

some such stranger did stop at the inn for a few minutes and write a letter. This clue is being actively followed up, and doubtless with the identification of this mysterious person, which is understood to be a matter of a few hours' time, we shall be nearer the unravelling of the knot. It may be added, from information supplied us from a safe source, that the police do not expect to find that this stranger was Moriarty, but rather

AN ACCOMPLICE OF WATSON'S,
who has for long collaborated with him in his writings, and has been a good deal mentioned in connection with the deceased. In short, the most sensational arrest of the century is on the tapis.

The murdered man's

ROOMS IN BAKER-STREET

are in possession of the police. Our representative called there in the course of the morning and spent some time in examining the room with which the public has become so familiar through Watson's descriptions. The room is precisely as when deceased inhabited it. Here, for instance, is his favourite chair in which he used to twist himself into knots when thinking out a difficult problem. A tin canister of tobacco stands on the mantelpiece (shag), and above it hangs the long-lost Gainsborough "Duchess," which Holmes discovered some time ago, without, it seems, being able to find the legal owner. It will be remembered that Watson, when Holmes said surprising things, was in the habit of "leaping to the ceiling" in astonishment. Our representative examined the ceiling and found it

MUCH DENTED.

The public cannot, too, have forgotten that Holmes used to amuse himself in this room with pistol practice. He was such a scientific shot that one evening while Watson was writing he fired all round the latter's head, shaving him by an infinitesimal part of an inch. The result is a portrait on the wall, in pistol-shots, of Watson, which is considered an excellent likeness. It is understood that, following the example set in the Ardlamont case, this picture will be produced in court. It is also in contemplation to bring over the Falls of Reichenbach for the same purpose.

THE MOTIVE.

The evidence in the case being circumstantial, it is obvious that motive must have a prominent part in the case for the Crown. Wild rumours are abroad on this subject, and at this stage of the case they must be received with caution. According to one, Watson and Holmes had had a difference about money matters, the latter holding that the former was making a gold-mine out of him and sharing nothing. Others allege that the difference between the two men was owing to Watson's change of manner; Holmes, it is stated, having complained bitterly that Watson did not jump to the ceiling in amazement so frequently as in the early days of their intimacy. The blame in this case, however, seems to attach less to Watson than to the lodgers on the second floor, who complained to the landlady. We understand that the legal fraternity look to

THE DARK HORSE

in the case for the motive which led to the murder of Mr. Holmes. This dark horse, of course, is the mysterious figure already referred to as having been seen in the vicinity of the Falls of Reichenbach on the fatal day. He, they say, had strong reasons for doing away with Mr. Holmes. For a long time they were on excellent terms. Holmes would admit frankly in the early part of his career that he owed everything to this gentleman; who, again, allowed that Holmes was a large source of income to him. Later, however, they have not been on friendly terms, Holmes having complained frequently that whatever he did the other took the credit for. On the other hand, the suspected accomplice has been heard to say "that Holmes has been getting too uppish for anything," that he "could do very well without Holmes now," that he "has had quite enough of Holmes," that he "is sick of the braggart's name," and even that "if the public kept shouting for more Holmes he would kill him in self-defence." Witnesses will be brought to prove these statements, and it is believed that the mysterious man of the Falls and this gentleman will be found to be one and the same person. Watson himself allows that he owes his very existence to this dark horse, which supplies the important evidence that the stranger of the Falls is also a doctor. The theory of the Crown, of course, is that these two medical men were accomplices. It is known that he whom we have called the dark horse is still in the neighbourhood of the Falls.

DR. CONAN DOYLE.

Dr. Conan Doyle is at present in Switzerland.

AN EXTRAORDINARY RUMOUR

reaches us as we go to press, to the effect that Mr. Sherlock Holmes, at the entreaty of the whole British public, has returned to Baker-street, and is at present (in the form of the figure 8) solving the problem of The Adventure of the Novelist and His Old Man of the Sea.

A TALKING BOOK.*

ONE has often heard of people who "talk like a book;" but here is a book that, if it does not exactly talk, emits audible and vocal sounds. It is adorned with coloured pictures of various domestic animals, including babies. There are also verses describing the peculiarities of the cock, the cow, the goat, and so on, in the artless style familiar to well-regulated nurseries. Here is nothing unusual, though the pictures are well executed and the print clear; but the great novelty of the Speaking Book lies elsewhere. You pull a string, and lo! the donkey does indeed bray, the cow "moos," the small birds twitter, the lamb says "baa" in a lifelike manner, and the baby cries "Papa" and "Mama." The imitations are wonderfully realistic, and the whole idea of the book is as excellent as the execution is ingenious. No nursery should be without it; and anybody at a loss for a present for good little girls and boys may safely be recommended to order this remarkably clever toy.

* The Speaking Picture Book. (London: H. Grevel and Co.)

CHESS IN 1893.

By ISIDOR GUNSBURG.

WHEN the history of the year 1893 comes to be written it will be found not to have been uneventful for chess-players. Although the year has not been so prolific in big tournaments as several of its predecessors, there have been competitions of sufficient importance, both in England and abroad, to leave a marked impression upon chess history. Perhaps the most interesting event which took place in this country was the match between the players of the North and South of England, contested with 106 players a side at Birmingham in the early part of the year. The match created widespread interest throughout the United Kingdom; and the very close victory by the odd game for the South (if it can be called a victory) has led to a return match to be played in London in April next. In the month of February a "Masters' Tournament" was arranged to be played at Simpson's Divan, with prizes amounting to £60. The competitors in this tourney were Messrs. Bird, Blackburne, Mason, Teichmann, Tinsley, and Van Vliet. A few good games were produced; but the proportion of drawn games was so great as to detract somewhat from the interest in the contest—unfortunately a too common occurrence nowadays. From February until July the only event of any importance was a match played at Simpson's between Messrs. H. E. Bird and N. Jasnogrodsky. When both players had won six games the match was disappointing, and was abandoned as a draw. On the 31st of July the annual tourney of the Counties' Chess Association was held at Woodhall Spa, Lincolnshire, and several noted amateurs from various parts of England competed. Mr. E. A. Jones, of London, won the first prize without having lost a game—always an enviable record for any player. In September another match took place at Simpson's, this time between Mr. R. Teichmann, a young expert of great promise, and the well-known amateur, Mr. R. Loman. Mr. Teichmann beat his opponent very decisively, the score being—Teichmann 5, Loman 0, and 2 draws. The usual blindfold and simultaneous performances by the masters were given in various parts of the country. But Mr. Blackburne had a more than usually brilliant and successful season; a pleasant feature in connection with these exhibitions being the lively interest evinced by Alderman Sir Stuart Knill, the late Lord Mayor of London, who paid a visit to the Metropolitan Chess Club when Mr. Gunsberg was playing and to the City of London Chess Club to look at Mr. Blackburne's blindfold exhibition.

The principal events abroad were the Tarrasch-Teichgorin match played in the autumn in St. Petersburg, and a tournament held in New York about the same time. The match in Russia was disappointing to many amateurs, who expected much from a meeting between these two celebrated masters. Unfortunately, owing to a meagre selection of openings, there was a great deal of sameness about the games, and the match was finally drawn, when each player had scored nine games. The tournament in New York was chiefly remarkable on account of the fine play of Lasker, who won every game, and therefore won the first prize with four games to spare. This was very creditable to Lasker, but does not say a great deal for the balance of the competitors. Lasker in the course of the year played two matches with Showalter, both of which he won. He also paid a visit to Havana, and the enthusiasts there were favourably impressed with his skill at chess. About the time of Lasker's visit Herr Walbrodt, another young German expert, was also invited to visit the Havanas; and it was only natural that the Cuban players should have been eager to see the two young masters exhibit their skill against each other. But although all sorts of efforts were made towards this end, nothing would induce Lasker to consent to a meeting, as he had not been notified of Herr Walbrodt's visit to Havana, nor had any intimation of any kind been conveyed to him beforehand that he was expected to play Walbrodt. This may be a valid objection from a professional standpoint, to prevent Lasker from engaging in a set match and risking his reputation as well as sacrificing his immediate prospects of club engagements; but Lasker went to the extreme of even refusing to play a consultation game against Walbrodt. Such arguments, however, could hardly be expected to meet with much favour from such chess-players and enthusiastic amateurs as abound in Havana. This is the more to be regretted because in consequence thereof the members of the chess club have declined to entertain proposals for a match to be played in Havana between Mr. Steinitz and Herr Lasker in the early part of 1894. Upon his return to New York Walbrodt engaged in a match with Mr. E. Deimar, one of America's leading players. Walbrodt was victorious by five games to three, and three draws. The young expert shortly after returned to his native land, and in August divided first honours with Herr von Bardeleben in a tournament of German masters held at Kiel. A pleasant feature of the year's foreign chess was the appointment by President Cleveland of Mr. Max Judd, of St. Louis, to be Consul-General of the United States to Vienna. The prospect for the forthcoming year in this country is another North v. South match, to be contested in London in April; but, further than that, no movement has as yet been set on foot for any event of magnitude. An International Masters' Tournament in England during 1894 would be welcomed with enthusiasm by all lovers of chess. All that is required to bring about such a contest would be for some one to exert himself in the right direction to obtain the necessary funds. There is considerable need for a new national chess association managed by gentlemen who have only the interest of chess at heart, and who are not actuated by private interests, party prejudices, or professional jealousies. In America it is hoped that a meeting between Steinitz and Lasker may still be arranged, and efforts are being made to have a part of the match at least contested in Montreal. An international competition is also due to take place in Germany during the summer months, but the chances are against its taking place.

In London club life great strides have been made in a forward direction. Mr. Gunsberg's engagement both by the St. George's and the Metropolitan Chess Clubs marks a new departure in club enterprise and activity which has had favourable results in both instances. The St. George's Club, the oldest and most renowned club in the kingdom, has brought itself more in touch with modern ideas, and after a change to better and more commodious rooms at 87, St. James's-street, which will take place this week, greater chess activity will be the order of the day there. Mr. Gunsberg's success at the Metropolitan was still more marked. The club this year has risen to the proud place of being the largest in the kingdom. The Metropolitan committee arranged the largest match on record at the Cannon-street Hotel against the Ludgate-circus Chess Club. There were 120 players a side, and the Metropolitan Club won by nearly two to one. The great success of this club has also had the effect of moving the City of London Chess Club to put forth some efforts to cater for the amusement of their members. They have somewhat departed from a dull routine by joining the London Chess League Competition. In all probability the issue will rest between the City and the Metropolitan in the meeting between these two clubs.

In the past year we have made our first bow to the public, and we hope we have succeeded in interesting our chess readers. The *Times* Weekly Edition has also devoted a regular portion of its space to chess. The *Daily News* takes the lead among the daily journals in chess matters; it has followed the example of other contemporaries, and has instituted a regular chess column every Monday, besides reporting chess regularly from day to day. Both the *Standard* and the *Morning Post* have in the past year put forth great and praiseworthy efforts on behalf of chess, and the same may be said of several provincial journals and the *British Chess Magazine*, which usually contains much excellent and