

The Medical Bulletin

ISSUED FOR

DOCTOR WATSON'S NEGLECTED PATIENTS

Volume 3, Number 3

September, 1977

FIRST RUNNING OF THE HOUND OF THE BASKERVILLES RACE

by Robert N. Alvis

Eighty-nine years ago began that grim business which played out its story on Grimpen Moor. Tragedy does not necessarily beget tragedy as those Patients, whom Dr. Watson found it so often necessary to neglect, gathered for a race in remembrance of the "gigantic hound". Insofar as is known, this was the first running anywhere of a dog race in honor of the Hound of the Baskervilles.

We gathered, as per the Chief Surgeon's instructions, at the Coach House Motor Inn, just outside of the small city of Loveland, Colorado. The planned meeting of the Medical Board was truncated because so many of the Patients were sidetracked, as it were, by the convivial spirits of the local pub, the Paddock Room. Squeezing this business meeting into the first few minutes of the dinner was no problem for the Chief Surgeon, nothing was discussed. All important business was deferred to the monthly meeting, as is called for in the bylaws.

(Editor's note: THE DOCTOR'S ORDERS read--"VII...All other business shall be left for the Monthly Gatherings. VIII...There shall be no regular Monthly Gathering.")

Dinner was delicious and plentiful. Barbecued chicken was the entree.

MORSTAN-WATSON WEDDING ANNIVERSARY

The Watsons' wedding anniversary on May 1st was celebrated by the Out-Patients with a potluck dinner featuring practically everything but a wedding cake. Nancy Wynne, the hostess, welcomed the twenty Sherlockians and guests to her home in Littleton, and all the food was delicious. Toasts were drunk to Mary Morstan and her husband, also to the youngest of the Out-Patients, Mike Stander, who was celebrating his thirteenth birthday. The evening ended with a sing-in of Victorian music hall ballads, with Nancy at the organ.

Several toasts were offered. Persh Blake toasted the Hound himself, while Ron De Waal raised his glass on high to Sir Charles Baskerville, whose unhappy end had brought us to this place. Chuck Hansen reminded us that there would have been no tale at all had it not been for the good doctor, John Hamish Watson. A toast was drunk. Ron De Waal and his Forty Patients conjures up visions of Baghdad, of jinnis, and of magic lamps. But it only refers to the attendance at the dinner.

Then all repaired to the Cloverleaf Greyhound Racetrack to witness the major event of the evening. The Hound of the Baskervilles event, which commemorated the death of Sir Charles Baskerville on June 4, 1888, was to be the sixth race of the evening with a starting time of about 9:30 P.M. In the interim, several of the Patients became quite taken with

betting on the dogs. From all reports they did reasonably well, picking winning dogs in most every race. Since most of us were rather conservative in our bets, no great sums of money came into our hands. Forty to eighty cents in winnings per race were big winnings to most.

At last came the big event for us. It was announced over the loud speakers that those folks in deerstalkers were Irregular and that they were sponsoring this special event. Many of the spectators had figured out at least part of that announcement for themselves.

Before proceeding down to the track, Ron De Waal picked a random number between one and eight and placed a \$2.00 bet on win on A. H. Charly, number three. Charly was not favored by any of the handicappers. Ron said that was OK because it was not his money anyway. He had received a two dollar bill from Dr. Ben Wood of Holmes Beach, Florida. Wood wrote, "On behalf of the 'Pleasant Places of Florida' place the enclosed 'Jefferson' on an entry appropriate to us here in Florida." Ron interpreted this to mean A. H. Charly. Because of Ron's brilliant handicapping A. H. Charly won and paid \$12.80. Ron could only mumble for the rest of the evening, "Why didn't I bet some of my own money."

Nine Neglected Patients trooped out onto the track to meet A. H. Charly and his owner/trainer, Edward Stockley. He, the owner not the dog, was presented with a beautiful plaque inscribed "Winner of the First Annual Running of the Hound of the Baskervilles Race, Cloverleaf Kennel Club, Loveland, Colorado, June 4, 1977. Sponsored by Dr. Watson's Neglected Patients, A Scion Society of the Baker Street Irregulars." A suitably ferocious "gigantic hound" on the plaque, carved by Ralph J. Tice, of Fort Collins, Colorado, lent a unique

Sherlockian air to the award. The greyhound seemed especially pleased.

Sated with the delights of the evening, we left the track looking forward to next year's event. Perhaps the dogs could all be coated with phosphorescent paint and run in the dark. Of course, the rabbit would have to be coated, too.

IN PRINT ELSEWHERE

Nancy Blue Wynne with an article in the March 1977 Baker Street Journal titled "The Baker Street-Devon Connection, The Influence of the Sherlock Holmes Stories on Agatha Christie's Early Work." Nancy says, "I cannot but help think that Doyle himself would have been pleased with Christie's contributions to a writing tradition that he was so instrumental in developing."

In the Winter 1976 issue of The Sherlock Holmes Journal, Ron De Waal's "I Hear of Sherlock Holmeses and Dr. Watsons Everywhere!" tells of a long search to locate men bearing the Master's name. Ron suggests all the men named "Sherlock Holmes" and "John Watson" should form their own Society and call it The Namesakes of Baker Street.

Reviewing Michael Harrison's book, "Beyond Baker Street," in the same issue, Nicholas Utechin cites the work of the impressive collection of Sherlockians presented there, to close with the highest praise of all for Neglected Patient David Pearson -- "In all this welter of new problems and interpretations, there is one, perhaps, which stands out over the rest: David Pearson's paper on Holmes' belief in, or attitude towards, God...no one until now, I think, has done the subject as much justice as Mr. Pearson."

DR. WATSON'S NEGLECTED PATIENTS

Chief Surgeon: Ronald B. De Waal, 5020 Hogan Dr., Ft. Collins, CO 80521.

Founded: September 11, 1974, by Mary Ake and Nancy Wynne. Outgrowth of the "Baker Street and Brandy" evening, January 26, 1974, at the home of Dick and Jan Willson, Littleton.

Chief Surgeons: Lt. Col. Morency R. Dame, 1975; Dr. William S. Dorn, 1976; Ronald B. De Waal, 1977-

Membership requirements: "All persons, male or female, who upon examination have been found to evidence the Sherlock fever and recurrent attacks of Holmesmania known as the Watson Syndrome shall be eligible for membership upon taking the oath." (The Doctor's Orders)

Dues: \$5.00 yr. Payable to Dr. W. P. Blake, Wielder of the Scalpel, 2410 Eighth Ave., Greeley, CO 80631.

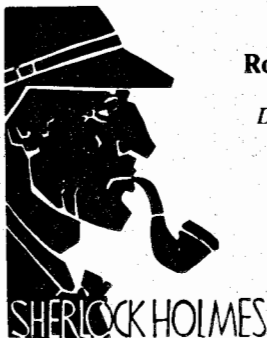
Members: 102.

Publication: The Medical Bulletin. A quarterly edited by Mary Holmes and illustrated by Terrance Teis. Published since January 20, 1975.

Awards: The Annual Pillbox Awards, presented to members either for service to the Patients or for achievement as Sherlockians, or both.

Annual events: Banquet and Meeting on or near the Master's birthday, January 6; The Hound of the Baskervilles Race, Cloveleaf Kennel Club, Loveland, on the anniversary of Sir Charles Baskerville's death, June 4; Birthday Party for Dr. John H. Watson, Baker Street Restaurant & Pub, Greeley, September 18.

Other events: Sponsored "Sherlock Lives!" a symposium at Colorado State University, February 2-5, 1975, and "A Weekend in Denver with Sherlock Holmes," May 7-8, 1976; dedicated the Baker Street Restaurant & Pub, September 18, 1976; held a Sherlock Holmes film festival, University of Denver, December 1-14, 1976; offer courses on the Master Detective at Colorado State University and the University of Denver. A department of the society named The Out-Patients and headed by Jill Stone meets irregularly at various members' homes.



Ronald Burt De Waal, B.S.I.
Chief Surgeon
Dr. Watson's Neglected Patients

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Prepared by Ron De Waal
May 9, 1977

For Sean Wright and his forthcoming book on S'ian societies

The Canon And/As Modern Myth

(a Watsonian Essay written by Saint
Terrance in an Italic Script for
the Sake of Atmosphere)

Hansom cabs instead of chariots
of fire; street arabs in the place of
cherubim; gas light rather than
the Divine Radiance; deerstalkers
and top hats replace haloes; great-
coats and Invernesses, not shining
Robes; an assortment of sticks, re-
volvers and syringes replace the
flaming sword which turns all-
ways: This is one of the ways two
mythic worlds, the Biblical and
the Canonical, may be compared/
contrasted to demonstrate their
common dynamics.

For the world in which Watson and
Holmes existed and moved/exist and
move is a World of Heroes, which
is different from (although tangent/
parallel/timelessly existent with)
the mundane World of Daily
Existence. The Heroic World is
filled (in several senses of the word)
with things and persons which exist in
all purity/completeness, rather than
things and persons tinged with/by
purity/completeness, as is the case with
the world in which we spend most of
our time.

To come at it from another angle,
considered under the title or category
of Recovery, this may be stated thus:

"We should look at green again,
and be startled anew (but
not blinded) by blue and yellow
and red... Recovery... is a
regaining - regaining of a
clear view. I do not say 'seeing
things as they are' and involve
myself with the philosophers,
though I might venture to say
'seeing things as we are (or were)
meant to see them,' as things
apart from ourselves."¹

Which is to say that the fogs of Watsonian
London (a special/particular/sacred/
mythic London which is not [exactly] the
same place as either modern London or
Shakespeare's London, especially if one is an
inhabitant of London or a Shakespearean
enthusiast) are foggier and more mysterious
than any fog of this world, for these
Watsonian fogs are not of this world, but
are as all fogs should/could be: the Primary
and Secondary (Watsonian) Worlds in
that way.

Likewise, every dog, be it purebred or
mutt (or the vast and numerous in-between)
Shares in The Hound Of The Baskinwilles (and
in Toby, as well as in the dog that did nothing
in the night) for that/they is/are The Dog.
(And what is true of dogs is/can be true
of persons.)

And, not intending any aspersions by

proximity, consider The Woman, a sort of Platonic Ideal, straight from the Realm of Forms, given (an) individual existence (an animated Archetype, it may also be said); but The Woman is seen outside the Watsonian (Secondary) World only in glimpses: distributed throughout all womankind (and also all mankind), because the inhabitants of myth are indeed complete-in-themselves, as we are not. The same thing may also be said of The Man (Holmes Himself), when he is observed in brief flashes in our (more inspired) living.

Which brings us by a circuitous (to be polite about it) route, back to Heroes, where we (hopefully it is still "we") began. Another way to say this is to observe that Watsonian Heroes come in three varieties, as in befitting a mythic/sacred World: The Good, The Bad, and The Ordinary, that is, Holmes, Moriarty, and Watson. All (and each) are complete in their own way, and all (are able to) tell us something about ourselves, because of the separate-but-related style of their and our own existences: such is the way of the things of myth/the Sacred/the meaning-full.

Holmes: the mixture of brilliance, narrowness, sloth, strength, and weakness I find in the person I know best (it will be noticed that I have ceased speaking of "the rest of us").

Moriarty: a personification of Mary Larwell's definition of Original/Sin/Sinners: "We're all born bastards and getting meaner by the minute."

Watson: the way I am "most" of the time, raised to perfection/perfect imperfection: always amiable (but strong enough a person to admit it), possessing a sense of humour and a set of humours, and given to (inspired) bumbling.

There is no (need for an) anti-hero in the Watsonian (Secondary) World, or in its visitors, for ordinariness has been seen from a new perspective, and in being so ap-/comp-rehended, is given a new meaning/made sacred, for anyone who brings this learn from this Secondary World back to the Primary World of daily life.

For this is the power of (modern) myth: to perceive the Sacred/the Meaning-full in the ordinary, as well as in the extraordinary. (Anyone notices the outstanding, but a Holmes observes the little things which are the things of import.) That this ability/gift of seeing the importance/meaning-full-ness of the ordinary is something which modern humanity seems (at least in my more pessimistic moments) to be losing, is something I could go on (and on, and on) about, but will not.

Instead, I shall let the point be made in this way/these words:

"Do we walk in legends
on on the green earth in the
daylight?"

"A man may do both... For
not we but those who come
after will make the legends
of our time. The green earth,
say you? That is a mighty
matter of legend, though you

read it under the light of day.²

Inasmuch as Watson, Holmes, Moriarity, Irene Adler, and all the other persons, places, things and events of the Watsonian World are able to function for us as Myth, they are able to function as Symbols, which, by participating in that to which they point, provide opportunities for perceiving Meaning/Possibilities in all the components of life.³

NOTES

1. J. R. R. Tolkien, "On Fairy Stories" in The Tolkien Reader. N.Y.: Ballantine Books, 1966. p. 57.
2. J. R. R. Tolkien. Lord of the Rings. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co. 1974. Vol. II. Book 3, p. 37.
3. I am here striving to avoid the Watsonian Secondary World's parallel of the Fundamentalist-Modernist controversy, which brings to mind a topic whose consideration I shall postpone until a much later date, if ever.

Saint Terrance is a student at the Iliff School of Theology, where he "does something" largely in the area of counseling, and a freelance photographer, in which capacity he also "does something." He is married and enjoys it, drinks more tea and less coffee than he used to, and "reads extensively in narrow areas."

He is a Master of Divinity and is teaching a course in THE PHILOSOPHY OF PROCESS at Denver Free University, Summer, 1977.

GIVE YOUR CHILDREN SHERLOCK HOLMES

by David Pearson

I take the ancient view, restated in Victorian times by Matthew Arnold, that literature should, ideally, exist as an instrument for the elevation of life, and that a great book should make the reader into something better than he was before reading it. Indeed, Arnold went so far as to place literature--or, at least, poetry--above religion as an influence for social as well as individual morality. Taking a cue from Swift, he never ceased in his personal search for "sweetness and light."

Now I should like to cite an instance and suggest a literature which bears out Arnold's general thesis. As a pre-adolescent I came upon Sherlock Holmes and immediately reached three conclusions:

- 1) That there may be, in fact are, people who do--unlike parents!-- have "all the answers" and are equipped to do battle with the real giants of this world;
- 2) That I infinitely preferred reading about an admirable person to a person as weak or weaker than myself; and
- 3) That I aspired to be like Sherlock Holmes.

Then, as I matured and came more and more to discern a shadowy figure (the Agent!) looming ever in the background of the Writings, I reasoned--not knowing a single fact about Doyle's life--that here was a man who would be kind and noble and brave and true. And I recall how desolated I felt when it first dawned on me that he had been in his grave over a decade before my birth, so that I could never know the great joy of meeting him or writing him a letter!

This may all seem terribly trite and sentimental now, but I want to try to make a point and shall therefore divide the balance of this paper into sections having their reference in the three above-stated conclusions.

1.

First, Holmes made me believe, and more than simply believe in the possibilities of humanity and my own possibilities. I don't mean to cast him as a quasi-religious figure, because that sort of thing would disgust the ranks of anti-Sherlockians even more than they already are. As a youth I was aware of Holmes's faults and loved him not only in spite of, but even because of, them. After all, they proved him a real, breathing human being, and therefore all the more worthy of respect for his genuine skills and achievements. And Watson's references--as well as Holmes's own--to his professional failures never dimmed my belief in him and never has; for they, too, make his large number of successes so infinitely more real and marvelous.

It is a truism to say that ours is a cynical world. That much-quoted eleventh beatitude, "Blessed is he who expects nothing, for he shall not be disappointed," has become the favorite of many. This withering negativism is even creeping into our schoolrooms: some children are sarcastic about elves and hobbits! And, since children invariably reflect dominant adult influences, they sometimes seem harder, more crass, and less disposed to believe in the permanence or the untarnished worth of any thing or any one. Their imaginations have been stunted, and their aspirations have become increasingly vulgarized.

How necessary, therefore, that they learn to believe! How essential that they come to the realization that there are more things in heaven and earth than are dreamt of in the narrow philosophies of so many modern parents! And how greatly this state of affairs could be remedied by a delight in the return to the printed page, which has always possessed a power to uplift and transcend far beyond

the more artificial and commercial media of today. As an assistance toward correcting the situation, I suggest that one book worthy of youthful attention is The Complete Sherlock Holmes.

For instance, in the Holmes stories there is such a thing as Evil, and an Evil which demonstrably contains the seeds of its self-destruction. One returns to this world for refreshment of soul after the wearying demands of so much modern fiction, where a happy ending is considered contrary to life as we know it. It is consoling to encounter wickedness thwarted, and despite those psychologists who deride the time-honored notions of morality, there is something in human nature which insists upon not only a distinction between right and wrong but also a triumph of the one over the other. Holmes gives us precisely this, again and again and again. Furthermore, he proves himself capable of surmounting seemingly insurmountable obstacles, and thus restores ones faith in man's ability to conquer his own baser self.

I am certainly not suggesting that in Holmes we have a rose-coloured view. By their very nature as detective stories, the Writings do not shy away from the grim realities of life. On the contrary, they make their negative comments, as for instance that one uttered by the Master after the denouement of "The Cardboard Box"--surely the most quietly bitter ending to any Holmes tale. There is too much of human failing and the misery which results from it to warrant calling the Writings a Pollyanna effect. But yet through all of this there remains an underlying sense of security and ordered peace which nothing can gainsay. Though melodramas are unfashionable, villainy is still a joy to hiss; and though giants no longer haunt our mountaintops, yet cancer and the threat of nuclear devastation only serve to encourage the best of men in their quest for a solution. Holmes possessed a faith in the future characteristic of his age, and his legion of admirers will fail to adopt a similar faith at their peril.

2.

Second, we all of us not only need to believe in something, we should also have someone admirable to whom we can look up. This, too, seems to be a built-in requisite of human nature. And yet so much of modern fiction, in its concern for "realism," offers us only antiheroes who seem to sell copies in direct proportion to the number of times they "prove" their manhood--or womanhood--in bedroom gymnastics. Nothing is more impermanently satisfying than the rewards of sex, and nothing can more quickly cloud good judgment than an over-appetite for physical intimacies. Again, I hasten to explain that I am no prude and regard the act far more highly than those who cheapen it for commercial reasons; but what is there of uplift, what is there of self-improvement, in a "literature" which, as archeologists a thousand years hence may deduce, considered sex as the raison d'etre of its age?

But I do not mean to single out one fault from many. The antiheroes with their topsy-turvy values so obviously meant to portray what modern man is really like, simply fail to inspire, and literature worthy of the name must surely do this. I like to think that we have just about had enough of antiheroes; and it is a comfort, a healthy sign, to witness the current revival of interest in the basically laudable character of Holmes and the high moral tone of the Watson chronicles. Of course Holmes experimented with cocaine--though it will always remain a matter for debate as to whether or not he was ever addicted; certainly he was sometimes of ill disposition and impatient; admittedly, he had too good an opinion of himself (although he spoke at least once--in "The Copper Beeches"--of his deductive gift as being "a thing beyond me.") However, with all of his faults one must charitably admit that his virtues far surpassed them. As I once stated in another

article,* Holmes would not be so universally loved were he not also so good.

The Writings are far from being sanctimonious; they contain no preachments. Works of a consciously "improving" nature rarely survive. And it is questionable whether or not the Master derived his ethical and humane values from a religious view of life and humanity. Nevertheless, the stories are shot through and through with a quiet kindness and compassion, and a sense of human decency that is all too rare in the literature of our so-called age of "sophistication." The old-world courtliness and gallantry encountered in Watson's manner, and in the social dealings which he records, may produce guffaws in some modern readers; but this courtliness and gallantry was not a literary device used to recall the tone and temper of the times. It was part and parcel of Dr. Doyle himself, and he would be first to remind us that good manners never go out of date!

I mentioned three of Holmes's more flagrant faults, but are these not terribly inconsequential when placed beside the sins he despised in others? The very fact that he labeled Charles Augustus Milverton the "worst" man in London because Milverton's blackmail career was so destructively cruel helps us to see that, to Holmes, the most contemptible wrongs were those which hurt other people. And we remember also how he was, even before 1900, demonstrating--in "The Yellow Face"--that even a biracial marriage is an occasion for sympathy, tolerance, and the noblest impulses of humanity. I have always considered this interesting little case, one of his few recorded failures, to prove the singular high-mindedness of both the Master and the Agent, and in that very real sense not a failure at all. How many moderns, who pride themselves on material progress, have actually caught up with Holmes in

*"Did Holmes Believe in God?", in Beyond Baker Street (ed. Michael Harrison, New York: Bobbs-Merrill Co., 1976: pp. 221-225.

their willingness to understand and respect all manner of people? I confess that I personally fall short; but then this realization lends all the more credence to my conviction that men need heroes.

3.

Finally, there is the matter of emulation. Of course I do not possess the deductive powers of Sherlock Holmes; who does? The important thing is the striving towards perfection which Matthew Arnold, with whom I began, never ceased to promote as the only possible answer to human problems. In this regard, for those who are interested, nothing better suits than having an example to follow. Hawthorne gave us the story of "The Great Stone Face," but he is not the only author to demonstrate that men become like that which they most admire. I cannot conceive of anyone reading a biography of Hitler and then wanting to be like him, but this sort of thing does happen. It has always been significant to me that Joseph Stalin steadfastly refused to read Sherlock Holmes, and one wonders what he might have feared from stories written, after all, for idle enjoyment. I suspect he feared as men always fear who do not want to be deflected from their goals of self-seeking, as those feared who put such as Socrates and Jesus, Savonarola and Bonhoeffer to death--Stalin did not want exposure to values infinitely higher than his own.

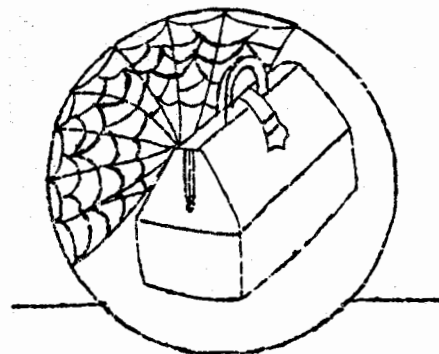
No reading is more beneficial to our young than the reading of biographies. It would be interesting to know how many careers have had their almost forgotten inception in the study of great men and women. At any rate, I would direct the children I know to those souls whose influence might elevate; and in the ranks of what it pleases some to call "fictional" heroes I would unhesitatingly give them Sherlock

Holmes among the very first volumes. Perhaps there is not in the Writings the "high seriousness" which Arnold or most contemporary critics would expect from great literature. But to us "cultists" --I use the word unblushingly--there remains a certain truth and beauty, a certain sense of fitness and rightness, for which the world needs desperately to regain a healthy regard.

Let your children read Hemingway; let them have Fitzgerald; let them find out from Orwell the dangers of our present way of "progress"; by all means let them come to know the works which will endure despite Best-Seller lists. But give them also Conan Doyle to refresh and uplift them, to engender hope and due regard for permanent values. Give them the opportunity to meditate over the ugliness, the cruelties, the injustices and uncertainties of life as demonstrated in modern fiction; but treat them also to a literary world-view just as intellectually sound, just as artistically true, which honours veracity, kindness and virtue, and shows that, in fact, there is such a thing as a happy ending.

With all my heart I cannot believe that anyone who loved Sherlock Holmes as a child or adolescent has ever grown up to be really bad. And so I urge: Give Holmes to your children. His may not be a "great" literature, but yet it will endure so long as men seek "sweetness and light."

David Pearson is Chairman of the English Department of a middle school in Hope, Arkansas, where he teaches 9th Grade English.



MY DEAR HOLMES...

My Dear Holmes:

It has come to my attention rather recently that a new film version of the Master's fine adventure of SILVER BLAZE has been created. Christopher Plummer essays to interpret the role of Sherlock Holmes; while some lesser known personage portrays Dr. Watson.

The production is for sale (\$390) or rent (\$35) from:

Learning Corporation of America
1350 Avenue of the Americas
New York, N.Y. 10019
(212) 397-9360

It is a half hour production.

Under the circumstances, I do feel our Society should obtain this film for viewing at some subsequent suitable occasion.

Apropos of other stage presentations of the Adventures, do you think others of the Society are aware of William Gillette's famous Castle?

In 1913, Mr. Gillette acquired 122 acres of land near East Haddam along the Conn. river. This is a rock-ridged area along the river bank. It was necessary to build an aerial tramway to carry workmen and materials from the road to the construction site. Built of southern white oak and native stone, workmen completed it in five years at a cost of well over a million dollars.

Mr. Gillette designed everything within and out of his castle. There are 24 rooms. Bedroom furniture is incorporated within the building's structure.

Outside, and running throughout the property is a RR line, which has long since fallen into rubble.

Since the Sherlockian actor liked cats (15 cats at one time lived there) much of the decoration--mantles, door-stops, etc., are of cat motif.

The Gillette Castle is now a State Park and is visited annually by thousands of people.

Fraternally yours,

Mary Ake, Consultant
Dr. Watson's Neglected Patients.

From: Andrew Jay Peck, Editor
The Commonplace Book
2974 Perry Ave., Bronx, N.Y.10458

Dear Fellow Sherlockian:

After an eight year hiatus, The Commonplace Book is back. As many of you no doubt remember, The Commonplace Book was started by Bill Rabe in 1964, and he edited 19 issues of it before ceasing publication in 1969. With Bill's permission and cooperation, I am reviving The Commonplace Book, and expect to have Volume 1, #1 ready in the Fall.

The purpose of The Commonplace Book, as before, is to reproduce clippings of Sherlockian interest from newspapers, magazines, and "special" publications, which the Sherlockian collector is often unaware of or unable to acquire for his collection. Most issues of The Commonplace Book will be composed of a selection of the best of the current crop of clippings, and a few older clippings as well. Some issues will be "theme" issues, with all the clippings relating to a specific Sherlockian subject. The first two theme issues will probably be devoted to "The Seven-Per-Cent Solution" and to the recent revival of the Gillette play, "Sherlock Holmes".

In order for The Commonplace Book to succeed, Sherlockians must send me clippings. Since Xerox copies do not reproduce as well, whenever possible I would appreciate originals, which will be returned after use if you so request. Please fold the article as little as possible. If an article is printed on both sides and you have access to additional copies, please send two. Most importantly, please include the name of the publication (no article can be used without that information), the date the article appeared, and the page it was on.

Subscriptions to Volume One of The Commonplace Book are now being accepted. The cost is \$8.00 (4 issues). Individual issues will be available at \$2.50 each. Subscribers will also be given the first opportunity to purchase the limited remaining supply of copies of the original (Rabe) Commonplace Book, which have become collectors' items; details will appear in The Commonplace Book.

THE BUTTER DISH by Mary Holmes

Just in time to catch this issue of THE BULLETIN, a mailing from Ron De Waal with a copy of the June issue of The Northumberland Dispatch, a 3-page newsletter published by the Fifth Northumberland Fusiliers, the Pittsburgh Scion of The Baker Street Irregulars. The Dispatch features the following editorial by Jackie Geyer, Editor:

An Editorial

Inspired, most likely, by the annual running of the "Silver Blaze", there will now be the First Annual Running of The Hound of the Baskervilles Race. This event will be held at the Cloverleaf Dog Track in Loveland, Colorado, on June 4, 1977 at 8 P.M., and is sponsored by Dr. Watson's Neglected Patients. The Scion plans to present a wooden plaque of the Baskerville Hound to the trainer of the winning dog.

As a member of the Humane Society of the United States and other animal protection agencies, I contend that dog racing is cruel and inhumane, and I am saddened to learn that a Sherlockian Scion is supporting it.

Money and greed are essential elements in the problem which makes dog racing attractive. Not many people know of the cruel training methods employing live rabbits or the plight of the dogs that don't run fast enough. The grisly, behind-the-scenes reports of this horrible "sport" would turn people away from it if brought to their attention.

Colorado is among the states that (unfortunately) have legalized the races. It is reported that training dogs with live rabbits exists in all 50 states. People use guineas, chickens, and anything that will run from them. Rabbits are also the prey in off-track dog

races called "coursing". Dogs are given points on their ability to catch up and kill the rabbit, tearing it to pieces. The screams of the rabbits would curdle your blood. During this training a potential racer is tested for speed and agility at tracking and killing the hare. By the time the dog is ten months old, the dog is run on a schooling track similar to the racing course. Less than 80% of the dogs make it from the coursing field to the race track. Dogs unable to beat a fixed time requirement are usually euthanized.

Legislation has defeated dog racing in several states, and humanitarians hope that, once the hidden cruelties in dog racing are exposed, the "sport" will be banned in other states.

Jackie Geyer

In his covering letter, Ron wrote:

Dear Mary:

Here I am again! I couldn't resist sending you a copy of the June 1977 newsletter of The Fifth Northumberland Fusiliers. In my opinion, the editorial by Jackie Geyer is so absurd and humorous that it may merit being reprinted in our MEDICAL BULLETIN. Perhaps Persh could respond to it. I'll also send a copy to the Cloverleaf Kennel Club for its reaction.

You will note on Page 3 that the Fusiliers do support the Baltimore Silver Blaze Race. Is horse racing any more humane than dog racing?

Best regards,
Ron

cc: Jackie Geyer

Since Ron is not an expert on dog racing (and neither am I), he has asked for and has been promised a reaction both from the Cloverleaf Kennel Club and from their training headquarters in Florida. When these come, we will print them. We hope for an opinion from Persh Blake, who

is a Veterinarian. We would like to have letters on this question from our members and readers, whether pro or con. We will print all we have room for and, if there are more, will tabulate the results and report them.

I was not at the Race but comments I have heard parallel what Bob Alvis says in his report (page 1). Early on, one Patient remarked that the Hound of the Baskervilles Race was about as appropriate as making a pilgrimage to the herpetology house at the Zoo because the Speckled Band was a snake. On the other hand, a British correspondent praised it, saying that while there is no mention of dog racing in the Canon, Welsh miners were coursing their greyhounds in that period and, therefore, this is an appropriately Victorian event.

Personally, I do not think The Hound of the Baskervilles Race is going to promote greyhound racing. Or that non-existence of the Race would have discouraged it. Ron was simply presenting an event at which our members could get together on a date mentioned in the Canon. And those who are better acquainted with us than Jackie Geyer is know that observing Canonical dates is characteristic of the Neglected Patients.

Dr. Benton Wood, "Recorder" of The Pleasant Places of Florida, has sent us that Scion's newsletter. This Corresponding Society also publishes round-robin pastiches. Copies of three (The Second Stein, The Lost £s and The Foreign Cabman) can be ordered for \$1 each from Dr. Wood at 4408 Gulf Drive, Holmes Beach, Florida 33410.

CREDITS: Banner--Teis. P. 9--
Teis-Burton. P. 12--De Waal
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DUES ARE DUE

The 1978 dues for membership in Dr. Watson's Neglected Patients are payable on or after September 30th, and will become delinquent on December 31st. Checks in the amount of \$5, made out to Dr. Watson's Neglected Patients, should be mailed to the Wielder of the Scapel (Treasurer): Dr. W. P. Blake, 2410 Eighth Ave., Greeley, CO 80631.

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