks that, while the individual man is an insoluble puzzle, in the aggregate he becomes a mathematical certainty. You can, for example, never foretell what any one man will do, but you can say with precision what an average number will be up to. Individuals vary, but percentages remain constant. So says the statistician."
Sign of Four, chapter 10

I know dear Watson that you share my love of all that is bizarre and outside the conventions and humdrum routine of everyday life. As a rule 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.
The red-headed league

'My dear fellow,' said Sherlock Holmes as we sat on either side of the fire in his lodgings at Baker Street, **'life is infinitely stranger than anything which the mind of man could invent.** We would not dare to conceive the things which are really mere commonplaces of existence. If we could fly out of that window hand in hand, hover over this great city, gently remove the

roofs, and peep in at the queer things which are going on, the strange coincidences, the planning, the cross-purposes, the wonderful chains of events, working through generations, and leading to the most outré results, it would make all fiction with its conventionalities and foreseen conclusions most stale and unprofitable.'

How weary, stale, flat and unprofitable seem to me all the uses of this world. (Hamlet 1ii133:)
Adventures 27

..that for strange effects and extraordinary combinations we must go to life itself, which is always far more daring than any effort of the imagination.

The red-headed league

Ah, that is good luck. I could only say what was the balance of probability. I did not at all expect to be so accurate. But it was not mere guesswork?

No, no: I never guess. It is a shocking habit---destructive to the logical faculty. What seems strange to you is only so because you do not follow my train of thought or observe the small facts upon which large inferences may depend.

The Sign of Four, chapter 1

We are coming now rather into the region of guesswork, said Dr. Mortimer.

Say, rather, into the region where we balance probabilities and choose the most likely. It is the scientific use of the imagination, but we have always some material basis on which to start our speculation.

The Hound of the Baskervilles, chapter 4

I have already explained to you that what is out of the common is usually a guide rather than a hindrance. In solving a problem of this sort, the grand thing is to be able to reason backward. That is a very useful accomplishment, and a very easy one, but people do not practise it much. In the everyday affairs of life it is more useful to reason forward, and so the other comes to be neglected. There are fifty who can reason synthetically for one who can reason analytically.

A Study in Scarlet

"Most people, if you describe a train of events to them, will tell you what the result would be. They can put those events together in their minds, and argue from them that something will come to pass. There are few people, however, who, if told them a result, would be able to evolve from their own inner consciousness what the steps were which led up to that result. This power is what I mean when I talk of reasoning backward, or analytically.

A Study in Scarlet, pt.2, chapter 7

One should always look for a possible alternative and provide against it. It's the first rule of criminal investigation.

Black Peter, Complete 712, Clues 75

I have already said that he must have gone to King's Pyland or to Mapleton. He is not at King's Pyland. Therefore he is at Mapleton. Let us take that as a working hypothesis and see what it leads us to.

Silver Blaze

I have devised seven separate explanations, each of which would cover the facts as far as we know them. But which of these is correct can only be determined by the fresh information which we shall no doubt find waiting for us.

The Adventure of the Copper Beeches

By the method of exclusion, I had arrived at this result, for no other hypothesis would meet the facts.

A Study in Scarlet, pt. 2, chapter 7

Some facts should be suppressed, or at least, a just sense of proportion should be observed in treating them.

The Sign of Four, chapter 1

It is not really difficult to construct a series of inferences, each dependent upon its predecessor and each simple in itself. If, after doing so, one simply knocks out all the central inferences and presents one's audience with the starting-point and the conclusion, one may produce a startling, though possibly a meretricious [tawdrily and falsely attractive, prostitute-like] effect.

The Dancing Men

Nothing clears up a case so much as stating it to another person

Silver Blaze

Detection is, or ought to be, exact science, and should be treated in the same cold and unemotional manner

Sign of Four

It is a capital mistake to theorize before one has data. Insensibly, one begins to twist facts to suit theories, instead of theories to suit facts.

Scandal in Bohemia

Data! Data! Data! I can't make bricks without clay.

The Copper Breeches

Crime is common. Logic is rare.

The Copper Breeches

There's nothing more elusive than an obvious fact.

Sherlock Holmes 2009, Guy Ritchie with Robert Downey jr

No man would take up my profession if danger did not attract him

The Three Gables 40:45

You're not in full possession of the facts of this complex case.

Just you to say there is more to it that meets the eye, mister Holmes
I never consider myself at anything than to that...
The creeping man 28:20

Who knows, mister Gibson, what is and what is not relevant?
-You're like a surgeon who wants every symptom before he can give a diagnosis.
It's the patient who sees reason in deceiving his surgeon who conceals the facts.
Problem of the Thor Bridge 27:35

It's one of those cases where the art of the reasoner should be used rather for the sifting of the details than for the acquiring of fresh evidence. The tragedy have been so uncommon, so complete, and of such personal importance to so many people that we are suffering from a plethora of surmise, conjecture, and hypothesis. The difficulty is to detach the framework of fact -of absolute undeniable fact- from the embellishments of theorists and reporters
Silver Blaze old 306

At least I have a grip on the essential facts of the case. I shall enumerate them to you, for nothing clears up a case so much as stating it to another person, and I can not hardly expect your cooperation if I do not show you the position from where we start.
Silver Blaze old 307

You see, the value of imagination is the one quality that inspector Gregory lacks. We imagined what might have happened, acted upon the supposition and find ourselves justified.
Silver Blaze Jeremy Brett BBC-series 28.28

I fancy that every one of his cases has found its way into your collection, and I must admit, Watson, that you have some power of selection..., which atones for much of which I deplore in your narratives. Your fatal habit of looking at everything from the point of view of a story instead of of as a scientific exercise has ruined what might have been an instructive and even classical series of demonstrations. You slur over work of the utmost finesse and delicacy in order to dwell upon sensational details which may excite but cannot possibly instruct the reader.

Why don't you write them yourself?
I will, I will, Watson, in my declining years.
The Abbey Grange 834

You know my methods in such cases, Watson. I put myself in the mans place, and having first gauged his intelligence, I try to imagine how I should myself have proceeded under the circumstances.
The Musgrave Ritual 413

I will explain now Holmes methods in such cases. You see, he puts himself in the mans place and he first gauges his intelligence. Then he tries to imagine how he himself would have proceeded in similar circumstances. So you see in this case it is unnecessary to make allowance for the personal equation. As the astronomers have dubbed it. The Musgrave Ritual 37:45

To work the brain without sufficient material is like racing an engine, it cracks itself to pieces.
The Devils foot

-This is the work of the devil, make no mistake. Put your faith in the known and tangible,
mister Roundhay
The Devils foot

I have lived so long amongst savages and beyond the law that I got into the way of being the law unto myself. You do well mr. Holmes to remember that, because I have no desire to do you an injury.
The Devils foot

I cannot agree with those who rank modesty among the virtues. To underestimate oneself is a much a departure from the truth as to exaggerate oneself.
The Greek interpreter

Pray be precise as to details, said he.
The speckled band

What you do in this world is a matter of no consequence, returned my companion bitterly, the question is what you can make people believe what you have done.
A study in scarlet

Never trust to general impressions, my boy, but concentrate yourself upon details.

The observer who has thoroughly understood one link in a series of incidents, should be able accurately to state the other ones, both before and after.'

Life is infinitely stranger than anything which the mind of man could invent. We would not dare to conceive the things which are really mere commonplaces of existence.

Depend upon it there is nothing as unnatural as the commonplace.
A case of identity

You have not observed. And yet you have seen. That is just my point. Now, I know that there are seventeen steps, because I have both seen and observed.'
Scandal in Bohemia. Adventures (old) 6

It's my belief, founded upon my experience, that the lowest and vilest alleys in London do not present a more dreadful record of sin than does the smiling and beautiful countryside....
[The Copper Beeches](#)

From a drop of water a logician could infer the possibility of an Atlantic or a Niagara without having seen or heard one or the other. So all life is a great chain the nature of which is known whenever we are shown a single link of it.

-The Sign of Four

Chapter 2 - "The Science of Deduction"

No data yet. It's a capital mistake to theorize before you have all the evidence. It biases the judgement.

Novels, Scarlet 51

When I hear you give your reasons, I remarked, the thing always appears to be so ridiculously simple that I could easily do it myself, though at each successive instance of your reasoning I am baffled until you explain your process. And yet I believe that my eyes are as good as yours.'

'Quite so,' he answered lighting a cigarette, and throwing himself down into an armchair.

'You see but you do not observe. The distinction is clear. For example you have frequently seen the steps that lead from the hall to this room.'

'Frequently.'

'How often?'

'Well, some hundred times.'

'Then how many are there?'

'How many! I don't know.'

'Quite so. You have not observed. And yet you have seen. That is just my point. Now, I know that there are seventeen steps, because I have both seen and observed.'

Scandal in Bohemia. Adventures (old) 6

It is an error to argue in front of your data. You find yourself insensibly twisting them around to fit your theories. Wisteria lodge, Complete 903

We approached the case with an absolutely blank mind, which is always an advantage.

The cardboard box

'And yet I am not convinced of it,' I answered 'The cases which come to light in the papers are, as a rule, bad enough and vulgar enough. We have in our police reports realism pushed to its extreme limits, and yet the result is, it must be confessed, neither fascinating nor artistic.'

'A certain selection and discretion must be used in producing a realistic effect,' remarked Holmes. 'This is wanting in the police report, where more stress is laid perhaps upon the platitudes of the magistrates than upon the details which to an observer contain the vital essence of the whole matter. Depend upon it there is nothing as unnatural as the commonplace.'

Adventures 27

All this seems strange to you, because at the beginning of the inquiry you failed to grasp the importance of the single real clue which was presented to you. I had the good fortune to seize upon that, and everything which has occurred since then has served to confirm my original supposition, and, indeed, was the logical sequence of it. Hence things which have perplexed you and made the case more obscure, have served to enlighten me and strengthen my conclusions. **It is a mistake to confound strangeness with mystery.** The most

commonplace crime is often the most mysterious, because it presents no new or special features from which deductions may be drawn. This murder would have been infinitely more difficult to unravel had the body of the victim been simply found lying on the roadway without any of those outré and sensational accompaniments which have rendered it remarkable. These strange details, far from making the case more difficult, have really had the effect of making it less so.

Scarlet 50, Clues 42, Novels, Scarlet 117

The pressure of public opinion can do in a town what law cannot accomplish.

The copper breeches, Adventures 260

One should always look for a possible alternative and provide against it. It's the first rule of criminal investigation. Black Peter, Complete 712

When you follow two separate trains of thought, you will find some point of intersection which should approximate the truth. Disappearance of Lady Frances Carfax, Complete 1018

A man should keep his little brain-attic stocked with the furniture that he is likely to use, as the rest he can put away in the lumber room of his library, where he can get it if he wants it.

The five orange pips

These are at once so obvious when explained and so easy, once you know them, that the ingenuous reader at once feels, and says to himself, I also could do this; life is not so dull after all; I will keep my eyes open and find out things.

from "Mr. Sherlock Holmes" by Dr. Joseph Bell in Study in Scarlet

Omne ignotum pro magnifico

Once explained everything becomes normal

Holmes in the Red Headed League

Ook zien The Copper Breeches.

'I glanced over it. Honestly, I cannot congratulate you upon it. Detection is, or ought to be, an exact science and should be treated in the same cold and unemotional manner. You have attempted to tinge it with romanticism, which produces much the same effect as if you worked a love-story or an elopement into the fifth position of Euclid.' Sign of Four on Watson's treatment of Study in Scarlet.

'How often have I said to you that when you have eliminated the impossible, whatever remains, however improbable, must be the truth? We know that he did not come through the door, the window or the chimney. We also know that he could not have been concealed in the room, as there is no concealment possible. Whence, then, did he come?'

'He came through the hole in the roof!' I cried.

Novels. Sign Four 274

Exactly Watson, pathetic and futile. But is not all life pathetic and futile? Is not his story a microcosm of the whole? We reach. We grasp. And what is left in our hands in the end? A shadow. Or worse than a shadow – misery. The retired Color man, Complete 1319

It is human nature to see what we expect to see, and that is why we so seldom observe and notice what we see .

make a point of never having any prejudices, and of following docilely wherever fact may lead me. The reigate squire/Puzzle 407, Clues 43

They say that genius is an infinite capacity for taking pain. It's a very bad definition, but it does apply to detective work.

It has long been an axiom of mine that the little things are the most important.

What you do in this world is a matter of no consequence. The question is, what can you make people believe that you have done? (STUD)

The example of patient suffering is in itself the most precious of all lessons to an impatient world. (VEIL)

Life is infinitely stranger than anything which the mind of man could invent. (IDEN)

I am familiar with forty-two different impressions left by tires. (PRIO)

How small we feel with our petty ambition and strivings in the presence of the great elemental forces of Nature. The chief proof of man's real greatness lies in his perception of his own smallness. Sign of Four 129