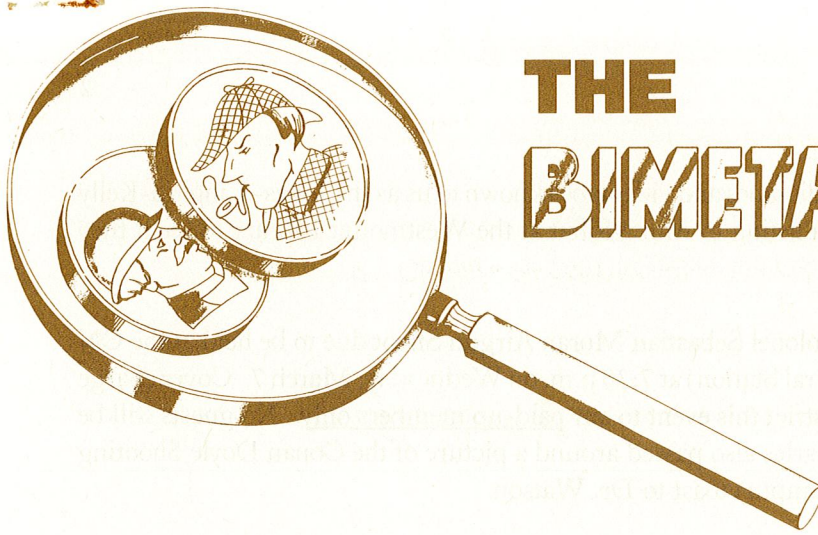


7 FEB 2001



THE BIMETALLIC QUESTION

Box 883 Stock Exchange Tower
Montreal, Canada H4Z 1K2

The next meeting of the BIMETALLIC QUESTION will held be on Wednesday, April, 4, 2001 at 6:30 p.m. SHARP at the Westmount Library (Westmount Room), 4574 Sherbrooke Street West, Montréal, Québec. PLEASE PAY ATTENTION TO PARKING SIGNS!!!

The NEXT QUIZ will be prepared by NANCY WALKLING based on THE FIVE ORANGE PIPS.

PLEASE TAKE NOTE

Cheques for 2001 Membership (January-December) are now due; please forward to Wilfrid de Freitas at the address above

MINUTES of the MEETING of the BIMETALLIC QUESTION held on Wednesday, February 7, 2001 at the Westmount Library (Westmount Library), 4574 Sherbrooke Street West, Montréal, Québec.

Present: Jack Anderson, Maureen Anderson, Stanley Baker, Paul Billette, Patrick Campbell, David Dowse, Linda Huntoon, Elliott Newman, Charles Purdon, Peter Reiner, Colin Semel, Nancy Walkling, Heather Wileman-Brown
Regrets: Claude Campbell
Guests: Ethan R. Allen, Richard Buche, David Kellett, Christopher O'Brien, Christine Sparks

CALL TO ORDER

Due to parking problems, with most local streets posted for snow clearance, the meeting was called to order by David Dowse at 6:45 p.m. David gave a toast to **The Master**, then introduced our guests, and all present explained how they became interested in the society. It was good to see Richard Buche back in the fold. It was noted that there is a full moon tonight, which explains a good deal.

David asked what people thought of the banquet and comments included: food and price was appreciated, larger room with fireplace and higher ceiling was a lovely bonus, the lack of singing was noted. Comments on the speaker (Dr. Gardner) concerned access to the book described. Patrick Campbell explained how the speaker had become know to us, and some background to the "Whole Art of Detection," and the possibilities of having an expanded version published.

VENATIO ADEST

SHOW/TELL

David spoke concerning the collection of books, audiotapes and videotapes known to us as the Jones- Lingard-Kelly Archives. It was agreed that Patrick should mail a listing to Ann Moffat at the Westmount Library to see if they would be interested in taking over the collection.

Charles Purdon gave a brief background on the **Colonel Sebastian Moran Airgun Shoot** due to be held at the CN Revolver Club (891 William Street — behind Central Station) at 7:30 p.m. on Wednesday, March 7. Cover charge will be \$5.00. The Revolver Club expects us to **restrict this event to our paid-up members only**. No guests will be permitted. Twelve people put up their hands. Charles also passed around a picture of the Conan Doyle Shooting Trophy. Maureen Anderson then gave the (impromptu) **toast to Dr. Watson**.

Nancy Walkling brought a map of the Andaman Islands; Heather Wileman-Brown had a book, *Mr. Doyle and Dr. Bell* (Howard Engel), and a pair of Victorian gloves. Charles had a tiny (2-inch square) book, *The Baker Street Comparison*. Elliott Newman had a book, *A Study Guide to Sherlock Holmes* (William Dorn). He also handed around some nice leatherette bookmarks. David had the Jack Todd Gazette mystery series, apparently rather sordid in nature. Elliott gave the **toast to Mrs. Hudson**.

David said that we may put together a group to attend Muse Entertainment's next film, **Sign of the Four**. Our secretary has written to Muse Entertainment but no answer has been received so far. Heather carried on with a **toast to Irene Adler**.

Patrick gave an overview of the upcoming Toronto symposium (October 19-21), "Footprints of the Hound," and all members should try to put together a group to go. There will be a reduced cost to those signing up before March 31; see enclosed pamphlet.

Paul reminded us of the October visit we made to Burlington, with the Goose Club of the Alphonse Inn, and we hope to have a further visit, perhaps a garden party or picnic this summer, with our group turning up in costume.

QUIZ

The quiz was on *The Sign of Four*, set by Charles, and there was the usual hilarious marking session. The winners were Nancy (45), David Kellett (42), and Patrick (40). The prizes were a model of Ganesh (the elephant god), a copy of *The World's Greatest Sherlock Holmes Quiz*, and *Naked is the Best Disguise* by Samuel Rosenberg. Nancy chose *The Five Orange Pips* as her subject of the next quiz.

VARIA

David said there was a need to restaff the phone committee, and Maureen and Elliott agreed to join Stanley Baker and Rachel Alkallay in this important work.

David suggested we try to develop some sort of contest with prizes. There was some discussion — including setting "homework" assignments to be brought to the next meeting, or perhaps exhibits, collages or the like, or a round of charades with some specific set of rules. David said he would bring some ideas to the next meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

David called on Paul to give the **toast to The Society**, and we closed at 8:25 p.m. after a very merry evening.

Respectfully submitted,
Patrick Campbell / cac

During the evening, David Kellett mentioned that *The Sign of Four* (or *Sign of the Four*) had been commissioned at a dinner party in London at the same time as a similar length book by Oscar Wilde. Stoddart invited Doyle to the dinner on the recommendation of James Payne, editor of the Cornhill Magazine, who admired Doyle's *A Study in Scarlet*. This is perfectly true.

The dinner took place at the Langham Hotel (opposite the BBC at the northern end of Regent Street). The dinner was arranged by Joseph Marshal Stoddard [1845-1921] of Lippincott & Co., publishers of Lippincott's Magazine that published the Sherlock Holmes stories in the U.S.A. At the dinner were Stoddart, Doyle, Wilde and Thomas Patrick Gill (an Irish MP). Both Doyle and Wilde promised to write a book for Lippincott's Magazine, so Doyle wrote his second Sherlock Holmes tale, *The Sign of Four* and Wilde wrote *The Picture of Dorian Gray*. Lippincott agreed to pay Doyle a hundred pounds for a story of not less than 40,000 words which was much better than the 25 pounds that Ward, Lock had paid Doyle for *A Study in Scarlet*.

Doyle had originally hesitated between "The Sign of the Six" and "The Problem of the Sholtos." Stoddart published his first edition with two titles, "The Sign of the(sic) Four; or, The Problem of the Sholtos" while the English first edition was put out by Spencer Blackett as "The Sign of Four" (leaving out "the").

The agreement between Doyle and Lippincott's was signed on August 30, 1889, and the book, written during September and October, and first publication in Lippincott's Monthly Magazine, was in February 1890. Pretty fast work!

During the evening, David Porter learned that Wm. Gray (or Gray of the Law) had been commissioned as a dinner party in London at the same time as a similar party book by Oscar Wilde. Stoddard invited Porter to the dinner on the recommendation of James Taylor, editor of the Cornhill Magazine, who advised Porter and Gray as follows: "This is perfectly true."

The dinner took place at the Lyngham Hotel (opposite the BHC at the northern end of Regent Street). The dinner was arranged by Joseph Wills and Co. (1842-1921) of Lippincott & Co., publishers of Lippincott's Magazine, that published the Spectator. Various stories in the U.S.A. At the dinner were Stoddard, Doke, Wilde and Thomas Patrick Gill (an Irish MP). Both Doke and Wilde promised to write a book for Lippincott's Magazine so Doke wrote his second Spectator. Porter later wrote Wilde wrote The Victim of Dorcas Cove. Lippincott agreed to pay Doke a hundred pounds for a story of not less than 10,000 words which was much better than the 25 pounds that Ward, Cook and Doke had paid for 2 days work.

Doke had originally intended to write "The Problem of the Six" and "The Problem of the Seven", Stoddard had asked his first edition with two titles, "The Sign of the Six" or "The Problem of the Six", while the English first edition was put out by Speker Blacker as "The Sign of Four" (leaving out "Six").

The agreement between Porter and Lippincott's was signed on August 30, 1888, and the book written during September and October, and first published in Lippincott's Monthly Magazine, was in February, 1890. Very few work.