

THE MEDICAL BULLETIN

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THE MEDICAL BULLETIN is issued quarterly for Dr. Watson's Neglected Patients, a scion of the Baker Street Irregulars.

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Bulletin Board

I would like to extend my gratitude to all those who took part in the auction at the Annual Dinner, and especially to Blair Kittleson and Charles Hansen who made it all the more riotous. With all the enthusiasm shown, it was well-worth all the singed fingers - Debbie Laubach

University Weekend with Sherlock Holmes and Conan Doyle. July 24-26, 1981, Queen's University at Kingston. For more information write:

Sherlock Holmes Weekend
Donald Gordon Centre
Queen's University
Kingston, Ont. K7N 6N6 CANADA

*From the Chief Surgeon
by David Poole*

Dr. Watson's Neglected Patients celebrated the Master's birthday with a dinner at The Padre restaurant, Englewood, CO, on January 10th. Although the room was somewhat crowded, it seemed to add to the conviviality of the 56 Patients and guests. At intervals during the dinner, the traditional toasts were given by Mary Ake (Sherlock Holmes), Chuck Hansen (The Literary Agent), and Sally Kurtsman (Irene Adler). Other toasts were offered by various Patients so we could finish our wine. The dinner ended with the serving of dessert, one prepared by The Padre, and the other by Jo Ann Daugherty. Joanne presented the Patients with a decorated birthday cake: a profile of Sherlock Holmes complete with deerstalker and pipe. Although it seemed a shame to cut up such a work of art, the deed was done, and the cake was cut and served by Charlene Schnelker.

After a short break, to refill glasses and restore circulation, a short business meeting was held. The Bursar, John Stephenson, not only reported on the state of Dr. Watson's Neglected Patients' finances (which are healthy), but also gave a toast to the good Doctor. An election was held for the positions of Chief Surgeon, Bursar, and four Interns. Elected for two-year terms were David Poole (Chief Surgeon), John Stephenson (Bursar), and Interns, Debbie Laubach, Sally Kurtsman, and Dan Daugherty. Martha Liehe was elected to a one-year term as Intern to finish the term of Jill Stone, who resigned from the board. Our thanks to Jill and the other retiring board members, Bill Dorn and Guy Mordeaux for serving on the Medical Board.

Our treasury balance was substantially increased by the auction of a plaque donated by Debbie Laubach. Debbie inscribed Vincent Starrett's poem, 221-B, by

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Trifles by Charlene Schnelker

I am often asked by new and prospective members, "Don't you meet more than two or three times a year?" The answer, if you want to be an active member, is to join the Out-patients at a Tuesday meeting. You don't need to come every week (we don't either), but if you would enjoy an evening of stimulating conversation, call me to find out what we are currently reading - 979-8284. Occasionally, we vary the routine discussion with a mystery game night or a "field trip."

The Out-patients last outing was on January 6th, a birthday celebration for "the Master" at a favorite Littleton restaurant, Professor Plum's. Joining in the festivities were Lucia and David Poole, Debbie Laubach, Chuck Hansen, Kathy and Guy Mordeaux, Liz Teis, Jill Stone, Charlene Schnelker and mascot in residence, Psyche Schnelker.

A new roster will be prepared soon, so a reminder to all who haven't renewed their membership yet:



Thanks are in order, first to Nancy Iona for the beautiful calligraphy on the Annual Dinner program and for the new Bulletin embellishments; secondly, to Roy Hunt for Doctor Watson's "shingle" which graces our publication; thirdly, to Debbie Laubach's remarkable plaque which was auctioned at the Annual Dinner by an equally outstanding tour de force performance by auctioneer, Flair Kittleson, who kept the audience in a frenzy; and finally, to the membership, from me. Being awarded a pill box was a surprise and an honor. I have been more than rewarded already by the friendships which I've formed in the Neglected Patients, but I'll keep the box, too.

Poisons in the Canon by Charles Hansen

Part I

In beginning this study of the uses of poisons in the Sherlockian Canon the order in which the tales are discussed is Dr. Watson's, not mine. I follow the order of the adventures in The Complete Sherlock Holmes, single volume edition by the Garden City Publishing Company. My own volume is a 1938 edition, but I doubt that the order of stories has been altered in subsequent editions.

In the first of the tales, the novel A Study In Scarlet, Watson, after living a few days with Holmes wonders momentarily if Holmes is a self-poisoner, addicted to some drug, because of the extreme lassitude he sometimes observed in the great detective. Such depression is frequently an after-effect of some drugs, but, he rejects the idea because he states that the temperance and cleanliness of the man's whole life forbids such an idea. Later Watson goes to 3 Lauriston Gardens with Holmes, to investigate the death of Enoch Drebber. It is quickly determined by Holmes that despite the considerable amounts of blood scattered about, Drebber was not killed by ordinary violence, but was **poisoned**. The blood was all from the murderer, who had suffered a considerable nosebleed at the scene of the crime.

Later Lestrade, in searching the hotel room where he found the murdered body of Stangerson, Drebber's secretary, comes upon a small pill-box on the windowsill. It contains two tiny and remarkable pills. Holmes proves by administering half of one and then half of the other to the landlady's hopelessly ill terrier, that one is quite harmless, while the other contains some extremely quick-acting

(over, please)

poison. Later the killer, Jefferson Hope, tells us that one pill of each set was quite harmless while the other contained an alkaloid, derived from some extremely deadly South American arrow poison.

The most commonly known of the South American Indian arrow poisons is the source of curare, which is very deadly indeed, if introduced into the bloodstream through a wound, but it can be ingested in modest quantities without ill effect. There are, however, a number of other types of arrow poisons made by the Indians of South America. All have one thing in common, that they are quickly deadly, as a slow-acting poison is of little use to the hunter.

We must assume in this case that curare was not the basis of the poison used. Curare attacks the central nervous system, killing by causing respiratory failure much as some forms of polio do. It is quick, but not so speedy as Dr. Watson suggests. We must grant an amnesty on that point however, the good Doctor is wont to exaggeration on the speedy deadliness of toxins, as in "The Speckled Band." It is perhaps possible that some of the South American arrow toxins may be equally as toxic by mouth as by bloodstream.

At the outset of our second Canonical novel, The Sign of Four, we learn from Watson that Holmes is indeed at times a self-poisoner - although never to the point that the habit gets beyond his iron control. He cannot properly be called an addict, since addiction implies that the habit is beyond the control of the user. In times when there is insufficient crime to occupy Holmes' active mind he falls back on the stimulation of cocaine or morphine. Watson's objections are clearly reasonable as both are very dangerous alkaloids, and lacking the strength and self-discipline of Holmes' character may well overwhelm the user. Holmes, however, seems to have abandoned the habit, as we hear much less of it later.

Later in The Sign of Four we learn that another case

(continued)

of arrow-type poisoning has been utilized quite successfully against Bartholomew Sholto. Tonga, Jonathan Small's Andaman Island pygmy companion, shoots one of his poisoned blow-gun darts, a large thorn encusted with some native toxin, into Bartholomew's head just above the ear. Later in the story, while Holmes, Watson and the police are chasing Small and Tonga in the Aurora, down the river Thames, Tonga attempts to kill Holmes with one of his deadly darts. He misses by a very small margin, but Holmes does not miss -- exit Tonga.

In the Adventures of Sherlock Holmes, the first volume of the short stories, we find our next case of poisoning, a minor case as far as the story is concerned. This is in "The Man With The Twisted Lip." This, as in Holmes' use of morphia and cocaine, is a case of self-poisoning, although in this case the victim is a true addict. Isa Whitney is hopelessly addicted to opium, thanks to a foolish experiment in his college days. His wife, Kate Whitney, appeals to Dr. and Mrs. Watson. Watson goes to a vile opium-den, The Bar of Gold, in Upper Swandam Lane, to find and to return Kate's husband to his home. Watson sends the wreckage of Mr. Whitney home in a cab, while he turns aside to aid Holmes, whom he met in the Bar of Gold, to solve the disappearance of Neville St. Clair.

Our next example, also in the Adventures, is the "Adventure of the Speckled Band". In this story, after the death of Julia Stoner under highly suspicious circumstances, the body is examined for evidence of poisoning, but none is discovered. In all probability the stomach and internal organs were examined for toxic substances, whether or not they thought of toxins in the blood-stream is problematical. Internal evidence in the story leads us to the belief that Julia Stoner actually was not bitten by the snake as her step-father intended, but died of shock and sheer terror from heart-failure. At least this seems unavoidable if the agent of intended death

was the same one used later against her sister Helen. In the later attempt on the life of Helen Stoner the doctor sends his agent - described by Holmes and Watson as an Indian Swamp Adder. "the deadliest snake in India", into her bedroom, through the ventilator. The plot is thwarted by Holmes, resulting in the evil Dr. Roylott himself being bitten and ending as the victim of his own plot.

We must not take too literally, Holmes' statement that the doctor had died within ten seconds of being bitten, nor indeed of his identification of the snake. Scientifically speaking, there is no snake that is native to India called the Swamp Adder. Of course in various areas snakes have so many and varied common names that they are quite useless for identification. The inadequate description given in the story, coupled with the fact that it was quite a large Indian reptile make the Russel's Viper, Vipera russeli, much the most likely candidate. It is indeed a formidable and deadly snake and grows to a length of 6 feet or more. There is, however, no snake known which has the power to kill so quickly, unless the venom were injected directly into a large artery, a million-to-one chance. We should also not take seriously the statement that the creature was the most deadly snake in India. The most deadly snake known to inhabit this planet is almost certainly the great King Cobra, Hammadryas hannah, which combines its great size - it is known to reach a length of 16 or 17 feet - with an extremely deadly toxin which is delivered in considerable quantity, so he is well named the King.

Let us assume that Dr. Roylott - knowing himself bitten by a snake of great deadliness - realized he was being killed by his own scheme, and his heart completed the job which the venom would almost certainly have done had heart-failure not intervened.

The first story in The Memoirs of Sherlock Holmes is "Silver Blaze", and it is our next case of

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The Case of the Unearthly Visitor by Debbie Laubach

I have often been asked by my readers whether my friend, Shortluck Ohms, ever, in his brilliant career, refused his assistance for reasons other than former commitments.

Looking over notes of cases we shared, I can only offer one adventure, if it may be called such, when this occurred. This humble tale I now lay before the public.

It was late in the Fall of last year that my companion finally brought to consummation the affair of the M.P., the gopher, and the internal combustion engine, which nearly drove him to collapse.

I was glad to see him once more in our quarters in 221b Bacon Street that evening, tuning his kazoo of old. I was compiling my notes of that singular business and, once having it sorted, I contemplated examination of another case cooling in our housekeeper's icebox below. Before I could decide in the affirmative, I noticed a curious humming noise emanating from above our heads. As it grew in intensity, it was coupled with a blinding red light outside our window. Just as it seemed the walls would collapse, Ohms, now buried in the daily comics, looked up, the cacophony ceased. I screamed and dived under the dining table, my usual attitude. There, framed in the doorway, was a hulk dressed in black from metal face mask to glossy boots!

"Which of you is Ohms?" the creature wheezed menacingly.

"I am he. Come out, Doctor; my colleague, Dr. Wassat." Our visitor stepped forward and threw his ebony cape back around his immense shoulders.

(over please)

"You may address me as the Dark Lord. I have come here expressly to engage your powers on behalf of the Empire."

"Well, an Englishman to the last as I. In what way may I serve you?"

"You must find the rebel Alderaan."
"A subversive fellow, eh?"

"The planet Alderaan; we must know its location."

Ohms glanced at me. "You misplaced an entire planet? Even Wazzat is not that inept." I beamed inwardly at the compliment.

The black figure hissed, "That is beside the point. Your skills are known far and wide. You will find the scourge of Alderaan and be well-rewarded."

"And if not, your Lordship?" Ohms asked, absent-mindedly attempting to fill and light his kazoo.

"Governor Tarkin will see to that," he chuckled malevolently. Suddenly a sound reached his galvanized ears. An instant later, he had uncovered and fired a magnificent lighted humming cutlass.* "Come out, Kenobi, you antiquated hermit; I've got the Force too!"

"No, your Lordship," replied I. "Not Kenobi! Anthony, my pet hermit crab over there in the corner. Have you seen someone about your bronchial trouble?"

"I will have silence!" His voice boomed and broke three beakers of Ohms' Junior Scientist Kit. "The Princess Leia refuses to reveal her information; I am at my patience's end. You will come now!"

"Not so fast!" cried my friend, rising. "I see through your ludicrous disguise. You're a spy sent

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from my nemesis, the dastardly Professor Rigor Mortis." He reached for his dressing-gown pocket, where I knew him to keep his water pistol.

In a flash, the brute put Ohms against the wall with the point of his musical sword.

"I have a platoon of Imperial Storm troopers ringing this house. You make one move to injure me, and you will disintegrate faster than ice on a Tatooine flatland."

"All right!" burst my friend, pushing away the weapon. "This charade has gone far enough. I know your kind; dealt with 'em before. Landing your spaceship in the backyard, disrupting the peace, not to mention what you've done to the geranium beds! Then you in your tin outfit, with your battery-operated dirk, have the gall to swagger in here ordering us about. And now I've ruind my best kazoo. Well, we've had all we care, thank you, and you can just pack it all in and go back to whatever galaxy you came from."

The jet-black fiend stood quietly for a moment, then, with a curse, turned and tromped from our quarters. A moment later, the great roar blasted through the walls, swelled, and was gone.

I turned to Ohms. "You never told me you had dealings with the likes of him."

"Oh come, Wazzat. Don't tell me you believe me. Who ever heard of unidentified flying objects and extra-terrestrials? Really?"

And with that, Shortluck Ohms returned to his paper.

* The humming cutlass that fires is not mentioned in the literature on ARMS and WEAPONRY; it appears to be unique to outer space. Ed.

The Adventure of the Horseless Carriage

by Daniel Daugherty

Part I

Since the Light Locomotives Act went into effect in November of the year 1896, there has been a sharp rise in the popularity of the horseless carriage here in England. This vehicle, also known as the automobile (a French term), the autocar, and the motor car, has proved a surprisingly durable contrivance - a fact well proved back in 1900 by the Automobile Club's 1,000 mile trial. These machines have also gained the attention of some very influential people. I can recall accounts of Edward, then Prince of Wales, taking a turn in a Daimler, the then Duke of York behind the wheel of a Panhard and Levassor. A horseless carriage is not an uncommon sight on the streets of London these days, and throughout all Britain.

November, 1896, was, as I've said, a turning point. Yet certain events occurred earlier in that same year which might have resulted in an altogether different course for automobiles in England, were it not for a decision made at the time by my friend, Sherlock Holmes.

I recently approached Holmes on the subject of putting these events down on paper, but his eyes narrowed and his voice grew very threatening.

"Watson, we have been together many years; but any mention of that case concerning Sir Aubrey Snythe will put a severe strain on our friendship, I assure you."

"But Holmes," I protested, "why be so upset over..."

"Oh, write about it, if you must! But do not talk about it to me!"

Having gotten this approval, however reluctantly given, I took down my notes for the year 1896 to

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refresh my memory on the matter I have always called "The Adventure of the Horseless Carriage."

It was in early March that Holmes and I first met Sir Aubrey Snythe. My friend was busy pasting clippings from the many papers he perused almost daily, into his commonplace book - a reference of crimes, unusual events, and even items from the daily agony columns, which had more than once aided in the solution of one of the little puzzles so often brought to Holmes' attention.

Seeing that he was finished with the Morning Post, I picked it up and began to scan some of the more promising columns. My efforts were in vain, however, for every article of interest contained neat, rectangular cuts, which left much of the information I sought forever hidden on the backside of some fresh clipping in Holmes' book.

An example: "The most notable guest at the Lord St. Simon's dinner party last night, was the talented and highly esteemed author . . ."

And another: "The political career of Trelawney Hope took an important step forward Saturday, when he was appointed to . . ." and worst of all, this account: "According to Lord Bellinger, 'It is the single most important problem facing us today.'" Others may have learned, from reading the Post, what "it" was. I did not.

Grumbling some unkind words which Holmes took no heed of, I searched for a section of the paper that his scissors had not penetrated. What I found gave me a mild surprise.

"You seem to have missed an article of the type that you take such delight in, Holmes."

The death of Alfred Hutchinson? I read it, of course. The description of the look on the dead man's face being of particular interest, but, I found a more complete account of the matter in the Evening

News Standard. My examination into that singular death must, however, be delayed a little. A man from out of town is about to present us with what, I hope, will be an equally fascinating problem."

I, too, was in a position to look through the bay window to the street below, where a strangely attired gentleman seemed to be searching the building fronts, apparently looking for a number to match that written on a piece of paper he held in his hand.

"I see the fellow you speak of, Holmes, but how can you be so sure that he is from out of town, or has any problem other than finding the address he seeks?"

Holmes answered in an easy manner. I never ceased to be amazed at how effortlessly he made deductions which, to me, were quite ingenious.

"Observe his hat and boots. While of good quality they would probably not be worn by a city dweller, or at least not one concerned with fashion. And I dare say that curious long coat he's wearing is rarely seen in town - especially with something as curious as a pair of goggles hanging halfway out of the right pocket. Clothing often marks the man, Watson, and this man is not of the London society. It is all quite simple, really. As simple as the deduction that a man from out of town who is wealthy enough to afford that obviously expensive, if somewhat unconventional, outfit, could be looking for no other place among the humble apartments of Baker Street than ours; or that only a problem of a highly puzzling nature would cause him to forsake his local police and come down to London in search of my services..

The man at last found the address he was looking for, and it was, indeed, our front door he walked up to. Holmes seated himself near the hearth, and I joined him; soon Mrs. Hudson showed the gentleman into our sitting room.

He was not over five-foot-ten, yet his immense frame gave one an impression of bigness, and also of power. His large beard and mustache had tinges of

grey, as did his thick black hair, and I judged his age to be about forty-five.

As he removed his overcoat, putting it and some things he carried aside, Holmes surveyed him intently. I knew that in my friend's mind many small observations were being labeled and filed away; any conclusions that could be drawn from these, no matter how obscure, were being made. As a result of this, Holmes' first words to our visitor would reveal a knowledge of that gentleman's affairs which would astonish the man no end, and no doubt astonish even myself, who had some knowledge of the deductive process involved. It was a technique Holmes used often, and it accomplished two things: first, the client realized at once that he had come to the right place, and second, it gave Holmes the upper hand at the outset, as the client realized that no piece of information he might wish to keep from Holmes could remain hidden for long.

"I am Sir Aubrey Smythe," our visitor announced in a voice booming and full of confidence, "and I have come to see Mr. Sherlock Holmes concerning my Peugeot"

"A French servant, no doubt," my companion observed.

"Of course not! Where did you ever get such a fool idea?"

"Who, then, is this Peugeot?" asked Holmes, taken aback.

"Not who, confound it, what! My Peugeot 'Vis-a-Vis'!"

Holmes took a long draw from his pipe, then turned to me, a terrible confusion apparent on his face. "Perhaps you can shed some light on this, Watson. What, pray tell, is a Peugeot 'Vis-a-Vis'?"

"Sounds rather like a make of horseless carriage, I should say."

(over, please)

"Precisely," said Sir Aubrey Smythe. "At least one of you has an inkling of what's going on."

Holmes looked agitated. "Are you referring, Watson, to one of those noisy, pungent, four-wheeled conveyances such as we saw near Hyde Park last week?"

"Exactly," I replied.

Holmes turned to our visitor again. "I trust, Sir Aubrey, that you have come to tell of your Peugeot being stolen. If you have, I can only hope that the thief destroys all evidence of his crime as soon as possible."

Our visitor was appalled by this statement. He stiffened, then flushed with rage. "If the gentleman beside you is Mr. Sherlock Holmes," he said to my companion, "then I have some business to discuss with him. If you, sir, are Sherlock Holmes, then I bid you good day!"

Holmes had lost clients before, but never quite in this manner. I think he must have realized it, for his attitude became somewhat more conciliatory.

"I am Sherlock Holmes, Sir Aubrey, but please be seated. You've had a tiresome journey, and I'm sure a brandy will calm you down a bit."

"No, I must get back. I should not have come."

"I'm sure that your Great Dane, Toby, is quite capable of watching after your country estates," Holmes interrupted.

The annoyance in Sir Aubrey's face was changing to something else. "I do not recall ever having met you, Mr. Holmes, so how is it you know so much about me?"

Holmes was pleased at having hit his mark. "You have laid down a dog collar on the settee, which bears a

brass plate inscribed 'Toby'; ergo, you have a dog named Toby. He is a good and highly valued pet, I take it, since a collar so handsomely tooled and set could not have cost under one pound, six."

"How did you know that Toby is a Great Dane?"

"A guess," Holmes admitted, "aided by the dimensions of the collar, and the knowledge that a man of means is likely to have a dog of noble breed."

"And that I am a man of means," Sir Aubrey persisted, "with, as I believe you mentioned, country estates?"

"A large dog needs a large place to run in," said Holmes. "A simple farmer would have lands, but not the money to indulge his pet as you have. A country squire, with large and profitable estates, however ..."

"I might be from someplace near London - Kensington, say - and yet have estates large enough to suit Toby."

"A perceptive statement, Sir Aubrey. But you see, I know that you arrived by hansom cab. There are some splatterings of mud on your coat, but they only cover the upper half of it, not the lower. This is characteristic of the hansom, whose doors shield only the lower part of the body. Now a man of wealth from Kensington would come by way of his own carriage, but a man from out of town might well come by train to a nearby station - Paddington, perhaps? - then hire a cab."

"Very clever of you, Mr. Holmes," said Sir Aubrey, taking a seat at last. "I had ordered that collar a week ago, and picking it up was my excuse for coming to London today; but all during the trip down, I kept wondering if I shouldn't stop in to see you. Perhaps it is good that I did, after all. You clearly know nothing about motor cars, Mr. Holmes, or you wouldn't feel about them as you do. I can only hope that you change your mind once you have had the opportunity of riding in one."

"May I join Moriarty first," muttered Holmes.

"Nevertheless," our client continued, "A man who can see so much in a dog collar and some specks of mud may be of help in solving my problem."

"Please tell me your story from the beginning, Sir Aubrey," Holmes requested. He assumed an attitude of concentration, fingertips together, and eyelids narrowed to mere slits.

Sir Aubrey looked annoyed. "I hope you'll have something more helpful to offer me than prayers."

"It is a habit of mine to place my fingertips as I do," retorted Holmes with asperity. "Please continue."

"Very well, then. I've come about my Peugeot, as I've said. It was not stolen, despite your wishes to the contrary; but it was borrowed and returned again without my knowledge or permission."

Holmes' interest picked up at this, and he asked, "If it was without your knowledge or permission, then how do you know that it was borrowed at all?"

"That is exactly the question Alyson asked when I reported the incident this morning. Alyson is my wife, you know. Well, I couldn't answer to her satisfaction, and she thinks I am imagining things, but I know it was moved, never the less. Its petroleum tank was full yesterday when I put it away, and this morning it was not. I also know where Sir Reginald and I placed it, and it is not in exactly the same spot now. It's only been moved a foot or so, but the difference is there, all the same."

"Sir Reginald?" Holmes asked.

"Yes, Sir Reginald Wingate. His estates border mine, and I asked him along on a ride yesterday afternoon. He accompanies me often - shows a genuine interest in motoring. I imagine he'll be investing in a motor car

Book Review

WHO'S WHO IN SHERLOCK HOLMES, Scott R. Bullard and Michael Leo Collins. Taplinger Publishing Co., New York, 1980.

The sub-title of this reference work dealing with the Master Detective is: "A Complete and Handy Reference to the Great Detective's Every Case." As such, this slim volume will be useful to all Holmesians and Sherlockians anywhere. Listing names, places, and significant objects from the canon in dictionary form, it gives sufficient information to identify each item. The authors refer to the Loring-Gould edition for their references: i. e., II 608 (Volume two, page 608), I 151 (Volume one, page 151).

However, THE ENCYCLOPAEDIA SHERLOCKIANA, by Jack Tracy, Doubleday, New York, 1977, covers much the same ground, and much more thoroughly. The later book includes maps, pictures, and other helpful illustrations. It is also more extensive in its listings. A bibliography, picture source list and identifying code listing are found in the text.

To Compare: Bullard - "ALDGATE STATION A station on the Underground system in London. It was just outside Aldgate Station that the dead body of Arthur Cadogan West was found. THE ADVENTURE OF THE BRUCE-PARTINGTON PLANS II 434"
Tracy - "ALDGATE STATION an underground and suburban railway station in the City, the eastern-most station of the Metropolitan line. Cadogan West's body was found near here (BRUC). See UNDERGROUND: see map of the CITY."

The above example is typical of both books. Both volumes are useful to those following the writings of Dr. Watson. The Bullard, Collins, newer work is in both paperback and hardback. The former is handy to slip in one's pocket while venturing through the

(Poisons, continued)

poisoning - although it may seldom be thought of as such - as it happily had no permanent ill-effects, nor

was it intended that it should. In this case the victim of the poisoning was Ned Hunter, a stable boy at King's Pyland racing stables. He was poisoned with opium, which had been introduced into his dinner of curried mutton. It was the belief of the police that this had been done by Fitzroy Simpson, the tout, but Holmes proved that the curry for dinner had been carefully chosen to cover the taste of the opium, and of course Simpson could not have known what was to be served for dinner. The evil deed was done by the trainer himself, John Straker, so that he could get the great race horse Silver Blaze out of the stable without anyone knowing. The dosage was not sufficient to do more than keep Hunter in a deep stupor for several hours.

Again in the Memoirs, we find two cases of poisoning, one of which proved fatal, in "The Adventure of the Greek Interpreter." This case is not the sort of thing one normally thinks of as poisoning, but does fall well within that category, nevertheless. In this adventure Paul Kratides perishes and Mr. Melas, the interpreter is only just saved from the same fate by the strenuous efforts of Dr. Watson. The poisonous elements are principally carbon monoxide and carbon dioxide. Carbon dioxide is not generally considered poisonous, we exhale it constantly, but it is a heavy gas and in a confined space can replace the oxygen, with lethal result. Monoxide is very deadly and soon renders the red blood cells of the victim unable to pick up and carry oxygen with fatal results. The two men are bound and confined in a small, closet-like room entirely lacking in ventilation. A small brazier of burning charcoal is thrust into the room with the men. The combustion byproducts do the rest, and when Holmes, Watson, and Mycroft find them, Kratides - who was nearly starved and had little resistance left - is beyond human help but Mr. Melas eventually responds to Watson's efforts in his behalf.

Among the thirteen stories of The Return of Sherlock Holmes there is but one that deals directly with poisoning. This is "The Adventure of the Golden Pince-Nez." This is a strange story of Russian Nihilist revolutionaries seeking refuge in England from the vengeance of the Tzar's Secret Police. In this tale we meet one of the least likable or sympathetic characters to be found in the Canon, Professor Coram. Coram is actually a pseudonym, we never learn his real name. The episode of the poisoning develops very late in the story, after Holmes has solved the case of the death by stabbing of young Willoughby Smith, the professor's secretary. Holmes, Watson, and Stanley Hopkins are in the professor's bedroom when Holmes explains that the woman who fatally stabbed young Willoughby Smith is hiding in the professor's bedroom behind a bookcase. The bookcase swings back, revealing a sort of Priest's Hole in which the professor had concealed her, and the lady comes out to tell her story. She is obviously unwell, but waves away offer of assistance, saying she has little time to tell her story. She had taken poison before she left her hiding place, but lives long enough to reveal that she is the professor's wife and that they were revolutionaries. Her husband, when they were arrested by the Tzar's police, had told all on his wife and their fellow revolutionaries to save himself. Even more despicably, he had deliberately lied in an attempt to swear away the life of a young man he knew to be entirely innocent, but to whom his wife was attracted. His wife, Anna, after eventual release from prison in Siberia, had invaded her husband's home in England to find and steal some documents and a diary which she knew would prove the innocence of the young man, who was still working out a life sentence in the salt mines. With her dying breath she charges Holmes to deliver the packet of papers to the Russian embassy, and free young Alexis from his living death.

(To Be Continued)

of his own, when his affairs allow it. A Daimler, no doubt, since that seems to be his favorite. But to each his own. I consider the Peugeot to be the finest automobile available anywhere. It has style and good mechanics - placed well in the Paris-to-Rouen run two years ago, and in the Paris-to-Bordeaux race just last year."

"I'm sure it did," said Holmes impatiently. "I take it Sir Reginald's affairs do not allow for sizeable expenditures at the moment?"

"That is really none of our business, Mr. Holmes," said Smythe with ascerbity, "what does concern us here is my Peugeot. It is my only passion, and I have invested much time and money in it. The chassis alone cost 80 pounds, and the customizing coachwork and fittings brough the total to nearly 150. It's the finest motor car in England and I plan to show it in an exhibition later this year - bought this French motoring coat just for the occasion. You can understand, I think, why I'm upset at its being tampered with."

"Quite understandable," replied Holmes, unconvincingly, "but if it were driven away, as the loss of petroleum would indicate, the household must surely have heard the din."

"My Peugeot in not so noisy as you might think, sir," replied our client defensively, "but I grant you that someone should have heard it started up. That is the thing I find hardest to understand."

"Did anyone see anything?"

"No, not before six-thirty. After that time, my family and all the staff were indoors and they couldn't have seen anything then. You see, I've had a shed built for my Peugeot close to the carriage road leading into my estates, and apart from the manor a little. Only a few of the rooms in the west wing afford a view of it, and no one occupied these rooms last night. It was growing dark by six-thirty, in any case."

(Review - continued)

byways of London following the adventures of Mr. Holmes and Dr. Watson; whereas one could brouse, at leisure, in one's armchair, while delving into Mr. Tracy's more complete work.

Reviewed by MARY AKE

(Consultant. Dr. Watson's Neglected Patients

(Chief - continued)

wood burning on the plaque. Our volunteer auctioneer, Blair Kittleson, aided by John Stephenson, cogily pushed the bidding up and up. The final bidder was Chuck Hansen. Thanks, again, Debbie, John, Blair and Chuck.

Though the auction was a tough act to follow, our speaker for the evening, Tom Schantz, was equal to the task. Tom and his wife, Enid, are the proprietors of the Rue Morgue Bookshop in Boulder. Tom is very knowledgeable about the parodies and pastiches of Sherlock Holmes, and has reprinted 10 of them (The Aspen Press). He is also an expert in all fields of mystery fiction. His talk was about the collecting of Sherlockiana. Tom's stories of how certain volumes have become extremely rare and valuable, and the antics of collectors trying to obtain such items were very entertaining.

(Carriage - Continued)

"And what of Toby?" asked Holmes

"Now that you mention it, I do recall hearing him raise a bit of a fuss. Let me see - it was a little after seven. He quieted down after a little, though, and I didn't think much of it. Perhaps he saw a rabbit."

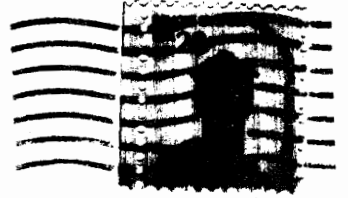
"You have not mentioned where your estates are located, Sir Aubrey."

"Near Chesham, in Buckinghamshire; just off the road to Aylesbury."

Holmes seemed surprised by this. "Your problem has features of interest which I find irresistible," he replied. "The train you intend taking back leaves Paddington in two hours, if memory serves. With your permission, Dr. Watson and I will join you. Perhaps we can discover who is taking late night excursions in your machine without the advantage of first starting its motor."

(TO BE CONTINUED)

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From Dr. Watson's Neglected Patients
2851 S. Reed Street
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*This is the last
issue on 1980 dues
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