

like the look. Then he goes outside and sees the bag, and asks what is in the bag. "My blankets," says Lambert. Meikle stands 26 ft. off; but although he noticed this and was waiting for the night on which the deed was going to be done, yet, with all this mystery, he does not go over to the bag and look at it. He is not suspicious enough for that. But yet, if you believe him, he kept the smithy locked, and every day had a search made for these mysterious sheepskins. Well, the knife has been sharpened, and the skins wickedly put into the smithy. Lambert has done his evil work, and he goes into the house and Meikle says the clock struck ten. He remembers it nineteen years ago. Your Honours will remember that in the tragedy of Bluebeard and a great deal of the literature of that class the clock always strikes something at the critical moment, and here the clock struck ten. Mr. Lambert, if his story is correct, put the skins where he had already told everybody about the district he was going to put them, and the police came and found them there, and Meikle was convicted. But, more wonderful still, Lambert is a common visitor at this house. Harvey says he was there every day. Harvey says his hour for examining the skins was between 7 and 8 o'clock every morning for a period of nearly six weeks. So that it is reasonable to infer that Lambert knew of this practice at the Meikle household. He knew when he put the skins there the night before that next morning at 7 they would be discovered by Harvey, and when the police came they would find nothing at all. But that is not all. Lambert's notice to his employers that sheep had been stolen was given on the 19th or 20th October, ten days before the police came. He did not know when after that the police would make the raid. So, then, we are to believe that he waits after giving notice for eleven days before he goes with this horrible false evidence to Meikle's, and deposited it in the smithy. I ask your Honours is any part of this rigmarole of Meikle's credible? Surely it is all palpably absurd. The fact that he had got a number of witnesses since his conviction to come and tell this story about the man in white and the man in black, and all the rest of it, simply shows what an expert he is in making people believe what never happened, or in inducing dishonest people to perjure themselves. But how did Meikle act when the skins were found? If his story and that of the others is correct, he was quite aware that the skins were to be marked and brought in this way and put there by Lambert. How then, in those circumstances, would you expect Meikle to act when the skins were discovered? If Meikle's story is correct, he must have known as soon as ever the police discovered the skins there that the man who put them there was Lambert, and no one else. Your Honours will remember that Lambert had told everybody that he was going to put the skins there. Harvey swears that he heard him say so repeatedly. Arthur Meikle knew, and swears he heard him say so. Nobody but Lambert, it is said, was there the night before the police arrived. Harvey swears that he searched the skins the morning of the day before the police arrived, so that on their own evidence the skins were not there the day before the visit of the police. The only person who had had access to the smithy was Lambert. Could any one, then, have the faintest doubt when the skins were found who the culprit was? But what is the answer given when the police came? When Harvey, who knew all this, and Arthur Meikle, who knew all this, were confronted with the skins and asked to explain, what was their answer? If they knew of this conspiracy—if Lambert was, as they say, the man who was paid to do and did this business—why did not Harvey, when these skins were found in the smithy, say, "That is the work of Lambert"? Why did not young Meikle, when the skins were found in the smithy say, "That is the work of Lambert." Why was some such explanation not given as to their being there? But what does Arthur Meikle say? When asked by the police how the skins got there he says they must have been taken off the fence by mistake. Harvey, who hears that explanation given, keeps silence, and does not give the show away. As far as these two men are concerned, after the oath they have taken that they knew the whole plan and believed that none but Lambert could have left the skins there, is it explicable that they did not at once clear themselves by saying, "This is part of the plot; these skins were put there by Lambert, and we will prove it"? But no, one gives a false reason, and one keeps his mouth shut. Now, let us see how this experienced gentleman, who has various ups and downs in the world (Mr. Meikle), how he acts when the police raid the place and he hears that they have discovered two sheepskins on it. Does he come at once and tell them about this plot—about the black and the white man, and all the rest of it? Meikle sees Lambert on the 8th November, the day after Meikle was arrested; and I ask your Honours to look at the evidence he swears to, and say whether that can be credited for a moment. He meets this man Lambert, the arch-conspirator, in the Star Hotel. He has been arrested. He knows the skins have been found, and does not say, "Why did not you tell me you were going to put those skins there?" Instead of that he says, "Speak truthfully, whatever way it is." Now, Mr. McDonald, the witness who was in the box yesterday, says that he heard Meikle ask Lambert to speak truthfully, and that Lambert said he would. He answered "Yes, but I want £10 blood-money from Stuart." Well, now, your Honours, I submit with some confidence that that statement credited to Lambert is absolutely and manifestly false and absurd. Lambert is to speak the truth. He is to give away this plot, and say how he came to put the skins there; and at the same time he was to get £10 blood-money from Stuart. How is he to get the blood-money from Stuart? His £50 was dependent upon the conviction. Now, on the 14th, Meikle, who had now had six days more to think it over—six more days in which to recognise that no man but Lambert put those skins there—writes to Lambert and asks him to come and shear for him, and tells him he has nothing to fear, and to listen to no reports, and that Constable Leece would get into serious trouble. That is perfectly inconsistent with the story Meikle now asks us to believe. "You had nothing to fear, and listen to no reports." There was a previous letter which will be proved by both Mrs. Lambert and her husband which, if read along with this witness, will give an entirely different meaning from the document than that which Mr. Meikle now attempts to put upon it. In the letter which he wrote earlier he asks Lambert to keep his mouth shut, and it was on the assumption that he kept his mouth shut that he had nothing to fear. Pieced out besides the other letter, "You keep your mouth shut and there is nothing to fear, and listen to no reports." That, it is submitted, is the reasonable and fair interpretation of this document of 14th November. He is to give his