

The Bimetallic Question

Walt Colby

In planning an agenda for my visit to Montreal this month, I was inspired to find the local Sherlock Holmes society and hope that a meeting would happen in my time here. I credit Tom Brydges and his visit to Australia and New Zealand, socializing with Sherlockians there, for giving me the idea. On the Web I easily discovered The Bimetallic Question and happily noted that their next meeting was on my second day here.



Westmount Public Library

I wrote to ask about attending and Wilfrid de Freitas promptly responded. He would be out of town but copied others on his email who gave me a most warm welcome when I appeared at the meeting: Ron Zilman, Elliott Newman, Paul Billette, David Dowse, Marie and Roger Burrows.



Ron, Paul, Roger, Marie



The meeting was in a spacious, well-windowed, formally decorated room at the Westmount Library. I was pleasantly surprised to be offered port or sherry for the toasts, which were all well-composed and distributed through the evening. Accompaniments included shortbread, cheese, crackers, and pâté.

A round of show and tell included news clippings, an early photo with members somewhat younger, and several bound volumes of Punch from the Holmes era, a good reminder of the ambience of the times of the stories.

We then had a logic and deduction puzzler in which David Dowse spread out several dozen very assorted objects then read cryptic references for us to match to one of the articles. The clues closely resembled those of British crosswords, requiring that special kind of wordplay. My mind was certainly stretched.



David reading the clues



The articles to match to the clues

I sat next to Patrick Campbell, former club Sovereign, Sherlockian author, and composer of the evening's excellent quiz on *A Study in Scarlet, Part 1*. The quiz was written and we swapped papers for marking afterwards. I barely escaped having the lowest score and am inspired to do much closer reading and more intense preparation.



I thoroughly enjoyed my evening of great camaraderie, wit, and Sherlockian discussion and thank all who made me feel like a long-standing member.

Meetings are bimonthly. The next one is August 4th 2011 6:30pm. The website is <http://www.bimetallicquestion.org/>

