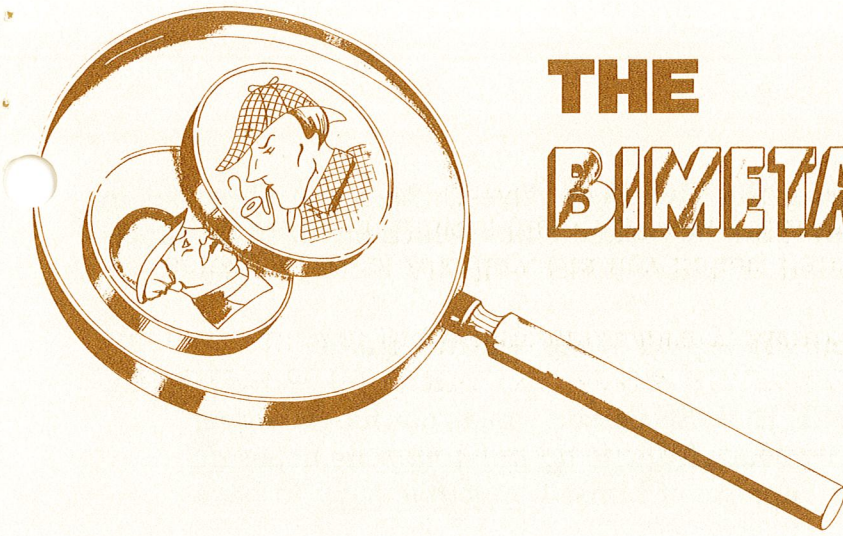


4 AUG 99

THE BIMETALLIC QUESTION

Box 883 Stock Exchange Tower
Montreal, Canada H4Z 1K2



The next meeting of the **BIMETALLIC QUESTION** will be held on Wednesday, October 6, 1999 at 6:45 p.m. at the Coach House of the Montréal Badminton & Squash Club, 3529 Atwater, Montréal, Québec. **VOLUNTEERS ARE NEEDED TO PROPOSE TOASTS:** Phone Claude Campbell at 747-7987 and choose your toast.

MINUTES of the **MEETING** of the **BIMETALLIC QUESTION** held on Wednesday, August 4, 1999 at the Westmount Library, Montréal, Québec.

Present: Rachel Alkallay, Stanley Baker, Patrick Campbell, Wilfrid de Freitas, David Dowse, Mary Finnegan, Edward Kelly, Johanne King, Lynda Penning-Gatelaro, Carole Rocklin, Heather Wileman-Brown, Lise Winer

Apologies: Claude Campbell

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:10 p.m., and our Sovereign, David Dowse, suggested that we all go downstairs to the Junior Library, where a glass display case held a number of Sherlockian articles on loan to the library from members of the Bimetallic Question. There were also a number of fine posters on the walls and several appropriate notices. It seems that the library is running a theme of "Mystery and Detection" for the summer, and the children must read certain books and solve certain puzzles, with the winners gaining the title of Chief Inspector. We had given our support as requested by Wendy Wayling, who had attended our Executive Meeting on March 25th. All of us were most impressed.

Following the viewing, we all trooped back to the fine meeting room, and all agreed it had a suitable Victorian/Edwardian air and that it would be a most agreeable venue for the Society, although we would have to adjust to the 9:00 p.m. closing time. For the present, however, we will continue to meet at our new home, the Coach House on Atwater.

SHOW/TELL

Lise Winer read an amusing anecdote from the *New York Times*, whereby Arthur Conan Doyle was identified by a cab driver in New York by various clues, which included the labels on his luggage clearly stating his name.

Edward Kelly delved out a quotation from *Finnegan's Wake*, which I quote:

I should like to ask that SHEDLOCK HOMES person who is out for removing the roofs of our criminal classics, by what *deductio ad domunum* he hopes *de tacto* to detect anything unless he happens of himself, *movibile tectu* to have a slade of.

Now this would, of course, be perfectly clear to any scholars of James Joyce, but Edward explained it all for the uninitiated.

Colin Semel chipped in with a short piece on "The Acid Test" from an *Ellery Queen* magazine.

Patrick Campbell read excerpts from an announcement from the Sherlock Holmes Society of London, detailing the events planned to celebrate the erection of a statue of Holmes outside the Baker Street Underground Station. These included a reception on the high-level walkway of Tower Bridge, an evening at the British Library, the unveiling at Baker Street, a tea party at the House of Lords, films at the London Museum, a gathering at Lords Cricket Ground, a play, "The Last Act," various lectures, and a visit to the studio of the sculptor, John Doubleday.

The festival lasts from Tuesday, September 21 to Sunday, September 26. Cost to attend all events is £155 (about \$375) plus return airfare, unless you stay there, or about \$750. All the venues can be reached by the Underground. Add about £35-50 (about \$100) per night/hotel including full English breakfast. Very tempting.

Rachel Alkallay gave a graphic account of her trip to the Channel Islands, where she photographed everything in sight and located a Priory House near the Devil's Hole, about as Sherlockian as she could get.

VARIA

David asked about our proposed colloquium "fin de siècle" and, in fact, nothing is going on at the moment as we would need a cadre of volunteers to put it all together. Several present agreed to help, so it was agreed that an Executive Subcommittee should be formed, and meet before the end of September. Mary Finnegan and Carole Rocklin offered to host the meeting.

David announced that the Garden Party was to be on August 14, as notified, and seven of those present expressed a resolve to attend, with an approximate total of 11-14 attendees. All were told to bring appropriate food and drink and to try to wear suitable costume, or at least a funny hat. Don't forget swimsuits! In case of rain, events will move indoors. Correct number for registration is 747-7987 not 744-7987 as previously advised. Sorry about that.

David handed out a game, concerning Jim and Tim, or was it Tim and Jim, and all took part.

Patrick gave a short talk on the works of the writer R. Austin Freeman, and his detective, Dr. Thorndyke, a contemporary of Holmes. The collected works are being published in 14 volumes by The Battered Silicon Despatch Box of Sherburne, Ontario.

CORRESPONDENCE

A letter was then read, somewhat belatedly, from our absent member Francis Lalumière, who writes from San Francisco, saying that he misses, inter alia, his family and friends, our province of Québec, and the Bimetallic Question. It appears that he has obtained a job as Content Developer - Marketing for Lucasfilm Ltd., and is writing articles for the StarWars website, as well as for licensed magazines; StarWars aficionados and Trekkies present turned green with envy. Francis included a toast to the Society, which was read out at our April 7 meeting. A copy of all minutes will be sent to him, of course.

QUIZ

The dreaded quiz was on THE ADVENTURE OF THE THREE GABLES with contestants to identify a person, a place or a thing from the story. David won with 12 correct answers, Mary and Stanley Baker tied with 11 each, and Lise brought up the rear, in a manner of speaking, with 9½. Realizing that we had started with 13 people, Johanne King sportingly left early. A tiebreaker gave the prize, a jigsaw puzzle, to Mary, as David, the supplier, could hardly award it to himself. The quiz for the next meeting will be based on THE SUSSEX VAMPIRE.

TOASTS

Five toasts, all involving libraries, appropriately were delivered during the evening by Edward Kelly, Stanley Baker, Wilfrid de Freitas, Rachel Alkallay and Colin Semel (see attached).

Respectfully submitted,
Patrick Campbell for CAC

/cac

TOASTS OF THE EVENING

When Holmes first came to London, he took rooms in Montague Street, which extends along the eastern side of the British Museum — and we can be sure that Holmes frequented the legendary Reading Room, now known as the British Library. In memory of those days

TO THE MASTER

Mrs. Hudson's library may have been big or small, but it would certainly have included "Mrs. Beeton's Book of Household Management." And Mrs. Beeton's husband was the publisher who first printed "A Study in Scarlet" in Beeton's Christmas Annual in 1887.

TO MRS. BEETON and MRS. HUDSON

Dr. Watson undoubtedly had a library of his own, to keep his copies of Lancet, the medical journal, his own writings, including "The Reminiscences of John H. Watson, M.D., late of the Army Medical Department." Back numbers of "The Pink'un" to keep track of the horses, his sea stories of Clark Russell and other such ... for Watson was a reader as well as a writer.

TO DR. WATSON

Irene Adler's library would have, of course, included opera scores and play scripts, and, I'm sure, a copy of Debrett and Who's Who.

TO THE WOMAN

Our society has a nice little library of printed books, as well as audio and videotapes, thanks to bequests from Arnie Jones, William Lingaard and Tom Kelly.

TO THE SOCIETY and OUR BENEFACTORS

THE BIMETALLIC QUESTION
2nd LAURENTIAN GARDEN PARTY
Saturday, August 14, 1999

The weather forecasts predicted nothing but clouds, rain and cool temperatures as a hardy group of Sherlockians headed north along Highway 15, seeking Exit 72 at Ste-Adèle. At this point, some soon located N° 1 Rue de Luminaires, said to be just past the Village de Séraphin. What they did not tell us was that said village had been closed and auctioned off some time ago. Certain of the party drove bravely about for some time, apparently touring the area, then arriving somewhat late for lunch.

However, it all worked out, the clouds rolled away, and, probably arranged by our generous host, Doug Grove, the sun shone forth, and the pool was soon declared open. Heather Wileman-Brown was sent to cut a large batch of flowers for the table, and, as others arrived, an astonishing range of food began to appear on the groaning board. Carole Rocklin arrived with Stanley Baker, and Simon Petzold arrived with Wilfrid and Susan de Freitas.

Unfortunately, Doug as called back to the city by an urgent family matter, but his sister, Barbara, and her husband, Claude, soon appeared with the key to the wine cellar and intimate knowledge of the whereabouts of all the equipment and supplies, and how to operate the machinery. Some were detailed to wash and set out the lawn chairs while another group began to open bottles and assemble the lunch, and before long piles of Mrs. Porter's Cornish Pasties (*pasties radix pedis diaboli*) and hot sausage rolls appeared, together with cold cuts, various cheeses, salads, dips and all sorts of goodies. The white and the red flowed freely as usual and things looked brighter and brighter as the afternoon wore on. Soon almost all were floundering into the fine heated inground pool, next to a beautiful grove of trees which enclosed a Japanese garden with a waterfall, a pool, and stone seats in the shady retreat.

Somewhat after the first arrivals, a new member, Sandy Tabori joined us, and our co-founder, David Dowse, arrived with his wife, Guylaine, and their two daughters, Genevieve and Audrey-Anne. On sight of the pool, poor Guylaine was sent back to Mirabel to bring more swimsuits, and Claude got the water supply going on the slide and the two girls, the Yellow Peril and the Black Bullet, were soon hurtling down the slide and entering the pool with great aplomb. As the sun grew hotter and hotter, the pool became more and more popular, although some retired to the games room for some English billiards or to play some very complex game that Sandy had brought along.

As the sun sank slowly in the west over the splendid ski slopes of Ste-Adèle, there was a general movement indoors, much chatter, and more food and drink appeared. Fortunately, by this time, Doug had been able to rejoin us, back from the city. The evening cooled, conversation grew, the products of the grain and the grape, accompanied by several pies, fruit, hot tarts, cheese and crusty bread, and finally coffee, and, for those who wished, liqueurs.

With the washing up done, the hugh downstairs television was loaded with some videos, thoughtfully brought by Wilfrid, of the July 1989 garden party at the Wendy Zubis Estate, a fine record of our First Bimetallic Colloquium in June 1990, including the entire telling of "The Green Eye of the Little Yellow God," declaimed by Roger Johnson, and finally, part of the fantastical visit to the Reichenbach (Dorwin) Falls in August 1991.

As the sun finally sank with a splendid display, the entire company faded gradually southward after a wonderful day of friendship and frivolity, food and fun. Doug said, "Why don't we do this during the winter months?" Well, why not?

Comments by Patrick Campbell

