

# The KENNEL MURDER CASE

By S. S. Van Dine  
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## SYNOPSIS

Philo Vance, expert in solving crime mysteries, investigates the supposed suicide of Archer Coe, District Attorney Markham and Vance go to Coe's house. They find Wrede, a friend of Coe's, there; also Signor Grassi, a guest. The door of the death chamber is bolted from the inside. They force it. Coe is clothed in a dressing gown, but wears street shoes. Vance says it is murder. The medical examiner says Coe had been dead for hours when a bullet entered his head. He had been stabbed. The investigators find a wounded Scottish terrier in the house. Vance declares the animal should prove an important connecting link. Brisbane Coe, Archer's brother, is supposed to have left for Chicago the previous afternoon, but his dead body is discovered in the Coe home. Vance interrogates the Chinese cook, Liang. Brisbane died from a stab in the back, as did Archer. Vance, searching Brisbane's coat, finds waxed thread attached to a bent pin, and a darning needle. It is learned that Wrede once had a dog, which he gave to a friend, a Doberman Pinscher. A lipstick found in Coe's wastebasket, indicates that a woman called on the murdered man the night of his death. By manipulating the string, the bent pin and the darning needle found in Brisbane's pocket, Vance bolts Archer Coe's door from the outside. Grassi is stabbed. He says he did not see his assailant, who came in at night. Vance sets out with the Scottish terrier to determine the dog's ownership.

## CHAPTER IX—Continued

Vance thanked him for his help and added: "Do you happen to know what bitch this is, or who owns her?"  
Mr. Stinemetz shook his head.  
"No, I never saw her before—she must be a newcomer. I didn't see a catalogue of the show and there were no postmortems at the judge's table after the show."  
Vance left Mr. Stinemetz's kennels in a much happier frame of mind.  
"Tomorrow," he said, as we drove home through the gathering dusk, "we will know the owner's name."  
Immediately upon our arrival in New York, Vance telephoned to Markham at his home, and learned that there had been no developments in the case during the day. The den window-sill had been gone over carefully for fingerprints, but without results. A general routine investigation had been put in operation by the sergeant, but, aside from this, nothing had been done.  
"The case has me bogged," Markham complained sadly at dinner that night. "I see no way out of the situation. Even if we knew who committed the crimes, we couldn't show how they were accomplished—unless the guilty person himself chose to tell us. . . . And that attack on Grassi; instead of helping us, it has only put us deeper into the well. And there's nothing to take hold of. All the ordinary avenues of investigation are closed. Heaven knows there are enough people who might have done it—and there are enough motives for a dozen murders."  
"Sad . . . sad," sighed Vance. "My heart bleeds for you, don't you know. Still, there's some simple explanation. It's a deucedly complicated puzzle—a cryptogram with apparently meaningless words. But once we have the key letter, the rest of it will fall into place. And the key letter may be the Scottish. I'm hopin' for the best. You might confide in me the exact condition of the Coe domicile tonight."  
"There's little to confide," Markham told him acerbically. "Heath has done the usual things and gone home. However, he's left two men on guard, one in the street and one at the rear of the house. Grassi has remained in his room all day—Heath's last report to me was that the gentleman had gone to bed. The lock on his door, by the way, has been fixed; so he'll probably live the night through. Miss Lake came in just as the sergeant was going. . . . By the way, she took the news of Grassi's stabbing rather hard—"  
Vance looked up quickly.  
"I say, that's most interestin'."  
"The Chinaman did not leave the house," Markham continued, "and told Heath he preferred to remain until the guilty person had been brought to justice."  
"I do hope he hasn't too long to wait," Vance sighed. "But it's just as well if Liang stays with us. I feel that he's going to be most helpful to us anon. . . . And you, Markham, old dear; what have you been doing? Milk investigations, I suppose—and committees of eminent citizens who wish to uplift the drama—and interviews with aldermen."  
"That's about all," Markham confessed. "What would you have suggested?"  
"Really, Markham, I haven't a

suggestion today." Vance leaned back in his chair. "But tomorrow—"  
"You're so helpful and satisfying," Markham snapped.

## CHAPTER X

The Scottish's Trail.  
AT NINE o'clock the following morning Vance called at the offices of the American Kennel Club, and explained to the secretary, Mr. Perry B. Rice, the nature of the information he sought. Mr. Rice introduced us to Mrs. Del Campo, the head of the show department. Mrs. Del Campo, when Mr. Rice explained to her what Vance wanted, found the marked Englewood catalogue. Turning to the Scottish terrier section, she ran her finger down the list of Pupy Hitch entries until she came to the winner of the class. The owner's name was given as Julius Higginbottom, and the name of the dog itself as Miss MacTavish. The breeder was Henry Bixby.

Vance made a note of these data, and expressed his admiration for the A. K. C. system.  
When we arrived at the district attorney's office on the fourth floor of the Criminal Courts building, Markham was in conference with Sergeant Heath. Swacker, the district attorney's secretary, ushered us immediately into Markham's private office.

"Things are moving," Vance sat down and took out his cigarette case. "I have just come from the American Kennel Club and have discovered a bit of most interestin' information. The wounded Scottish, Markham, belongs to none other than Julius Higginbottom."  
"And who might he be, Vance?"  
"And why does the fact interest you?"

"I have met Higginbottom. He's a member of the Crestview Country club, and he has a large country estate at Mount Vernon, where he spends his entire time living what he imagines to be the life of a country gentleman."  
"Heath sat forward in his chair.  
"It was the Crestview Country club at Mount Vernon," he interjected, "where Miss Lake and Grassi went to a dance Wednesday night."  
"And that's not all, Sergeant." Vance sprawled luxuriously in his chair and took a deep inhalation. "Higginbottom knew Archer Coe pretty well. Several years ago Higginbottom inherited, from an aunt, a very fine collection of early Chinese paintings, many of which Coe bought from him at a preposterously low price. Higginbottom is something of a gay bird—the sporting type of man—and knew nothing of the value of the paintings. After he had sold them to Coe he learned from a dealer that they were very valuable, and there was consequent talk, in certain New York art circles, to the effect that Coe had put over a shrewd and somewhat unethical deal on Higginbottom, who, as I know, took the matter up with Coe, but without any success, and there has been a certain amount of bad blood between them ever since. Higginbottom was a major in the World war and is a hot-headed sort of a chap."

Markham beat a nervous tattoo on the desk.  
"Well, where does that get us?" he asked. "Are you implying that Higginbottom came down from Mount Vernon with his dog and murdered Coe?"  
"Good Lord, no!" Vance made a slight gesture of annoyance. "I'm not implyin' anything. I am merely reportin' my findings. But I must confess that I find the relationship between the Scottish and Major Higginbottom and Archer Coe a bit satisfyin'. I am motoring immediately to Mount Vernon, where I hope to have a polite—and I trust, illuminatin'—intercourse with the major concerning Miss MacTavish. . . . Would you care to have the result of my social endeavors?"

"I'll be here all afternoon," Markham answered glumly.  
We had little difficulty in finding the Higginbottom estate, and we were lucky enough to find the major sitting on the big colonial front porch.  
"To what do I owe the honor of this call, sir?" He spoke with hospitable good nature. "I am really delighted. You should come often."

"I'd be charmed," Vance sat down beside a small glass table. "But today, Major, d'ye see, I hopped out here on a little matter of business. . . . The truth is, I'm dashed interested in a Scottish bitch belonging to you—Miss MacTavish—who was shown at Englewood. . . . At the mention of the dog's name, Higginbottom gave a loud cough,

pushing his chair back with a scraping sound, and glancing over his shoulder to the open window leading into the house. The man seemed deeply perturbed, and his tone of voice and his manner, when he answered, struck me as most peculiar.

"Yes, yes; of course," he blustered, rising and walking toward the front steps. "I rarely go to dog shows any more. By the way, Mr. Vance, I want to show you my roses. . . ." And he walked down the stairs toward a small rose garden at the right.

Vance lifted his eyebrows in mild astonishment and followed his host. When we were out of hearing of the house, the major placed his hand on Vance's shoulder and spoke confidentially:

"By gad, sir! I hope my wife didn't hear that question of yours. She's generally in the drawing room during the mornings, and the windows were open." He appeared troubled. "Yes, sir, it would be most annoying if she heard it. I didn't mean to be impolite, sir—no, sir, by gad—but you startled me for a moment. . . . A most trying and delicate situation." He put his head a little closer to Vance. "Where did you hear of that little bitch of mine?—were you at the Englewood show?—and why should you be interested?" He glanced again over his shoulder toward the porch. "George! I hope your question didn't reach my wife's ears."

Vance looked at the man quizzically.  
"Come, come, Major," he said pleasantly. "It really can't be so serious. I was not at Englewood, and I never saw Miss MacTavish until the day before yesterday. The fact of the matter is, Major, your little bitch is now in my apartment in New York."

"You don't say!—In your apartment?" Higginbottom seemed vastly astonished. "How did she get there?—I don't understand at all. This is most peculiar, Mr. Vance. Pray enlighten me."  
"But she is your dog, is she not, Major?" Vance asked quietly.

"Well . . . well—the fact is—that is to say—"  
"Higginbottom was spluttering with embarrassment. "Yes—yes, I suppose you would say that I am the technical owner of her. But I haven't seen her for over six months. . . . You see, Mr. Vance, it's this way—I gave Miss MacTavish away to a friend of mine—a very dear friend, y' understand—in New York."  
"Ah," breathed Vance, looking up at the cerulean sky. "And who, Major, might this friend be?"  
Higginbottom began to splutter again, with an added show of indignation.

"By gad, Mr. Vance! I can't see—really, I can't see—what possible concern that is of any one but myself—and, of course, the recipient. . . . It was a purely private transaction—I might say a personal transaction—"  
"Major," Vance interrupted brusquely, "I am not prying into your private affairs. But a rather serious matter has arisen, and it will be much better for you to confide in me than to have the district attorney summon you to his office."  
Higginbottom's little eyes opened very wide and he fumbled with the ashes in his pipe.

"The fact is, Mr. Vance, I have a very dear friend in New York—a young woman—a very charming young woman, I might say—"  
"It's like this, Mr. Vance. I come to the city quite often—on business, y' understand—and enjoy a night club and the theater now and then, and—you know how it is—I don't care to go alone, and Mrs. Higginbottom has no interest in such frivolous things—"  
"Pray don't make apologies, Major," Vance put in. "What did you say the young lady's name was?"  
"Miss Doris Delafield—and a very fine young woman she is. Comes of an excellent family—"  
"And it was Miss Delafield to whom you gave the dog six months ago?"  
"That's right. But I'm most anxious to keep the matter a secret. You see, Mr. Vance, I wouldn't care to have Mrs. Higginbottom know of it, as she might not understand exactly."

"I'm sure she wouldn't," Vance murmured. "And I quite sympathize with your predicament. . . . And where does Miss Delafield live, Major?"  
"At the Belle Maison apartments at 90 West Seventy-first street."  
Vance's eyes flickered very slightly as he took out a cigarette and lit it slowly.

"That's the small apartment house just across the vacant lot from Archer Coe's residence, isn't it?"  
"That's right. The fact is, Mr. Vance, I was calling on Miss Delafield the very night he was murdered."  
"Indeed, Major. That's most interestin'." Vance leaned over and snapped off a dead leaf from one of the Tullman bushes. "By the way, Major," he went on in an off-hand tone, "little Miss MacTavish was found in the Coe house the next morning, with a rather vicious wound across her head."  
The major's pipe fell from his mouth to the lawn, and was ignored. He stared at Vance like a man transfixed, and the blood went from his face.

"I—I—really. . . . Are you—sure?" he stammered.  
"Oh, quite. Quite. As I told you, I have Miss MacTavish in my apartment now. I found her in the house—in the lower hall. I took her to

Doctor Blamey—she's coming round in first-class shape. . . . But how do you account for the fact, Major."  
—Vance looked at the man squarely—"that your dog was in the murder house at the time the crime was committed?"  
"Account for it!" the man blustered excitedly. "I can't account for it. . . . Good gad! This is incredible! I'm completely bowled over—"  
"But how does it happen, Major," Vance cut in placidly, "that you have not heard of the dog's absence from Miss Delafield's apartment—"  
"Oh, I forgot to tell you," said the major, and hesitated.

"Ah, what did you forget to tell me?"  
The major shifted his eyes.  
"I omitted to mention the fact that Miss Delafield sailed for Europe on Wednesday night."  
"The night Mr. Archer Coe was murdered," Vance said slowly.  
"Just so," the major returned aggressively. "The reason I happened to be at her apartment that night was because we were having a farewell dinner, and I was to see her off on the boat."  
"And how does it happen, Major, that your dog was not returned to your kennel here when Miss Delafield sailed for Europe?"  
"The fact of the matter is—"  
Higginbottom became apologetic—"Doris—that is, Miss Delafield—on my advice, left the dog in the care of her maid, who was to look after the apartment during her absence."

"On your advice? . . . Why?"  
"I thought it best," the major explained weakly. "You see, sir, if I brought the dog here it might involve the situation a bit, as I would have to give explanations to my wife when Doris—Miss Delafield—returned from Europe and wished to have the dog back. And, of course—"  
"Ah, yes, I quite understand," nodded Vance. "And what time did Miss Delafield sail Wednesday night?"  
"On the Olympic—at midnight."  
"And you were in the apartment at that time?"  
"I called about six o'clock and we went out immediately. We had dinner—let me see—at a little restaurant—I suppose you might call it a night club—and we remained there until it was time to go to the boat."

"What little restaurant was it?" Higginbottom knit his brow.  
"Really, Mr. Vance, I can't remember." He hesitated. "You know, I'm not certain that it even had a name. It was a small place in the West Fifties—or was it the Forties? It was a place that had been recommended to Miss Delafield by a friend."

"A bit vague—eh, what?" Vance let his eyes come to rest mildly on the major. "But thank you just the same. I think I'll stagger back to New York and have a chat with Miss Delafield's maid. I'm sure you won't mind. What, by the by, is her name?"  
The major looked a bit startled. "Annie Cochrane," he said, and then hurried on: "But I say, Mr. Vance, this thing sounds rather serious. Would you mind if I accompanied you to the city? I myself would like to know why Annie didn't report to me the absence of the dog."

"I'd be delighted," Vance told him.  
We drove back to New York with Major Higginbottom and went direct to the Belle Maison.  
Annie Cochrane was a young dark-haired woman in her early thirties, obviously of Irish descent, and when, on opening the door to our ring, she saw Major Higginbottom, she appeared frightened and flustered.

"Listen here, Annie," the major began aggressively. "Why didn't you let me know that Miss Delafield's dog had disappeared?"  
Annie explained stumbingly that she had been afraid to say anything about the dog's disappearance, as she considered it her fault that the dog was gone, and that she had hoped from day to day that it would return. The woman was patently frightened.

"Just when did the dog disappear, Annie?" asked Vance in a consoling voice.  
The woman looked at him gratefully.  
"I missed her, sir," she said, "just after Major Higginbottom and Miss Doris went out Wednesday night, at about nine o'clock, sir."

Vance turned to Higginbottom with a faint smile.  
"Didn't I understand you to say that you went out at six o'clock, Major?"  
Before Higginbottom could answer, the maid blurted: "Oh, no; it wasn't six o'clock. It wasn't until nine o'clock. I got dinner for them here a little after eight."

The major looked down and stroked his chin cogitatively.  
"Yes, yes," he nodded. "That's right. I'd thought it was six o'clock, but now I remember. An excellent dinner you prepared that night, Annie." He looked up at Vance with a smile of nonchalant frankness. "Sorry to have misinformed you, Mr. Vance. The—ab—incident rather slipped my memory. . . . I had intended to take Miss Delafield out to dinner. But when I arrived Annie had prepared everything for us, so we changed our plans."  
(TO BE CONTINUED.)

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A German scientist has succeeded in clarifying the entire chemical structure of vitamin C, the curvy preventive.

## HOW TO SHOOT

By Bob Nichols  
Shooting Editor, Field and Stream

NO MAN can hope to become a very good wingshot if he lays his gun away ten months in the year and takes it out again only when the autumn gunning season rolls around. Especially in his development stage, the hopeful shooter needs practice the year 'round. Much of this practice can be had in terms of "dry shooting." That is, mere practice indoors with the gun empty.  
"Dry shooting" will materially help you acquire good form and speed in your gun mounting. Keep your gun standing handy in a corner of your room, where you can snatch it up for a few minutes' practice in the evening before you turn in. Keep all shells for the gun under lock and key where children, or grown-ups with children's minds, can't get at them. Never slip shells in your gun in the house. To do so is to invite tragedy!  
Grab your gun for a few minutes each day. Not more than two or three minutes at a time, for practice does you little good if you continue after your arms are fatigued.  
Practice mounting the gun to your shoulder. Get so you can do it swiftly but gently. Never jerk it up spasmodically, or jam the butt hard back into your shoulder.  
Bring it up smoothly, pointing it instinctively at a spot on the wall paper as it comes up to your face and in to your shoulder, then giving it the finer aiming adjustment just as you pull the trigger. Keep both eyes open and see how gradually it becomes easier and easier to point the gun accurately with the full power of your two-eyed vision. Push the gun stock in close to your face so it won't be necessary to tilt your head too far over to look down the barrel. Your gun butt should rest clear in on your shoulder, clear in the base of your neck—never out on the arm.  
Don't snap your hammers. You may break a firing pin. Put the safety on. You can practice pulling the trigger just about as well this way.  
Stand erect as you practice. Not stiffly like a ramrod, but easily erect. Keep your head erect and your chin down. To tuck in your chin before you mount your gun may prevent you from getting the bad habit of craning your head and neck out over the gun stock when you shoot. Get the habit of keeping your chin tucked in as you bring your gun up, and you'll find that your barrels come up into easy alignment much quicker. Mounting your gun with chin tucked in is a simpler movement. Doing it with the chin sticking out results in a compound movement—your gun comes up and your chin comes down. Frequently they do not meet at the same point. Your head may be craned out too far over the stock of the gun. When this awkward strain is introduced, the shooter frequently raises his head an instant before firing and up goes his gun muzzle and he over-shoots.  
With your chin tucked snugly in your face soon learns to assume a fixed shooting position. Face and gun stock no longer try to "find each other in the dark." The hands, having been taught their duty, bring the gun stock up into the accustomed position, where cheek and eyes are all ready waiting to take possession of the finer adjustments of the aim.  
Hunters who haven't yet learned to assume correct head position before bringing the gun to shoulder, quite often get a bruised cheek bone. They blame the gun. Usually it isn't the gun's fault at all.  
Good shooting form—and good shooting, too—results from a synchronization of movement, and a consequent elimination of unfamiliar movement and lost motion.  
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**"Sensitization Diseases"**  
**Found Largely Inherited**  
Hay fever, asthma, eczema, food (idiosyncrasy and similar minor diseases caused by excessive sensitivity to certain pollens, dusts, foods or other common substances have been found to be inherent family weaknesses in 33 per cent of 7,000 students studied by the University of Michigan health service.  
Since 1930 complete medical histories of 7,000 students entering the university have been registered and checked for accuracy by parents of the students, according to Dr. Buenaventura Jimenez in the Michigan Medical Society Journal.  
It was found that 12 per cent of these students had previously had hay fever, rose fever, asthma or eczema. A second group, 22 per cent, reported having had urticaria, gastro-intestinal upsets, food idiosyncrasy, frequent "colds" and headaches of the type usually caused by sensitization to some substance or food. A third group, 19 per cent, reported themselves so far free from such annoyances, but with a history of sensitivity among other members of the family.  
"Although the health service figures show a prevalence of sensitization diseases exceeding all previous estimates, they are well attested, and emphasize the need of more attention to these conditions."

## NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS

By Katherine Edelman

HAPPY and prosperous New Year! All day the words had been flung at Bob Cameron; everywhere he went they echoed in his ears. He wanted to shut them out, to forget that a New Year was beginning.

Last night, in summing up the old year, he had come to the conclusion that he was an utter failure, that he might as well discard the idea of becoming a writer. Every story that he had sent out had come back. It was true that a few editors had encouraged him—one of the best known in the country had told him to keep on, that he had a fine literary style. But none of them had kept his offerings.

Bob felt that the wisest thing he could do was to chuck the whole thing at the beginning of the New Year. Yet down in his heart he knew that writing was a part of him; that it would be an almost impossible task to keep away from the untidy desk back in his den. But he would have to do it, a man couldn't hold a girl to a promise, with nothing to offer her but failure.

Bob knew that Dorothy Trent was back of his resolution to quit the writing game. He loved Dorothy and she loved him. They had been engaged since their senior year at Northwestern. It was time that he should say something about marriage; it was not fair to hold her as he was doing. He would have to get a position that would enable him to keep a girl like Dor-



"It Will Be Glorious to Help You Work Out Your Career."

othy; he couldn't ask her to exist on the meager pittance he was getting from the Pryor company. He had taken the job simply because it gave him so much time for writing, caring nothing at the time for the small salary and the lack of opportunity that it held.

The unhappiness brought by his resolve showed plainly in the weary droop of Bob's shoulders and the tired lines on his boyish face. He found it hard to join in the small talk and fun of the New Year's party that was going on. If Dorothy hadn't been so insistent upon his coming, he would have remained away, for he was in no mood for frivolity. And now, an even deeper bitterness had crept into his heart, as he watched the crowd pay tribute to Everett Elstun, the literary lion of Raymondville.

He wondered how Dorothy had got Elstun to her party; he was a bit of a recluse and seldom mingled with the crowd. He was surprised as he saw him walking across the room, with an eager look upon his face.

"How are you coming with your writing?" he asked.  
Bob gave a worthless laugh. "I've just decided that as a writer I'm a pretty good hod-carrier. The fact of the matter is, Mr. Elstun, I've made a New Year's resolution to quit."

"Giving up in a hurry?" Elstun said, a trifle sharply.  
"I've been trying for almost two years," Bob answered.  
"And you think a few hours every now and then for two years should have brought you success? Listen, boy, I was writing full time for more than three years before I got a hint that I wasn't wasting ink."  
In a moment Bob was confessing his real reason for quitting. Elstun listened quietly, then he spoke. "I, too, had that problem," he said. "There was a girl; I felt sure she wouldn't be satisfied with what I had to offer. Fortunately, I found out in time she wanted to share my struggles. Maybe the girl you love feels the same way."  
Bob found that Elstun was right. Dorothy was aghast at the thought of his giving up the work he loved, or doubting that she would want to share his poverty. "It will be glorious to help you work out your career," she assured him.  
So a new resolution was made that called for success instead of failure. The New Year was going to bring Bob the acceptance that he craved.

**Dinner Cocktail**  
An oyster cocktail is a nice start for the holiday dinner, not so filling as the more usual soup.

## CHARMING QUILT IS "SUN BONNET"

By GRANDMOTHER CLARK



Many mothers and grandmothers would get busy and make the "Sun Bonnet" quilt for a home darling if they could see just how cunning it looks when finished. One of the six poses of the baby is shown here. The 18 inch blocks are stamped on white material. The applique patches are stamped for cutting and sewing on many colored beautiful prints. The embroidery is in simple outline stitch.

Send 15c to our quilt department and we will mail you one complete block like the above picture, also picture of quilt showing the six different blocks. Make this one block up and see how it looks when finished. Six blocks, each different, will be mailed for 75c postpaid.  
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Address—Home Craft Co., Dept. D, Nineteenth and St. Louis Avenue, St. Louis, Mo.  
Enclose stamped addressed envelope when writing for any information.

## TAKE OWN LIVES, SUFFERING FROM IMAGINARY ILLS

Imaginary ills cause most suicides, and unrequited love is waning as a cause for self-destruction, says J. F. Cutbirth, veteran coroner's jurymen of Kansas City, who has been investigating suicides for years.  
"It's not just the loss of their money that causes a man to commit suicide," said Cutbirth. "As often as not it is imagination that gets them."  
"What seems to plunge them into despair is the thought they are losing caste. They've fallen into the habit of thinking only the life they have been living is worth while."  
"I can think of several men who committed suicide after financial losses which did not leave them destitute by any means. A lot of folks get along without complaint on what was left to them."  
"Does romance figure much in suicides?" he was asked.  
"Not much these days," Cutbirth replied. "Some women still commit suicide because of broken hearts, but very few. And hardly any men do so."  
"I suppose that men and women know that if they lose their sweethearts they can find new ones. There are a lot of men and women in the world. Both men and women have larger circles of acquaintances than they formerly did."  
"Public opinion also is a factor. Men and women, fearing ridicule, do not go about moaning over their unhappy romances."  
Made a Hit With Himself  
A framed portrait of himself fell from the wall on to a householder's head the other day. He was struck by the likeness.—London Humorist.

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