The Baker Street Journal

An Irregular Quarterly of Sherlockiana

Edgar W. Smith - Editor

VOLUME 2
NUMBER 3

Ben Abramson, Publisher - New York - 1947

THE EDITOR'S GAS-LAMP

THE FORTUNATE ONES

IT WAS A heartening experience, at the meeting of the Baker Street Irregulars last January, to look around the room and take count of the many young faces that brightened an otherwise august and rather doddering assemblage. The legend has persisted too long, certainly, that only those who sowed their oats by gaslight are eligible for this inner circle, or that a purely personal nostalgia is essential to affection for the man who stands as symbol of the old remembered times. Sherlock Holmes has more than this to commend him to the world's esteem, and the rising generation knows it.

Some of the men in their thirties and their twenties who sat with the Irregulars that night were the sons—the scions, if you will—of the founding gaffers whose roots lie deep in the beckoning past. A few of them, perhaps, were there from filial piety or as a mere gesture of imitation; but there were many more who came, with or without parental sponsorship and incitement, for the simple and satisfying reason that they had found something they liked, and that they liked what they had found. Such neophytes, whether within the body of the Irregulars themselves or as a part of the burgeoning societies out around the land, are the fortunate ones among us. For theirs is a wholly objective devotion, unbolstered by the treacherous props of memory.

But happier and more fortunate still, if we stop to consider, are those virginal souls, young and old alike, who have never read the tales of Sherlock Holmes at all. Here is the optimum of all potential: for them the world has not begun, and they have yet to live. Think what it is they have before them! We who have wisdom in the lore would not give up one whit of what we have acquired—but for these others the joy that we have known is promised in the very fact of acquisition. It is a joy that we would know anew if only ignorance could be recaptured and innocence restored. What ransom would we pay if we could wonder once again at the meaning of the task poor Jabez Wilson had been called upon to do; if we could speculate upon the sinister and mysterious significance of the Dancing Men? And how we would delight to find ourselves bewildered by the tiny footprints in the attic of the house where Bartholomew Sholto had died in agony, or by the cryptic references to the gipsy band that roamed the neighborhood of Stoke Moran! These are the voyages of great discovery that we can never take again . . .

"Footprints?"
"Footprints."
"A man's or a woman's?" . . .

We know the epic answer. But how we wish that we did not!

IN MEMORIAM

HARVEY OFFICER May 20, 1947

". . . Stand with me here upon the terrace, for it may be the last quiet talk that we shall ever have."

WHAT HAPPENED TO MARY MORSTAN

by T. B. HUNT and H. W. STARR

THE MARRIAGE of Dr. John H. Watson to Miss Mary Morstan in 1887–8 is recorded beyond any doubt. Several years of uxorious domesticity are indicated; then the bits of evidence become vague and unsatisfactory. There is Holmes's report of a "sad bereavement" [1] in or about 1894; the statement that in 1903 "the good Watson had deserted me for a wife." [2] Mr. S. C. Roberts [3] leans to the superficial interpretation of second and third marriages; he even suggests Miss de Merville of *The Illustrious Client* as the second Mrs. Watson.

The corner of the curtain was partly lifted in "Some New Light on Watson" [4] wherein the suggestion was made—and supported by a careful verbal analysis of the moot passages—that the marriages of Watson did not involve new brides, but were reconciliations with Mary, who had been driven into separation by the Doctor's extra-professional engagements.

This interpretation is shocking to those who have seen in Watson the sterling qualities of the loyal Englishman, one whose friendship never wavered, one whose love would be as solid as Gibraltar. Fortunately it is now possible to read the evidence in a still newer light which throws into relief the nobility, the *pukka sahib* worth of a fine gentleman.

[1] *The Adventure of the Empty House.*

[2] *The Adventure of the Blanched Soldier.*

[3] *Doctor Watson: Prolegomena to the Study of a Biographical Problem,* Faber & Faber, London, 1931.

[4] THE BAKER STREET JOURNAL, Vol. I, p. 55.

Mary Morstan did not cast off her husband; she fought courageously—and with the Doctor's self-sacrificing help—against the inroads of insanity. Again and again his love and medical skill pulled her back from the shadows of the asylum: to her he gave the closing years of his life, attending her in seclusion, saving her from the final horror of institutional care. This is the "sad bereavement," this the explanation which Roberts must subconsciously have sensed when he wrote, "In all probability Mrs. Watson had left for a period of treatment at a rest-home or sanatorium . . ." [5]

The evidence of this mental malaise is made up of many details of great cumulative force. We begin with a study of Mary's very difficult childhood in which the maladjustment of her mature years so manifestly originated:

> "My father was an officer in an Indian regiment, who sent me home when I was quite a child. My mother was dead, and I had no relative in England. I was placed, however, in a comfortable boarding establishment at Edinburgh, and there I remained until I was seventeen years of age." [6]

Here we have the beginnings of tragedy; a pitiful babe deprived of its mother in a savage and heedless world; a father too preoccupied with military affairs [7] to supervise the child's welfare; the Hindoo attendants who must cruelly have terrified the love-hungry infant; the separation from the father and the long voyage to a strange land; the empty years in an alien country, in a private school; a boarding establishment where sympathy was unknown. So until she was seventeen this frail child lived in a friendless world —"no relative in England"—fixing all her love on her absent father.

Then the ecstatic news of his voyage to her, the extravagant expectations, his arrival in England, his disappearance, his probable death. Even the well-adjusted mind would have been shaken. In Mary's case the impact of the catastrophic mystery was too great to be borne. On the threshold of her meeting with Watson, even then, Mary was a strange being, delicate, appealing to the healing

[5] Roberts, *op. cit.*

[6] *The Sign of the Four.*

[7] Not to mention with an intensive investigation of those laws of chance governing the distribution of a card deck.

urge in the young medical man, but already tinged and tainted with the patterns which at that time medical science could hardly hope to diagnose.

Indeed, the trauma which Mary suffered in her childhood must have been operative even before Dr. Watson knew her. She is living with a Mrs. Forrester who regards her clearly as "no mere paid dependent but an honoured friend." [8] The motherly attitude of Mrs. Forrester may be the outward sign of the matronly care which was essential to Mary's well being.

Let us now turn to a detailed examination of the evidence. When we do so, we find that Mary suffered from a marked emotional instability which was doubtless aggravated by the love of solitude and avoidance of friendship that is so clearly an integral part of her character. "I have led a retired life," she tells Holmes and Watson, "and have no friends whom I could appeal to." [9] She flies from one extreme to another: frequently she experiences a profound melancholia which at times is followed by an almost hysterical exhilaration. Watson noted the melancholy at the very first, although he did not realize its significance: ". . . the dull, heavy evening with the strange business upon which we were engaged, combined to make me nervous and depressed. I could see from Miss Morstan's manner that she was suffering from the same feeling." [10] This is of course merely a trifle, but we are not surprised to find Watson writing: ". . . her sweet grave face. . . . One white arm and hand drooped over the side of the chair, and her whole pose and figure spoke of an absorbing melancholy. At the sound of my footfall she sprang to her feet, however, and a bright flush of surprise and of pleasure coloured her pale cheeks." [11] This abrupt transition from extreme melancholy to extreme exhilaration has a very sinister ring. She shows distinct traces of hysteria when she appears at Baker Street: ". . . her lip trembled, her hand quivered, and she showed every sign of intense inward agitation." [12] Yet only a little later she is in a most cheerful mood: ". . . with a bright, kindly glance from

[8] *The Sign of the Four.*
[9] *The Sign of the Four.*
[10] *Ibid.*
[11] *Ibid.*
[12] *Ibid.*

one to the other of us, she replaced her pearl-box in her bosom and hurried away." [13]

Frequently she is so agitated that she finds herself on the point of fainting; yet she recovers almost as quickly as she collapses. Although her father had vanished nearly ten years before and for some time she had been aware of his death: "At the short account of her father's death Miss Morstan had turned deadly white, and for a moment I feared that she was about to faint. She rallied, however, on drinking a glass of water which I quietly poured out for her from a Venetian carafe upon the side-table." [14] And as Watson later describes to her the pursuit down the Thames: "She listened with parted lips and shining eyes to my recital of our adventures. When I spoke of the dart which had so narrowly missed us, she turned so white that I feared that she was about to faint. 'It is nothing,' she said as I hastened to pour her out some water. 'I am all right again.' " [15] Note that *again*; these attacks were clearly habitual.

Yet alternating with these extreme vacillations of mood we find an abnormal calm, an indifference, a withdrawal from the world unpleasantly suggestive of schizoprenia. The first sign of this appears in the account of the trip to Sholto's: "She must have been more than woman if she did not feel some uneasiness at the strange enterprise upon which we were embarking, yet her self-control was perfect. . . ." [16] Only a moment after experiencing such a state of excitement that she stood squeezing the hand of a perfect stranger, she exhibited such calm that the Sholto housekeeper exclaimed: "God bless your sweet, calm face!" [17] Let us consider her reaction to the possibility of becoming one of the wealthiest women in England: ". . . she showed no sign of elation at the prospect. On the contrary, she gave a toss of her proud head, as though the matter were one in which she took small interest." [18] She glances at the treasure box: "'Is that the treasure then?' she asked coolly

[13] *Ibid.*
[14] *Ibid.*
[15] *Ibid.*
[16] *Ibid.*
[17] *Ibid.*
[18] *Ibid.*

enough," [19] and when Watson asks if she would like to see it, her behaviour is extraordinary:

> "It would be of the greatest interest to me," she said. There was no eagerness in her voice, however. It had struck her, doubtless, that it might seem ungracious upon her part to be indifferent to a prize which had cost so much to win.
>
> "What a pretty box," she said, stooping over it. "This is Indian work, I suppose?"
>
> * * *
>
> It was absolutely and completely empty.
>
> "The treasure is lost," said Miss Morstan calmly.[20]

Now it must be remembered that Mary Morstan was a governess, hence a member of the teaching profession; and that a teacher could regard the loss of a fortune with utter equanimity is the very clearest evidence of complete insanity.

Indeed, Mary's emotional state was most unstable. There is even some indication that she was capable of flying into violent rages upon little provocation—and this must have rendered Watson's home life most unhappy. She and her friends are courteously welcomed by Sholto, who explains that he is very much of a recluse. With no valid provocation Mary exclaims, "You will excuse me, Mr. Sholto . . . but I am here at your request to learn something which you desire to tell me. It is very late, and I should desire the interview to be as short as possible." [21] This to a man who was about to present her with a fortune!

Let us examine certain of Mary's reactions even more minutely. When she informs Holmes of her father's disappearance, she "put her hand to her throat, and a choking sob cut short the sentence." [22] This is rather excessive emotion to be exhibited by an Englishwoman of the upper classes when speaking of an event which occurred ten years before and of a person she has long believed to be dead. She is subject to similar collapses whenever Captain Morstan's death is mentioned. How else can this be explained save by the existence of a marked Oedipus complex? Furthermore, accomplished and overpowering lover though Watson was, it is almost

[19] *Ibid.*
[20] *Ibid.*
[21] *Ibid.*
[22] *Ibid.*

incredible that he could have progressed as far as this with such a model of Victorian virtue as Mary at only their second meeting:

> Miss Morstan seized my wrist [Observe that here she is the aggressor] . . . Miss Morstan and I stood together, and her hand was in mine. A wondrous subtle thing is love, for here were we two, who had never seen each other before that day, between whom no word or even look of affection had ever passed, and yet now in an hour of trouble our hands instinctively sought for each other. I have marvelled at it since, but at the time it seemed the most natural thing that I should go out to her so, and, as she has often told me, there was in her also the instinct to turn to me for comfort and protection. So we stood hand in hand like two children, and there was peace in our hearts. . . .
>
> "What a strange place!" [23] she said, looking around.[24]

Unquestionably at this point Mary has transferred her father fixation to Watson, and he is now the object of the thwarted sexuality of her Oedipus complex.

And now we must touch upon an even more painful matter. Watson writes of the trip to Sholto's:

> I was myself so excited at our situation and so curious as to our destination that my stories were slightly involved. To this day she declares that I told her one moving anecdote as to how a musket looked into my tent at the dead of night, and how I fired a double-barrelled tiger cub at it.[25]

It is too much for us to believe that such a veteran of crime and love as Watson could become as excited as this over an unusual adventure and a pretty woman. The only tenable explanation is that the poor girl suffered from paranoiac hallucinations. Watson of course later tried to cover up this slip by saying that he told Sholto to take strychnine in large doses as a sedative, but this story is obviously manufactured by Watson to conceal from the reader any indication of Mary's true condition, or by Holmes, who possibly hoped to spare Watson's feelings by furnishing an indirect confirmation of Mary's absurd story.

[23] Incidentally, here we once more have the completely irrelevant remark that is typical of Mary.

[24] *Ibid.*

[25] *Ibid.*

In the light of these poignant facts let us reread Watson's account of his trip with Mary to Mrs. Forrester's home:

> . . . she had borne trouble with a calm face as long as there was someone weaker than herself to support, and I had found her bright and placid by the side of the frightened housekeeper. [Abnormal calm, withdrawal from the world.] In the cab, however, she first turned faint and then burst into a passion of weeping. . . . [Hysteria and emotional instability.] She has told me since that she thought me cold and distant upon that journey. [Hallucinations and thwarted sexuality.] She little guessed the struggle within my breast, or the effort of self-restraint which held me back. . . . She was weak and helpless, shaken in mind and nerve.[26]

"Shaken in mind"—alas what could be plainer!

If any further evidence is required it may be found in Mary's extraordinarily erratic behavior on certain occasions. Only two instances need be noted, for to dwell upon this situation is inexpressibly painful. The first has been the subject of many rather unconvincing speculations by students of Sherlockiana; now it is unhappily clear. No sane woman after several years of married life would refer to her husband as James[27] if his name was John. The second is to be found in the remark by Mary which immediately precedes that unhappy reference. "Now, you must have some wine and water, and sit here comfortably and tell us all about it." Only a manic-depressive with a cycle reaction could suggest such a desecrating concoction as this.

In the few glimpses we get of the Watson *ménage*, we find that Mary is rarely downstairs in her own home. Watson always finds it necessary to go upstairs to break any news to her: "I . . . rushed upstairs to explain the matter to my wife"[28]: "I rushed upstairs, explained the matter shortly to my wife . . ."[29]: "My wife had already gone upstairs. . . ."[30] This haunting of the upper story may indeed be significant.

[26] *Ibid.*
[27] *The Man with the Twisted Lip.*
[28] *The Stockbroker's Clerk.*
[29] *The Adventure of the Engineer's Thumb.*
[30] *The Crooked Man.*

Little need be said of the most compelling evidence in the case, Mary's unexplained absences from home, or Watson's disappearances. In the course of a few years no less than seven [31] times is she away from home or Watson lost to Holmes's ken: and yet we know that she was almost friendless in England when Watson met her! The most satisfactory explanation is that she was making periodic visits to an institution in search of relief and cure. But this must have been fruitless, until at last the Doctor himself withdrew with her into such seclusion that during Holmes's connection with the Von Bork case Watson was not aware that his friend had been absent from England for fully two years! [32]

An observer as highly gifted and trained as Holmes would be expected to recognize the symptoms of eccentricity even before the diagnosis forced itself upon a medical man blinded by infatuation. Thrice Holmes attempted to warn Watson:

> "What a very attractive woman!" I exclaimed. . . .
>
> "Is she?" he said languidly; "I did not observe."
>
> "You really are an automaton . . ." I cried. . . . He smiled gently.
>
> "It is of the first importance," he cried, "not to allow your judgment to be biased by personal qualities. . . . I assure you that the most winning woman I ever knew was hanged for poisoning three little children for their insurance money. . . ."
>
> "In this case, however—"
>
> "I never make exceptions. An exception disproves the rule." [33]

Again in the same adventure Holmes gives out a guarded but futile hint: "'I would not tell them too much!' said Holmes. 'Women are never to be entirely trusted—not the best of them.'" [34] So Mary was not to be trusted in the judgment of a sympathetic but keenly analytic mind.

When Watson finally breaks the news of his engagement, Holmes is unable to conceal his dismay. From his lips is forced a "dismal

[31] Mary's absences: *The Copper Beeches, The Five Orange Pips, The Final Problem.* Watson's separations from Holmes: *The Illustrious Client, The Final Problem, The Adventure of the Blanched Soldier, The Adventure of the Lion's Mane.*

[32] *His Last Bow.*

[33] *The Sign of the Four.*

[34] *Ibid.*

groan." Unconsciously responding to Holmes's distress, Watson speaks, perhaps bitterly, of the "ordeal" of marriage with Mary, a prophetic phrase which ushers in the grievous plight of Watson's later years:

> "Miss Morstan has done me the honour to accept me as a husband in prospective."
>
> He gave a most dismal groan.
>
> "I feared as much," said he. "I really cannot congratulate you."
>
> I was a little hurt.
>
> "Have you any reason to be dissatisfied with my choice?" I asked.
>
> "Not at all. I think she is one of the most charming young ladies I ever met. . . . I should never marry myself, lest I bias my judgment."
>
> "I trust," said I, laughing, "that my judgment may survive the ordeal." [35]

After the marriage, Holmes and Watson drifted apart, but the loyalty of friendship must have urged Holmes to keep a discreet watch on developments. He knew that Mary had had a collapse after *The Sign of the Four:*

> "I trust that Mrs. Watson has entirely recovered from all the little excitements connected with our adventure of the Sign of Four."
>
> "Thank you, we are both very well," said I. . . . [36]

The guarded response, in which Watson directs attention away from Mary by coupling her condition with his, is both obvious and pathetic.

A very significant phrase escapes Watson in *The Adventure of the Empty House.* "In some manner he had learned of my sad bereavement." "A sad bereavement" may be challenging, but the "in some manner" is portentous. What more natural than that Holmes would hear of his friend's trouble if it were of the sort to be recorded by the press, as a death would be? But here is a bereavement which Watson believes unknown, as trouble which perhaps he has been attempting to conceal. But "in some manner" the sensitive ear of Holmes has heard of the tragedy, and the detective has come to offer consolation through a renewal of the old companionship.

[35] *Ibid.*

[36] *The Stockbroker's Clerk.*

One final act of practical assistance Holmes performs: under cover he arranges for Watson to be relieved of the daily routine of medical practice, perhaps to devote himself more fully to the ministration to his wife.[37] It must have been a real sacrifice when Holmes "found the money" to buy Watson's practice for his "distant relative," Dr. Verner.

Close association with an unbalanced mind inevitably aroused Dr. Watson's interest in abnormal psychology. Indeed, it must not be forgotten that Watson introduced to Holmes only two cases, one of which concerned "Colonel Warburton's madness," [38] a clear indication that Watson's practice included some psychiatric cases. It seems probable that he became an authority in this field, certainly recognized by those close to him. Lestrade remarked:

> "It comes more in Dr. Watson's line than ours."
> "Disease?" said I.
> "Madness, anyhow. And a queer madness too." [39]

In the same tale Watson gives a little lecture on "monomania," "the *idée fixe*," hereditary "family injuries," and "modern French psychology," [40] thus appearing to be thoroughly conversant with the contemporary literature in the field.

The conclusions of this paper are naturally distressing to those who have long admired Mary Morstan, but they should be comforted by the thought that Dr. Watson emerges as a devoted husband who gave much of his life and skill to the treatment of his afflicted wife. Nor should it be forgotten that his inquiries into this field of medicine were so influential that a family tradition was established. His older brother, who we know emigrated to America,[41] very possibly founded a line which carried on this tradition, culminating in the school of Behaviorism so splendidly developed by the bearer of that great name, the eminent Dr. John B. Watson of Johns Hopkins University.

[37] *The Adventure of the Norwood Builder.*
[38] *The Adventure of the Engineer's Thumb.*
[39] *The Adventure of the Six Napoleons.*
[40] *Ibid.*
[41] See Bliss Austin, "What Son Was Watson?" in *A Baker Street Four-Wheeler,* The Pamphlet House, 1944. Mr. Austin is mistaken on one point. It was of course the *older* brother who went to America.

SOME MORIARTY-POINCARE CORRESPONDENCE

by GEORGE SIMMONS

THROUGH AN extraordinary and fortunate circumstance, some letters between Professor Moriarty and Henri Poincaré have recently been brought to light. As there is much of great scientific interest in these letters, and as they were written in that period of Moriarty's life when Sherlock Holmes was beginning to draw his toils about the elusive professor, it is entirely fitting that they first be laid before the public eye in the pages of this JOURNAL.

As all educated people know, Henri Poincaré was the most eminent and able among all the theoretical scientists of the last quarter of the nineteenth century. His great powers were exerted with telling effect upon all branches of pure and applied mathematics, as well as much of theoretical physics. When he died in 1912, in his fifty-ninth year and at the height of his powers, he was, in the words of Painlevé, "the living brain of the rational sciences." The singular career of Professor Moriarty needs no comment here.

This series of letters is concerned, for the most part, with one of the central problems of celestial mechanics—the mathematical physics of the heavenly bodies. A bit of explanation is perhaps desirable. Poincaré's first great success in this field emerged from an unsuccessful onslaught which he had launched on the so-called "problem of n bodies." The problem of two bodies was completely solved by Isaac Newton in 1687, with his law of universal gravitation; the problem of three bodies is that dealt with in these letters; and the problem of n bodies is far out of the reach of scientists even

to this day—it is incredibly complicated and deep. But just what it is is easily explained. According to the Newtonian law, two particles of masses m and M, at a distance D apart, attract one another with a force proportional to mM/D^2. Given a configuration of two bodies, that is, their positions and motions, the mathematician is enabled by the force law to predict just what their configuration will be at any given future time. Newton worked this problem out for the case of the earth and the moon in very great detail, and was led thereby to theories which accounted for the tides and their movements, for the fact that one face of the moon is always hidden from the earthly observer, and for large masses of other previously unexplained astronomical data. The problem of three bodies is the same thing for three particles; and according to tradition this was the only problem that ever made Newton's head ache—he did not solve it. Nor is there a solution, in complete generality, to this day. The problem of n bodies thus amounts to asking what the aspect of the entire universe will be at any future time, assuming that it is completely known at a given time.

The letters we have before us deal in part with the efforts of both Poincaré and Moriarty to give a complete solution for the problem of three bodies. They consist of Moriarty's actual letters, copies of those Poincaré wrote in reply, and a bit of communication between Poincaré and Painlevé, once a fine scientist, and later premier of France. These all fell into our hands in rather interesting circumstances.

Poincaré, being a meticulous man, never destroyed a document. On his death his scientific papers were inspected by competent men; but his personal papers fell to his heir, his first and only son. This man took no particular care of the valuable papers in his possession, and finally sold the lot to a Paris junk dealer. The dealer immediately sold them to one of the "artistic millionaires" (I will not mention his name) who at that time were buying up truckloads of the artistic and literary treasures of Europe. And thus they finally found their way into a storage vault in one of the great research libraries in this country, where they rested for thirty years, unknown and undisturbed.

Now for the letters. Readers will recall that in 1891, when Professor Moriarty called personally on Mr. Sherlock Holmes, he drew

a memorandum-book from his pocket and said, "You crossed my path on the fourth of January. On the twenty-third you incommoded me; by the middle of February I was seriously inconvenienced by you; at the end of March I was absolutely hampered in my plans; and now, at the close of April, I find myself placed in such a position through your continual persecution that I am in positive danger of losing my liberty. The situation is becoming an impossible one." A large share of this element will be recognized by the attentive reader in the following exchange of notes.

I: Poincaré to Moriarty

(Poincaré's letters have all been rendered from the original French. In the account of *The Final Problem* Holmes says of Moriarty: "At the age of twenty-one he wrote a treatise upon the binomial theorem, which has had a European vogue." This statement and the following letter combined are most illuminating on this matter. In the first place, the letter makes it clear that the treatise was *not* on the binomial theorem, whose last mysteries were cleared up by N. Abel (*Journal für die Reine und Angewandte Mathematik*, 1826), but on generalized infinite series. Clearly Holmes knew no mathematics. In the second place, the treatise did *not* have a European vogue, for one of the foremost continental masters had not heard of it for fifteen years after it was published. And lastly, it establishes Moriarty's age at about thirty-six years when he encountered Holmes.)

5 January, 1891,
Rue Gay-Lussac,
Paris.

My dear Professor Moriarty,

Your comprehensive treatise on the theory and applications of infinite series has just come to my attention. As it was brought out over fifteen years ago, I must apologize, both to you and to myself, for not having sooner read a work which strikes so at the core of my own labors in mathematical analysis. You are already aware of the extent to which it improves on the whole of the work which Weierstrass has done on the matter; and I am certain that our French co-workers will come to appreciate it as well. The Germans have led the world in our science for long enough. Between us we shall change that.

As soon as I had mastered your treatise I read up on your other works in the minutes of the meetings of the Royal Society. And I perceive that instead of an ever-mounting flow of such admirable work

as might be expected of one of your penetrating originality, your publications are rather few in number, though high in quality. I hope that this has not been occasioned by any troubles or difficulties in your personal life; such promise as yours should be fulfilled. If you are having any such trouble through lack of proper recognition of the breadth and depth of your achievements, be assured that I and my professional friends here will aid you.

Your sincere servant,
Henri Poincaré.

(NOTE: The spirit of large-minded generosity which this letter records was repeated many times in Poincaré's later life; notably, it was he who extended the first hand of recognition to one Albert Einstein, just entering upon his own extraordinary career.)

II: Moriarty to Poincaré

(The first volume to which Moriarty alludes is *The Dynamics of an Asteroid, Vol. I.*)

25 January, 1891
London.

My dear Poincaré,

I was extremely gratified to receive your kind letter in recognition of the few small works for which I have been responsible. The infrequency of my publication in recent years is due largely to efforts which I have been making in another direction. I have, in a sense, been trying to disprove, by constructing a counter-example, a theorem which has long been held to be of complete generality: namely, that it is impossible for a pure scientist to accumulate a satisfactory amount of the world's goods. In short, I have created a business, unique of its kind in the world, and it absorbs much of my energy.

For some time past I have turned my scientific labors toward celestial mechanics; and I am at present preparing a second volume on the subject. Evidently you have not seen my first; but then it had a small printing. This second volume deals largely with the general problem of three bodies. I expect to have the work completed in three or four months. It has turned out to be rather more complex than I had anticipated, but is yielding beautifully to my efforts. Jacobi, poor fellow, was on the wrong track altogether, as it has turned out. A slight alteration in the way of approaching the problem gave me, only last week, the key to its complete solution.

Sincerely,
Moriarty.

III: Poincaré to Moriarty

3 February, 1891
Rue Gay-Lussac,
Paris.

My dear fellow,

What an achievement, this of yours on the three body problem! I have myself been working on it for ten years, but with little success. I have managed to make one or two advances, but have progressed very little towards a general solution.

Two years ago I arrived, under circumstances interesting to the psychologist, at the following theorem: no integral of the restricted problem of three bodies exists (except the Jacobian integral of energy, and integrals equivalent to it), which is of the form Φ=constant. After thinking on the matter almost continuously for three weeks, without arriving at a rigorous proof, I woke one morning after a long dreamless sleep with the entire proof clear in my mind. Whence it came, I do not know. I did not publish this result, hoping to extend it still further; and I did at last manage the extension, which is written up in my forthcoming *Nouv. Méth. de la Méch. Cél.*, I, p. 251—but this at the cost of immense labors. And even then I was not near to our hoped-for result.

You would oblige me greatly by communicating this new method you have found.

Your servant,
Henri Poincaré.

IV: Moriarty to Poincaré

(The fate of the middle portion of this letter was a tragedy of the first magnitude, for it contained the exposition of Moriarty's solution of this classic problem of the three bodies. The circumstances of its loss are related in Poincaré's next letter.)

26 March, 1891,
London.

Dear Poincaré:

I regret this delay in answering yours of two months ago. You see, my business activities have taken up an increasing proportion of my time; and along with this, they have taken a turn for the worse. I have recently been subjected to a series of annoying persecutions by a certain low fellow, who is in a sense a business rival.

But to the matter at hand. I shall try to indicate for you just what it is that I have done. I have taken the most general equations of motion from the three body problem,

$$m_k \ddot{q}_r = -\frac{\partial v}{\partial q_r} \qquad (r=1, \ldots 9)$$

where k is the integral part of $(r+2)/3$, and have subjected them to the following transformations, using a new principle which I shall now enunciate . . .

(It is at the present stage that the letter is broken, many of the middle pages being missing.)

And so you see, by the invention of these new functions, and by a straightforward application of my principle (here we have seen that my principle is itself deducible from strict fundamentals), I have arrived at a complete solution of our little puzzle.

The business worries I spoke of above have so distracted me that I have not yet been able to incorporate this final stage in my work into the treatise. One free week and it will be ready for the press. Whether I shall have that week is at present problematical.

Moriarty.

V: Poincaré to Moriarty

1 May, 1891,
Rue Gay-Lussac,
Paris.

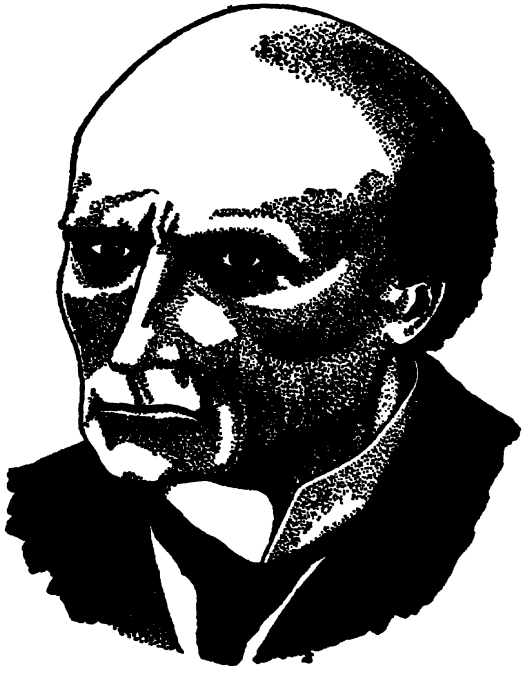
My friend,

Your letter was, as you can well imagine, of the very greatest interest to me. But what seemed simple to you was somewhat hazy to me. I did not immediately comprehend the genesis of your new class of functions. And the unfortunate part for me was that the important parts of your explanation were lost before I could go over them again.

On reading it over first I was so excited that I rushed out to inform Painlevé of what you had done. In my absence the maid brushed part of your letter (the vital part) off my desk into the trashbasket. Before I returned the refuse had been emptied and the manuscripts were lost irretrievably.

I won't presume on your patience by asking for a repeated communication, but will only hope that the week you need to complete your treatise will become available, and the completed work be soon published. I assure you that the scientific world of France will be waiting most eagerly. No finer thing will have been done in our lifetimes. With a work of this sort in hand you must feel strongly, as I do, that a scientist worthy of the name, above all a mathematician, experiences in his work the same impression as an artist does; his pleasure is as great and is of the same nature.

Poincaré.



JAMES MORIARTY, Sc. D.
From a drawing by the Editor of the JOURNAL to illustrate
"A Lauriston Garden of Verses."

VI: Moriarty to Poincaré

(In this interval Moriarty left England in pursuit of Sherlock Holmes. *The Final Problem* gives a graphic account of the circumstances attendant on that departure.)

3 May, 1891,
Leuk.

My dear colleague,

You are no doubt surprised to hear from me at this address. But I have been forced to leave London with more precipitation than I like.

I was sorry to get word of the fate of my letter; and in view of present circumstances it becomes more serious than it might otherwise have been.

The present state of my personal affairs bodes ill for my ever returning to England; the blackguard of whom I spoke, the one who has caused this trouble, has seen to that most effectively.

I wonder if I could impose on your kindness to the extent of asking you to go to my residence in London to do the touch-up work on that final chapter for me. You will find the necessary papers among my scientific manuscripts on the lower shelf in my study. No one but you could complete them for me to my satisfaction.

Moriarty.

VIII: Poincaré to Moriarty

5 May, 1891,
London.

My dear Professor,

The extreme importance of your work to our science prompted me to make the journey to London immediately. I have not yet gone round to your home; so this is merely a note to inform you that I am here.

Poincaré.

VIII: Painlevé to Poincaré

5 May, 1891,
Paris.

Dear Poincaré,

I am extremely eager to learn of the results of this trip of yours to London to look through the papers of this man Moriarty. As soon as you have any definite news as to whether or not his work is genuine and valid, do let me know.

Painlevé.

IX: Poincaré to Painlevé

7 May, 1891,
London.

My dear Painlevé,

It is with a very heavy heart that I undertake to tell you of what has happened here. This man Moriarty, as it has turned out, was a good deal more than we ever imagined. In the phrase of one of the officers of Scotland Yard, he was "the Napoleon of English crime," a great strategic general and overall commander of half the forces of darkness in the continent of Europe. His activities in mathematics and in theoretical physics were the recreations to which he turned after each day's work, which consisted in organizing and executing multitudes of crimes.

When I first went to his home, I found it completely in charge of the official police. All his papers and personal possessions had been impounded. By the time I had obtained the necessary permits, his papers were in such a mess, some having been lost, some having been mixed in storage, that I could find nothing of the work for which I was seeking. Damn this official stupidity and incompetence! I searched long and carefully, and without avail.

It would be too easy to condemn such a man; and perhaps his moral sense was twisted. But he was very great intellectually, and in him we have lost one of the first brains of this century.

Poincaré.

After Sidney Paget, in *The Adventure of the Blue Carbuncle*; The Strand Magazine, February, 1892.

After an original drawing by J. N. Williamson, of The Illustrious Clients of Indianapolis, Ind.

SILAS BROWN, or, WHO SHOT DESBOROUGH'S BOLT?

by CHARLES B. STEPHENS

"Hum!" said Holmes. "Somebody knows something, that is clear."

—SILVER BLAZE

QUITE OBSCURED by the curious incident of the dog in the night-time, there is revealed in *Silver Blaze* a facet of Holmes's character that cautious Watson might have taken pains to conceal had he grasped more fully the significance of the events to which he was a witness. As it is, the record points to the inescapable conclusion that on this occasion, at least, Holmes was not above turning information acquired through his private investigations to his own financial profit. This breach of professional ethics was all the more deplorable for the active part that Holmes played in taking advantage of his client's predicament, and the shabby characterization he accorded to the man on whom he relied to carry off his coup.

That man was Silas Brown, manager of Lord Backwater's training establishment at Mapleton and trainer of Desborough, leading contender to Silver Blaze for the Wessex Cup. Of him Holmes remarked to Watson, "A more perfect compound of the bully, coward, and sneak than Master Silas Brown I have seldom met with." The fact that he subsequently pleaded with Colonel Ross for "amnesty in that direction" is scant recompense for one who had been so grossly maligned. What is the true story of Silver Blaze as it links Holmes with Silas Brown?

Holmes and Watson were flying along in the corner of a first-

class carriage, at fifty-three and a half miles an hour by Holmes's count of the telegraph posts, with Reading far behind, before Holmes thrust his newspapers under the seat, offered Watson his cigar-case, and began his narrative of the facts relating to the disappearance of Silver Blaze as reported in the public press. Among the preliminary observations on the case, he volunteered the seemingly non-essential information that Silas Brown managed Lord Backwater's establishment nearby to King's Pyland, where Silver Blaze had been stabled. Whether he gained this information from the newspaper accounts or from previous personal contact is immaterial; the fact is that he knew the name and mentioned it to Watson several hours before their meeting with Brown after following the tracks of Silver Blaze to the Mapleton stables.

Holmes gave Watson only the sketchiest summary of his interview with Silas Brown, but enough to reassure Watson, at least, that Silver Blaze was safe in Brown's custody. Holmes and Watson returned forthwith to London, and the subsequent events culminating in Silver Blaze's winning of the Wessex Cup are too familiar for repetition or comment. What does demand critical analysis, however, is the chain of unrecorded events that must have transpired in the interval between Holmes's talk with Brown and the running of the race on the following Tuesday, at Winchester.

Why was Holmes so eager to return to London by the night train, just a few hours after he had arrived on the scene? There is no evidence that he was engaged on any other matter that demanded his immediate presence in London. He had solved the murder of John Straker and the disappearance of Silver Blaze. Wearied by the two-hundred-mile rail journey from London and the jog across the moor to Mapleton, we can imagine that Watson was looking forward to a quiet dinner at the Tavistock inn followed by a restful night on one of the beds for which such inns are justly famous. Yet Holmes, forsaking these creature comforts and with no apparent reason for haste, started them back on the long night ride to London, a trip which left Watson so dazed with fatigue that he spoke of the Tuesday of the race as being "four days later" than the Thursday on which they visited Tavistock. Certainly Watson must have been thinking of the cold, gray dawn of the Friday morning on which they alighted from the train at Padding-

ton after what must have seemed like endless hours of riding through the night.

This timing is important in unraveling the mystery of Holmes's desire to return to London. He had information that was useful only if he applied it promptly; it was of such delicacy that its advantage might be lost if he did not move quickly. Only Holmes, Watson, and Brown knew at that time that Silver Blaze would definitely run for the Wessex Cup. If Holmes were to profit from that knowledge, he could not dawdle the night at Tavistock and waste Friday on the return trip. He had to be in London on Friday, or his whole scheme might fail. What game, then, was afoot?

At the beginning of his narrative to Watson, en route to Tavistock on Thursday, Holmes observed that up to the time of his disappearance, Silver Blaze had been first favourite for the Wessex Cup, "the betting being three to one on him," and that "even at those odds enormous sums of money have been laid upon him." The following Tuesday, at Winchester, in answer to Holmes's query as to the betting on Silver Blaze, Colonel Ross replied: "Well, that is the curious part of it. You could have gotten fifteen to one yesterday, but the price has become shorter and shorter, until you can hardly get three to one now." This prompted Holmes to the revealing comment: "Hum! Somebody knows something, that is clear." As the horses went to post, the betting was "five to four against Silver Blaze" and "five to fifteen against Desborough," Lord Backwater's entry.

The race itself reveals a further point of interest, and Watson's brief account is worth quoting in full:

> From our drag we had a superb view as they came up the straight. The six horses were so close together that a carpet could have covered them, but halfway up the yellow of the Mapleton stable showed to the front. Before they reached us, however, Desborough's bolt was shot, and the Colonel's horse, coming away with a rush, passed the post a good six lengths before its rival, the Duke of Balmoral's Iris making a bad third.

The distance being a mile and five furlongs, the least that one can say is that Desborough was ridden with poor judgment to have had his bolt shot so early and so completely that he finished six lengths behind the winner, even if he did put third-place Iris and the rest of the field to shame.

Viewed as objectively as it is possible to approach the Conanical writings, it seems difficult to escape the pattern presented by these events. Having gained a personal dislike for his employer, Colonel Ross, Holmes saw and seized upon an opportunity to turn his information to personal advantage. In his interview with Silas Brown, he quickly outlined the plan, and, over the protest of that worthy, who originally intended only to secrete Silver Blaze until after the running of the Wessex Cup, secured his unwilling cooperation by threat of exposure and possibly the promise of a share in the proceeds.

Briefly, Brown was to keep Silver Blaze in hiding as long as possible while Holmes, dashing down to London by the night train, was to place bets at as long odds as he could possibly get on Silver Blaze. The fact that as late as Monday it was possible to get "fifteen to one" indicates the sort of odds that Holmes had in mind. On Monday, when it would be necessary to move the horses to Winchester, the news could no longer be kept secret, though Colonel Ross, the owner, seemed singularly incapable of finding out whether or not his horse was present for the race. To make doubly certain of the success of the coup, Brown was to instruct Desborough's jockey to run just the sort of race that Watson recorded without grasping its significance.

Because of his employment by Colonel Ross, Holmes of course could not be too closely identified with the wagers made in London. While Watson was sleeping off the effects of the trip to Tavistock, Holmes probably contacted his brother Mycroft, who in his capacity as Fred Porlock could manage such matters with the necessary tact and discretion, no doubt adding a few pounds of his own to the sums provided by his more publicized brother. Holmes, the whiles, had to maintain before Watson the pretense of an acute aversion to Silas Brown, and a contempt for those who might engage in such nefarious machinations. Yet the evidence seems all too clear that it was Holmes, himself, who master-minded the manipulation of the betting odds to his own advantage, in derogation of his obligations to the man who had employed him for the investigation.

Brown's position in the matter was indeed a difficult one. Until he met Holmes at Mapleton, the worst that he had done was to

hide Silver Blaze in his own stables, with intention of turning him loose to find his way back across the moor to King's Pyland too late to run for the Wessex Cup. Certainly there was nothing in that to subject him to criminal prosecution, and he was completely innocent of the murder of John Straker. Holmes's appearance on the scene simply made it apparent that someone other than the Mapleton stable hands knew that Silver Blaze was in their stalls. He could still turn the horse loose and tell Holmes, in explanation, that Silver Blaze had broken away from his grooms and outdistanced them in the pursuit.

What he actually did was at Holmes's personal urging and direction, even though it forced him to violate his own obligation to Lord Backwater. Holmes accused him of knowing the tricks of the horse faker, and among those tricks must have been many that would have incapacitated Silver Blaze from scoring his brilliant six-length victory without too great risk of detection. Yet whatever threats or compulsion Holmes may have used to gain his cooperation and allegiance, Silas Brown proved to be a man of his word, giving Holmes just cause for asking amnesty in recognition of his integrity in this particular instance. Silver Blaze appeared at Winchester in the pink of running condition, Desborough's bolt was conveniently shot shortly past the halfway mark to assure the victory of his rival, and we can only hope that Silas Brown came in for enough of a share of Holmes's winnings on the race to offset the loss of his wagers on his own entry. Perhaps over the cigars in their rooms in Baker Street Holmes may have suggested the name of Silas Brown to Colonel Ross as a worthy successor to the late departed John Straker. If so, it would have been small payment enough for the debt that he owed to Lord Backwater's manager.

No other theory, probable or improbable, fits so neatly the facts recorded by Watson with reference to Holmes's participation in the affair of Silver Blaze. Reluctantly we must conclude that on this occasion Holmes violated his professional obligation to his client, for his own selfish advantage, and in so doing corrupted to his own ends as honest and capable a trainer as ever appeared on the English turf. We can only join with Professor Moriarty in saying: "Dear me, Mr. Holmes, dear me."

THE OLD TIN BOX

by JAY FINLEY CHRIST

In the vaults of Cox was an old tin box
With Watson's name on its lid.
What wouldn't we pay for that box today
And the secret notes there hid?

Old Russian dame, Ricoletti the lame,
The famous aluminum crutch;
For Alicia, the cutter, the parsley in butter,
What *would* you give for such?

Story of Randall, Darlington scandal,
The coptic patriarchs,
The opal tiara, the Addleton barrow—
Dollars? or francs? or marks?

The tale of the pinch of Victor Lynch,
The furniture warehouse mob,
The case at the Hague, the murder at Prague
The powderless Margate job,

The giant rat, the cardinal's hat,
The Patersons (first name Grice),
The cormorant's bill, the Hammerford will—
We'd take 'em at *any* price.

The Phillimore fella who sought an umbrella,
The steamer Friesland (Dutch);
For Col. Carruthers or Atkinson brothers
One *never* could give too much.

The Vatican case and its cameo face,
The slithering, unknown worm,
And Abergavenny were none too many—
Where *is* this Cox's firm?

Oh, wonderful box in the vaults of Cox!
You come with a touch of salt!
But I offer two blocks of choicest stocks
For the treasure of Cox's vault.

THE QUOTABLE HOLMES

by MORRIS ROSENBLUM

AFTER DR. WATSON had mournfully concluded that Sherlock Holmes had been hurled to his death at the falls of Reichenbach, the bereaved doctor penned a terse but eloquent eulogy of "him whom I shall ever regard as the best and wisest man whom I have ever known." [1]

Millions agree with Watson's judgment and they, too, regard Holmes as the wisest man they have ever known or ever will know. However, there exists a group of literary specialists who are not aware of the Sherlockian sapience. These literary gentry, the anthologists of quotations, whose task or rather whose duty it is to know a good quote when they see or hear one and to set it down for the convenient perusal of mankind, have failed to inform the world that in Holmes's words is contained the quintessence of wisdom.

Make a preliminary search through some of the well-known books of quotations [2] and you will be horrified by the omission of the name SHERLOCK HOLMES. There are plenty of sayings attributed to an American namesake, Oliver Wendell Holmes, prob-

[1] *The Final Problem.*

[2] *Putnam's Complete Book of Quotations*, G. P. Putnam's Sons, New York, 1927; edited by W. Gurney Benham: *The Pocket Book of Quotations*, Pocket Books, Inc., New York, 1942; edited by Henry Davidoff: *International Encyclopedia of Prose and Poetry Quotations*, John C. Winston, Philadelphia, 1908; edited by William S. Walsh. I make no mention of H. L. Mencken's collection since it lacks an index of authors.

ably a distant relative[3] of the greater Sherlock from whose conversations he must have gleaned some aphorisms worthy of note.[4] Look up the W's in the index and you will find that the collection of Watsons is a fine one. There is Thomas Watson, the English poet; a William Watson who was alive in 1602; Walter Watson, a weaver and poet of Scotland, all before our time; and later a Sir William Watson of Holmes's time—but never a mention of Dr. John H. Watson! There is even a Sir Francis H. Doyle but no Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, who is often cavalierly listed as the chronicler of the wit and wisdom of Sherlock Holmes.

Continue the search and in one compendium[5] you will come across the name JOHN W. WATSON, once the subject of a paper by Holmes's biographer.[6] This Watson is the author of an old-time favorite:

> Oh! the snow, the beautiful snow
> Filling the sky and the earth below.

Let us digress for a few moments since "these little digressions . . . sometimes prove in the end to have some bearing on the matter."[7] In this case, the digression has a very important bearing on a related matter. How often in searching for the solution to one problem in canonical scholarship do we unwittingly find the key to another! "When you follow two separate chains of thought, Watson, you will find some point of intersection which should approximate the truth."[8]

[3] *Cf.* "Was Sherlock Holmes an American?" by Christopher Morley, in *221B: Studies in Sherlock Holmes*, The Macmillan Co., New York, 1940: "Genealogical Notes on Holmes," by Rufus S. Tucker, in *Profile by Gaslight*, Simon & Schuster, New York, 1944; and "A Connecticut Yankee in Defense of Sir Arthur," by Rolfe Boswell, THE BAKER STREET JOURNAL, Vol. II, p. 119.

[4] Unpublished communication by Christopher Morley, February 22, 1946, "I have always surmised that S.H. was over here at the time of the Centennial; when he went to Boston to call on O.W.H. . . ."

[5] *Hoyt's New Cyclopedia of Practical Quotations*, Funk and Wagnalls, New York, 1922, 1927, 1940.

[6] Or rather of part of a paper. John Whitaker Watson appears in the chapter "Who Wrote These Pieces?" in *Books Alive*, Random House, New York, 1940; by Vincent Starrett. Other Watsons in the quotation books are John Watson, pseudonym of Ian Maclaren, John Broadus Watson and Sydney Watson.

[7] *The Adventure of the Three Garridebs.*

[8] *The Disappearance of Lady Frances Carfax.*

The name of the author of that deathless lyric, given as JOHN W. WATSON in the index, appears in the text as JAMES W. WATSON! Dorothy L. Sayers's explanation of the John-James mystery [9] is ingenious and plausible but "how simple the explanation may be of an affair which at first sight seems to be almost inexplicable." [10]

Once again we must resort to the Sacred Writings. In fact, such is the quotability of Holmes that in his sayings can be found a remark for all occasions and a premise for all arguments. The master himself has averred that "woman's heart and mind are insoluble puzzles to the male." [11] He likewise discovered that "the motives of women are so inscrutable." [12] The feminine confusion of John and James,[13] especially when joined to Watson, is further evidence of women's inscrutability. In the Sacred Writings it was a woman who confounded the two names and in this instance it was a woman also, for the compiler is Kate Louise Roberts!

Other explanations are possible. "One should always look for a possible alternative, and provide against it." [14] There may be a relationship between Celtic, Cornish, Chaldean,[15] and Hebrew roots [16] in which a distant common origin of the names John and James can be traced, a connection unknown to the philologists but apparent to the intuition of women. "The impression of a woman

[9] "Dr. Watson's Christian Name," by Dorothy L. Sayers in *Profile by Gaslight*.

[10] *The Adventure of the Noble Bachelor.*

[11] *The Adventure of the Illustrious Client.*

[12] *The Adventure of the Second Stain.*

[13] *The Man with the Twisted Lip. Cf.* also note on *A Tree Grows in Brooklyn* by Edgar W. Smith in "The Editor's Commonplace Book," BAKER STREET JOURNAL, Vol. I, p. 65. A sidelight on feminine nominal anfractuosity is seen in *The Yellow Face.* Grant and Jack are the same to Mrs. Grant Munro, and no explanation is given.

[14] *The Adventure of Black Peter.*

[15] *The Adventure of the Devil's Foot.*

[16] The criminal-scholar, Eugene Aram, was of course known to Sherlock Holmes, the "walking calendar of crime." Aram assumed this philological connection which was the subject of a prefatory essay on a contemplated *Comparative Lexicon* of English, Greek, Latin, Celtic and Hebrew, and possibly Chaldee, which Aram found easy. A reprint of this essay was in the consignment of books upon philology received by Holmes in Cornwall.

may be more valuable than the conclusion of an analytical reasoner." [17] Surely the answer is to be found also in Holmes's monograph on this branch of philology, or in his brochure for the British Society of Genetics and Psychology, *On Color-Blindedness in Males with Some Notes on an Analogous Characteristic in Females: Their Inability to Differentiate Between John and James.*

Returning to the examination of quotation books, we find that not all compilers have been so remiss as the ones we have mentioned above. Burton E. Stevenson has included one entry for Holmes in the later revisions of his collection.[18] Under the heading of WONDER he has quoted:

> "Wonderful!" I ejaculated.
> "Common-place," said Holmes.

Stevenson characterizes this exchange as "a colloquy in the first Sherlock Holmes tale, and repeated with variations many times in later ones." [19] Editorial traditions undoubtedly compelled Stevenson to list the quotation under A. Conan Doyle without a cross-reference to Holmes or Watson. In addition, there are two non-canonical citations from the same A. C. Doyle, a writer of historical romances, something about a bow that was made in England,[20] and a reference to a dog: "It is the mute dog that bites the hardest." [21] The manner in which the quotation experts slight Holmes is clearly discernible in this choice of a quote on dogs, which shows great ignorance of canine behavior. Did not Holmes in his wisdom discover that the mute dog did not bite at all? [22]

[17] *The Man with the Twisted Lip.*

[18] P. 2209 of *The Home Book of Quotations,* Dodd, Mead & Co., New York, and the Blakiston Company, Philadelphia, 1944 and 1945.

[19] It first appears in *A Study in Scarlet.* To date I have discovered ten variations.

[20] "What of the Bow?" from *The White Company.* Set to music it is often heard on the radio; a favorite among singers like Nelson Eddy.

[21] *Sir Nigel.*

[22] I refer of course to the classic incident in *Silver Blaze.* The anthologist would have done better to have selected that or "A dog reflects the family life," from *The Adventure of the Creeping Man,* or "Dogs don't make mistakes," from *The Adventure of Shoscombe Old Place.*

The tenth edition of *Familiar Quotations* by John Bartlett,[23] a standard favorite for so many years, knew not our Holmes or our Watson. "Some facts should be suppressed, or, at least, a just sense of proportion should be observed in treating them." [24] Thus spake the master, but he never intended that his sayings and saws, his aphorisms and apothegms should be totally suppressed. Much as he disdained public applause,[25] Sherlock Holmes did not want the light of his sparkling jewels of wit to be hidden under a bushel of Bartlett's.[26]

Presumably to make amends, Mr. Christopher Morley, who has some connection with a society whose aim it is to propagate all that is Holmesian, assumed the task of revising Bartlett's, as editor of the eleventh edition in conjunction with Miss Louella D. Everett.[27] Scant justice has been done, however, since there are only six references to Sherlock Holmes, four in quotations and two in footnotes. On the other hand, more than two pages are devoted to the William Watson [28] of our time, and there are more quotations from the works of A. C. Doyle than in any other compendium cited so far. Mr. Morley has included stuff from minor works and obscurities, from *Through the Magic Door, The Athabasca Trail* and *Cremona.* If this be treason, let the Irregulars make the most of it.

Only in one anthology is there an apparent intent to do justice. *The Oxford Dictionary of Quotations* [29] contains the ubiquitous *Song of the Bow* but the rest is silence about Doyle. Instead, there are forty-three passages from the Sacred Writings, thirty-three direct quotations from the sayings of Sherlock Holmes, one in-

[23] Little, Brown & Co., Boston, 1929; edited by Nathan Haskell Dole.

[24] *The Sign of the Four.*

[25] Sacred Writings *passim. Cf. The Adventure of the Norwood Builder* for typical example.

[26] "Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel."—Matthew V, 15.

[27] I have consulted the 1938 and 1945 editions.

[28] This William Watson seems to have hit the fancy of our quotation experts. Stevenson quotes him 85 times. A prolific poet, he lived from 1858 to 1935. He was unlike our Watson; according to Compton-Rickett, he had "little really of the eager, adventurous spirit of the Romantic" . . . "He is at his best as a thinker in verse."

[29] Oxford University Press, London, New York, and Toronto, 1941; edited by Carl Van Doren.

direct,[30] seven coruscations and scintillations by Watson,[31] and two expressions by a pair of other characters in the saga. The collection was edited by the staff of the Oxford University Press, worthy scholars who have compiled a wonderful *florilegium* because they knew where to search for wisdom.

However, they should have gone even further. Perhaps a Moriarty admirer prevented them from continuing along the path they had evidently chosen. Their work must go on undeterred by threats. Almost every remark uttered by Holmes is quotable and applicable to some situation in life or art. Even if a seeker after wisdom were to select only those utterances which satisfy the definitions of quotability laid down by eminent authorities,[32] he could easily find at least one for every day in the year. There lies wide open, it is now evident, a yawning *lacuna* in the field of scholarly research which the present writer has vowed to fill.

"It's every man's business to see justice done." [33] Once again the master is right. Sherlock Holmes deserves a quotation book of his own, a one-man exhibition of his priceless word-pictures. The projected monograph will contain the sayings of Holmes alone: Watson and the visitors to Baker Street must be satisfied with places of honor in an appendix or in a separate compilation.

Thus the snapper-up of considered jewels will possess a treasure-chest from which he can readily select the gems to be displayed on suitable occasions. Thus justice will finally be done to a master of paradox, *pensées, sententiae,* maxims and reflections who has been neglected by those who saw but who did not observe:

THE WISDOM OF SHERLOCK HOLMES
AS REPORTED
BY
JOHN H. WATSON, M.D.

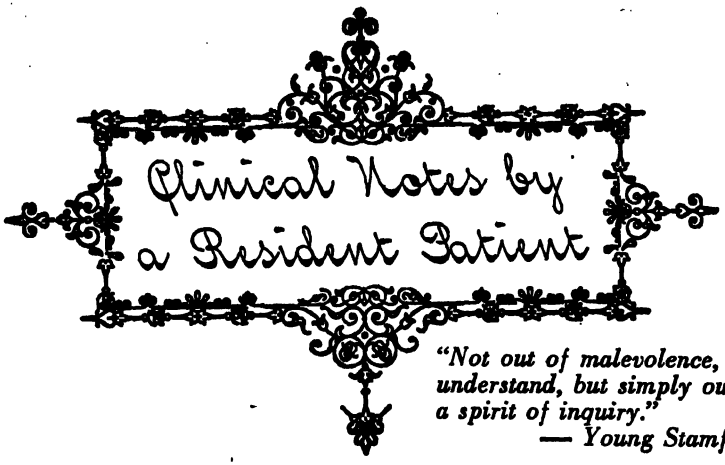
Fiat Justitia, Ruat Coelum.

[30] I refer to "*The* Woman."

[31] Cf. *The Valley of Fear* and *The Adventure of the Missing Three-Quarter.*

[32] *Cf.* introductions by Christopher Morley and Carl Van Doren in *opera citata,* and essay, "Mahomet and the Mousetrap" by Vincent Starrett in *op. cit.*

[33] *The Crooked Man.*



"Not out of malevolence, you understand, but simply out of a spirit of inquiry."
— Young Stamford

by CHRISTOPHER MORLEY

I HAVE BEEN so hilariously amused by *Sherlock Holmes and Music,* which Denis Brogan sent me from Cambridge (Eng.), that I've written to Terence Holliday (Holliday Book Shop, 49 East 49, specializes in English imports) to send one to the editorial office of the JOURNAL for review. It's really comical that (in true British mode) Guy Warrack shews no knowledge whatever of any U. S. Holmesians except Harold Bell, who of course was published in England.

It is hard to forgive Warrack for the note that no one has ever studied S. H. and Music: in *221B: Studies in Sherlock Holmes,* edited by Vincent Starrett and published by Macmillan under the sponsorship of the Baker Street Irregulars, Harvey Officer's essay bore the very title; and the JOURNAL has frequently alluded to the topic, including the problem of the gramophone records.

Mr. Warrack should know that Holmesian scholarship has reached a fairly lively tempo over here—after all, the Baker Street Irregulars were founded in 1934—and it is a little comical to find him suggesting that someone should write about such topics as Holmes the Oinosophist or Oenophilist when that theme was so charmingly dealt with by our learned Edgar Smith some ten years ago.

Chaffing apart, it is a delightful little book.

Mr. J. F. Christ (B. S. J., Vol. II, p. 91) need not be puzzled by absence of reference to any heating, other than the fireplace, at 221B. English lodgings in those days, and most often still, never dreamed of central heating. *Crede experto.*

In regard to the constantly recurring query as to the address 221B, surely it should be pointed out that the "B" probably stood for "bis" (literally meaning *twice*) which was a frequent English identification for a subsidiary address. See for instance Leonard Merrick's genial old story *Conrad in Quest of His Youth* (1903) where one of his chorus girls gives her address thus:

Miss Tattie Lascelles
c/o Madame Hermiance,
42 bis, Great Titchfield Street, W.

Mme. Hermiance ran a laundry on the ground floor, and Miss Tattie had rooms up one flight; probably 17 steps.

Therefore the stickler will remember that Mrs. Hudson's address was 221; it was only the suite occupied by Holmes and Watson that was 221B.

* * *

You may remember two middle-aged gentlemen flying westward at fifty miles an hour, on their way to Boscombe Valley. Or again, in the affair of *Silver Blaze,* "flying along en route for Exeter" at 53½ ditto. ("The telegraph posts are 60 yards apart, and the calculation is a simple one").

Sometimes I have wondered whether Watson had some G. W. R. shares and was trying a little bullish ramp? As a matter of fact the Great Western in those days was famous for lethargy of schedule. I refer you to the classic work *Express Trains, English and Foreign,* by E. Foxwell and T. C. Farrer (Smith, Elder & Co., 1889). This lively compilation, equal in candor and humor (with some vigorous tangents upon North American railroads) speaks particularly of the "timorous conduct" of the G. W. R. management, which "waits dozing till the traffic shall be thrust upon it." In especial of the London-Exeter expresses (Holmes's and Watson's favorites) which averaged 5 hours 20 minutes for a journey of 194 miles. A "discreditable speed," they reckon, of 36½ m.p.h.

* * *

It appears that these trains, even the crack *Dutchman* and *Zulu,*

had to make prolonged "stoppages" which cut their overall average and compelled the calculable celerity between stations. I never realized until studying Foxwell and Farrer that there was bitterness in Holmes's remark: "We lunch at Swindon." They *had* to lunch at Swindon. Our authorities say:

> Inclusive speed of trains on the Great Western is lessened by the obligation to pause ten minutes at Swindon, an obligation from which the refreshment proprietors will not free the company until the year 1940.

How I would love to know whether this 99 year lease, or whatever it was, did actually persist until the savage year 1940! And if so, what ceremonial untrooping of Bath buns was performed in the Swindon Refreshment Rooms?

* * *

Probably ten minutes would have been enough for Holmes and Watson, light lunchers. A cup of tea and a sausage roll. They were both solid breakfastmen, and we know that Watson had been at the morning table as late as 10:15. They left Paddington at 11:15, and should have reached Swindon (1889 timetable) about 12:42.

I believe, subject to correction, that the G. W. R. main line was in those days still broad gauge, which accounts for the roomy perspective of the carriages illustrated in the old Strand Magazine by Sidney Paget. There is still pleasing research to be done on the railway journeys of Holmes and Watson. If one could only find a Bradshaw of about 1890! In these parts it is *introuvable.*

* * *

> It always astounds me, (writes old Stanley Hopkins) that you fellows in yr earnest research do so little among the parallaxes (or paralipomena) of Dr. Watson. For instance Mr. Morley's otherwise lucubrated and well-intended study of *A Study in Scarlet* and *The Sign of the Four.* The first draught of these excellent tales, as also of that worthy fellow Hilton's Shangri-La stuff, was obviously *The Mystery of Cloomber*; which everyone has tried hard to obliterate. Your American publisher R. F. Fenno printed it 'copyright 1895' but that I do not believe. It is a more difficult problem in bibliography than Hawthorne's *Fanshawe* or Poe's *Tamerlane.* When was it written? Very early, I suggest; and unsalable until after the success of Sherlock and Watson. At my age, an old old man as I am, I have no hesitation to say what I think: it is prothonotary stuff.

You will see in it, not only (as Mr. Morley has noticed) the umbilical confusion of James & John, but the Urquelle of the Night-Time, the lurcher dog, and the great Grimpen Mire. What became in *Study in Scarlet* the *second* Afghan War was, in *Cloomber*, the *first* Afghan War. It was a pity, I always thought, that Dorothy Sayers so many years later wrote a story (I forget the title, and even her publisher can't remember it) of mayhem and mortmain in the same county of Wigtown (you will find it in the atlas in SW Scotland) with the fatal Bay of Luce (not Henry) and Stranraer and Kirkmaiden and the Great Hole of Cree. Miss Sayers never even thought to make any acknowledgment; nor did that heavily sponsored man Dr. Watson. Do your members do their collateral reading?

STANLEY HOPKINS, O.B.E.

P.S. If your members were to do a little outside reading, among the things not so easy to acquire (e.g. *Sassassa Valley,* or *Beyond the City,* or *My Friend the Murderer*) or the literary schidzoes such as *Through the Magic Door* (with 16 illustrations) or *A Duet* (which could only be published by a publisher newly married) you would realize how sad it is to be a narrow specialist. Have none of you realized how many corny and lovely things old Watson wrote under another name, so as to avoid the incubus of his (let's be honest) very irritating roommate? I know, as did the Apostles, that the myth outgrows the creator; but I was a competitor of Holmes & he annoyed me. Watson was the greater man. The radio sponsors agreed.

Yrs,

S. HOPKINS

P.S. *bis*:—You will have noticed, or I hope you will, that *The Mystery of Cloomber* is one of Watson's several attempts to rewrite Stevenson's *The Pavilion on the Links*. No one but the often peccant and wrongheaded Mr. Morley seems to have pointed out the persistence of Stevenson in Watson's works (even the name *Branksome* in the Cloomber story is an echo of R.L.S., though only to the initiates). But more important than that, Cloomber is definitely of the pre-neck-and-wrists era. There are two beautiful young heroines; neither of them has a frill of white at those strategic openings. I offer a lace wristlet (a pair of them) to any woman who can find a copy of *The Mystery of Cloomber*. And what became of R. F. Fenno?

S. HOPKINS, O.B.E.

"MANY NATIONS AND THREE SEPARATE CONTINENTS"

An Inquiry into One Aspect of the Life of John H. Watson, M.D.

by BELDEN WIGGLESWORTH

"THERE REMAINS," as Mr. Elmer Davis points out, "the more obscure, perhaps the more sinister problem of the love life of Watson." [1] That this is a fertile field for inquiry is obvious to even the most inexperienced observer, for therein lie, to borrow Mr. Davis's pertinent phrase, "depths of psychological research still unplumbed." In the field of historical criticism and biography the same situation exists. As Dr. Maclaurin, author of *Post Mortem: Essays Historical and Medical,* says: "There were far more whose actions were clearly the result of their state of health; and some of these . . . I have ventured to study from the point of view of the doctor. This point of view appears to have been strangely neglected by historians and others." [2]

We are dealing with a delicate subject, but within the bounds of reason and good taste we shall speak as frankly and as explicitly as possible. What we have to say reflects in no wise on the moral character and the personal integrity of Dr. Watson, who, in the words of Miss Kathleen I. Morrison, was "an English gentleman with all the instincts of honour and chivalry, which is a memorial placed upon the professional class of English society." [3]

[1] "The Emotional Geology of Baker Street," in *221B: Studies in Sherlock Holmes,* The Macmillan Co., New York, 1940.

[2] *Post Mortem: Essays Historical and Medical,* by C. Maclaurin; George H. Doran Co., New York, 1922.

[3] *John H. Watson, M.D.,* by Kathleen I. Morrison, in *Historical Bulletin, Notes and Abstracts Dealing with Medical History,* Vol. 8, No. 1, May 1943.

Let us admit at the outset that Dr. Watson was a great admirer of women. Indeed, we can scarcely do otherwise: "We know," says Mr. H. W. Bell, "from many incidents and remarks scattered through the Stories that he was a keen admirer of the fair sex, and this constant but controlled preoccupation must have been obvious to Holmes." [4] Holmes himself, in *The Adventure of the Second Stain,* remarks with a smile: "Now, Watson, the fair sex is your department." The remark is Holmes's, but the description of the departure of the lovely client: "When the dwindling *frou-frou* of skirts had ended in the slam of the door," is Watson's and Watson's alone. Finally, we have Watson's own modest statement in which he admits to "an experience of women which extends over many nations and three separate continents." [5] Indubitably, Dr. Watson was very much the ladies' man.

Let us go back to the beginning: let us take Dr. Watson at that high moment when he steps across the threshold of history into late Victorian London. On his own admission in *A Study in Scarlet,* he had "naturally gravitated to London, that great cesspool into which all the loungers and idlers of the Empire are irresistibly drained." There he stayed for some time at a private hotel in the Strand, "leading a comfortless, meaningless existence, and spending such money as I had considerably more freely than I ought." Then, fortunately, ensued the momentous meeting with Sherlock Holmes, which in turn led to marriage with Mary Morstan.

What are the facts concerning this marriage? We know, of course, that it was a romantic one, for never was a bachelor more completely bowled over than was Dr. Watson in *The Sign of the Four.* Indeed, it is entirely possible that Dr. Watson and Mary Morstan contracted a secret marriage prior to *The Sign of the Four.* The evidence for this marriage is based on the irrational state, induced by the bottle of Beaune he had had for lunch, in which Watson finds himself when the story opens. "How and when he first met Mary Morstan," says Miss Jane Nightwork, "we do not know; probably in connection with the earlier case when Holmes was 'of some slight service' to her employer, Mrs. Cecil Forrester." [6] How-

[4] *Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson: The Chronology of Their Adventures,* Constable & Co., London, 1932.

[5] *The Sign of the Four.*

[6] "Dr. Watson's Secret," in *221B: Studies in Sherlock Holmes.*

ever, as Mr. Elmer Davis points out, "it is impossible to agree with the view that Watson's first marriage was unusually happy." [7] In less than two years Mrs. Watson's absences from home became increasingly frequent, while Watson himself resumed the partnership with Holmes. Within three years Mrs. Watson's health began to fail, and in a few more years Dr. Watson was a widower, for Mary Morstan Watson, as Mr. S. C. Roberts indicates, "died some time between the summer of 1891 and the spring of 1894." [8] The exact year was, presumably, 1893.

"The evidence for Dr. Watson's second marriage," says Mr. H. W. Bell, "is contained in a few brief sentences in *The Adventure of the Veiled Lodger:* 'One forenoon—it was late in 1896—I received a hurried note from Holmes asking for my attendance'; and: 'Two days later when I called upon my friend . . .' That is all." [9] The second Mrs. Watson, whose identity we do not know, must have been a woman of character and determination, willing to go to extreme lengths to make the marriage a success. She was very likely, as Mr. Elmer Davis suggests, "a woman who knew enough about the first marriage to tell the amorous doctor: 'I don't intend to go through what poor Mary suffered'; or . . . 'I care enough for you to want you to stay at home.'" [10] Alas for her good intentions! Within the year Dr. Watson was once more a widower.

Dr. Watson's third marriage occurred between September, 1902, and the end of the year, for in *The Adventure of the Blanched Soldier,* which took place in January, 1903, Holmes remarks: "The good Watson had at that time deserted me for a wife, the only selfish action which I can recall in our association." Later we shall have more to say concerning this third marriage.

What, then, is the meaning behind these events? The ostensible explanation is given by Watson in the brief survey of his career in *A Study in Scarlet.* To be sure, he had been a physical wreck as the result of having been wounded on the field of battle and of having acquired enteric fever, "that curse of our Indian possessions." On the other hand, the month-long sea voyage in the spring

[7] Davis, *op. cit.*

[8] *Doctor Watson: Prolegomena to the Study of a Biographical Problem, with a Bibliography of Sherlock Holmes,* Faber & Faber, Ltd., London, 1931.

[9] Bell, *op. cit.*

[10] Davis, *op. cit.*

of the year[11] could only have a beneficial effect on a man as ill as Watson makes himself out to be. Yet, for the whole of an English summer and autumn in London Watson was, in Mr. Edgar Smith's perfect phrase, "softening his muscles and hardening his arteries, and certainly spending too much money."[12] It is little wonder that, at a time when his thoughts should have been taking on a healthful tinge, we find him using such a phrase as "London, that great cesspool . . ." Here was an unhappy man whose outlook on life had become morbid, indeed. Mr. Davis was closer, perhaps, to the truth than he knew when he referred to "the more sinister problem of the love life of Watson." In "the constant but controlled preoccupation" with the fair sex lies the key to the solution to this problem, for Dr. Watson was, after his brief but disastrous career of soldiering, the victim of a physical affliction where these matters were concerned. There can be little doubt that such was the case when the facts we have recorded here are considered. First, there was a period of morbid stagnation, momentarily relieved by the meeting and ensuing partnership with Holmes. Then came the romantic and possibly secret marriage with Mary Morstan, which was followed by increasingly frequent absences by both marital partners, the wife's invalidism and, in a few years, her death. The second marriage was catastrophic, for the bride did not even last the year out. Such is our thesis, but for its proof we must seek elsewhere.

The Battle of Maiwand was fought on July 27, 1880, and during its course Watson, as he himself states explicitly, "was struck on the shoulder by a jezail bullet, which shattered the bone and grazed the subclavian artery."[13] In Mr. H. W. Bell's erudite study of the problem,[14] an instance is cited of Dr. Watson's reference in 1887 to "nursing his wounded leg." At another time he refers to himself as "a half-pay officer with a damaged *tendo Achillis*." There is more here than meets the eye, for it would seem that Dr. Watson is deliberately fostering a confusion as to the second wound and its location in the Watsonian anatomy. There is no doubt about

[11] According to the proposed chronology in "The Long Road From Maiwand," by Edgar W. Smith, in *Profile by Gaslight*, Simon & Schuster, New York, 1944.

[12] *Ibid.*

[13] *A Study in Scarlet.*

[14] "Dr. Watson's Wound," in *Baker Street Studies.*

the first wound, for the history of the jezail bullet is a matter of record. Yet Watson, a trained medical man, gives only contradictory evidence when mention is made of the second wound. Mr. James Keddie, Sr., came to the point with succinctness and full emphasis, when he demanded: "WHERE WAS DR. WATSON'S SECOND WOUND?" [15] It is Watson who gives us the clue to the answer in his description of the sequence of events on the stricken field of Maiwand. "I was struck on the shoulder by a jezail bullet," he says, "which shattered the bone and grazed the subclavian artery. I should have fallen into the hands of the murderous Ghazis had it not been for the courage shown by Murray, my orderly, who *threw me across a pack horse* and succeeded in bringing me safely to the British lines." "Safely," as Mr. Keddie points out, "but for the second wound, of which Watson's modesty and delicacy forbade his making mention. A man 'thrown across a pack horse' presents a singularly enticing target. His head and arms hang down one side . . . his legs dangle on the other." The inference is clear, and Watson's actions in connection with his second wound are understandable.

So let us turn our attention to the year 1658, shortly before King Charles II of England came into his own. On March 26th Samuel Pepys, Esq., "underwent a successful operation for the stone." [16] The famous Diary begins, 1659–1660, with the words: "Blessed be God at the end of last year I was in very good health without any sense of my old pain, but upon taking cold." Mr. Pepys was, in fact, cut for a uric acid calculus of the bladder. "Cutting for the stone," as Dr. Maclaurin remarks, "was one of the earliest surgical operations. . . . Hippocrates knew all about it, and the operation is mentioned in that Hippocratic oath according to which some of us endeavour to regulate our lives." [17]

The operation, as Mr. Pepys experienced it, was performed via the perineum, which, necessarily, was operative surgery in one of its more brutal forms. "It remained for the genius of Cheselden," says Dr. Maclaurin, "when Pepys was dead and possibly in Heaven for some twenty years, to devise the operation of lateral lithotomy,

[15] "The Mystery of the Second Wound," in *Profile by Gaslight*.

[16] *The Diary of Samuel Pepys*, edited by Henry B. Wheatley; G. Bell & Sons, Ltd., London; Harcourt and Brace Co., New York, 1924.

[17] Maclaurin, *op. cit.*

one of the greatest advances ever made in surgery. This operation survived practically unchanged until recent times." During the performance of the operation the surgeon was assisted by a retinue of followers, most of whom, it seems, were required to maintain the patient *in situ*. Dr. Maclaurin goes on to give a fairly detailed description of the vivisection perpetrated on the Pepysian *corpus*. "The results," he admits, "in many cases were disastrous." And then he makes this pertinent observation: "Nor does it seem to me impossible that his extraordinary incontinence—he never seems to have been able to resist any female allurement, however coarse—may really have been due to the continued irritation of the old scar in his perineum. There is often a physical condition as the basis for this type of character, and some trifling irritation may make the difference between virtue and concupiscence." With the sequence of events on the field of Maiwand in mind, let us echo Dr. Maclaurin and say of Watson that "his extraordinary incontinence may really have been due to the continued irritation of the old scar in his perineum."

In spite of his unfortunate physical affliction and in spite, too, of his unhappy connubial experiences, Dr. Watson, unlike his seventeenth-century prototype, was ever a seeker after Aphrodite Urania, not Aphrodite Pandemos. His character and his personal integrity are proof thereof. The third marriage was, therefore, inevitable. That this venture was a success, we know; although whether it was because Watson obeyed the dictum of Martin Luther or followed the advice offered by Honoré Balzac to any man contemplating wedlock, we cannot say. The marriage occurred, as we have noted, in September, 1902. That it was a success cannot be doubted, for the simple reason that it stood the test of time. Nearly twelve years later, in *His Last Bow*, we find the proof thereof. After Von Bork has been rendered *hors du combat*, Holmes takes Watson by the shoulders: "But you, Watson," he says, "I've hardly seen you in the light. How have the years used you? You look the same blithe boy as ever." And Watson answers quite simply: "I feel twenty years younger, Holmes."

So there let us leave him, in the words of Mr. S. C. Roberts, "after a varied experience of femininity . . . contentedly anchored in this haven of domesticity." [18]

[18] Roberts, *op. cit.*

THE DATES IN 'THE RED-HEADED LEAGUE"

by DOROTHY L. SAYERS [1]

AMONG THE curious chronological problems encountered by the Sherlock Holmes student, one of the most delicate and fascinating is that of the dates in *The Red-Headed League.* Its difficulties have been most ably set forth by Mr. H. W. Bell in his scholarly and comprehensive study, *Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson.* This work —the first and only attempt to place *all* the cases in chronological order—must inevitably form the basis of all future Holmes-Watson exegesis, and the following statement of the problem is summarised from its pages.

1. Watson says that Jabez Wilson's visit to Baker Street took place on a Saturday in the autumn of 1890. Later on, the day is fixed, by the notice on the door of the League's premises, as October 9th. But October 9th, 1890, was a Thursday.

2. The advertisement shown to Holmes on this occasion is stated by Watson to have appeared in the *Morning Chronicle* of April 27th, "just two months ago." This is incompatible with all the other dates.

[1] Reproduced, with Miss Sayers' permission, from *The Colophon,* Part 17, 1934. The piece is also included in Miss Sayers' new volume of essays, *Unpopular Opinions,* Victor Gollancz, London, 1946.

3. Jabez Wilson says that the advertisement appeared "this day eight weeks," which, reckoning back from 9th October, would bring it to Thursday, 14th August.

4. Wilson also says that the League paid him £4 every Saturday for eight weeks, and that this "cost them two-and-thirty pounds." It is hardly conceivable that Wilson should be mistaken about the money he received. But on the last Saturday ("9th October") the office of the League was closed, and he got no pay. If, therefore, he only worked for eight weeks, he should have received only £28 in all.

Let us now see what we can make of these contradictions. The year 1890 is determined by the original date of publication in the *Strand Magazine* for August 1891 ("One day in the autumn of last year") and by the notice on the League door ("The Red-Headed League is dissolved. Oct. 9, 1890"). The day of the week on which Wilson visited Holmes is also fixed, not merely by Holmes' own statements ("to-day is Saturday"—"to-day being Saturday rather complicates matters"), but also by the fact that, as Mr. Bell points out, "the choice of Saturday was an essential part of the bank-robbers' plot." The visit to Baker Street, the investigation at Wilson's establishment, and the final capture of the criminals all take place within 24 hours (Saturday morning[2] to the early hours of Sunday), so that we are restricted to a Saturday in the autumn of 1890. Since the date "April 27th" is an obvious error, which could not by any stretch of the imagination be called a "day in the autumn" there is no reason to reject the month of October mentioned in the notice. We are therefore obliged to choose between the four Saturdays in October, 1890, which fell on the 4th, 11th, 18th, and 25th respectively.

Mr. Bell, thinking that Dr. Watson may have misread his own figure "4" as a "9," selects October 4th. I emphatically agree that this is the correct date, though I differ from Mr. Bell as to the precise way in which the mistake came about. In my opinion the crucial points of the problem are (a) the surprising error "April

[2] Mr. Bell says "early afternoon"; but Wilson's visit, Holmes' 50 minutes of reflection, and the journey to the City all took place before lunch. Wilson probably arrived about 11 o'clock, coming immediately from Pope's Court, which he had reached at 10 A.M.

27th," and (b) the discrepancy about the money, neither of which anomalies is accounted for in Mr. Bell's commentary. In the following notes I shall hope to show exactly how (a) occurred, and to prove that (b) was no error at all, and thus to establish the date by two independent and mutually supporting lines of reasoning.

1. The date October 4th for Wilson's visit to Holmes is *a priori* the most likely, since, as Mr. Bell remarks, Watson is hardly likely to have mistaken any one of the double figures 11, 18, or 25 for the single figure 9.

2. The advertisement in the *Morning Chronicle* directed the applicants to attend at 7 Pope's Court "on Monday." It was evidently on the very Monday specified in the advertisement that Vincent Spaulding showed the paper to Wilson, since they "put the shutters up" and started for Pope's Court immediately.

3. The wording of the advertisement at first sight suggests that it appeared in the previous Saturday's issue, and this suggestion is supported by Wilson's remark that it appeared "this day *eight weeks*." On examination, however, this will not hold water. If the advertisement appeared on the Saturday, why did Spaulding (who lived on the premises) not show it to Wilson at once? Why should he be reading Saturday's paper on Monday morning? The inference is that the advertisement actually appeared on the Monday. The wording may have been due to carelessness; or the advertisement may have been intended to appear on the Saturday and have been crowded out or arrived too late for insertion on that day.

4. This view is strongly supported by Watson's remark that the advertisement appeared "just *two months* ago." This, if accurate, brings us back to Monday, August 4th. Wilson, no doubt, made the common error of reckoning a month as four weeks, whereas Watson was going correctly by the calendar.

5. Duncan Ross asked Wilson if he could "be ready to-morrow," and he accordingly started work the day following the interview, viz.: Tuesday, August 5th. On the Saturday immediately succeeding, he was paid £4 "for my week's work." Actually, he had only worked five days, but the salary would, no doubt, be reckoned as from the time of his engagement on the Monday, and, in fact, it is clear from the text that this was so.

6. Wilson thus received in all eight payments of £4, viz.: on August 9th, 16th, 23rd, and 30th, and September 6th, 13th, 20th, and 27th, before the League was dissolved on the morning of the *ninth* Saturday, October 4th; these payments making up the correct total of £32.

7. The only difficulties which now remain are the two incorrect dates given in the text: (a) April 27th as the date of the advertisement, and (b) October 9th as the date of the dissolution of the League.

a. This is patently absurd, and suggests the error of a not-too-intelligent compositor at work upon a crabbed manuscript. Watson was a doctor, and his writing was therefore probably illegible at the best of times; moreover, he may have written his dates in a contracted form and used, in addition, a J pen in a poor state of repair. The adjoined pair of figures show how easily "Augst 4" might be mistaken, under these conditions, for "April 27." In this way, the

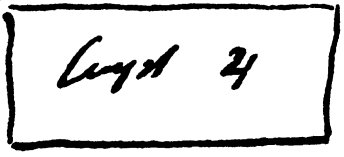


Figure 1. Dr. Watson's suggested method of writing "August (Augst) 4." Note the loopless "g", ill-formed "s" and uncrossed "t"; also the preliminary flourish to the left-hand stroke of the "4."

very error itself provides independent testimony that August 4th was the actual date of the advertisement, since it is difficult to see how any of the other dates in August (11, 18, 25) [3] could have been mistaken for 27, while the Saturday dates have already been shown to be impossible. But if August 4th was the date of the advertisement, then October 4th must have been the date of Wilson's visit to Holmes; thus the two conclusions are mutually checked and

[3] Any one of these dates would throw the date of the dissolution of the League forward to a double-figure date (Oct. 11, 18, 25) which could not readily be mistaken for a "9." August 25th is open to the further objection that Watson (as is clearly proved by Mr. Bell in an interesting study of *The Sign of Four* shortly to appear) wrote his "5" rather like a "6," without the cross-bar, so that it certainly could not have resembled a "7."

confirmed. No other system of dating accounts *either* for the error "April 27th" *or* for the £32, whereas the present hypothesis accounts reasonably for *both* and is the only one that will do so.

b. If we accept this explanation of "April 27th," we are confronted with a slight difficulty about the second error: "Oct. 9th" for "Oct. 4th" in the notice pinned on the League door. Could Watson write the figure "4" in two such dissimilar ways that it could be misread, on the one occasion as "27" and on another occa-

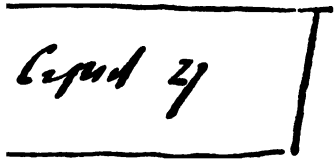


Figure 2. Dr. Watson's suggested method of writing "April 27." Note the loopless "r" and the undotted

sion as "9"? It seems possible that, in this instance, Watson himself carelessly misread the handwriting of Duncan Ross on the notice-card. Ross may have written his "4" in some such form as is shown in Fig. 3, and Watson, hurriedly espying the inscription, either then or later, when he came to compile his story, may have written down what he thought he saw, without troubling to verify the date by the calendar.

It is, in any case, abundantly clear that the good doctor did not at any time carefully revise his proofs, and it may be (as Mr. T. S.

Figure 3. Ross's suggested method of writing the figure "4."

Blakeney suggests in *Sherlock Holmes: Fact or Fiction?*, that he was especially vague and distrait when writing this story, owing to "the (presumed) death of Holmes shortly before, which evidently hit Watson hard." Had he read his proofs with any attention he

could not possibly have passed the blatant absurdity of "April 27th."[4]

Having now shown that October 4th and August 4th are almost certainly the correct dates for Wilson's visits to Holmes and to Pope's Court respectively, we find ourselves face to face with a very remarkable corollary, namely, that the Monday on which the advertisement appeared in the *Morning Chronicle*, and on which Wilson entered upon his engagement with the Red-Headed League, was August Bank Holiday. This appears, at a first glance, to be most improbable. However, in Holmes' own words, "I ought to know by this time that when a fact appears to be opposed to a long train of deductions it invariably proves to be capable of bearing some other interpretation." And, in fact, when we examine the text in detail, we shall find the strongest corroborative evidence in favour of Bank Holiday.

Let us begin by examining the nature of Jabez Wilson's business and the geography of Saxe-Coburg Square (or Coburg Square; there seems to be some doubt as to the precise title, due also, no doubt, to Watson's slip-shod method of jotting down his notes).

The first thing we observe is that Wilson describes his establishment as "a small pawn-broker's business." Now, pawn-broking is usually carried on in connection with a shop of some kind, having a window in which unredeemed pledges are displayed for sale. But there is no mention of either shop or window[5] in connection with Jabez Wilson's pawn-broking, and it is, in fact, quite evident from the text that nothing of the kind existed. On p. 42 (reference is to Murray's Omnibus Edition of the Short Stories) Holmes says, "To-day is Saturday," and, after a brief interval of contemplation, turns to Watson with the words, "Put on your hat and come." It is before lunch (p. 43), and therefore all the shops would be open, and cer-

[4] Students may object that Mr. Bell has discovered another occasion (*The Man with the Twisted Lip*) on which Watson read his own "4" as a "9" (Bell, p. 66). But I am inclined to think that here Mr. Bell's second suggestion may be the correct one, and that Watson simply wrote "Ju. 19th," forgetting that this abbreviation might stand either for June or for July.

[5] It is true that the *Strand Magazine* artist depicts the establishment with a window which appears to be intended for a shop-window, but no goods are displayed there. In any case, the evidence of the illustrations is only to be accepted with caution. See Mr. Bell's section on *The Musgrave Ritual* (p. 14).

tainly were open, for we read on p. 44 of "the immense stream of commerce" and the footpaths "black with the hurrying swarm of pedestrians." This was *after* the visit to Wilson's, so that we may conclude that, if Wilson had had a shop, it should have been open when Holmes and Watson called.

This being so, if Holmes wanted to see the shop-assistant, Vincent Spaulding, in a casual way, without arousing suspicion, what should we expect him to do? Surely, to walk straight in and enquire the price of some object in the window. (True, in such a case, the knees of Spaulding's trousers, which Holmes particularly wanted to examine, might have been concealed by the counter, but that difficulty could readily have been overcome by requesting him to bring the object forward into the light of the doorway). But it seems clear that no such opportunity presented itself. The place was only "announced" by "three gilt balls and a brown board." There was no shop and no window, and Holmes was thus obliged to fall back upon knocking at the door of the house, and, on having it opened to him, putting forward an unconvincing enquiry about the way to the Strand, which could have been put with far more propriety at the tobacconist's, the little newspaper shop or the Vegetarian Restaurant.

So far, so good. There was no shop; and we must suppose that the business was a money-lending business and nothing more, unredeemed pledges being presumably disposed of by private arrangement with other secondhand establishments.

Let us now go back to the events of Monday, 4th August, the day on which Wilson and Spaulding answered the advertisement.

We are told that, on this occasion, Vincent Spaulding "came down into the office." This, to begin with, supports the conclusion that the business was carried on in an office and not in a shop. Where, then, did Spaulding come "down" from? Certainly not from the shop, if such had existed (for any shop or place of public business would be on the ground floor), unless we suppose the "office" to have been in the basement, which seems scarcely reasonable. If, then, Spaulding came "down" to the office, it was either from a bedroom or living-room on an upper floor, or else from some upper room used for the storage of goods. If he came from a living-room or (*a fortiori*) from a bedroom, then he was idling while his employer

worked, and, with so exceptionally diligent a young man, how could that have happened at any other time than a public holiday? (I shall come presently to the nature of Jabez Wilson's work in the office.) If, on the other hand, Spaulding came "down" from a storeroom, it is quite possible that he was engaged in putting away and inventorying the goods deposited there—a very suitable occupation for a day on which no regular business was being transacted. Actually, I am inclined to think that he was thus employed,[6] since on p. 33 Wilson states that Spaulding "was very glad to have a holiday," thus suggesting that he would, in the ordinary course of events, have expected to work on that particular day.

Jabez Wilson, in the office, was undoubtedly at work—and upon what? It appears very likely that both he and Spaulding were engaged in storing, valuing and otherwise dealing with pledges deposited on the previous Saturday, and booking up the various transactions completed on that day. Thursday and Friday, as we know, were normally Wilson's busiest days, but Saturday, being pay-day, is the day on which pledges are most frequently redeemed, and pawn-brokers always keep open to a late hour on Saturdays. This means that a good deal of business would be left to be carried over, on Monday, from the day-book to the ledger. In addition, if the Monday was a Bank Holiday, there would also be a number of thriftless people who had actually pawned goods on the Saturday so as to get extra money for their week-end pleasuring. Thus we get a mental picture of Spaulding engaged (or supposed to be engaged) in stock-taking upstairs, while his employer is at work on the books in the office, both taking advantage of the public holiday to set their house in order. It is also quite conceivable that they would not be averse from doing a little money-lending even on a Bank Holiday morning. What was there to prevent the man who had squandered his wages in the public-house on the Saturday and Sunday from sending his wife round to knock discreetly at the front door on Monday, bringing the Family Bible or the flat-irons in a modest paper parcel?

[6] At the moment when he came down he was presumed to have been reading the paper, but this need only mean that he had knocked off work for a few minutes. Perhaps it was the regular time for his "elevenses." He would not, of course, get the paper till Wilson had finished with it.

But now we come to a very important point. When Spaulding had shown Jabez Wilson the paper, he was instructed to "put up the shutters for the day and come right away"; after which Wilson adds, "so we shut the business up." Immediately we ask ourselves: If there was no shop-window, to what shutters does this refer? Why should any shutters be put up at all? If this was an ordinary week-day, with the "girl of fourteen" at home and working about the house, what imaginable reason could there be for putting up the shutters, which (in the absence of a shop), could only be the shutters of the "office" or the dwelling rooms? The point is puzzling, in any case; but the most reasonable answer seems to be this: That it was Bank Holiday, that the girl had been given the day off, and that the shutters were put up on the ground floor, first, to indicate to any caller that there was nobody to answer the door, and, secondly, as a measure of protection for the money in the office safe, which could not, of course, have been paid in to the Bank either on the Saturday evening, the Sunday or the Bank Holiday morning. In short, the shutters were put up because the house was empty, and the expression "we shut the business up" probably merely means that the work upon the books, etc., was discontinued.

The next passage to be considered is the description of the journey to Pope's Court. It is noticeable that no mention is made anywhere of open shops or of the ordinary City traffic. On the contrary, it is distinctly asserted that "Fleet Street was choked" with red-headed folk, and that Pope's Court was packed "like a coster's orange-barrow." This was in 1890, not in 1934. Even today, it would be difficult to find enough permanently unemployed red-headed men in London [7] to "choke" Fleet Street on a working day; in 1890, it would have been impossible. Therefore, if all these men were able to leave their work to answer an advertisement, it must have been because Bank Holiday had already released them. And can we suppose that so serious a dislocation of the traffic as the "choking" of Fleet Street would imply could have been permitted on a working-day without police interference? Evidently there was no attempt at the formation of an orderly queue outside the League premises, since Spaulding was permitted to "push, pull and butt" his way

[7] The advertisement had only appeared that morning, and there was no time for applicants to come in from the provinces.

through the crowd; yet we hear of no protest from the occupiers of other premises in Pope's Court. It is evident that no business was being carried on that day in the City; the day was a Monday; therefore the day was Bank Holiday Monday. This unusual date was, doubtless, expressly chosen so that neither Wilson nor Spaulding should have any pressing reason for staying in Saxe-Coburg Square. We must remember that it was important, from the conspirators' point of view, that *both* men should be free to attend at Pope's Court, not merely so as to avoid delay and error in getting hold of the right Jabez Wilson, but also so that Spaulding[8] should be at hand to influence his employer's decision by offering to attend to the business in his absence.

It is, no doubt, odd that Wilson should not have mentioned to Holmes that the interview took place on Bank Holiday; but in his flustered state of mind the fact had probably slipped his memory, nor was there any reason why he should attach special importance to it. It may, perhaps, be a small corroborative point that he waited until the morning following the interview before effecting the purchase of a penny bottle of ink, a quill pen and seven sheets of foolscap. True, he was in low spirits on the Monday evening, but, on the other hand, he had returned from Pope's Court in a state of joyful excitement, and Spaulding might well have suggested the immediate purchase of the stationery, had any shops been open at the time. I do not, however, insist upon this. The most interesting and suggestive point in the narrative is, I submit, the absence of a shop-window combined with the putting up of the shutters. It will be noticed, by the way, that the shutters were "put up for the day," although (until he saw the crowds) Wilson could have had no reason to suppose that the interview would occupy more than a couple of hours at most. Evidently he had determined to make a day of it in any case; and this adds further weight to the argument for Bank Holiday.

[8] Spaulding would, indeed, miss a few hours of valuable time from his tunnelling work under the empty Bank, but this would be considered of minor importance, compared with the necessity of carrying through the plot to get Wilson out of the way.

NOTE ON DR. WATSON'S HANDWRITING

The only document we possess, purporting to be in the handwriting of Dr. Watson, is the sketch-map which illustrates the adventure of *The Priory School*.[9] It bears his name in block letters at the right-hand bottom corner, and presents at first sight an aspect of authenticity. The wording is clear, and the letters, on the whole, neatly formed, though five out of the ten small "i"s are undotted, the small "r" is loopless and tends to degenerate into a single stroke, the capital "E" resembles a "C," and there are variations in the forms of the capitals "R" and "T". In any case, whoever executed this wording would, of course, be taking particular pains to make it legible and suitable for reproduction as a line-block, and it probably is very unlike the same person's hand when writing ordinary ms. or notes.

But is the writing necessarily that of Dr. Watson? In *The Naval Treaty* we find a sketch-plan in exactly the same handwriting, purporting to have been drawn by Percy Phelps. In *The Golden Pince-Nez* the identical handwriting again makes its appearance, masquerading this time as that of Stanley Hopkins.

It is possible, of course, that Watson himself re-drew the two last-mentioned sketches for the blockmaker, though, since he evidently had access to Holmes' collection of original documents (e.g., the letter reproduced in *The Reigate Squires*) there is no obvious reason why he should have done so. It may be urged that at the time of *The Naval Treaty* (1888) he was married and not living in Baker Street; but this does not apply to *The Golden Pince-Nez*, which belongs to 1894, the year of Holmes' return.

The probability is that all three of the plans—hurriedly executed on scraps of paper—reached the blockmaker in a crumpled and dirty condition unsuitable for reproduction, and were re-drawn by him from the originals. Or, since the same artist illustrated the whole series of stories, from the *Adventures* to the *Return*, he may have done the re-drawing.

The letter in *The Reigate Squires* is in a different category. The exact reproduction of the original handwritings was essential, and, although we know that it was badly crumpled during Holmes'

[9] *Strand Magazine*, Feb. 1904.

struggle with Alec Cunningham, it was, of course, carefully ironed out and preserved as an important piece of evidence in the case; the blockmaker had to do his best with it.

It is a very curious thing that the handwriting on the blotting-paper in *The Missing Three-Quarter* should also bear a suspicious resemblance to that of this ubiquitous calligrapher. It is supposed, on this occasion, to be the autograph of Godfrey Staunton, written on a telegraph form with "a broad-pointed quill pen," and blotted with "thin" post-office blotting-paper. For a document produced under these conditions, it is remarkably legible, and the ink has spread very little.

Finally, in the definitive ("Omnibus") edition of 1928, the signature "John H. Watson" has been omitted from the map of the Priory School. This cannot be without significance. Watson doubtless felt its presence to be misleading, and had it excised from the block as a tacit admission that neither sketch nor writing was from his own hand.

LA LIGA DE LOS CABEZAS ROJAS

In the JOURNAL *for April, 1946, there appeared the first of a promised series of foreign-language renderings of the original tales, carefully chosen from among those which have happily found their way into the public domain. On that occasion* A Scandal in Bohemia, *done into French by an anonymous Gallic devotee, was offered to the reader in the hope that the practice would be given a welcome warranting its continuance. The welcome extended was, by the record, enthusiastic.*

Here, for those who would see how their Watson reads in the tongue of Cervantes, is The Red-Headed League *in a translation by Adolfo Bioy Casares and Jorge Luis Borges, from a volume entitled* Los Mejores Cuentos Policiales, *published in Buenos Aires in 1943 by Emecé Editores, S. A. The selection of this particular version out of the many available was made by Anthony Boucher, whose guest-conducting of the Bibliographical Notes in this issue testifies to his complete authority in the area of Holmesiana Hispanica.*

"The anthology from which this translation is taken," Mr. Boucher writes, "is an unusually admirable one, tasteful in its selection and distinguished in its translations. The credit goes to the two editor-translators, Adolfo Bioy Casares and Jorge Luis Borges, both notable Argentinian men of letters. Bioy has published various short stories and novels, including some artistic tales of murder; Borges is noted as a poet and poetry-anthologist and as a creator of off-trail fictions, among them two of the subtlest and most imaginative crime stories in any language; and the two have collaborated, under the pseudonym of H. Bustos Domecq, to produce a unique volume of satiric detective stories, peculiarly Argentinian, called Seis Problemas para Don Isidro Parodi. *Almost alone among a multitude of hacks, they have in their anthology provided the Spanish reading public with foreign whodunits in intelligently literate form. Your attention is particularly called to their handling of Holmes's reference to 'the very simple problem presented by Miss Mary Sutherland.' Fearing the allusion might be lost on the unindoctrinated, they have replaced it by 'el sencillísimo problema del laberinto extraviado' ('the very simple problem of the mislaid labyrinth')—surely one of the finest of the Untold Adventures."*

Un día del último otoño fuí a visitar a mi amigo Mr. Sherlock Holmes, y lo hallé conversando con un señor ya entrado en años, muy corpulento, muy colorado, de fogoso cabello rojo. Balbuceando una excusa, empecé a retirarme; Holmes se levantó, me hizo entrar en el cuarto y cerró la puerta.

—No puedes llegar más a tiempo, Watson— dijo cordialmente.

—Creí que estabas ocupado.

—Lo estoy. Muchísimo.

—Entonces, te espero en el cuarto de al lado.

—De ningún modo. Mr. Wilson, este caballero ha sido mi colaborador en muchos problemas difíciles. Sin duda, podrá ayudarnos en este caso.

El señor de pelo rojo se incorporó e hizo un torpe saludo, con una tímida mirada interrogativa.

—Siéntate en el sofá—dijo Holmes—. Sé que compartes mi pasión por lo extravagante y lo misterioso. Lo has demostrado por la paciencia que tuviste al historiar y, si me permites, al retocar, tantas de mis pequeñas aventuras.

—Siempre me han apasionado tus casos— observé.

—Recordarás que el otro día, antes de examinar el sencillísimo problema del laberinto extraviado, observé que la realidad es más compleja que la ficción.

—Afirmación que me atreví a poner en duda.

—No tardarás en aceptarla. Aquí está el señor Jabez Wilson, que ha tenido la gentileza de consultarme y que ha iniciado un relato que promete ser de los más extraños que hemos oído. Hemos dicho alguna vez que las circunstancias más extraordinarias suelen presentarse en aquellos casos en que el crimen es pequeño, o no existe. Por ahora me es imposible afirmar si en este caso hay crimen, pero los hechos son los más singulares que han llegado a mi conocimiento. ¿Quiere tener la bondad, señor Wilson, de recomenzar el relato? No se lo pido tan sólo porque mi amigo el señor Watson no ha escuchado el principio, sino para no perder el menor detalle. Generalmente, ante un resumen de los hechos, puedo guiarme por los centenares de casos análogos que acuden a mi memoria. En este caso, me veo obligado a admitir que los hechos narrados por usted no tienen precedentes.

El ponderoso cliente hinchó el pecho con alguna soberbia y extrajo del bolsillo interior del sobretodo un diario sucio y arrugado. Lo colocó sobre las rodillas y, resoplando, recorrió con la vista las columnas de anuncios. Yo entonces procuré imitar los procedimientos analíticos de mi camarada. De poco me valió aquel estudio. El señor tenía todas las agra-

vantes de un vulgar comerciante inglés: obeso, pomposo, lento. Usaba unos anchos pantalones a cuadros, levita negra no demasiado limpia, chaleco grisáceo, una pesada y charra cadena y un agujereado rectángulo de metal, colgado como adorno. En una silla estaban un viejo sombrero de copa y un abrigo pardo con un cuello de terciopelo. Por más que lo miré nada extraordinario ví en él, salvo la vívida cabeza roja y la amargura del semblante.

Sherlock Holmes, con su habitual sagacidad, había sorprendido mis intenciones, y me miró sonriendo.

—Salvo el hecho evidente de que ha residido en la China, que se ha dedicado alguna vez a trabajos manuales, que es francmasón, que toma rapé y que recientemente ha escrito mucho, mada más puedo deducir.

Wilson se incorporó sobresaltado, con el índice en el diario, pero con los ojos fijos en mi compañero.

—¿Cómo ha averiguado todo eso, Mr. Holmes? ¿Cómo ha sabido usted, por ejemplo, que he hecho trabajos manuales? Es cierto como la luz del día; de joven fuí carpintero de abordo.

—Sus manos, señor. Su mano derecha es visiblemente mayor que la izquierda. Ha trabajado con ella, y los músculos están más desarrollados.

—Bueno ¿el rapé, entonces, y la masonería?

—No ofenderé su perspicacia explicándole cómo deduje eso, ya que infringiendo las estrictas leyes de la orden, usa usted un alfiler de corbata con el compás y el arco.

—Claro. Me había olvidado. Pero ¿cómo sabe que he escrito mucho?

—¿Qué otra cosa pueden significar esa manga derecha tan lustrosa, y la izquierda gastada cerca del codo, donde la apoya en la mesa?

—¿Y la China?

—Ese tatuaje de un pez, en la muñeca derecha, sólo puede haber sido hecho en la China. He hecho un pequeño estudio sobre los tatuajes y he contribuído a la literatura del tema. Ese tenue rosado de las escamas, es privativo de la China. Cuando, además, veo una moneda china en la cadena de su reloj, el asunto se aclara singularmente.

El señor Jabez Wilson se rió con ganas.

—¡Tiene gracia! Al principio creí que se trataba de algo ingenioso; ahora veo que no tiene nada de particular.

—Me parece, Watson—dijo Sherlock Holmes—, que hice mal en dar explicaciones. 'Omne ignotum pro magnifico', recordarás, y mi pobre fama naufragará si soy tan desprevenido.

—¿No encuentra el aviso, señor Wilson?

—Sí, aquí lo tengo—respondió, indicando, con su grueso índice colorado, la mitad de una columna—. Aquí está.

Tomé el periódico y leí lo siguiente:
"A la Liga de los Cabezas Rojas:

Cumpliendo con las disposiciones testamentarias del finado Ezekiah Hopkins, de Lèbanon, Pennsylvania, U. S. A., se anuncia otro puesto vacante que permite a un miembro de la Liga cobrar cuatro libras semanales, por una tarea mínima. Todos los hombres mayores de edad, que a la completa salud corporal y espiritual reúnan la virtud indispensable de tener el pelo rojo, pueden presentarse mañana lunes, a las once, al señor Duncan Roth, en las oficinas de la Liga, 7, Pope's-court, Fleet-street."

—¿Qué quiere decir esto?— exclamé, después de releer la tan extraordinaria declaración.

—Sale de lo trivial, ¿no es cierto?—dijo Sherlock Holmes—. Y ahora, señor Wilson, empiece de nuevo. Háblenos de usted, de su casa, y de los cambios que este aviso produjo en su destino. Anote primero, doctor Watson, el nombre del diario y la fecha.

—Es "La Crónica Matutina" del 27 de abril de 1890. Hace justo dos meses.

—Muy bien. Prosiga, señor Wilson.

—Como le decía, Mr. Sherlock Holmes—dijo Jabez Wilson secándose la frente—, tengo en Coburg-square, cerca de la City, una pequeña casa de préstamos. No es un gran negocio; en estos últimos años me ha dado lo necesario para vivir, nada más. Tuve que despedir a uno de los dos dependientes que tenia, y hasta hubiera tenido que despedir al otro, si no fuera porque este excelente muchacho se conformó con la mitad del sueldo, para aprender el oficio.

—¿Cómo se llama ese joven tan servicial?— preguntó Sherlock Holmes.

—Se llama Vincent Spaulding, y no es tan joven. Es difícil adivinar su edad. Es un empleado modelo; trabaja como pocos y podría ganar en cualquier parte bastante más de lo que yo puedo darle. Pero, si él está satisfecho, ¿a qué meterle ideas en la cabeza?

—Es verdad. Tiene usted mucha suerte. No es un caso habitual. Su dependiente me parece tan extraordinario como su aviso.

—Tiene sus defectos, también— admitió el señor Wilson—. No he visto una pasión igual por la fotografía. Fastidiando con una máquina, en vez de trabajar; metiéndose en el sótano, como un conejo en la madriguera, para revelar sus fotografías. Este es su peor defecto, pero, en general, es muy trabajador.

—¿Sigue con usted, me imagino?

—Sí, señor. Él y una muchacha de catorce años, que me hace la comida y limpia el negocio. No hay nadie más en la casa. Soy viudo y no tengo

familia. Vivimos con modestia, los tres, sin que nos falte el pan de cada día y sin deber a nadie un penique. Lo primero que nos inquietó fué este aviso. Hace dos meses entró Spaulding con este mismo diario en la mano y dijo:

—"¡Ojalá, señor Wilson, yo fuera un hombre de pelo rojo!"

—"¿Por qué?"— le pregunté.

Me contestó:

—"Aquí se anuncia otra vacante en La Liga de los Cabezas Rojas. Es una lotería para el hombre que la consigue. Hay más vacantes que candidatos, y los albaceas no saben qué hacer con el dinero. ¡Ah, si yo pudiera teñirme sin que se notara!"

Yo le pregunté de qué se trataba. Como usted comprenderá, Mr. Holmes, yo soy muy casero, y como los asuntos me llegaban sin que yo fuera a ellos, a veces me pasaba las semanas sin salir a la calle. No estoy muy informado de lo que sucede en el mundo y agradezco cualquier noticia.

—"¿No oyó hablar nunca de La Liga de los Cabezas Rojas?"— me preguntó azorado.

—"Nunca."

—"Bueno, me asombra, porque usted puede optar a una de las vacantes."

—"¿Y qué producen?"— pregunté.

—"Sólo unas doscientas libras por año, pero el trabajo es liviano y deja tiempo libre para otras tareas."

Yo paré la oreja, porque hace tiempo que anda mal el negocio.

—"Explíqueme bien"— le dije a Spaulding.

—"Como puede ver usted mismo—me respondió—, el fundador de la Liga fué un millonario americano bastante excéntrico. Ezekiah Hopkins. Era de pelo colorado y simpatizaba muchísimo con todos los de pelo colorado. Al morirse, se supo que había dejado toda su fortuna en manos de albaceas que tenían el encargo de facilitar puestos cómodos a hombres de pelo rojo. Por lo que tengo oído—continuó Spaulding—el sueldo es bueno y hay muy poco trabajo."

—"Pero—le dije—habrá millones de candidatos de pelo rojo."

—"No crea que son tantos— respondió. —Está limitado a londinenses mayores de edad. Este americano empezó en Londres y ha querido no ser ingrato. También se dice que es inútil presentarse si uno tiene el pelo de un color rojo claro o demasiado obscuro, o de cualquier color que no sea un rojo furioso. Si usted se presentara, señor Wilson, tendría el puesto seguro; pero tal vez no le convenga incomodarse por unos pocos centenares de libras."

Como ustedes ven, caballeros, mi pelo es de una tonalidad muy intensa y pensé que, si había un certamen, nadie tendría más probabilidades que yo. Vincent Spaulding parecía tan enterado que le ordené que bajara las cortinas del negocio y me acompañara. Estaba encantado de tener un día de asueto. Cerramos el negocio y nos encaminamos a la dirección que daba el periódico.

No espero ver un espectáculo igual, Mr. Holmes. Del sur, del norte, del oeste, del este, todos los hombres con un matiz rojizo en el pelo habían venido a la ciudad para contestar al aviso. Fleet-street estaba abarrotada y Pope's-court parecía un depósito de naranjas. Nunca hubiera creído que había tantas personas de pelo rojo. Había de todos los tonos, desde el paja hasta el limón, desde el naranja al ladrillo, desde el arcilla al hígado; pero muy pocos tenían este color mío: rojo ardiente.

Si hubiera ido solo, viendo el gran número de mis rivales, me vuelvo a casa sin hablar con nadie. Pero Spaulding se opuso. No sé cómo demonios se las arregló; el caso es que, a fuerza de codazos, empujones y disputas, atravesamos la muchedumbre y llegamos a la escalera que conducía a la oficina. Una doble corriente la llenaba: una ascendente de los esperanzados y otra descendente de los no elegidos. Pronto llegamos.

—La experiencia ha sido bastante divertida— observó Holmes, mientras su cliente se detuvo para refrescar la memoria con una narigada de rapé—. Por favor, continúe su interesante relato.

—No había en la oficina más que un par de sillas de madera y una mesa de pino detrás de la cual estaba sentado un hombrecillo con un pelo mucho más rojo que el mío. Dirigía unas pocas palabras a cada candidato y siempre encontraba algún motivo de repulsa. Con esto aumentó mi desconfianza. No parecía tan fácil llenar la vacante; sin embargo, cuando llegó nuestro turno el hombrecillo se mostró más benévolo y cerró la puerta para hablar privadamente.

—"Le presento al señor Jabez Wilson—dijo mi dependiente—, que desea entrar en la Liga."

—"Y que parece reunir las condiciones necesarias—contestó el otro—. No recuerdo haber visto color más hermoso."

Dió un paso atrás, inclinó hacia un lado la cabeza, y contempló la mía con una atención molesta. De pronto se adelantó, me estrechó la mano y me dió la enhorabuena con gran entusiasmo.

—"No sería justo titubear—dijo—. Permítame, sin embargo, tomar precauciones. . . ."

Con las dos manos me tiró del pelo con tal fuerza que grité de dolor.

—"¡Bien!"— exclamó satisfecho—. "Sus ojos llenos de lágrimas me prueban que no hay trampa. No tengo más remedio que ser cauto; dos

veces nos han engañado con pelucas y una con tinturas."

Se adelantó al balcón y gritó con todas las fuerzas de sus pulmones que la vacante se había llenado. Un rumor de desencanto subió hasta nosotros y la multitud se dispersó en todas direcciones hasta que sólo quedaron dos cabezas rojas: la mía y la del examinador.

—"Mi nombre—dijo—Duncan Ross, y soy uno de los beneficiados por las disposiciones de nuestro noble protector. ¿Es casado, señor Wilson? ¿Tiene familia?"

—"No la tengo"— contesté.

Su rostro se oscureció.

—"¡Dios mío!"—dijo gravemente—. ¡Esto es serio! Uno de los fines de la sociedad es el de perpetuar la especie de los pelirrojos tanto como el de mantenerlos. Es una desgracia que usted sea soltero."

Entonces fuí yo el que me inmuté, señor Holmes, porque pensé que me quedaría sin la vacante; pero después de pensarlo unos minutos dijo que se arreglaría.

—"En otro caso la objeción sería fatal, pero teniendo en cuenta lo extraordinario de la cabellera, haremos una excepción. ¿Cuándo podrá entrar en funciones?"

—"No sabría, pues tengo un negocio"— dije.

—"¡Oh! No se preocupe—dijo Spaulding—; trataré de reemplazarlo en lo posible."

—"¿A qué horas tendré que venir?"— pregunté.

—"De diez a dos."

Bueno; debo advertirle, señor Holmes, que las casas de empeño trabajan más por la tarde, excepto jueves y viernes (vísperas de cobro), que hay trabajo todo el día; me venía muy bien ganar algo de mañana. Además, sabía que mi dependiente era un buen hombre y que se desempeñaría a satisfacción.

—"De acuerdo—dije—. ¿Y el sueldo?"

—"Cuatro libras semanales."

—"¿Y el trabajo?"

—"Puramente nominal."

—"¿A qué llama usted nominal?"

—"Bueno, tiene que estar en la oficina, o al menos en el edificio, esas horas, sin salir para nada. En caso de no cumplir este requisito, de abandonar la oficina con cualquier pretexto, pierde su empleo."

—"Son sólo cuatro horas diarias y no tengo por qué salir"— dije.

—"Ninguna excusa es válida—dijo el señor Duncan Ross—; ni enfermedad, ni negocios, ni nada. Tiene que quedarse o perder el empleo."

—"¿Y qué tendré que hacer?"

—"Copiar la Enciclopedia Británica. Ahí está el primer tomo. Tiene que traer su tinta, plumas y papel secante. Nosotros le damos esta mesa y la silla. ¿Empezará mañana?"

—"Por supuesto"— contesté.

"—Entonces, adiós, señor Wilson, y permítame felicitarlo de nuevo por el importante cargo que ha tenido la suerte de ganar."

Me acompañó hasta la puerta y volví a casa tan contento con mi buena suerte, que no sabía qué hacer ni qué decir.

Después de varias horas, aún no sabía lo que me pasaba. Confieso que el extraño destino despertó mis sospechas de si aquello sería alguna treta para alejarme de mi casa o para perjudicar a alguien. Parecía increíble que existiera semejante testamento y que pagaran tan bien por algo tan sencillo como copiar la Enciclopedia Británica. Vicente Spaulding hizo lo que pudo para animarme, pero al acostarme estaba resuelto á no volver a Fleet-street. Sin embargo, cuando me desperté, a la mañana siguiente, resolví comprar un frasquito de tinta, unas plumas, papel y hacer mi entrada en Pope's-court.

Con satisfacción comprobé que no había nada anormal. La mesa estaba lista, el señor Ross me estaba esperando; entregándome el primer tomo de la Enciclopedia, me indicó que empezara a copiar la letra A, y se fué. Volvía de cuando en cuando a ver cómo iba. A las dos, al despedirnos, me felicitó por lo mucho que había escrito y cerró la puerta de la oficina cuando salí.

Esto se repitió día tras día y los sábados el jefe me entregaba las cuatro libras estipuladas. Poco a poco, la vigilancia del señor Ross se hizo menos severa, hasta que cesó del todo. Pero yo no me movía de mi puesto, temiendo que una imprudencia me hiciera perder aquella excelente entrada que tan bien me venía. Ocho semanas pasaron así y no había escrito sobre Arcos, Armaduras, Arquitectura y muchas cosas, y esperaba pasar pronto a la B. Algo había gastado en papel y tenía un estante casi lleno con mis escritos cuando el negocio se vino abajo.

—¿Abajo?

—Sí, señor. Hoy mismo fuí a mi trabajo a las diez, como de costumbre, pero encontré la puerta cerrada con un cartelito clavado. Helo aquí; puede leerlo.

Era un pedazo de cartón blanco del tamaño de una hoja de anotador. Decía así:

La Liga de los Cabezas Rojas
Disuelta
Oct. 9, 1890

Sherlock Holmes y yo miramos instintiva y simultáneamente al pres-

tamista y al ver su cara compungida y pensar en la parte cómica del asunto, soltamos la carcajada.

—No veo nada de risible en mi situación— exclamó colérico Wilson, enrojeciendo hasta las raíces de su pelo llameante—. Si no encuentran nada mejor que reírse de mí, será mejor que me vaya.

—No, no— gritó Holmes, obligándolo a sentarse de nuevo—. No quiero perder este caso por nada; es tan extraordinario. . . . Pero, discúlpeme: le encuentro algo gracioso. Dígame, ¿qué hizo al encontrarse con el cartelito?

—Me quedé asombrado. Llamé a las casas vecinas, pregunté a los porteros, a los guardias; nadie me supo dar razón. Por último, me dirigí al propietario, que es contador y vive en el piso bajo, y le pregunté si me podía decir lo que había sucedido con la liga de los pelirrojos. Dijo que nunca había oído hablar de semejante asociación. Entonces le pregunté quién era el señor Duncan Ross, y me contestó que nunca había oído su nombre.

—"Bueno—le dije—, el inquilino del No. 4."

—"¡Ah! ¿El hombre del pelo colorado?"

—"Sí."

—"Se llama William Morris y es abogado. Alquiló el cuarto provisoriamente, mientras terminaban el arreglo de su estudio. Se mudó ayer."

—"¿Sabe sus señas?"

—"Aquí están: King Edward street 17, cerca de San Pablo."

Salí corriendo, pero en esas señas había una fábrica de rodilleras de goma y nadie había oído hablar del señor Morris o del señor Ross.

—¿Y qué hizo entonces?— preguntó Holmes.

—Volví a casa y pedí consejos a mi dependiente. Me dijo que tal vez me escribirían, pero esto no es bastante, y recordando su fama y los casos que prueban su talento y sagacidad, me decidí a venir, pedirle un consejo y rogarle que se interese por mí.

—Bien hecho—contestó Holmes—. Su caso es uno de los más extraordinarios que se me han presentado y lo estudiaré con mucho gusto. Por lo que ya me ha dicho me temo se trate de algo grave.

—Gravísimo— dijo Jabez Wilson. . . . —Pierdo cuatro libras semanales.

—En lo que le concierne, señor Wilson— declaró el señor Holmes—, no creo que tiene nada de qué quejarse; al contrario, ha ganado unas treinta libras, sin mencionar los conocimientos adquiridos en lo que atañe a la letra A. No ha perdido nada con la Liga.

—No, señor; pero quiero informarme quiénes son y qué fines tiene esta broma. Y por qué se han gastado treinta y dos libras.

—Ya lo sabremos. Por lo pronto necesito saber cuánto tiempo ha tenido usted a ese dependiente que le mostró el aviso.

—Un mes.

—¿Cómo se presentó?

—Respondiendo a un aviso mío.

—¿Fué el único en presentarse?

—No; vinieron una docena, por lo menos.

—¿Por qué lo eligió?

—Porque era competente y barato.

—¿Se quedó por la mitad de sueldo que los otros?

—Sí.

—¿Puede describirme a Vincent Spaulding?

—Es un hombre bajo y fornido; ágil de movimientos, lampiño, de unos treinta años. Tiene una cicatriz causada, al parecer, por algún ácido.

Holmes se levantó muy excitado.

—Lo imaginaba—dijo—. ¿No se ha fijado si tiene las orejas agujeradas?

—Si, señor; me dijo que una gitana se las agujeró cuando niño.

—¡Hum!— dijo Holmes, preocupado—. ¿Está siempre con usted?

—¡Oh, sí! Acabo de dejarlo.

—¿Y ha atendido bien el negocio durante su ausencia?

—No tengo queja, señor. Además, hay poco que hacer de mañana.

—Está bien, señor Wilson. En uno o dos días le daré mi opinión. Hoy es sábado; espero decirle algo concreto el lunes.

—Watson— dijo Holmes cuando hubo partido nuestro visitante—, ¿qué piensa usted?

—Nada— contesté con franqueza—. Es un asunto más que misterioso.

—Por regla general, las cosas son menos misteriosas de lo que parecen. Debo resolver el caso rápidamente.

—¿Qué piensa hacer, entonces?— pregunté.

—Fumar. Necesito por lo menos tres pipas para resolver este problema.

Se acurrucó en el sillón y levantó las rodillas hasta la barba, de tal suerte que, con su nariz de águila, con sus ojos brillantes, parecía un extraño pájaro de rapiña. De sus labios pendía la pipa y poco a poco una azul humareda invadía la habitación. Empezaba a dormitar cuando mi amigo dió un salto, tiró la pipa, me puso las manos en los hombros y dijo:

—Esta tarde toca Sarasate en Saint-James' hall. Vamos ¿puede abandonar sus pacientes un par de horas?

—No tengo nada que hacer hoy. Mi clientela no es muy absorbente.

—Entonces tome su sombrero. Pasaremos por la City y almorzaremos en cualquier parte. El programa es casi todo de música alemana, más de

mi agrado que la francesa o la italiana. Es introspectiva: lo que necesito. Vamos.

El subterráneo nos llevó en pocos minutos a Aldersgate; y de allí anduvimos a pie hasta Saxe-Coburg Square, lugar donde habita el señor Wilson. Es un pequeño barrio pobre, de casas de ladrillo, con una especie de jardín de árboles raquíticos y flores agostadas por el ambiente corrompido del carbón. Un cartel obscuro con "Jabez Wilson" escrito en letras blancas y tres bolas doradas, nos indicó la casa en que nuestro pelirrojo tenía su negocio. Sherlock Holmes se detuvo en frente, con la cabeza inclinada, y examinó con atención la casa y alrededores, con ojos brillantes. Caminó lentamente por la acera y volvió a la esquina. Golpeó el suelo con el bastón, llegó a la puerta y golpeó con los nudillos. Un hombre bajo, completamente afeitado, apareció en el umbral y nos invitó a entrar.

—Gracias— dijo Holmes—; sólo deseaba saber cuál es el camino más corto hasta el Strand.

—La tercera calle a la derecha y luego la cuarta a la izquierda— dijo secamente el empleado, cerrando de golpe la puerta.

—Es el mismo— dijo Holmes cuando nos alejamos—. No conozco en Londres ningún pícaro que se le pueda igualar en talento y audacia.

—Me dí cuenta que las señas pedidas no ha sido más que un pretexto para verlo.

—A él no.

—¿A quién, entonces?

—A las rodilleras de su pantalón.

—¿Y qué vió?

—Lo que esperaba.

—¿Y por qué golpeó el suelo?

—Mi querido doctor, éste es el momento de observar, no de explicar. Somos espías en país enemigo. Sabemos algo de Saxe-Coburg Square. Exploraremos lo que hay detrás.

La calle en que estábamos hacía un gran contraste con la anterior. Era una de tantas arterias por donde converge el tráfico del norte y del oeste. Allí silencio, tristeza, paz; aquí ruido, trajín, ir y venir de carros, de camiones, aceras llenas de gente, tiendas colmadas de mercancías.

—Veamos, Watson— dijo Holmes abarcando con su mirada todos los pequeños comercios que como buen londinense conocía bien—; hemos trabajado; nos hemos ganado la comida y una taza de café, y ahora a la tierra de la música, donde todo es dulzura, delicadeza y armonía, y donde no hay problemas, ni cabezas coloradas.

Mi amigo era no sólo un amante de la música, sino un prodigioso eje-

cutante y hasta inspirado compositor. Si hubiera dudado alguna vez de estas disposiciones, habríame bastado verle aquella tarde en Saint-James' hall, absorto, con la mirada vaga y con una leve y mística sonrisa en sus delgados labios.

Sin embargo, acostumbrado a sus idiosincrasias, y sabiendo que en momentos en que uno lo creía inactivo analizaba hechos, pesaba conjeturas y planeaba medios de ataque, de manera que la reflexión aparecía como instinto y pasaba por acción repentina lo que era meditado obrar; conociendo todo esto, repito, compadecí al dependiente de Wilson; la red cruel e irrompible se iba ciñendo a su rededor.

—Tendrá que irse a su casa, ¿verdad doctor?— me dijo al salir del concierto.

Sería mejor.

—Y yo tengo mucho que hacer. Este asunto de Coburg-Square es serio. Creo que estamos a tiempo para conjurarlo. El que hoy sea sábado complica las cosas. Necesitaré su ayuda esta noche.

—¿A qué hora?

—A las diez.

—Estaré a las diez en Baker street.

—Bueno, y no deje de traer el revólver.

Se despidió agitando la mano y desapareció entre el gentío.

Eran las nueve y cuarto cuando salí de casa; atravesé el Parque y Oxford street hasta Baker street. A la puerta esperaban dos carruajes. Al subir oí las voces de varias personas. Cuando entré al cuarto de Holmes, éste conversaba animadamente con dos individuos. Uno de ellos era Peter Jones, el conocido agente de policía, y el otro, alto y delgado, de rostro patibulario y extraña indumentaria, me era desconocido.

—Ya estamos todos—dijo Holmes cuando me vió, y abotonándose la chaqueta verdosa tomó del perchero su morral—. Creo, Watson, que conoces a Jones, de Scotland Yard. Te presentaré al señor Merryweather, que será nuestro compañero de aventuras.

—Ya ve, querido doctor— repuso Jones sonriendo—, que vamos de caza. El señor Merryweather es un excelente sabueso; en cuanto a mí, no suelo quedarme atrás.

—Con todo— murmuró lúgubremente Merryweather—, me parece que vamos a dar un paso en falso.

—Tiene que tener fe en el señor Holmes— dijo el agente poniéndose serio—. El señor Holmes tiene métodos propios, que son, si me permite decirlo, un poco teóricos y bastante fantásticos, pero tiene la pasta del policía y se engaña muy rara vez.

—No digo que no— asintió el otro—, pero por primera vez en veinti-

siéte años falto a mi partida de whist.

—No tendrá por qué arrepentirse— intervino Holmes—, porque en la partida de esta noche se ganará, señor Merryweather, treinta mil libras, y usted, querido Jones, el hombre a quien hace tiempo quiere echar el guante.

—Ya lo creo; nada menos que el célebre John Clay, ladrón, asesino, falsificador y no sé cuántas cosas más. Es un joven notable. Su abuelo era un duque, y él se ha educado en Eton y Oxford. Su cerebro es tan hábil como sus manos, y aunque encontramos sus huellas en muchas partes y hace tiempo lo perseguimos, nunca hemos podido pescarlo.

—Espero presentárselo esta noche. He tenido uno o dos asuntos con John Clay; convengo con usted que, en su profesión, no tiene igual. Ya son más de las diez; tomen el primer coche; Watson y yo los seguimos en el segundo.

Durante el camino, Holmes no abrió la boca, limitándose a tararear entre dientes algunas piezas oídas aquella tarde. Atravesamos un infinito laberinto de calles obscuras hasta desembocar en Farringdon street.

—Ya estamas cerca— dijo mi amigo—. Este Merryweather es un director de banco, sin ningún interés personal. He pensado que Jones debía acompañarnos. No es malo, aunque en su profesión es un perfecto imbécil. Tiene una virtud positiva. La bravura de un bulldog y la tenacidad de un cangrejo cuando clava sus garras. Ya llegamos; nos esperan.

Los dos coches se detuvieron en la misma calle donde estuvimos aquella mañana. Los despedimos, y el señor Merryweather nos guió por un pasillo sombrío hasta una puerta de servicio que, al abrirse, dejó ver otro corredor y una puerta de hierro. La abrió y bajamos por una escalera de caracol hasta dar con una verja maciza. El señor Merryweather se detuvo a encender una linterna, que nos alumbró por un sombrío y húmedo corredor, y después de abrir una tercera puerta nos hallamos en un sótano o bóveda atestada de cajas de valores.

—Esto no es muy vulnerable por arriba— dijo Holmes, levantando la linterna y mirando a su alrededor.

—Ni por abajo— dijo el señor Merryweather, golpeando sobre las banderas que alfombraban el piso—. ¿Qué pasa? Parece hueco— dijo todo sorprendido.

Holmes le rogó que se sentara en una caja y, con su lupa y la linterna, empezó a examinar los intersticios de las piedras. Unos pocos segundos bastaron. Se paró satisfecho, guardó la lupa en el bolsillo y dijo:

—Tenemos una hora por delante; no se atreverán a hacer nada hasta que esté dormido ese buen prestamista. Entonces no perderán ni un minuto, porque cuanto antes concluyan más tiempo tendrán para la

huída. Estamos, doctor, como ya lo habrán adivinado, en los sótanos de uno de los principales bancos de Londres. El señor Merryweather, presidente del directorio, le explicará por qué los más audaces criminales de Londres tienen tanto interés, en estos momentos, en este lugar.

—Este es el depósito de nuestro oro francés; un empréstito de unos treinta mil napoleones que hemos hecho al Banco de Francia. Estamos intranquilos porque hemos recibido anónimos, previniéndonos que se intenta dar un golpe.

—Es para estarlo— añadió Holmes—. Dentro de poco empezarán las hostilidades, y es preciso que no nos tomen desprevenidos. Por favor, hay que apagar la linterna.

—¿Y nos vamos a quedar a oscuras?— gimió Merryweather.

—Es necesario. El menor rayo de luz podría comprometerlo todo. Además, debemos tomar posiciones, porque, a pesar de tener sobre ellos la ventaja de la sorpresa, se trata de gente peligrosa. Yo me colocaré detrás de esta caja; tú, Watson, ahí con el revólver listo a disparar sin lástima si te atacan. Aquí, a mi lado, señor Merryweather.

Yo coloqué mi revólver sobre la caja detrás de la que me ocultaba; Holmes nos mantuvo en la oscuridad, pero con la linterna preparada para alumbrar en el momento necesario.

—¿Y, Jones, cumplió mi encargo?— murmuró Holmes.

—Sí; pierda cuidado. He puestò tres agentes en la puerta de la tienda.

—Entonces no tenemos más que guardar silencio y esperar.

Los minutos se me hacían siglos; las sienes me latían con fuerza; sentía estremecimientos; abría los ojos, queriendo taladrar las tinieblas. Al cabo de unos minutos aprendí a distinguir la respiración ruidosa de Jones del débil aletear de Merryweather y del suave y tranquilo respirar de Holmes.

De pronto apareció un rayo de luz en el suelo, entre la unión de dos piedras, para desaparecer en seguida. Un momento después, sin ruido, sin violencia alguna, el rayo se ensanchó y apareció una mano fina y blanca, una mano de mujer, que se agitó un momento y desapareció, quedando sólo la cinta luminosa. Una de las losas se levantó con leve rumor, apareció un boquete y surgió la luz de una linterna y con ella la cara de un joven pálido; después las manos que se afianzaron para ayudar la salida del cuerpo, los hombros, los brazos, el busto, una pierna, la otra. Ya completamente fuera, se inclinó sobre el agujero y hundió el brazo en él murmurando:

—Arriba; todo va bien.

En el agujero apareció una cabeza de cabellos rojos. Un grito de angustia resonó entre los cofres.

—¡Socorro, Archibald, socorro!

Sherlock Holmes había salido de su escondite y agarrado al intruso por el cuello. La cabeza roja había desaparecido rápidamente. Un instante brilló el cañón de un revólver, pero un puñetazo de Holmes lo hizo rodar por el suelo.

—Es inútil, querido John Clay— dijo Holmes suavemente—; no hay nada que hacer.

—Ya lo veo— contestó el otro con la mayor sangre fría—. Por suerte se salvó mi amigo.

—Tampoco; hay tres hombres esperándolo en la puerta.

—¿De veras? Parece que usted ha sabido hacer las cosas. Lo felicito.

—Y yo a usted—contestó Holmes—. Revela ingenio y novedad la invención de las cabezas rojas.

El bandido se inclinó ceremoniosamente.

—¡Basta de tonterías!— exclamó Jones brutalmente—. Vengan las manos para ponerle estas pulseras.

—Le ruego que no me toque con sus manos sucias— replicó nuestro prisionero, mientras las esposas se cerraban sobre sus muñecas—. Tal vez ignoren que tengo sangre real en mis venas. Tenga la bondad de no olvidar el tratamiento.

—En ese caso— contestó irónicamente Jones—, ¿desea Vuestra Alteza subir donde podamos conseguir un coche para llevarlo a la policía?

—Será mejor— repuso Clay alegremente. Nos saludó con una aristocrática inclinación de cabeza y echó a andar tranquilamente custodiado por el policía.

—Realmente, señor Holmes— dijo Merryweather mientras seguíamos a la pareja—, no sé cómo el banco podrá agradecerle. No queda duda que ha detenido y hecho fracasar del modo más rotundo el robo más audaz que conozco.

—La satisfacción de haber llevado a cabo esta pesquisa única y de haber arreglado un par de cuentas pendientes con John Clay, me compensan de todo— dijo Holmes.

A la mañana siguiente, sentados Holmes y yo ante unos vasos de whiskey and soda, charlábamos acerca de lo ocurrido, y Sherlock, con su verbo fácil, me explicó cómo llegó a descubrir los proyectos de Clay.

—Ya te habrás dado cuenta que el famoso anuncio de la asociación de los Cabezas Rojas y la copia de la Enciclopedia no tenían más objeto que alejar de su casa al prestamista por unas horas cada día. Sin duda fué una ingeniosa ocurrencia de Clay, sugerida por el color de pelo de su cómplice. El incitante cebo de las cuatro libras semanales, ¿qué era para ellos que esperaban miles? Desde que vi que el dependiente de Wilson se

conformaba con trabajar a mitad de sueldo, comprendí que debía tener un motivo importante para hacerlo.

—Pero, ¿cómo adivinaste el motivo?

—Si hubiera habido mujeres en la casa hubiera pensado en una intriga amorosa, pero como no había ninguna pensé en un robo, aunque el modesto capital del señor Wilson no justificaba los gastos tan crecidos y los peligros que corrían el falso testamentario de Hopkins y el dependiente Spaulding. Pensando y cavilando, me fijé en la absorbente afición de éste a la fotografía y en las largas horas que pasaba encerrado en la cueva. En seguida comprendí que se trataba de un hombre vivo y que aquellas encerronas debían tener por objeto agujerear las paredes que comunicaban con alguna casa vecina. Recuerda que te propuse pasar por delante de la tienda del prestamista y que allí golpeé el suelo con mi bastón; lo hice para calcular hacia qué lado correspondían los sótanos. Luego llamé a la puerta y al salir el dependiente miré sus pantalones antes que su cara. Si hubieras hecho lo mismo, habrías visto que el pantalón manchado y rozado en las rodillas revelaba un trabajo continuo y misterioso.

Para saber cuál era este trabajo, di vuelta a la calle, y vi que un banco importante estaba pegado a la casa de Wilson. Con esto ya tuve bastante; avisé a Jones, de Scotland Yard y al presidente del Directorio, señor Merryweather, y los tres en compañía del Dr. Watson los sorprendimos infraganti.

—Bueno, ¿pero cómo sabías que anoche mismo iban a dar el golpe?

—Muy sencillo. El cierre de la oficina y la disolución de la Sociedad demostraban que el túnel estaba concluído y que debían usarlo en seguida para no arriesgarse a ser descubiertos, y siendo ayer sábado, tenían dos días para escapar.

—Es asombroso, exclamé; no ha fallado ni un eslabón de cadena tan larga.

—Me ha servido de entretenimiento, contestó Holmes bostezando. Estos pequeños problemas me ayudan. Mi vida no es más que un eterno esfuerzo contra la monotonía. Soy el eterno aburrido.

—Y un bienhechor de la humanidad, añadí. Holmes se encogió de hombros. Bueno, quizá sirva de algo, dijo. "L'homme c'est rien, l'oeuvre c'est tout" escribió Flaubert a Jorge San en cierta ocasión.

THE QUASI-FINAL PROBLEM

by EDGAR W. SMITH

The time had come, the Master said, to gather in the nets he'd spread
To snare the swarming villains who were plundering the town:
Among them, so the story ran, would be Sebastian Moran
And a certain ex-professor of malodorous renown.

The *coup* had been superbly planned; it showed the fine Holmesian hand—
Yet in the end it left a little something to desire:
For, even as the nets drew tight, Holmes suffered injury one night—
To which was added insult when his rooms were set afire.

Then came the crowning touch of all, for Moriarty came to call,
His head thrust out and moving in that strange reptilian way.
"I'll tread you under foot!" he cried; and ordered Holmes to stand aside
And leave him undisputed in his pestilential sway.

There was no witness to this scene, and consequently there has been
A deal of speculation as to how the change was rung.
We cannot doubt, at any rate, that Holmes was idly tempting fate
By staying on in London while the trap was being sprung.

His scheme demanded, it appears, that Scotland Yard would take the cheers
While he himself remained anonymously in the wings.
So, since his presence was *de trop*, and since he felt the urge to go,
A Continental journey seemed the way of fixing things.

". . . Achieving climax as the giants wrestled toward the ledge."

A prime essential for the trip would be the good companionship
Of Watson, who, invited, said he wouldn't mind at all.
The plans were therefore duly laid, and Holmes, his preparations made,
Took leave until the morrow by the doctor's garden wall.

The rendezvous was most discreet: Victoria was where they'd meet,
And Watson, in the morning, took a cab and then a brougham—
His second Jehu, 'pon my word, was Mycroft Holmes, who never stirred,
Except in dire exigencies, from the Strangers' Room.

Arriving, Watson feared the worst, for Holmes had been expected first:
The carriage they had taken was as empty as could be;
Then, just before they headed east, there came an old Italian priest
Whose talk was incoherent till he winked and said "It's me!"

The train began to chuff along, when, pushing through the station throng,
Holmes spotted Moriarty panting hot upon the trail:
To throw him off they changed their route—and then they heard a special toot
And realized that stratagems would be of small avail.

In Brussels, this was verified: a message from the Yard supplied
The tidings that their nemesis had gotten clean away.
All hope for quietude was gone—the chase, to use the term, was on—
Though just exactly who was chasing whom is hard to say.

At crack of dawn the course began: our heroes took the trail that ran
Through Strasburg and Geneva and the Valley of the Rhone;
They dallied in the Gemmi Pass, and by the Daubensee a mass
Of falling rock came close to leaving Watson all alone.

This episode gave Holmes to think; he saw his armor had a chink
Because his adversary lusted only for the kill:
So, switching plans, he said: "Gee Whiz! I'll gladly give my life for his—
Then other men may find *their* lives a slightly sweeter pill!"

In this intense, exalted mood—but thinking still of rest and food—
Holmes called a halt at Meiringen, where Peter Steiler, *père,*
Was famous for his bed and loaf; his inn, the snug 'Englischer Hof,
Provided just the solace for the cross they had to bear.

The walks for many miles around were fine as any to be found:
For instance, there was Rosenlaui, and, upon the way,
A corner where, at Reichenbach, the Aar leaped down from crag and rock
To make a thund'rous cataract that lost itself in spray.

"This," said the Master, "we must see!"—so off they went, intrepidly,
To stand upon the awful brink from which the waters raced.
They gazed their full; then, as they turned, a lad rushed up, and Watson learned
His services were needed at the Inn in urgent haste.

He knew his Hippocratic oath: a lady called; so, nothing loath,
He hurried back to Meiringen—to find it all a trick.
There came upon him sudden dread; his lion heart was turned to lead,
And back again he scampered on the double-double-quick.

Alas! the precipice was bare: the only things awaiting there
Were Sherlock Holmes's alpenstock and little silver case.
In panic, Watson called and peered; but all was dark and foul and weird,
And only ghostly echoes mocked the silence of the place.

He saw it all: the subtle plot to lure him from the fateful spot,
And thus deprive his comrade of assistance he would miss;
Then Moriarty closing in, strong with the fearful strength of sin—
And Holmes alone between the devil and the deep abyss.

He saw the struggle that ensued—he saw the sempiternal feud
Achieving climax as the giants wrestled toward the ledge;
And then his heart was in his throat: he found the brief, pathetic note
That Holmes had left in token of his philanthropic pledge.

The facts were plain: down in the gorge that Mid-Victorian St. George
Lay limp and broken with the dragon he had overthrown. . . .
So came the combat to an end; so Watson lost his only friend;
So died the best and wisest man whom he had ever known.

* * *

At least so Doctor Watson thought: he used the methods he'd been taught,
Observing and deducing as the data came along;
He followed all the formulae, neglected no minutiæ—
But three years later learned that he was absolutely wrong.

A SCANDAL IN BAKER STREET

by NATHAN BENGIS

II

The Curious Affair of the First[22] *Stain*

WHILE MOST of the discrepancies previously mentioned might be explained away on the ground of dramatic exigencies, the same cannot be said for one divergence not yet referred to, which is of such import as to lead to startling inferences. We refer to the curious fact that in the Canon there is no mention whatever of Watson's previous acquaintance with Helen Stoner—or, in fact, with any member of the Stoner family.[23] Let us examine the evidence as given in the play. On page 11 of Act I of the Samuel French edition, we read the following:

> ENID. Your kindness has been the one gleam of light in these dark days. There is such bad feeling between my stepfather and the country doctor that I am sure he would not have come to us. But I remembered the kind letter you wrote when we came home, and I telegraphed on the chance. I could hardly dare hope that you would come from London so promptly.
>
> WATSON. Why, I knew your mother well in India, and I remember you and your poor sister when you were schoolgirls. I was only too glad to be of any use—if indeed I was of any use. *Where is your stepfather?*[24]

[22] *And only!*

[23] It is only fair to mention at this point that this fact was cited *exempli gratia* by Anthony Boucher on the occasion of the 1946 B.S.I. dinner. In his apparently innocuous remark lies the genesis of the theory about to be expounded.

[24] The italics are the writer's. Note how significant this seemingly casual remark becomes if we imagine that Watson is embarrassed and is, as we shall try to prove, hiding guilty knowledge.

Now from this passage one of two things is clear: either Watson knew the Stoner family in India and deliberately suppressed all mention of it in his story, or else the statement is a fabrication pure and simple on the part of the playwright. We propose to show that the latter supposition is preposterous. All men of any sensibility—especially those who are, or who have been, married—are extremely careful as to what they will permit to be published concerning their association with the fair sex. It is unthinkable that the playwright would have had the temerity to intimate a previous acquaintance of Watson with the Stoner family unless he knew he was treading on the *terra firma* of fact. A dramatist simply does not allow himself such liberties—least of all a meticulously honorable gentleman such as Watson's agent is well known to have been. By no stretch of the imagination can it be maintained that Watson's presence in Act I was so necessary that he had to be brought in at all costs—even at the expense of a fabricated previous acquaintance with the Stoners. If the playwright felt he could do without Holmes in the first act, he could certainly, *a fortiori*, have dispensed with Watson, and have had Enid come to Baker Street in Act II on the recommendation of Mrs. Farintosh, as related in the Canon. In any case, Watson would never have wished to have his name linked in any such way with the tragic affair, especially because it would excite undue curiosity on the part of his wife.[25] In other words we are faced with a divergence from the Canon which cannot be explained on the basis of dramatic expediency, and, what is more, cannot be regarded as a fabrication on the part of the author.

We are thus forced to the conclusion, incredible though it may seem, that it is not the apocryphal play which is at variance with the truth in this regard, but the Canon itself, and that Watson deliberately suppressed important information in his own story. In fact we shall show that Watson went so far as to tamper with vital facts for purposes of his own. There follows, as a corollary, the conclusion that Watson did not give his agent permission to pro-

[25] Whether Mrs. Watson No. 1 or No. 2 (or even No. 3!) there may be some doubt, although, from H. W. Starr's ingenious argument in *Some New Light on Watson* (THE BAKER STREET JOURNAL, Vol. I, No. 1), it is certainly at least possible that Mrs. Watson (née Morstan) was still living in 1910, when the play first appeared.

duce this play—certainly, at any rate, not in its present form, and that the latter therefore proceeded on his own responsibility, apparently in the secure knowledge that Watson would not dare to sue him for plagiarism. Two questions inevitably arise: first, what possible reason could Watson have for completely suppressing the fact of his having known the Stoners; second, why would Watson be most reluctant to sue his agent for appropriating his literary property?

By this time surely the true solution of this mystery will have become abundantly clear: Dr. Watson had had an affair with one of the women in the Stoner family! Preposterous as this supposition seemed to the writer when he began his research in the matter, it was found, on mature reflection, to be corroborated by a plenitude of internal evidence. It is inexplicable, on any other supposition, that Watson would so meticulously have hidden from us, from his wife, and from Holmes, the fact that he had known the Stoners. If now it be asked with which member of the Stoner family he became involved, we can easily arrive at the answer by the well known Holmesian process of elimination. Mrs. Stoner, the mother of the twins, can be eliminated at once, as Watson was much too circumspect to get himself involved with a mother of two children. Besides, we know from the Canon that Helen was thirty-two in 1883,[26] so that in 1880 or 1881, the most probable years of Watson's stay in India,[27] she was twenty-nine or thirty. As Watson was twenty-eight or twenty-nine in those years,[28] it is no coincidence that they were about the same age. Mrs. Stoner, on the contrary, would have been about twenty or more years older, i.e., forty-nine or fifty, much too old for even a most amorous Watson to wish to have an affair with. It is true that if Dr. Roylott was in prison at this time, as seems likely, the situation would be eminently safe for an intrigue with Mrs. Stoner, but this argument applies with even greater force in support of a liaison with one of the sisters. All in

[26] Helen might have lied about her age, but could hardly have strayed far from the truth.

[27] According to the conventional chronology, Watson left India in 1880; according to Mr. Smith's, in 1881.

[28] S. C. Roberts (*op. cit.*) assigns the year of Watson's birth to 1852.

all, it is abundantly plain that Mrs. Stoner is not the woman in the case.[29]

We are thus narrowed down to Helen and her twin-sister Julia. To decide between them, we are compelled at this point to consider what may at first appear as an insuperable difficulty. Since Helen visited Holmes in 1883, and, according to her own statement in the Canon, she and her family returned to England eight years previously, that is, in 1875, it follows, if the facts are as stated, that she could not have been in India in 1880 or 1881. It is, moreover, hardly conceivable that she returned to India in 1880 or 1881, as her step-father would have feared a marriage entanglement. Nor, on the other hand, is it possible that Watson was in India in 1875 or thereabouts, as he was pursuing his course in medicine at the University of London at that time.[30] It is clear, then, that Helen stooped to altering a few dates for purposes of her own, and it is equally clear that there must have been collusion between her and Watson, who naturally would have feared embarrassing questions by Holmes if the latter knew that the Stoners were in India in 1880 or 1881. Returning now to our problem of deciding between Helen and Julia as *the* woman, we see that it must have been Helen. If it had been Julia, Watson could scarcely have conspired with Helen to alter any facts in her story without dragging his affair with her sister into the picture, something which his sense of honor would never have permitted. If, on the other hand, Helen was the woman in the case, as indeed she must have been, she would have entered only too readily into any necessary collusion with Watson. It is obvious, therefore, that at Watson's suggestion, Helen conveniently altered the date of her family's return to England from 1881 (or 1880) to 1875.[31] It is obvious, too, that Mrs. Stoner must have died in India; or, if in England, very soon after her

[29] It is useless to argue that in any event, as Helen relates her mother was killed "eight years ago" (1875), Mrs. Stoner may be eliminated from the reckoning, because, as we shall show, Helen and Watson conspired to falsify the records, and therefore all her dates are subject to suspicion.

[30] We are told in *A Study in Scarlet* that he took his degree in 1878.

[31] As Julia died in April, 1881, Watson, who must have been apprised of the fact, could hardly have failed to refer the case to Holmes if 1881 were the year when Holmes disclosed to Watson the nature of his calling. That Watson did not do so is confirmatory evidence, if any were needed, in support of Mr. Smith's chronology fixing this important event in 1882.

return there, not in 1875. It is, moreover, patent that Helen, once more at Watson's instigation, falsified the place of her family's home in India. Watson, as is well known, landed in India at Bombay, and was almost at once swallowed up in the second Afghan war, so that he could not possibly have met Helen had she been living with her family at Calcutta, where, according to her statement in the Canon, her step-father had established a large practice. There is thus no doubt that Watson, in advising Helen to state Calcutta as her city of residence, was motivated by the desire to represent her home as being as far as possible removed from western India and Afghanistan. Where, then, did the lovers meet? Where else but at the base hospital at Peshawur, where Watson had been removed following the encounter in the battle of Maiwand which resulted in the famous wound by a jezail bullet? And who else could Helen have been but Watson's nurse?[32] The thought of Helen, whose hair at that time was assuredly not yet "shot with premature gray," and whose face was not yet "weary and haggard," ministering to the good doctor during the long months when his "life was despaired of," presents a pretty idyllic picture. Watson says: ". . . and when at last I came to myself and became convalescent, I was so weak and emaciated that a medical board determined that not a day should be lost in sending me back to England."[33] But he had already had time to fall in love with his nurse, and to carry on a clandestine romance during his convalescence. What probably happened was that Helen, full of remorse and shame, and apprehensive of rumors that had begun to circulate, somehow prevailed on her family to return to England; or else, providentially, Dr. Roylott was released from prison about that time and decided to return with his family. Watson, who had been convalescing nicely, became so despondent that he began to lose ground, and the medical board, perhaps at Watson's request, decided to send him home. A month later he landed on Portsmouth jetty (in April, 1881, according to Mr. Smith's chronology).[34] He

[32] S. C. Roberts comes miraculously close to the truth in his *Dr. Watson*, where he says (p. 15): ". . . in India he can have seen few women except the staff-nurses at Peshawur."

[33] *A Study in Scarlet.*

[34] This date checks exactly with Julia Stoner's death, a fact which still further strengthens Mr. Smith's chronology.

located Helen and learned from her the news of her sister's death. A showdown took place, and Helen made it plain, once and for all, that she regarded the past a closed book. And so Watson "gravitated to London, that great cesspool into which all the loungers and idlers of the Empire are irresistibly drained." [35] Here at last is a logical explanation of Watson's profoundly despondent mood at this time, and of the "comfortless, meaningless existence" [36] he dragged out for months. The woman who had given comfort and meaning to his life had cast him aside. It was still an embittered Watson who was standing at the Criterion Bar when young Stamford tapped him on the shoulder, with consequences that are now history.

When, in 1883, Helen, who must have heard of Watson's association with Holmes, appealed to her former lover for help, Watson, still smarting, was at first no doubt reluctant to do so, especially as he no doubt learned of her engagement to be married; but her fearful plight and her persuasive manner at last won out. As the price for his compliance he exacted her promise to alter a few facts in her story. She would fall in most readily with his scheme, as she would be as anxious as he to keep Holmes from suspecting the truth. Watson even went so far as to look through Holmes's case-book to find the name of some former client of Holmes living in the vicinity of Stoke Moran, who Helen could say referred her to Holmes. In this way he learned of Mrs. Farintosh, and supplied Helen with the name.

It is remarkable, despite Watson's great care in concealing the truth in the Sacred Writings, how many little hints were unwittingly dropped by him along the way. Thus, if it be objected that Watson could not possibly have found the information about Mrs. Farintosh because the case was before his time, and especially because he himself tells us that Holmes unlocked his desk to get his case-book, we have only to point out that this very gratuitous statement on his part is a clue to the truth. A scheming Watson could easily have gained access to Holmes's desk in his absence; or, even if Holmes always had the key on his person, Watson could ask for permission to look through the files on the pretext of finding in-

[35] *A Study in Scarlet.*
[36] *Ibid.*

formation for writing up one of the cases. Admittedly these subterfuges would go against the grain of one who ordinarily was as honest as the day is long, but it is not generally known that Watson was shrewder, in his own quiet way, than he is usually given credit for being.[37] Thus, to throw us off the track, with disarming casualness he supplies the information about the locked desk. Those who know their Watson, however, are not so easily fooled, and are certain that there is a purpose behind everything he says. Consider, too, the excessive care he takes to avoid making any statement that would show a personal interest in Helen Stoner. In several places he all but gives himself away. Thus, he speaks at the outset of being relieved of his pledge of secrecy by the "*untimely* death of the lady to whom it was given." Note the telling effect of the italicized word, which, in a man as tight-lipped as Watson customarily was, expresses more than a casual regret at the passing of a woman of about thirty-nine. It should be mentioned in passing that Helen comes to Baker Street heavily veiled, a circumstance which undoubtedly shows how afraid she was, in the initial interview with Holmes, of betraying by any sign that she knew Watson. It is noteworthy, too, that, toward the close of the story, when Holmes tells Watson he "has some scruples as to taking him to-night," as "there is a distinct element of danger," Watson replies, with commendable sang-froid, his heart meantime doubtless pounding like a trip-hammer: "Can I be of any assistance?" To the ear that is attuned to fine interlinear vibrations this reveals more than Watson's customary readiness to share in the danger of Holmes's adventures, bespeaking as it does Watson's eagerness to help in any way a woman he had once loved and, despite everything, still had a sentimental attachment for.

Was Holmes really fooled? He unquestionably was, and would probably never have been undeceived were it not for a slip[38] made

[37] V., in this connection, *Dr. Watson Speaks Out*, in *By Way of Introduction*, by A. A. Milne (Methuen & Co., London, 1929).

[38] Perhaps not a slip. It is possible Watson deliberately threw in this clue to test his friend's much vaunted deductive powers. In a similar vein Mr. Giles Playfair, in his cogent essay, *John and James* (THE BAKER STREET JOURNAL, Vol. I, No. 3) argues that Watson deliberately falsified the records by having his wife refer to him as James, and later throws in the cabby's name John as a clue to the truth!

some years later, when Watson recounted the famous adventure of *The Sign of the Four*. There, in the course of his description of Mary Morstan, the good doctor speaks of "an experience of women which extends over many nations and three separate continents." If these are Europe, Australia, and Asia (as indeed they must be), where else but in India could Watson have acquired the Asiatic experience, and when else but during the period of the Afghan campaign? One can well imagine Holmes getting a jolt on reading that. A friendly note to Mrs. Farintosh thanking her for referring Miss Stoner to him would no doubt elicit a prompt reply to the effect that that lady had never even spoken to her. He could also have found that the date of the Crewe railway accident was falsified, or, if correct, that Mrs. Stoner was not one of the casualties. Holmes would have no difficulty in putting two and two together, and it is a fine reflection on his gentlemanliness that he never intimated to Watson his knowledge of that shady episode in the latter's otherwise stainless career.[89]

How did the playwright find out? Here we are on less sure ground. It may have been a chance remark by Watson in an unguarded moment during one of his visits to his literary agent. Perhaps it was Watson's very refusal to give the necessary approval to write the play—a refusal that must have seemed nothing short of perverse unless based on some definite reason—that planted the first grain of suspicion in his agent's mind. The latter, an armchair detective of no mean celebrity, would easily arrive at the truth, and decide to produce his play after all, first making some necessary alterations to convince Watson he was possessed of the true facts. Watson would of course be up in arms, but would hesitate to take legal action, fearing thereby the publicizing as actual fact of what might otherwise pass as dramatic invention. There can be little doubt, though, that there was a warm scene between the two.

The playwright, being innately a gentleman, took every precaution to disguise the facts so that they would not be immediately apparent. The first important statement made that is manifestly false to any one in possession of the truth is put in Watson's mouth early in Act I, when he says to Enid: ". . . I remember you and

[89] Note, however, the sly innuendo in Holmes's statement to Watson, in *The Adventure of the Retired Colourman:* "With your natural advantages, Watson, every lady is your *helper and accomplice.*" (Italics the writer's.)

your poor sister when you were schoolgirls." But the "schoolgirls" were ladies of about thirty when Watson knew them. The dramatist's purpose is plain, of course. If Watson knew Helen only as a schoolgirl, he could hardly be suspected of having had an affair with her. He is made to lie a little later also, in his testimony to the coroner. When asked if he knew Dr. Rylott "before the tragedy," he blandly says: "No, sir. I knew Mrs. Stonor when she was a widow, and I knew her two daughters." But according to Helen's own story in the Canon (and there is no apparent reason why this part of her recital should also have been falsified), she and her sister were only two years old at the time of their mother's remarriage, which took place in 1853 (thirty years before 1883), when Watson was about a year old! It was a white lie thought up by the playwright to push the true events so far back in time that no one would ever imagine that Watson could have known Mrs. Stoner or her grown daughters in India in 1880 or 1881. The novelist, of course, had no intention of defaming Watson's character. In fact, he went so far out of the way to hide and disguise the truth that the uncritical public, if they thought of these distortions at all, would consider them as harmless fabrications. Thus are explained, among other things, the alterations in the names of the Stoner sisters, the author's excessive zeal in protecting these ladies being itself highly significant. His purpose was clearly to tell Watson, and no one else, that he knew the facts. Thus, he brings in Watson's engagement to Mary Morstan several years ahead of time, not only to give Holmes the opportunity for some clever deductions, but to warn Watson that it would never do for a married man—or even a widower with an eye to another marital alliance—to sue him for plagiarism and risk the raking up of the safely buried past. There are also several lines intended by the author as a sort of aside from him to Watson, but which would be taken at merely face value by the audience. Thus, in the same scene, when Holmes says to Watson: "My dear fellow, you'll get into trouble if you go about righting the wrongs of distressed damsels. It won't do, Watson, it really won't," the playwright is in effect administering a mild admonition to Watson not to think of taking legal action against him, as the very thing Watson wishes most to protect: the name of his old sweetheart, may be dragged unnecessarily before the public eye.

For the most part the author is careful not to betray excessive feeling on Watson's part in his speeches with Enid. Thus, in his first words with her, Watson says: "Let me say how sorry I am, Miss Stonor." He does not call her by her Christian name. So too, a little further on, note the admirable restraint with which he says to her: "Excuse me if I take a liberty; it is only that I am interested. You are very lonely and defenseless." It is clear, though, that in his parting word to her at the end of Act I: "Good-bye, *Miss Enid,*" the mask has begun to fall; and when he adds, significantly *in a lower voice:* "Don't forget that you have a friend," the truth is fairly shouted at us.

In several places the playwright is not quite so careful, and almost gives the whole secret away. One instance, perhaps the most subtle of all, will be cited. Near the close of Act II, Scene II, when Holmes announces his intention to visit Stoke Place, Watson says, with ill-concealed excitement: "I will come with you, Holmes"; and when Holmes reminds him that he is no longer an unattached knight-errant, adding, very tellingly: "What would Miss Morstan say?" Watson replies, with magnificent aplomb: "She would say that the man who would desert his friend would never make a good husband." Holmes is touched by this display of fidelity, not knowing, of course, that Watson really means Enid in saying "his friend." This is a master-stroke on the author's part, flaunting as it does the truth in our eyes under such thin disguise. It is the supreme jest, intended for Watson's special delectation.

Considering that this single shady interlude in Watson's life could have been kept forever secret if he had suppressed *The Adventure of the Speckled Band,* one may very well inquire why as a matter of fact he did not do so. No doubt Holmes, who was rightly proud of his achievement in this case, prodded his Boswell more than once to write it up. Watson could put him off with a reminder of his pledge of secrecy given to Helen Stoner. After her death he could no longer offer this excuse. His failure to accede to Holmes's request would of itself have awakened suspicion. Aside from this, Watson had a good reason of his own for wanting to have the story published. In the Canon he states: "It is perhaps as well that the facts should now come to light, for I have reasons to know that there are wide-spread rumors as to the death of Dr. Grimesby

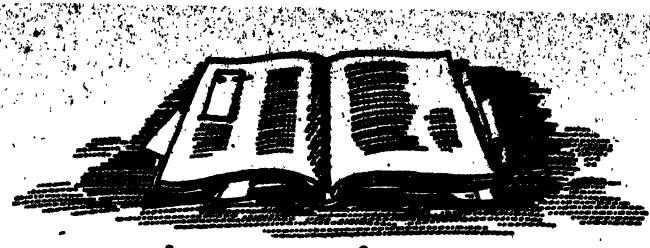
Roylott which tend to make the matter even more terrible than the truth." What can these rumors have been but insinuations to the effect that Helen, driven to distraction by her step-father's repressive tactics, had contrived, either with or without her fiancé's assistance, to kill Dr. Roylott, possibly by making him a present of a poisonous Indian snake? Watson, hearing of these rumors, would be impelled to defend the memory of her who had been his first love. And so the magnificent tale was born.

Did Watson ever completely forget? One doubts it, and is prone rather to believe that he carried the image of Helen Stoner close to his heart for many years, if not for the rest of his life. There is every likelihood that Mrs. Watson (née Morstan), with a wife's unerring instinct, discovered his secret, and held it against him as a pre-marital infidelity. Thus would be partially explained the many rifts between the two as related in H. W. Starr's essay.[40] It is easy to see now that Mrs. Watson, jealous as she was, must have felt that in Watson's affections she was always second to "that other." There must have been many arguments, and Watson's frequent drifting away to Baker Street was the result, rather than the cause, of these quarrels.

Hinc illae lacrimae! Poor Watson! Rebuffed in his first love, he never quite forgave the fair sex, and could never again give his heart as unreservedly as he did that first time.[41] For his fling at the Peshawur base hospital he paid a hundredfold in heartache and bitterness. Let this one transgression in an otherwise immaculate life be glossed over charitably, and let it not decrease but rather enhance our admiration and love for one to whom the world will, till the end of time, owe a boundless debt of gratitude.

[40] *Op. cit.*

[41] Note the restraint of his avowal to Mary Morstan: ". . . I love you, Mary, as truly as ever a man loved a woman." (*The Sign of the Four*, Ch. XI). He would not commit himself to say what we can easily imagine him to have declared to Helen: "No man ever loved a woman as I love you."



From the Editor's Commonplace Book

A PLEASANT development is in process which may lead, some day, to what could come to be known as the Fixed Cycle of the Scions.

The annual meeting of the Baker Street Irregulars takes place, as we all know, on the Friday which falls closest to January 5th, the anniversary of the Master's birth. Nothing daunted by this parental preemption of the natal month, The Dancing Men of Providence, R. I., have also chosen January for the occasion of their annual Cotillion—and in so doing they have set the cycle in motion. For The Five Orange Pips of Westchester County, who have met only sporadically over the years, have now deliberately set upon the month of February for their periodic foregathering, and The Amateur Mendicant Society of Detroit, conscious of the significance of the procession, has staked out its claim to the month of March. The Speckled Band of Boston has met regularly (if the expression is permissible) in April, and word comes that The Six Napoleons of Baltimore, who have the happy practice of coming together whenever the spirit moves them, will single out their meeting in May as the climactic event of their year.

There are still gaps to be filled before the Cycle completes itself and doubles back for a second lap. The Hounds of the Baskerville (sic) of Chicago show signs of picking on September for their annual baying, and, since The Scandalous Bohemians of Akron are already committed to October, there are still two good winter months, and three in the summer doldrums, that other Scions might choose before the duplications begin.

It will be interesting to learn what action in the direction of fulfillment of this manifest destiny will be taken by The Scowrers of San Francisco, and The Illustrious Clients of Indianapolis, and

The Canadian Baskervilles, The Seventeen Steps of Los Angeles, and all the other lively sprouts that cluster and burgeon upon the branch. For if any of those from the parentally benevolent Irregulars are to do the desired circuit riding as the months roll around, it will be helpful if the schedules can be made up in advance.

Dr. Julian Wolff has sent me a clipping from the *New York Times* of March 20, 1947, which is startling in its implications. The story it sets forth bears quotation in considerable extent:

> "The Thomason brothers have the same first name and a comparison of thir fingerprints by naked eye reveals a similarity in all except the index fingers. This curious circumstance was the basis yesterday of a case of mistaken identity that almost caused the revocation of one brother's parole.
>
> "James I. Thomason, 28 years old, of 129 West 135th Street, is a defendant on a charge of vehicular homicide. His brother, James G. Thomason, was sentenced on Tuesday to a nine-month term in Sing Sing for grand larceny.
>
> "When James I. appeared yesterday before Magistrate Charles E. Ramsgate in Vehicle Accident Court, his original arraignment for automobile assault, on which he had been paroled, was changed to a charge of homicide. . . . At this point, Eugene K. Jones, Jr., an attorney, formerly associated with the Legal Aid Bureau, stepped forward and said that he knew the defendant and was positive he had no fingerprint record.
>
> " 'How do you account for this, then?' asked Magistrate Ramsgate, showing the lawyer the record, which had been submitted by Detective Joseph Whitmire of the West 123rd Street Station.
>
> " 'His brother has the same first name. His brother is James G. Thomason, and that's his police record,' Mr. Jones replied. 'I know because I represented James G. in General Sessions yesterday when he received a nine-month sentence.'
>
> "This revelation caused Magistrate Ramsgate to order Detective Whitmire to return to Police Headquarters and re-check the fingerprint record."

Dr. Wolff's submission is accompanied by an apt quotation from the Writings themselves:

> "There's nothing new under the sun. It's all been done before."

There came an astounding announcement recently concerning the goose of Mr. Henry Baker. Miss Mildred Sammons, of Chicago, wrote to Charles Collins, keeper of "A Line o' Type or Two" in the *Chicago Tribune*, stating that "a goose has no crop." Dr. Collins, an erudite B. S. I., published this note in his column. Mr. J. A. Finch sent him a reply somewhat as follows:

> "This news produced a considerable shock. Consultation of one ornithologist, two zoologists, and three poultry-dressers, together with ocular demonstration, abundantly confirms the statement. Sherlock Holmes made an alimentary (sic) error, which the Baker Street Irregulars should have noted long ago . . . It is suggested that the society award Miss Sammons some kind of honor in token of their gratitude for her discovery."

Mr. Jay Finley Christ, also of Chicago, tells me that he has sent the lady a copy of Mr. Finch's little brochure, and he goes on to say: "In the same connection, let me point out that while the carbuncle was 'rather smaller than a bean in size,' Henry Ryder 'felt the stone pass along (the goose's) gullet.' It is submitted that, since the goose has a very large gullet, so small a stone would create no noticeable disturbance as it passed along."

* * *

I have just seen a copy of *The Journal of Political Economy* (University of Chicago Press) for April, 1946. It contains an erudite review of *The Theory of Games and Economic Behavior*, by John von Neumann and Oskar Morgenstern (Princeton Univeristy Press, 1944), of which new approach to static economics the *Journal* says:

> "The zero-sum two person game is analyzed in chapter iii; it is shown that the minimax solution is, in general, not determinate and that the introduction of randomized strategies makes it determinate. Chapter iv gives examples, including the intriguing case of Sherlock Holmes and Professor Moriarty who tried to outguess each other, and including a detailed analysis of poker."

We always thought the Holmes-Moriarty duel was pretty profound.

Mr. Morris Rosenblum calls attention to an item in the *New York Times* Book Review Section for February 23rd in which response is made to a query concerning a certain play by George Bernard Shaw:

> "The play in question, containing a reference to the popular song 'Bill Bailey Won't You Please Come Home,' is a one-acter called *Passion, Poison and Petrifaction, or The Fatal Gazogene* (1905).
>
> "It is included in Shaw's volume *Translations and Tomfooleries,* found in his collected works."

"Did Shaw and Sherlock," Mr. Rosenblum asks, "ever push a gasogene together?"

Amelia V. White, of Los Angeles, has succeeded at last in procuring from the unimaginative gentleman in charge of the Marion Davies collection a photograph of the Greuze painting "L'Amitié," which could well be "La Jeune Fille a l'Agneau." Unfortunately, permission for the reproduction of this masterpiece was withheld, despite Mrs. White's earnest pleas. She writes me, however:

"This letter follows closely on that of last week, but my tireless researches on the Greuze problem have unearthed new and (I think) vital data, so I hasten to communicate again. The Los Angeles Public Library has a copy of *Masters in Art,* Vol. V, Part 50, dated February, 1904, devoted to Greuze. This publication is, or was, from Bates and Guild, of 42 Chauncy Street, Boston, and in it is *another* 'Young Girl With Lamb' under the title 'Innocence,' from the Wallace Collection at Hertford House, London.

"However, even more closely connected with Holmes would seem to be the picture 'The Listening Girl,' also shown in the book and also in the Wallace collection. How was it Inspector MacDonald described the Greuze that belonged to Professor Moriarty himself? '. . . a young woman with her head on her hands, keeking

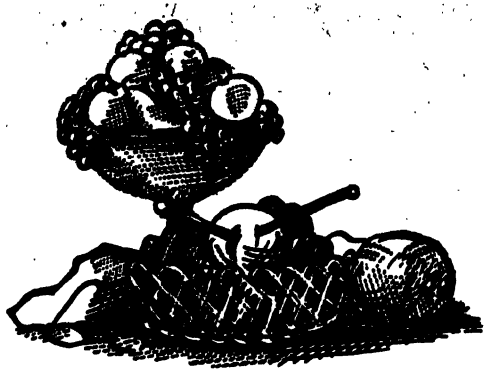
at you sideways.' 'The Listening Girl' has her head on only one hand, but she certainly is, as the American editions have it, 'peeping' sideways. The Marquis of Hertford paid £1260 for her, according to the book.

"Anent Holmes's remark that 'modern criticism has more than indorsed the high opinion formed of him [Greuze] by his contemporaries,' I am happy to pass along the following anecdote, retailed by the unknown author of the Life of Greuze in the above-mentioned book, especially as it amusingly links Greuze with Claude Joseph Vernet, who was Sherlock Holmes's great-great-grandfather.

> "'. . . many of his fellow artists were irritated by his inordinate conceit. On one occasion the Marquis de Marigny, an authority in the artistic world of Paris, as he passed through the rooms of the Salon followed by his usual train of artists, paused before a picture by Greuze and, turning to the painter, exclaimed, "That is beautiful!" "I know it, monsieur," replied Greuze with his customary complacency; "moreover, everyone praises me; and yet I am in need of commissions." Whereupon, Joseph Vernet, the marine painter, who was present, addressing Greuze said, "That is because you have a host of enemies, and among them one who, although he loves you to distraction, will nevertheless be your ruin." "And who is that?" asked the painter. "Yourself," was the reply.'

"There is something of Holmes in Vernet's remark; or, perhaps we should say, Holmes's wit was a legacy from his famous relative."

In this age of essential conflict between the power and glory of the state, on the one hand, and the dignity and worth of the individual, on the other, is it unseemly to reflect on the fact that Inspector Lestrade was the product of governmental bureaucracy, and that Sherlock Holmes was a ruggedly individualistic private enterpriser?



Mrs. Hudson Speaks

A Recording Made by Miss ZaSu Pitts for the Meeting of the Amateur Mendicant Society of Detroit on March 14, 1947, and for Baker Street Irregulars Everywhere

ANNOUNCER: It is my pleasure to present Mrs. Martha Hudson. Mrs. Hudson.

MRS. HUDSON: How do you do, dear gentlemen? This is the first time I've ever spoken to a club of American gentlemen and I'm a very old woman and a wee bit nervous. Of course, in the old days, we used to have Americans in the house. But that's a weary time ago and here on the South Downs we haven't seen an American, except soldier-Americans, in years and years. So you'll forgive me, I'm sure, if I'm nervous. Deary me, I'm all a-flutter.

I suppose you want to hear about Mr. Holmes. Well, gentlemen, I'm happy to say that he's very well indeed. Of course, he isn't as young as he once was; but who is? I always say. He suffers cruel from rheumatism, poor dear, and I tell you it just goes to my heart to see him sitting there, sometimes, with his rug over his poor knees and that faraway look in his eyes that I've learned to know so well. But age comes to us all; and we have a deal to be thankful for.

Of course he can't take the interest in his bees that he used to take. We're both over ninety, did you know that? But, naturally, you did. Mr. Hopkins tells me that you American gentlemen know about everything that used to happen in the old days in Baker

Street; so of course you know how old we are. Deary me, Mr. Hopkins is getting on, too. It seems just like yesterday when he used to come to the old house, and him hardly thirty, and ask advice of Mr. Holmes; and I'm bound to say he always got it and good advice it was.

We see Mr. Hopkins every month or so and he always brings us news. He's been retired for a long time now, as maybe you've heard. But he's got the O.B.E., has Mr. Hopkins, and I'm told there's even some talk of making him a knight. Wouldn't that be a fine thing! If he gets it, wouldn't I like to see that jealous little Mr. Lestrade or big, fat Mr. Jones! Dear, dear, and they're both of them dead and gone these 20 years; and sons of their name with great, big positions at Scotland Yard! I do hope the King does something handsome for Mr. Hopkins before it's too late: for he'll be 82 years old this very blessed year. But I'm sure I'd never be able to call him "Sir Stanley."

Now, I know something you're all wondering. And I'm going to answer a question you all want to ask. Mr. Hopkins told us how you argue and write books about us all. So I'm sure you'd like to ask me about "Mrs. Turner."

Well, gentlemen, everybody thinks that was mysterious and it wasn't a bit. There was never any landlady but me at 221B; and my name has been the same, ever since I went to church with Mr. Hudson. But, deary me, a body has to take a holiday, once in a way. That's all there was to it. I was in Brighton for a breath of air and Jennie Turner, who was the widow of my cousin Jack Turner, took care of things for a fortnight. She was devoted to Mr. Holmes and he paid her a compliment by pretending that she was the landlady, while I was gone. Mr. Hopkins says that you American gentlemen —and some gentlemen in England too—have all sorts of notions about that "Mrs. Turner" business. Well, that's the straight truth of it and I'm happy to settle it for you.

You'll never dream who came to see us, the other day. I didn't recognize him, of course. I didn't know who in the world it was, when that grey-haired man knocked on the door and gave me his card and asked to see Mr. Holmes.

It was one of Mr. Holmes's good days, I'm thankful to say, and he was up and about and he'd even been drinking a gin-and-tonic

that I'd made up for him. I wish you could have seen his old eyes light up, when that grey-haired man walked into the sitting-room and held out his hand. "Well, well, well," he cried out, in exactly his old voice, "I'll wager you're making more than a shilling-a-day in these times."

If you'll believe me, gentlemen, it was that very scamp of a Wiggins, as ever was! They sat and talked for hours and such a Cockney that Wiggins is, for all his gold watch-chain! He's an ironmonger in the Commercial Road and he's very well-to-do, but he did get pretty badly blitzed, back in 1940. I gave them tea and some cakes I'd made with the last of my sugar and that Wiggins said, "What, no curried chicken?" The sauce of him! As if I'd serve curried chicken at five-o'clock tea! But, just the same, it was fine to see him, for old times' sake. Well do I mind how he used to tramp his dirty feet over my clean stair-carpet in Baker Street; him and his precious ragamuffins!

Now of course you'll want to know of Dr. Watson. Poor, poor Dr. Watson! He's a very old man, of course, and we can't expect him to be up-and-coming like he used to be. But he's been in a nursing home, these past two years, and I'm afraid he'll never come out of it. It's a lovely place down in Devon and the head-doctor is a man named Stamford. I think his father was a doctor, too, and used to be some sort of friend, long ago, of both Mr. Holmes and our doctor. This Stamford writes Mr. Holmes every month and reports on the doctor's health. But I'm bound to say he hasn't been very encouraging in a long, long time and something tells me we'll never hear his cheery voice again.

Mrs. Watson passed away, almost 20 years ago, the poor darling. And what's all this I hear, gentlemen, about your wondering if the doctor was married twice, or even three times? Let me tell you, there was never any Mrs. Watson but one, and she was always sweet Miss Mary to her old Martha Hudson, that she was.

Oh yes, I know that the doctor spoke about his "sad bereavement," away back in 1894. That was the time when Mr. Holmes said that work is the best antidote to sorrow; and a truer word was never spoken. But didn't you know, gentlemen, that the doctor and Miss Mary had a baby boy, while Mr. Holmes was away gallivanting to the ends of the earth; and that the poor little mite died just

before his first birthday? And what do you suppose was the precious child's name? Why, Sherlock Holmes Watson, to be sure. What else could it be? I ought to know; for I was the blessed baby's sponsor in baptism, at St. Mary Abbots Church in Kensington.

You see, gentlemen, the doctor was never a one for talking about himself and his own affairs; and, even in his best years, he was the most forgetful mortal that ever breathed. It just broke his heart—and Miss Mary's, too—when that darling baby died. So, of course, he never said a word about it in any of his stories.

But you may take old Martha Hudson's word that there was never any lady in the doctor's heart but one; and I call it a sin and a shame for anybody to suggest that her place was ever taken by another! He was never the same, after she died. And, to tell the truth, Mr. Holmes was worse cut up by it than I've ever seen him in 60 years. She used to come down here to see us, every single Wednesday of the year. And there's a picture of the little lamb, right on Mr. Holmes's desk at this moment.

Well, is there anything else you'd like to have me tell you? Oh, deary me, I nearly forgot. Mr. Hopkins said that some of you think that my Hudson was that wicked convict that acted so bad to old squire Trevor, when Mr. Holmes was in college. Well, that isn't so at all. I never saw that bad Hudson and I certainly never wanted to. A convict indeed! My Hudson was a respectable tradesman, I'd have you know, in a very small way in Peckham, and he died when I was barely 25 years old. But he was a saving sort and he left me a little property. So, with never a chick or child of my own and a little money in the postal-bank, I cast about and, after a while, I took the house in Baker Street and put up a card for lodgers. And, one winter's day, Mr. Holmes and the doctor came to the door and they let my first-floor sitting-room and my two bedrooms and you know the rest.

I hope I haven't wearied you with this long story, gentlemen. But Mr. Hopkins told me that you'd be interested in anything about the dear, old days. So he arranged for me to come to Eastbourne, and speak into one of these microphones; and I suppose everything I've said will come out, just as I spoke it.

Good-bye, gentlemen. You're all friends of mine, because you all love Mr. Holmes. And I hope you'll not forget old Martha Hudson.

DR. WATSON AND THE BRITISH ARMY

by CRIGHTON SELLARS

IT WAS THE MOST natural thing in the world that Dr. Watson, when he wrote down the various adventures of his friend Sherlock Holmes, should have given as much space as possible to mention of Army men and the various regiments and institutions of the British and Indian Armies. Watson's heart was always with the Army; it came second only to his affection for his inspired friend, and the profession of medicine played a very poor third. In Watson's stories collected in the Canon we find, upon investigation, that he is so jealous of the good reputation of certain Army regiments that, though he is only too quick to note a real regiment when a member of it is of good reputation, he resorts to the subterfuge of inventing a regimental name or number if the individual of whom he is writing is of low repute or has done anything reprehensible.

It is interesting to follow up Watson's mention of Army matters; to see just where his conscience has made him change the name of regiments, and to try to penetrate his sometimes very ingenious disguise of the real organization to which certain disagreeable characters belonged. It is a fairly good indication of just how a man stood in Watson's estimation, to find out how far he has gone in the use of camouflage.

Where he himself was concerned, the good doctor felt that he had to tell the truth, even at the risk of mentioning the embarrassing encounter at Maiwand, in which the British Army well and truly got itself into a right and proper jam and was most ingloriously routed. Watson tells as little as possible of the engagement itself, speaking only of "the fatal battle" in *A Study in Scarlet*, and—forgetting modesty in a good cause—featuring himself by focusing attention on his wound; thereby managing to sidestep a

recital in detail of the Maiwand mess. He does tell the truth about the regiments to which he was assigned—first to the Fifth Northumberland Fusiliers and then to the Berkshires—and it is interesting to muse on the fact that had he not been detached from the Fusiliers at Candahar and assigned to the Berkshires, we might never have had the Sherlock Holmes stories; for the Fusiliers were not sent to Maiwand, and had Watson stayed with them he would not have acquired that mobile wound which invalided him home and out of the service, and he would never have met Sherlock Holmes.

In the midst of our gratitude to Medical Headquarters for this boon, we might wonder why in the heading of the first chapter of *A Study in Scarlet* Watson rightly describes himself as "John H. Watson M.D., Late of the Army Medical Department," whereas, much further on in his narratives, in *The Problem of Thor Bridge*, he speaks of his tin despatch-box as being labelled "John H. Watson M.D., Late Indian Army." If Watson's service with the two regiments he mentions was all the Army service he had, he was never in the Indian Army, for the Berkshires and the Northumberland Fusiliers are of the regular establishment of the British Army and were merely ordered to India; while the Indian Army, as an organization, is an entirely separate thing. Colonel Sebastian Moran, on the other hand, did belong to the Indian Army, in a disguised regiment, the real name of which it is not difficult to discover—but he will be dealt with later. It is more than possible that there was a connection with the Indian Army in Watson's immediate family that made him unconsciously make the mistake of painting the term on his tin box, and which would explain his love for the entire service of Her Majesty. There was a distinguished officer of his name in the Indian Army in his time—namely, Sir John Watson, V.C., K.C.B., who as a Lieutenant in the First Paunjaub Cavalry—a regiment that remained loyal during the Mutiny—won his V.C. at the siege of Delhi, performing great deeds of valor which were related in a special official report of Sir Hope Grant. Sir John might very well have been an uncle, for whom our famous story-teller was named, and whose exploits may very well have turned young John's thoughts toward an Army career. Fortunately for us, the Maiwand bullet put him on another course.

Our Watson began his Army service in the orthodox manner for a doctor, for he says, in first introducing himself, that after taking his degree of Doctor of Medicine at the University of London he went to Netley to take the course prescribed for Army Surgeons. Netley is near Southampton, and it was in the Royal Victoria Military Hospital there that he took his training. After that he sailed for Bombay, heard that the second Afghan War had begun, "went deep into the enemy country," joined the Fusiliers, was transferred to the Berkshires, and took part in the Maiwand battle, which was the turning point of his life. From an account of the history of the Royal Berkshires—or, to give them their full title, PRINCESS CHARLOTTE OF WALES'S ROYAL BERKSHIRE REGIMENT, composed of the 49th and 66th Foot—I quote the words of Walter Richards, who wrote their story from their beginning up to the middle 1880's.

"The second battalion of the Royal Berkshire Regiment consists of the old 66th, the original Berkshire Regiment. It dates from 1755. . . . Active service of a particularly severe nature again fell to their lot in the Afghan War of 1880. In July 1880 about five hundred of the 66th were with the reinforcements under General Burrows, when the force under Shere Ali revolted and the British troops found themselves surrounded by foes. In the encounter, sharp and decisive, that ensued, the 66th were the only regiment that incurred any loss. But Maiwand was to follow with another and more ghastly tale. . . . There is no grimmer story in all the war annals of the country; no names shine in her honour-roll with more brilliant lustre than do those of the officers and men of the 66th who died in that wild day of terror and ruin on the fatal ridge of Maiwand. The official report of General Primrose concludes with the words in which the conventionalities of routine phraseology are swept away in a torrent of soldierly and patriotic admiration for the men of whom he wrote. 'History,' affirms the General, 'does not afford a grander or finer instance of gallantry and devotion to Queen and country than that displayed by the 66th Regiment on the 27th of July 1880.' The fight—a fight in which every step made by our forces seemed but to further engulf them—began at nine. When six o'clock came, a forlorn column of weary and dejected men were retreating to Candahar, having been hopelessly beaten by an

'overwhelming enemy', having lost two guns and two colours, and leaving dead on the field thirteen hundred of all its ranks. It is possible that had the advice of Colonel Galbraith of the 66th been taken, the issue of the day might have been different. . . . Galbraith, bare-headed—his helmet had been struck off—riding 'conspicuous in his scarlet tunic,' the special mark of the enemy, cheered on his men, who were forging their way into the dense mass of Ghaziz cavalry and infantry that hemmed them in. At last the retreat was ordered. All was in hopeless disorder, 'the skeleton companies of the 66th alone holding the enemy in check. When last seen Galbraith was on a mound kneeling on one knee, mortally wounded; around him were his officers and men; in one hand he held the Regimental colours, around which they rallied. There afterwards was his body found.' . . . Another party of the 66th, estimated of about a hundred of all ranks, made a most determined stand in a garden. These were surrounded by the whole Afghan Army and fought on until only eleven were left . . . these eleven charged out of the garden and died—standing back to back, firing steadily and truly, every shot telling, surrounded by thousands."

In all this record of bravery against great odds, a record in which countless names of dead and wounded are given, it is most disappointing to find that neither Mr. Richards nor General Primrose makes any mention of the services or peculiar wound of Dr. John Watson. Perhaps they overlooked him in the general excitement, and did not think that he rated any special word; but oh, had they known!—had they only known what a difference to the world of letters that unrecorded wound was to make, they might have spared a moment from recounting the general *débâcle* to speak of one whose subsequent career was to mean so much.

Getting into the stride of his story, Watson's next mention of a regiment in *A Study in Scarlet* concerns The Royal Marine Light Infantry. Unlike the American Marine Corps, which is part of the Navy, the British rate their Marines as part of the Army, who, because of their growing out of the famous Trained Bands of London, had the unique privilege of being allowed to march through London with drums beating and colors flying. There is a pleasant little story that goes thus: "It happened in the year 1746 that a detatchment of Marines, beating along Cheapside, one of the

magistrates came up to the officer, requiring him to cease the drum, as no soldiers were allowed to interrupt the civil repose. The Captain commanding immediately said, 'We are Marines.' 'Oh sir,' replied the alderman, 'I beg pardon. I did not know it.' "

It is in March 1882 that Watson, looking out of the window into Baker Street, sees the man whom Sherlock Holmes instantly identifies as a retired sergeant of Marines. That really wasn't such a great feat of identification on Holmes's part, and even Watson should have known who the man was, for he admits that the ex-sergeant wore the "regulation side-whiskers" then relegated to the enlisted men of the Marines. Perhaps Watson really did know, but wrote the story as he did so as to glorify Holmes the more. It is the ex-Marine, however, now a commissionaire, who ushers in the famous Lauriston Garden murder by bringing a note from Tobias Gregson asking Holmes to please "favour me with your opinions," and thus leads us to the long story of *A Study in Scarlet.*

The Sign of the Four contains quite a few Army references. We are told that Captain Morstan was senior captain in "an Indian Regiment," but later on Major Sholto of the same regiment is said to belong to the "Thirty-fourth Bombay Infantry." At the period of the Mutiny, when the events relating to Morstan and Sholto began, the regimental numbers of the Bombay Infantry of the Indian Army appear to have gone no higher than Thirty. Moreover, in the record of their achievements, a thick veil is drawn over the history of the Bombay Infantry during the Mutiny, a sure sign that they were not loyal; but they were back in the line of duty soon after, and the Thirtieth was one of the regiments that tried to assist the 66th at Maiwand. In view of Watson's dislike of Major Sholto and the doctor's disapproval of his deceased father-in-law's conduct in the matter of the Agra treasure, I take it that this is one of the occasions on which Watson chose to create a fictitious regiment in which to put his reprehensible characters. But there was a *Bengal 38th Infantry* known as "The Agra Regiment," to which I make a guess that Captain Morstan and Major Sholto really belonged.

Jonathan Small tells us that he joined the Third Buffs, "that was just starting for India." This is a real and very famous regiment, officially known as the Buffs (East Kent Regiment) con-

sisting of the Third Foot. It is one of the oldest in the British Army, having its origin in the time of Queen Elizabeth. Of course Jonathan Small was not with it long, for the crocodile in the Ganges snapped off his leg and retired him from active service. Watson may have thought to assign him to a good regiment out of pity, and because at the time that Small was in the Buffs he was of good character; but it is hard to believe that he really belonged to this regiment, because it was sent to the Crimea in 1855—too late for Balaklava and Inkerman, but in time for the famous assault on the Redan—and stayed there until after the Mutiny in India was over. The Buffs' previous service in India was under General Grey at Punniar against the Mahrattas in 1843, and I doubt if Small went there with them at that date, particularly as they had not been in England before that, but went to India from New South Wales. Small, going on with his story, speaks of the Third Bengal Fusiliers, by which he probably means (or else Watson deliberately misquotes him) the Third Bengal Infantry—the famous *Guttrie-ka-pultan*—which stood firm and loyal during the Mutiny. He is vague about the other regimental designations at Agra, merely mentioning "some Sikhs, two troops of Horse and a battery of Artillery" and later "my Paunjaubees" "who had borne arms against us at Chillian Wallah," a battle which won for the Empire the territory of the Paunjaub.

The next Army man mentioned is Colonel Hayter, in *The Reigate Squires,* who had come under Watson's care in India—but that information is just about as far as we get, for his branch of the service is not given. He evidently was not the Colonel of the 66th, who was Galbraith, killed at Maiwand; nor do I think that Hayter could have been the Colonel of the Northumberland Fusiliers, who kept the Khyber Line. In the year 1880, however, Hayter must have been of some lower rank, and he might have been in either regiment, or in some other organization stationed at Candahar.

In *The Crooked Man* we are introduced to a dead man, Colonel Barclay of the Royal Munsters,[1] then supposed to be at Aldershot. The Royal Munster Fusiliers, at the time that Watson wrote of them, consisted of the 101st and 104th Regiments, both old regi-

[1] In the English editions, they were the Royal *Mallows*.

ments of the East India Company, raised by Clive. Watson says, however, "the Royal Munsters" (which is the old One Hundred and Seventeenth) is "one of the most famous Irish Regiments in the British Army. It did wonders in the Crimea and Mutiny." The real Royal Munsters, organized by Clive, went into the British and not into the Indian Army, because it was made up of white men and known as the Bengal European Regiment. Most of these men were Irish, and it bears on its colors the Shamrock in addition to the Royal Tiger of Bengal, but it was not an Irish regiment in any sense. It never came to the British Isles until 1871. I find no record of its having been in the Crimea, and it did not leave India until it came to England in 1871. There is record of a Private Regan of the Munsters, whose gallant conduct before Delhi won him great preferment, and a Private MacGovern who won the V.C., either of whom might have been in Watson's mind when he gave the early history of Colonel Barclay. Aside from its Mutiny service, there seems to be nothing in the regimental history that coincides with Watson's facts, so we can easily see the low opinion in which Watson held Colonel Barclay—and no wonder, after the way the dead man had treated Henry Wood!

In *The Greek Interpreter,* Watson records the spirited set-to between Sherlock and Mycroft Holmes over the identification of a man they saw from the window of the Diogenes Club. Among other things, they instantly identify him as an old soldier recently discharged from the Royal Artillery as a non-commissioned officer; because of his bearing, his still wearing ammunition boots, his expression of authority, and the fact that he "had not the cavalry stride, yet he wore his hat on one side, as is shown by the lighter skin on that side of the brow. His weight is against his being a sapper. He is in the artillery." All of this is true, and a nice score for Sherlock and Mycroft; but one could wish that they had gone a little further and told us whether the man belonged to the Royal Horse Artillery or the Field or Garrison branch. It would have been easy for them, but for some strange reason they stopped in mid-stride, though they were voluble enough about his being a widower and about his children's ages. For my part, I deduce that the ex-Sergeant belonged to the Garrison Artillery, because he did not have the cavalry stride and because of his weight, which pre-

cluded too much riding and activity.

In *The Naval Treaty* there is mention of the commissionaire at the Foreign Office. This man, Tangey by name, is supposed to have been an old soldier from the famous Coldstream Guards. Watson, anxious to establish the good character of his man, assigns him to one of the most famous regiments in the whole British Army. The Coldstreams ("Coalies"), now of the Household Brigade, were the fighting regiment of General Monk, which marched with him into London on February 2nd, 1660, to end the sway of the Roundheads and herald the return of the Monarchy. Their service has been long and always honorable.

And now we come to our arch-villain in a top hat and evening dress, toting a collapsible air-gun with a "curiously misshapen butt" into his lair in the Empty House in Baker Street across from 221B. He is described as "*Moran, Sebastian, Colonel.* Unemployed. Formerly First Bangalore Pioneers," and so on. His Army service is taken up again when he is described as having taken part in the "Jowaki Campaign, Afghan Campaign, Charasiab (despatches), Sherpur and Cabul." Nevertheless, in spite of his good record, Sherlock Holmes tells Watson that Moran "made India too hot to hold him," whereupon "he retired, came to London and again acquired an evil name." With such a man, surely our good Watson would do his best to camouflage the organization which he polluted by membership. Of course there is no Bangalore Pioneer Regiment, but there was a very famous Corps in the Indian Army called The Corps of Madras Sappers and Miners (The Queen's Own), which consisted of two separate bodies, the Engineers and Pioneers, whose history, dating from the capture of Seringapatam, closely parallels Moran's service during his time with it. Bangalor, near the eastern boundary of Mysore, is just next to the district of Madras, and this may account for the association of the districts in Watson's mind when he came to paraphrasing the name of the real regiment to which his knave belonged. The Madras Pioneers served in the Afghan Campaign, Sherpur and Cabul, and had detachments in the Jowaki Campaign; also at Charasiah. There is either a curious mistake in the American edition of the Canon (*The Complete Sherlock Holmes,* Garden City Publishing Company, 1938), or else Watson has been at his tricks again. I have quoted this edition

above as saying "Charasiab (despatches)"; whereas the engagement referred to was really Charasia*h*, at which the Third Goorkas fought so gallantly. In some way the final *h* has been changed into a *b*, but whether this is a typographical error that was not corrected in proof, or a deliberate falsification by Dr. Watson, I have no way of knowing.[2]

Sherlock Holmes spoke of Moran's iron nerve and instanced the story told in India of how he crawled down a drain after a wounded man-eating tiger. This would appear to be pure bravado, and an act that served no purpose, for the tiger could surely have been left there to die and be washed down with the next rain. A baffling reference to Colonel Moran by Holmes occurs in *The Adventure of the Illustrious Client*. In *The Adventure of the Empty House*, Moran was arrested and taken away by the police, presumably to be tried and executed for his crimes in the year 1894 in the month of April, and Holmes said, "Colonel Moran will trouble us no more." Yet in *The Adventure of the Illustrious Client*, where General de Merville "of Khyber fame" (I can find no trace of him) is spoken of, Holmes talks to Colonel James Damery (no regiment or department given) of "the late Professor Moriarty" and "the living Colonel Sebastian Moran"—in September of 1902! Could there have been a miscarriage of justice?

The poor *Blanched Soldier*, Godfrey Emsworth, had been in the Middlesex Corps of the Imperial Yeomanry, an organization that was raised to fight in the Boer War. He and his anxious friend, Mr. James M. Dodd, were both of unimpeachable character, and so of course their regiment was very much a real one. Dr. Watson, when he wrote this story, had the great advantage of consulting the work of his Literary Agent, *The Great Boer War*, in order to verify the actions in which this regiment was engaged; and so the doctor very properly says that they were in action near Diamond Hill and outside of Pretoria, as it was in that phase of the war, the march to Pretoria and subsequent actions, that the Imperial Yeomanry did its best service. Watson had young Emsworth speak of the "morning fight at Buffelspruit, outside Pretoria on the Eastern Railway line" and tell of his adventures afterwards, when he was separated

[2] The name is spelt "Charasiab" in all English book and omnibus editions as well. *Ed.*

from his regiment in that fight. The Agent recounts that action as having taken place at *Bronkhorst Spruit*, and his map shows the Delagoa Bay Railway line, which did run east of the city to the ocean. Either there was no teamwork here, or else Watson again used his wonderful imagination, perhaps in order to obscure the trail leading to the leper hospital, though why he should have done so is hard to say. His reasoning in most changes of names is easily followed, however, and the transparent motives that caused him to twist both names and places. He little thought, poor man, as he blithely went his literary way, that someone some day would pick his little subterfuges to pieces and find out what he really meant and what he was at such pains to conceal. He felt, no doubt, that he was doing what any gentleman would do who had the welfare of the British and Indian Armies at heart.

Edgar W. Smith - Editor
Ben Abramson, Publisher

THE BAKER STREET JOURNAL
An Irregular Quarterly of Sherlockiana

JULY, 1947

3 West 46 Street, New York 19
TELEPHONE: BRyant 9-6561

New York 19, New York
1775 Broadway, Room 1800

* By Subscription only. Four Numbers $5.00

by RUSSELL MCLAUCHLIN [1]

I KNEW a great deal about Sherlock Holmes some years before I learned to read, and so did all my companions on Alfred Street in old Detroit. Not only did we consider him a flesh-and-blood mortal, but we had the vague idea that he lived in Detroit and that we were likely to see him walking down the street.

There were two reasons for this.

The enterprising publishers of *Collier's Weekly*, back in those days, used to present a year's subscriber with a modest bonus: a pair of grey-backed volumes whose titles were *A Study in Scarlet* and *The Sign of the Four*. This economical acquisition of a pair of masterpieces naturally prompted the close perusal of the same by our elders, producing much Sherlockian conversation around every fireside on the street. Youthful ears overheard these discussions and the name of the detective grew familiar.

So we used to clamor for stories of Sherlock Holmes, and my father, a great enthusiast, was always happy to comply, often relying on his own powers of invention for thrilling plots of an impromptu nature. He was careful to inform us that all his stories—

[1] From Mr. McLauchlin's *Alfred Street*, Conjure House, Detroit, 1946.

even his excursions into fancy—had been collected and written down by a certain Dr. Watson, who enjoyed the incalculable advantage of being the great man's friend and room-mate.

And something like that went on in every household where *Collier's* was delivered by the postman.

But the second reason was perhaps more potent. Suddenly Sherlock Holmes came to life; not the "real" Sherlock, we dimly understood, but an altogether satisfactory facsimile. For William Gillette came to town, as part of his famous first tour, and every young gentleman on Alfred Street demanded, with the utmost in passion, to be taken to see him, even if the family were in consequence obliged to temporize with the butcher.

So it was that the first time I ever entered a theater was to occupy a balcony seat in the Detroit Opera House and to watch, throughout one perfectly remembered afternoon, the tall form of Gillette and his weary, handsome face, as there magically unfolded that wonderful melodrama of his own contriving. I was five years old and had not learned to write my name.

But I at once became, and so did all my contemporaries, a brimming reservoir of information about Holmes and Watson and Moriarty and the rascally Larrabee couple.

A few years afterward, when I had made some headway in the art of reading, I saw the play again, in a humbler theater and performed by, I think, Herbert Kelcey. But that was sacrilege, as I quickly recognized. There was but one face in all the world to be received as Sherlock's own; the countenance of William Gillette. We all professed this; and our elders assented. We had not become critics, only votaries; confirmed in our devotion at the golden matinee. And many a long year later we came to know, those of us whose faith was unfaltering, that our judgment was correct and shared by many men of high repute and one incomparable illustrator.

Thus in the days when I was only five and none of us was more than seven, the person of Gillette became entangled, in our minds, with his great original's; and, while we vaguely knew that he was but an actor, impersonating the hero, yet we felt that thereafter we should recognize our Sherlock at a glance.

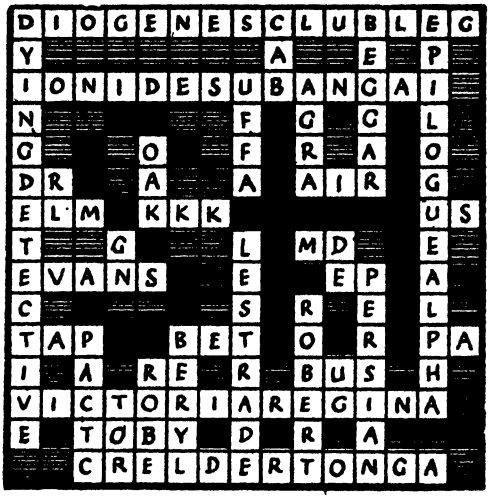
For five or more succeeding years, the best of all Alfred Street

pastimes, on a rainy Saturday afternoon, was the enactment of exciting Baker Street dramas, first based upon the play and odd scraps of our elders' narratives and finally founded, with no small scholarship, on the tales themselves, which we, by then, could read. We took turns at the characters but only one of us, a strong and stubborn youth, was ever Holmes himself. I was often Watson, being chunky and faithful.

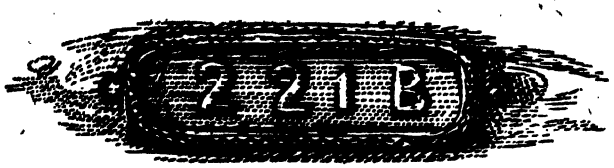
* * *

It seems to me—and to some others, too—that of all the good lines written by Booth Tarkington, the best was in a message which he sent to William Gillette on a famous evening in 1929. Wrote Mr. Tarkington, "Your return to the stage is a noble and delightful event, and, speaking for myself, I would rather see you play Sherlock Holmes than be a child again on Christmas morning."

SOLUTION TO CROSS-WORD PUZZLE BY STEPHEN SAXE IN THE APRIL ISSUE



LETTERS



TO BAKER STREET

Is Dr. Watson in the House?

SIRS:

Reading the story of Jonathan Small, I note that "a crocodile took me . . . and nipped off my right leg . . . just above the knee." In the next paragraph he says ". . . my leg was no great obstacle, for I had enough knee left to keep a good grip. . . ."

I believe it is usually necessary to further shorten the femur in order to form a flap for padding for the stump. Was this perhaps not so of the '60s? If research has already been made along these lines, please forgive and forget.

LEILA R. CAMERON

Ottawa, Ont.

Another Bow

SIRS:

Concerning Dr. Hammond's letter (Vol. I, p. 477) on the equivocal pronunciation of "bow" in *His Last Bow*, may I point out an important clue in Dr. Doyle's preface to *The Case-Book*? Here the literary agent says: "I fear that Mr. Sherlock Holmes may become like one of those popular tenors who, having outlived their time, are still tempted to make repeated farewell bows to their indulgent audiences." Is it not thus clear that *bough*, rather than *bo*, is the correct pronunciation? It may, of course, be argued that this is at best only apocryphal evidence, but I maintain that it is better than no evidence at all.

NATHAN BENGIS

New York, N. Y.

An Encounter with Dr. Doyle

SIRS:

I am unable adequately to express how really grateful I am to have the JOURNAL. My interest in Sherlock Holmes goes back to my boyhood days when my father, a minister with a fine library, and a great reader, brought me *A Study in Scarlet, The Sign of the Four, The Adventures* and *The Memoirs*. I, too, have peered into the depths of the Reichenbach Falls. . . .

During the winter of 1926 I met Sir Arthur Conan Doyle at Grindelwald in Switzerland. I was at the time an assistant in the surgical clinic at the University of Berne, and often we spent our holidays in the high mountains. One of my associates, a Montreal surgeon, as we were skating together one day, pointed to a man who was curling at a rink over at the side of the hotel. "Do you know who that is?" he asked. I had no idea. "Well," he said, "that is Conan Doyle."

Later, I met the good doctor, and since I was also a physician, became acquainted with him. In vain did I try by every known method of "history taking" at my command to get him to talk with me about the great one or about "the sacred writings." He simply wasn't interested. He talked at length about the psyche, and I am confident he would have been greatly interested in the present advance of psychosomatic medicine.

GEORGE M. CURTIS, M.D.

Columbus, O.

Another Suggestion

SIRS:

Why not run a contest in each issue of the JOURNAL under the heading "My Favorite Character in the Sacred Writings, and My Reasons"? Subscribers could write letters of a certain length with the winning entry published in each issue. I know that such a contest would mean plenty of extra work for the editor, but I think that results would be interesting to all Sherlockians.

ANGELLO HAMPARES

Grand Rapids, Mich.

Mrs. Hudson's Greatest Role

SIRS:

Dr. Watson is noteworthy more for his stolidness than for his inquisitiveness or deductive ability. On several occasions Holmes was clearly nettled on this account (*vide The Adventure of the Dancing Men*). Possibly this characteristic of Dr. Watson's enabled Mycroft to keep the rooms in Baker Street *in statu quo* while Holmes was traveling in Tibet and other far regions.

Dr. Watson apparently never once questioned either Mrs. Hudson or Mycroft as to the disposition of the famous scrapbooks and other voluminous records or the curios of crime which adorned the suite. This is clearly indicated by Dr. Watson's surprise at hearing that the rooms had been kept up during Holmes's absence. On the other hand, Mrs. Hudson kept her secret inviolate for three years.

Without a doubt the rooms were under constant surveillance by the confederates of Professor Moriarty for some time subsequent to the supposed death of Holmes. Mrs. Hudson probably had to turn away several prospective lodgers possessed of a suspicious interest in those famous rooms, and to do so with innocence mirrored in her good soul and plausibility in every word. It is surely the most difficult role she ever had to play, particularly as she presumed Holmes to be dead and yet had to keep up the rooms without exciting public comment. Certainly a woman can keep a secret! Mrs. Hudson, long suffering and uncomplaining, deserves another tribute for her tact and cooperation in this arrangement with Mycroft.

E. W. BLANK

Metuchen, N. J.

"Commuting" Again

SIRS:

One of my duties as a Scandalous Bohemian is to keep Mr. C. R. Andrew supplied with Mr. J. F. Christ's Sherlockian articles that appear frequently in the Chicago *Tribune*. I have been corresponding with Mr. Christ, and we have been arguing the matter of "commuting a felony." I base my arguments on the definition of "commute" in Crabb's *English Synonyms*. Crabb gives one meaning of *commute* as "to exchange, especially one form of punishment for another, such as the exchanging of the death penalty for one

of banishment." Thus Holmes exchanged the penalty of imprisonment (punishment for a felony) for Ryder's fear of being turned over to the police and exposure of his stealing the gem. One could even extend it to banishment—consider: "I will fly, Mr. Holmes, I will leave the country, sir."

The point of Holmes's not having the authority to commute anything can be absolved through Mycroft's influence: "Mycroft not only understands the British government, but . . . occasionally he *is* the British government."

DOYLE W. BECKEMEYER

Centralia, Ill.

WHAT SOME OF OUR READERS SAY

My opinion of the JOURNAL? It's that of every normal person who reads even one copy: it's the best publication since the Bible. —MRS. O. ROBERT REAGAN, *Westport, Conn.*

The BSJ is utterly charming and delightful—I hope it continues for many, many years.—MILES BECKER, *Chicago, Ill.*

Volume II Number 1 is the best yet published. Articles of the type contributed by Vincent Starrett, W. B. White, and Marie Rodell make the old gas-lamp burn brighter.—D. R. SALLEE, *Kansas City, Mo.*

I enjoy the JOURNAL very much. I like the text layout because it is solid text and no pages lost by advertisements, which are in front and back covers where they belong.—EARLE CORNWALL, *Los Angeles, Calif.*

The JOURNAL is the best thing of its kind ever done. All of us who have walked down Baker Street on a foggy winter's night salute you!—FREDERICK B. SHROYER, *Los Angeles, Calif.*

This serious, scientific, tongue-in-cheek study of Holmes helps keep him, for me, a *man*—the same living person he was to me in the glamorous uncritical days of my boyhood.—C. RUSSELL SMALL, *Winnetka, Ill.*

In this day and age it's the kind of creativity that, since it cannot lead to harmful ends, ought to be encouraged—and every issue of the BSJ renews my faith in mankind.—HELEN L. LINN, *New York, N. Y.*

A SHERLOCK HOLMES QUIZ

by JAMES SPEIRS, M.A. (HONS.)

1. Where were Sherlock Holmes's rooms? (b) What number of street, in all probability? (c) What distinguishing feature had the house?
2. Who was Sherlock Holmes's landlady? (b) How much did Holmes pay her, for her rooms and service?
3. "Elementary, my dear Watson!" From which of the *Adventures*, exactly, does this household phrase come?
4. Amati, Guarneri or Stradivari—which of these great Italians had made Sherlock's violin? (b) How much had he paid for it, and where? (c) How much was it really worth?
5. What was Holmes's favorite method (a) of getting about London? (b) of getting about England?
6. What "old friend" in Scotland Yard often did the routine work in Holmes's cases? (b) Were the two of them always on the best of terms? (c) What younger C.I.D. men later appeared on the scene?
7. What must be reckoned, in all probability, the most romantic episode in Sherlock Holmes's life?
8. On what famous occasion did Holmes pretend—to Dr. Watson and to his landlady—that he was dying? (b) Who was called in for consultation?
9. What kind of pipe did Sherlock habitually smoke? (b) What appears to have been his favourite tobacco? (c) Would he touch cigarettes?
10. In what story did Sherlock Holmes first make his appearance? (b) Who published it, and where?
11. At the auction of Sherlock Holmes's property, what favourite garment must, in all probability, have fetched a high price?
12. "This is *your* department, Watson!" What was?
13. There was something remarkable about Sherlock's eyes, and about

his nose. What were these peculiarities?

14. From what bad habit did Dr. Watson attempt, from time to time, to wean Sherlock Holmes? (b) From what disease did he occasionally suffer?
15. *The Adventure of the Five Orange Pips; A Scandal in Bohemia; The Red-Headed League; A Case of Identity.* Which of these stories was the *first* short story published in *The Strand Magazine*? (b) Which was the *last* short story published (April, 1927)?
16. In which Adventure did Sherlock Holmes confess: "We have not yet met our Waterloo, Watson, but this is our Marengo"?
17. What "great gift" (according to Dr. Watson) did Sherlock Holmes NOT have?
18. On what occasion did Holmes's landlady actually play a part in the plot?
19. A foreign Power conferred a decoration on Sherlock Holmes. (a) Which Power? and (b) What decoration?
20. Between what dates, exactly, did Sherlock Holmes disappear?
21. In what case, after his supposed death, did Holmes mysteriously reappear? (b) In what disguise did he first of all confront Watson?
22. Who was believed to have been the living original (a) of Sherlock Holmes? (b) of Dr. Watson?
23. Where, are we told, did Sherlock Holmes live in retirement? (b) In what pursuit did he tell Watson he had been engaged?
24. What tasty dish did the two friends enjoy especially in Baker Street? (b) What liqueur did Sherlock recommend, along with coffee and cigars? (c) What snack did he love to eat when pressed for time?
25. Name some hobbies which Sherlock Holmes loved, in addition to "his practice."
26. What method had Dr. Watson of reckoning the difficulty of a problem confronting Sherlock Holmes?
27. Did Sherlock Holmes ever come to grips with the agents of Germany?

The Scion Societies

OF PROVIDENCE

OFFICERS: Roland Hammond, M.D., *Dancing Master*; Roger T. Clapp, *Cypher*. Communications should be addressed to Dr. Hammond at 41 Boylston Avenue, Providence 6, R. I.

THE FIRST ANNUAL COTILLION of The Dancing Men was held at the Providence Art Club on January 24, 1947. The Bohemian atmosphere of the Club formed an appropriate setting for the gathering, since it was organized in 1880, just at the time when Dr. Watson was coming up the long road from Maiwand. The "#221B" was hung over the door-knocker, and the sundial, with its cryptic message held down by a pebble, was on the table. A Rhode Island dinner, prepared under the expert supervision of Mr. Miner and including the famed Jonnycake, was served to a party of twelve. We were honored by four members of The Speckled Band: James Keddie, Jr., Belden Wigglesworth, Mandel E. Cohen, M.D. and Richard Fiske; and two from The Five Orange Pips: Owen P. Frisbie and Benjamin S. Clark. The three other members of The Dancing Men, E. Tudor Gross, George L. Miner and W. Chesley Worthington, together with Bradford F. Swan as a guest, completed the company. Letters and telegrams were received from various other Scion societies. The traditional toast to The Master was drunk during the preprandial exercises, and during the evening appropriate pledges were given to Hilton Cubitt, Abe Slaney and Elsie.

The literary exercises were opened by The Dancing Master, who mentioned the residence in Providence of Edgar Allan Poe and his courtship with Mrs. Sarah Whitman, carried on largely in one of the alcoves of the Providence Athenaeum. He had also been informed that a certain individual, whose first names were Hamish Watson, had worked in one of the Providence hospitals several years ago. "The Pedigree of The Dancing Men" was traced by Dr. Hammond through the writings of Fletcher Pratt, Melville Davisson Post and the suggestive drawings of "The Restless Imps" in St. Nicholas magazine for June, 1874. Cordial greetings from The Speckled Band were extended by the Cheetah, James Keddie, Jr., and from The Five Orange Pips by Benjamin S. Clark. A rondeau, written especially for the occasion, was delivered by Belden Wigglesworth, Archivist of The Speckled Band. E. Tudor Gross read a parody, "The Mystery of the Art Club Mortgage," a Kerlock Shomes Adventure as recorded by Dr. Warsaw, in the well-known pattern that has become familiar to readers of *Stamps*. Owen P. Frisbie recited from memory a delightful rondel recalling many places and characters in the Sacred Writings, and ending with the couplet:

Pour out! Adventure sits with him who tips
The cup with Holmes and Watson, and The Pips.

The Musgrave Ritual was voiced by Owen P. Frisbie as the Canon, with the proper responses from the audience.

The program for the event, entitled "Alimentary, My dear Watson!" was produced by Mr. Worthington.

THE SIX NAPOLEONS OF BALTIMORE

OFFICERS: Paul S. Clarkson (Harker), *Gasogene*; Allen Robertson (Beppo), *Tantalus*; James T. Hyslop (Peterson), *Commissionaire*. All communications should be addressed to Mr. Robertson at 3963 Greenmount Avenue, Baltimore 18, Md.

OUR MEETING was held at the University Club, and all Six of the Nepoleons met at the Criterion Bar and raised the traditional toast at 6 P.M. We were honored to have as our guest one of the newly designated captains of the Maryland police, Lt. Alex L. Emerson, who gave us an interesting sidelight on the use of the bloodhound in the solution of crime.

Richard Q. Yardley presented to the Gasogene the original of the cartoon appearing in the *Sun* for January 4th: his discussion of Holmes was erudite, as was the new theory on the famous tooth episode presented by Dr. John C. Heck, a neophyte in the lore who will pass the required examination.

The Tantalus read the correspondence he had had with Hon. J. Edgar Hoover, who was delighted with the portfolio of Scotland Yard photographs presented by Commissionaire Hyslop. Prof. James H. Fitzgerald Brewster, of Johns Hopkins University, reported that Sherlock Holmes was correct in his opinion of Monsieur Bertillon, whose testimony in the Dreyfuss case helped to cause a miscarriage of justice. Napoleon Paxton asserted definitely that Devine did not make the bust of Napoleon. It was decided to review *A Scandal in Bohemia* for the next assembly. The Tantalus reported that a subscription had been entered for the JOURNAL in the name of the Enoch Pratt Library of Baltimore.

The Napoleons submit, for the delight of the JOURNAL's readers, this "Sonnet for a 'Six Napoleons' Dinner" written by James T. Hyslop:

We have two honored guests with us tonight:
Each in our hearts reserves for them a chair.
One, tall, beak-nosed, keen-eyed and spare,
The other broad, full-faced and of a medium height—
Two men to whom the world owes much delight.
"The game's afoot" we hear the taller one declare;
Let us adjourn with that immortal pair,
To where a London gaslamp sheds a feeble light:
Let's join Inspectors Gregson and Lestrade
In paying tribute to our famous host;
Let's sample tantalus and gasogene,
Discussing crimes that tantalized the Yard,
And these two men, in mem'ry ever green:
To Holmes and Watson, gentlemen, a toast!

THE WISTERIA LODGE CONFEDERATES

OFFICER: Manly Wade Wellman, *Commanding Colonel.* All Communications should be addressed to Mr. Wellman at Pinebluff, N. C.

THIS IS TO announce the official organization of the Wisteria Lodge Confederates as a Scion Society of the Baker Street Irregulars.

Pending consideration of qualifications of several possible recruits (a number wish to join, but seem shaky on just what the Sherlockian viewpoint should be), we are three in the WLC; myself, acting Commanding Colonel pending a formal choosing of officers; my brother Creighton Wellman, also of Pinebluff, who is a lifelong Sherlockian; and Mr. Richard W. Van Fossen of Durham, North Carolina. All officers of the WLC are

colonels, to meet Deep Southern requirements. The Commanding Colonel will execute the office of president, the Recording Colonel will serve as secretary, and the Supply Colonel will supply liquor, ice and soda water according to the wishes and resources of the order.

This is a small beginning, in numbers at least. Yet we remember how small was the Army of Northern Virginia, and how efficient.

I shall report more progress as it occurs. And I, and one or more of the other Confederates, will certainly be present next January at the Murray Hill Hotel or wherever else the faithful gather.

THE AMATEUR MENDICANT SOCIETY OF DETROIT

OFFICERS: Russell McLauchlin, *Gasogene*; Harry Bannister, *Tantalus*; Harry V. Wade, *Tide-Waiter*; Nevin C. Fish, *Lascar*. Communications should be addressed to Mr. McLauchlin in care of the Detroit *News*.

AMATEUR MENDICANCY soared to the highest point yet attained on the evening of March 14, as we have good reason to remember. It was the Annual Dinner and the place was the Stockholm Restaurant in Detroit, in an upper room, to enter which it was first necessary to ascend 17 steps. About two dozen Sherlockians, after drinking the Toasts, responding to the Ritual and singing the Anthem, sat down at the table.

Mendicant Robert G. (Trelawney Hope) Harris was able to stagger to his feet and serve as toastmaster. Several remarkable addresses, pleasantly accented by burps and belches, were delivered.

First, however, came two features, prepared long in advance and uncomplicated by smorgasbord. These were recordings, piped into the Stockholm from the studio of Station WWJ, through the good offices of the Tantalus, who is also manager of the station: A complete performance, cast and directed by the station, of Miss Edith Meiser's radio-adaptation of "A Scandal in Bohemia"; and an address to the Mendicants, recorded by Miss ZaSu Pitts for this very occasion, entitled "Mrs. Hudson Makes a Platter."

Distinguished visitors bore a large share of the program and they were three: Edgar W. Smith, a well-known industrialist who, they say, is likely to become prominent, some day, in Sherlockian circles; Robert J. Bayer, of the Chicago Baskervilles; and C. R. Andrew, who keeps the torch alight in Akron. Messrs. Smith and Bayer made secret communication of matters which will soon be spread before the national membership and therefore should not be described in this report. Mr.

Smith presented each member of the AMS with a "special edition" of the BAKER STREET JOURNAL; a greeting card suitable to the occasion, under the JOURNAL's masthead. Mr. Andrew, with liberal quotations from an Old Bailey transcript, elucidated "The Terrible Death of Crosby the Banker", in an able and fearless manner.

But these visiting celebrities by no means threw the resident Mendicants into the shade. Mendicant Ronald R. (Buck) Weaver opened the program with what is doubtless the final word on "The Bow Window." Mendicant Harry Hartman read a brilliantly reasoned judicial opinion, handed down in the appeal of "Plain Facts vs. Ultimate Reality," in which was established, by unanswerable logic, the supermundane actuality of Sherlock Holmes.

There were also quizzes, prepared by the Lascar and the Gasogene; the former's concerned with canonical clubs and the latter's dealing with ladies of the name of Violet and gentlemen with the title of Colonel. Mendicant John Sharman won the club-quiz and Mendicant Weaver the Colonel-Violet test.

Not the smallest feature of the evening was the display of a large ordnance map of Victorian London, on which Mendicant Harris had indicated, by the labor of many months, every canonical structure and street address, of whatever nature, together with a key which made identification an easy task, even for the visitors.

Agreeably to the principle that modesty is not to be ranked among the virtues, the Amateur Mendicant Society surveys its own merits with a splendid complacency and challenges all Scions, wherever situate, to organize shindigs in any way comparable to the tremendous event of March 14.

THE FIVE ORANGE PIPS OF WESTCHESTER COUNTY

ON FRIDAY evening, February 21st, The Five Orange Pips were the guests of Dr. Thorneycroft Huxtable at Priory Lodge, adjoining the Priory School, in Summit, N. J. Present were Jephro Rucastle, Reginald Musgrave, Roaring Jack Woodley, Victor Trevor, John McMurdo and Dr. Huxtable; regrettably absent were Henry Baker and Sir Henry Baskerville.

The group dined on oysters and roast goose, and in the latter was found, after much searching, a stone thought to resemble a blue carbuncle. Each of the members present read the paper he had prepared for the occasion, and there was much challenge and dialectic in the canon, all in the earnest vein befitting this erudite and most arcane of the Scions.

The Pips have set definitely upon the month of February as the occasion for their annual meeting.

An alphabetical listing, by authors, of books, essays, commentaries and verses about the Writings; extending the listing set forth in *Baker Street Inventory* (The Pamphlet House, Summit, N. J., 1945), and in previous issues of THE BAKER STREET JOURNAL.

Supplement No. 5

AUSTIN, BLISS

The Final Problem

The Queen's Awards, 1946; Little, Brown & Co., Boston, 1946.

Holmesian methods, exerted by Christopher Morley and Howard Haycraft, and abetted by much familiar Holmesian text, solve the murder of Ellery Queen by Colonel Moran.

CHRIST, JAY FINLEY

Irregular Chronology of Baker Street: I. Fragments

The Fanlight House, Chicago, 1947.

Appetite-whetting samples of Mr. Christ's work-in-progress: dealing with *A Study in Scarlet, The Sign of the Four, Silver Blaze, The Cardboard Box,* and *The Final Problem.*

KASNER, EDWARD, and JAMES NEWMAN

References

Mathematics and the Imagination

Simon & Schuster, New York, 1940.

The Dancing Men are used to demonstrate the equation of the laws of probability.

MCCLEARY, GEORGE F., M.D.

Three Examination Papers

The National Review, London, December, 1946.

Discourse on a trilogy of quizzes, the third of which is that of

E. V. Knox in Punch for October 31, 1928, as previously listed.

The Apotheosis of Sherlock Holmes

The National Review, London, December, 1946.

Mostly about the dating of *The Sign of the Four*, but B. S. I. commentary, too; with quotation of the third verse of the society's Anthem: as by "Londoner."

McLAUCHLIN, RUSSELL

Alfred Street and Baker Street

Alfred Street, Conjure House, Detroit, 1946.

A sympathetic chapter in a sympathetic book, which tells of pre-Irregular Sherlockian doings in old Detroit.

MacNAMARA, BRINSLEY

The Man Who Knew Sherlock Holmes

Tomorrow, New York, July, 1946.

A third-person pastiche, in the form of an Irish tall tale.

RHINELANDER, PHILIP H.

It's Very Unwise to Kill the Goose

The Pocket Book of Humorous Verse, Pocket Books, New York, 1946.

Sherlock Holmes and the police, from Mr. Rhinelander's *The Arrest of Wilson, the Notorious Canary Trainer*, q.v.

SNYDER, EDWARD D.

Sherlock Holmes at Haverford College

The Haverford Review, Haverford, Pa., Spring, 1945.

Random comment on the saga and the B. S. I., and on the Haverford collection of Sherlockiana.

STARRETT, VINCENT

The Private Life of Sherlock Holmes

The Art of the Mystery Story (ed. Howard Haycraft), Simon & Schuster, New York, 1946.

A new appearance, in careful selection, of salient facts from the standard biography, as previously listed.

STOUT, REX

Watson Was a Woman

The Art of the Mystery Story (ed. Howard Haycraft), Simon & Schuster, New York, 1946.

A new appearance of this perennial obscenity, as previously listed.

WOLFF, JULIAN, M.D.

A Catalog of 221B Culture

To Dr. R, privately printed, Philadelphia. 1946.

An erudite description and analysis of the writings that influenced the Baker Street learning; in this volume of tribute to Dr. A. S. W. Rosenbach.

Bibliographical Notes

HOLMESIANA HISPANICA

by ANTHONY BOUCHER

"Mister Reading is lean, smokes a cherry-wood pipe, and looks rather like Sherlock-Holmes. As for his wife, she too looks like Sherlock-Holmes when Sherlock-Holmes dressed in women's clothes to pursue Jack the Ripper."

Thus the Spanish humorist Jardiel Poncela describes his train companions in "My trips to the United States" (in his *Exceso de equipaje,* listed below). To the Anglo-Saxon Holmesian, the reference is startling; to the Spanish-speaking enthusiast, it is simple and inevitable.

For Holmes is renowned in Spain and Latin America not so much from the translations of the Canon as from a series of pulp pastiches known as the *Memorias íntimas de Sherlock Holmes,* in which the Master has an assistant named Harry Taxon, a landlady named Mrs. Bonnet, and more and wilder adventures in stranger corners of the earth than screen or even radio has ever credited him with.

The exact provenance of these pastiches has not hitherto been described. They were originally published in Berlin by the Verlagshaus für Volksliteratur und Kunst under the editorship of F. Butsch. Each volume was 32 pp., 8o. The first ten volumes (1907) carried the series title *Detektiv Sherlock Holmes und seine weltberühmten Abenteuer.* Volumes 11–157 (1907–1910) were *Aus. den Geheimakten des Weltdetektivs: Kriminal-Wochenschrift.* From volume 108 on (1909), they appeared also in a Salon-Ausgabe under the title *Der Welt-Detektiv,* in 8o volumes of 96 pp., presumably containing three stories apiece.

Four of these pastiches were translated in Madrid in 1908, and in 1911 a Barcelona firm took over the entire series. In Germany, where the translated Canon has enjoyed great vogue, the pastiches were quickly forgotten; in Spain they took root so firmly as almost to obliterate the writings of John H. Watson.

(A similar fate befell Raffles. At least 68 episodes of the *Aventuras de John C. Raffles* were published by Granada in Barcelona in 1911–12 and reissued by Atlante in 1929. Similar anonymous series include *Aventuras de Lord Jackson* (see PASTICHES below), *Aventuras del detective William Brunning*, and *Aventuras del detective Ros-Koff*. None of these seems to have attained the popularity of the Holmes series.)

Other Holmesian pastiches have been successful in Spain, especially in the theater; and it is probable that the name of Holmes carries greater weight in Spanish than in any other language save his own.

But in the coming era of perfect cultural relations with our Latin neighbors, you will need some slight acquaintance with the *Memorias íntimas* to bolster you against the shock of their casual reference to, say, Sherlock Holmes and the Treacherous Kodak, or the singular episode of the Black Mass in Naples.

(For a synopsis of the typical adventure of Jack the Ripper, cited by Jardiel, see Ellery Queen's *Misadventures of Sherlock Holmes*, pp. 14–15. And here is as good a place as any to confess that I am solely responsible for the error in that volume of referring to these pastiches as *Memorias últimas*.)

The following bibliography of Holmes in Spain is undoubtedly incomplete. Spanish bibliographical information is notoriously hard to come by and unreliable. A principal source of material has been my own collection, which I owe largely to the amiability of the Mexican author and bibliophile Antonio Helú. Other sources include:

Biblioteca española: revista general de la librería, de la imprenta [etc.].
Madrid: Asociación de la librería de España, 1901 ff.

Catálogo general de la librería española e hispanoamericana, años 1901–1930.
Madrid, Barcelona: Cámaras oficiales del libro, 1932–35, and the MLF article listed below.

The measurements of books I have examined are given in centimeters, others in the traditional terms. Translators are listed in parentheses, when known.

TRANSLATIONS

1902(?)
Policía fina [A Study in Scarlet]
Madrid: El Imparcial. 4o, 141 pp.

1906
Estudio en rojo (José Menéndez

Novella)
Madrid: Rivadeneyra. 8o, 255 pp. (reissued in 1921)

1907–08
Aventuras de Sherlock Holmes
Madrid: Editorial Española-Americana. 8o, 8 v.

Contents:
- Un crimen extraño (Julio y Ceferino Palencia). 1908, 224 pp.
- La marca de los cuatro (Julio y Ceferino Palencia). 1908, 252 pp.
- Nuevos triunfos de Sherlock Holmes. 1908, 208 pp.
- El perro de Baskerville (José Francés). 1908, 252 pp.
- Policía fina (José Francés). 1907, 252 pp.
- El problema final (José Francés). 1907, 207 pp.
- La resurrección de Sherlock Holmes (José Francés). 1908, 238 pp.
- Triunfos de Sherlock Holmes (José Francés). 1908, 215 pp.

1908
Estudio en rojo
Madrid: Saturnino Calleja. 4o, 76 pp. and 8o, 245 pp.

1909(?)
Aventuras de Sherlock Holmes (Emilio María Martínez)
Barcelona: Cassó Hermanos. 8o, 217 pp.

Un escándalo en Bohemia (Emilio María Martínez)
Barcelona: Cassó Hermanos. 8o, 202 pp.

1914(?)
Aventuras de Sherlock Holmes
Barcelona: Ramón Sopena. 8o, 6 v.
Contents:
- Aventuras de Sherlock Holmes (J. Bonet), 255 pp.
- Nuevas hazañas de Sherlock Holmes (J. Bonet). 272 pp.
- Nuevos triunfos de Sherlock Holmes (J. Zamacois). 237 pp.
- La señal de los cuatro (J. Bonet). 224 pp.
- Triunfos de Sherlock Holmes (J. Bonet). 239 pp.
- El sabueso de los Baskerville (Arturo Costa Alvarez). 253 pp.

1928
El valle del terror: novela (M. Vallvé)
Barcelona: Ediciones Iberia. 8o, 250 pp.

1930(?)
Nuevas y últimas aventuras de Sherlock Holmes (Case Book of Sherlock Holmes) (Adela Grego)
Valencia: Prometeo. 8o, 267 pp.

Reprints of these various translations are innumerable, under assorted imprints including Barcelona: Maucci, Valencia: Prometeo, and Buenos Aires: Hachette. Editorial Zig-Zag in Santiago published a complete Holmes in 15 volumes; but the exact date (probably the late '30s) and the nature of the translation have not been ascertained.

The reference in the catalog of

the Starrett sale to an *Aventuras* [sic] *de Sherlock Holmes*, Valencia circa 1910, as "(probably) First Spanish edition" is incorrect. The Valencia specimens are reprints of the 1907–08 Madrid series.

ANTHOLOGY APPEARANCES

Los señores de Reigate. pp. 46–64 of Historias de detectives: selección, prólogo y notas de Luis Enrique Délano.
Santiago de Chile: Zig-Zag, 1939. 20.5 cm, 167 pp.

La liga de los cabezas rojas. pp. 47–69 of Los mejores cuentos policiales: selección y traducción de Adolfo Bioy Casares y Jorge Luis Borges.
Buenos Aires: Emecé, 1943. 19.5 cm, 293 pp.

CRITIQUE

Fernández Cuenca, Carlos
La verdadera historia de Sherlock Holmes (con motivo de la muerte de Arturo Conan Doyle)
Probably first published in Spain circa 1930. Reprinted in Misterio (México), 74: 104–108, August 1940
Careless but well-intentioned account of Doyle, Bell, the *Strand*, etc.

Délano, Luis Enrique
Apuntes sobre la novela policial. pp. 5–10 of Historias de detectives (see anthologies above)
Contains a brief but sensitive rhapsody on Holmes.

DRAMATIZATION

Jover, Gonzalo & Arroyo, Enrique
La tragedia de Baskerville: drama policiaco en cinco actos
Barcelona: Biblioteca "Teatro Mundial"; Madrid: Sociedad de Autores Españoles, 1915. 19 cm, 79 pp.
Produced Barcelona 1915. Effective and reasonably faithful adaptation.

PASTICHES

Memorias íntimas:
Four of these were first published in 1908 by La Novela Ilustrada, Madrid, in two volumes of respectively 1 and 3 stories. Later editions include:

Memorias íntimas del rey de los detectives
Barcelona: F. Granada, 1911. 43 v.
(Also published 4 to the volume and variously entitled Aventuras, Memorias, or Recuerdos de Sherlock Holmes).

Memorias íntimas del rey de los detectives
Barcelona: Atlante, 1928. 76 v.

Segunda serie: Memorias íntimas de Sherlock Holmes
Barcelona: Atlante, 1928. 74 v.

Memorias íntimas de Sherlock Holmes
Barcelona: Atlante, 1928. 150 v. in 38.

Jackson contra Sherlock Holmes
Barcelona: Granada, 1911. (One of the Aventuras de Luis Jackson).

Leblanc, Maurice

One would expect all of Leblanc's Herlock Sholmès pastiches to exist in Spanish, but BE and CG list only one:

Arsenio Lupin, ladrón de levita (Carlos Docteur)
Madrid: Ortega, 1911. 8o, 266 pp.

There is reason to believe that Spanish translations of Leblanc were published in Paris; and Spanish books printed in France lie in a borderland inaccessible to bibliographic research. Some at least of the Lupin tales are published by Tor in Buenos Aires. For adaptations of Leblanc, see Serrano under dramatic pastiches and Helú under film pastiche.

DRAMATIC PASTICHES

Jover, Gonzalo, & González del Castillo, Emilio

Holmes y Rafles [sic]: primera parte del desafío entre el famoso detective y el astuto ladrón. Fantasía melodramática en cinco cuadros . . .
Madrid: Sociedad de Autores Españoles, 1908. 8o, 43 pp.

La garra de Holmes: segunda parte de Holmes y Rafles [sic]. Fantasía melodramática en un acto y cinco cuadros . . .
Madrid: Sociedad de Autores Españoles, 1908. 8o, 36 pp.

Both produced in 1908, with music by Pedro Badía.

Millá, Luis & Roura, G. X.

La captura de Raffles o El triunfo de Sherlok [sic] Holmes: melodrama moderno, en un prólogo, cinco actos y once cuadros . . .
Madrid: Sociedad de Autores Españoles, 1912. 19 cm, 83 pp.

Produced Barcelona 1908. A delightfully high-spirited comedy melodrama.

Nadie más fuerte que Sherlock-Holmes: segunda parte de La captura de Raffles, drama en seis actos . . .
Madrid: Sociedad de Autores Españoles, 1913. 19 cm, 92 pp.

Produced Barcelona 1909. A flat and unfortunate sequel, largely plagiarized from Leblanc's Arsène Lupin contre Herlock Sholmès.

Serrano Viteri, Heraclio & Grimau de Mauro, Enrique

La aguja hueca (Lupin y Holmes)
Published, but bibliographical details lacking.

Produced Madrid 1912. An adaptation of Leblanc's L'aiguille creuse.

Sucarrats, M. S.

El vendedor de cadáveres o El timo a 'La Gresham': melodrama en siete actos y ocho cuadros . . .
Madrid: Sociedad de Autores Españoles, 1916. 19 cm, 78 pp.

Produced Palma de Mallorca 1915. An adaptation from the Memorias íntimas—scarcely Holmesian, but rather effective Grand Guignol.

Soler, Emilio Graells, & Casanova, Enrique

Hazañas de Sherlock Holmes: melodrama en seis actos.
Barcelona: Biblioteca Teatro Popular, circa 1915. 19 cm, 114 pp.
Produced Barcelona circa 1915. Also probably from the Memorias.

Sierra Montoyo, Miguel
El robo del millón, o De potencia a potencia (Holmes y Rafles [sic] burlados)
Melilla: 1916.
Unproduced.

FILM PASTICHE

Helú, Antonio
Arsenio Lupín: comedia cinematográfica. pp. 53–101 of Las desventuras de Arsenio Lupín: recopilación y notas de Antonio Helú.
México: Oriente, 1945. 18 cm, 172 pp.
An entertaining original screenplay, borrowing its final scene from Leblanc's Herlock Sholmès arrive trop tard (but restoring the true name of the Master).

PARODIES

Jardiel Poncela, Enrique
Los 38 asesinatos y medio del castillo de Hull.
Madrid: Editores Reunidos, 1936. 64 pp.
reprinted as pp. 291–318 of
Exceso de equipaje
Madrid: Biblioteca Nueva, 1943. 19 cm, 609 pp.
A highly amusing (if untranslatably so) parody, but of the Memorias íntimas rather than of the Canon.

Novísimas aventuras de Sherlock Holmes. pp. 83–136 of El libro del convalesciente: inyecciones de alegría para hospitales y sanatorios.
Zaragoza: Biblioteca Nueva, 1939; Montevideo: Mar, n.d. 19 cm, 493 pp.
Seven short sketches similar to the previous entry.

Martínez de la Vega, Pepe
Humorismo en camiseta (Aventuras de Péter Pérez)
México, 1946. 19 cm, 184 pp.
Though Leopoldo Ramos' preface states that the parody-detective Péter Pérez "desciende en apariencia de Sherlock Holmes," the relationship is at most a distant one.

REFERENCES

[Maurice, Arthur Bartlett]
Señor Sherlock Holmes
The Bookman (N.Y.), 41:118 ff (April 1915)

Rogers, Paul Patrick
Sherlock Holmes on the Spanish stage
Modern Language Forum, 16:88 ff (June 1931)
Well summarized on pp. 149–152 of Vincent Starrett's Private Life of Sherlock Holmes.

Boucher, Anthony
Holmesiana Hispanica: a tentative bibliography
A pamphlet mimeographed for The Scowrers of San Francisco, 1945, of which the current article is an expansion.

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