

The Adventure of the Rydberg Numbers - Rydb
Three Problems for Solar Pons, 1952
The Return of Solar Pons, 1958

Date

Copper/October, 1925

Patrick/November, 1925

Quotes

- *(to Parker) Dear me, you medical gentlemen find it difficult to credit the unusual. Why are the scientific gentry always so ready to dismiss the admittedly inexplicable and substitute a rationalization which negates the evidence?*
- *Pons: I fancy we are all too prone to accept the opinion of the majority; it may be in error. It frequently is.*
Parker: The majority are entirely likely to be right.
Pons: Ah, I should hesitate to commit myself to the mercy of the majority.

The Case

Bancroft visits Praed Street early one morning. Lillian Pargeter's brother, Stanley, is an unimportant government research scientist. He seems to have been kidnapped and replaced with a duplicate who fools the vision-impaired Lillian. However, she realizes her brother is not the man living with her and seeks out Bancroft (erroneously) for help. Pons investigates the man's hobby of radiation research to find the solution.

Comments

- Parker tells us that he meets Pons' older brother Bancroft for the second time. Bancroft was on government business in Ricoletti of the Club Foot. However, he has been dragged grumpily out of his bed by a woman who is actually looking for Solar Pons. Bancroft is testy, even complaining about having to hoof it up seventeen steps (the same number to be found at 221B Baker Street).
- This case offers us an alternative German villain to Baron Ennesford Kroll: Baron Manfred von and zu Grafenstein. He poses as a "fanciful dilettante" but is actually an accomplished espionage agent working undercover for the German government. He is bested by Pons in this case and is not mentioned elsewhere in the Canon.
- This case could not have been successfully completed without the work of the Praed Street Irregulars. And it is easy to assert that Pons put them in peril; possibly deadly peril. It was fortunate that no one was injured as they affected the rescue of Stanley Pargeter.
- It is strongly implied that American scientists' splitting of the atom, long deemed impossible by British physicists, was partly due to Pargeter's theories.