

THE QUOTATION MARK PUZZLE

AN IMPERFECTION OF “THE FIELD BAZAAR”

[parallel citation: 2016 Green Bag Alm. 511]

Ross E. Davies[†]

The rare, and until now rarely seen, first printing of “The Field Bazaar” — that odd little 1896 Sherlock Holmes and John Watson vignette — has an intriguing defect of punctuation. Or is it a feature? (Versions of the entire story, which is very short, begin on pages 369, 464, and 519 of this *Almanac & Reader*. Read it now, if you haven’t already.)

The last paragraph of “The Field Bazaar” is in Holmes’s voice. He is speaking about his interest in violins made from the trees of Cremona, in Italy. When that paragraph ends, Holmes stops speaking, of course. But there is no closing quotation mark at the end of the paragraph. See for yourself. Here is a picture of that paragraph — the original version — from page 36 of the November 20, 1896 issue of Edinburgh University’s *The Student* magazine¹:

“It is as easy as possible,” said he, “and I leave its solution to your own ingenuity. In the meantime,” he added, raising his paper, “you will excuse me if I return to this very interesting article upon the trees of Cremona, and the exact reasons for their pre-eminence in the manufacture of violins. It is one of those small outlying problems to which I am sometimes tempted to direct my attention.”

Now compare that original version to leading early reprintings. The first reprinting — A.G. Macdonell’s — was made in 1934²:

“It is as easy as possible,” said he, “and I leave its solution to your own ingenuity. In the meantime,” he added, raising his paper, “you will excuse me if I return to this very interesting article upon the trees of Cremona, and the exact reasons for their pre-eminence in the manufacture of violins. It is one of those small outlying problems to which I am sometimes tempted to direct my attention.”

The Athenæum Press Ltd.

Distributed by A.G. Macdonell
at The First State Libraries

[†] Professor of Law, George Mason University School of Law, and *Green Bag* editor.

¹ For the entire issue of *The Student*, see pages 327-419 above.

² THE MEMOIRS OF SHERLOCK HOLMES: THE FIELD BAZAAR [2] (Athenæum 1934). Courtesy of Kent State University Libraries, Special Collections and Archives.

Vincent Starrett's, in 1940³:

"It is as easy as possible," said he, "and I leave its solution to your own ingenuity. In the meantime," he added, raising his paper, "you will excuse me if I return to this very interesting article upon the trees of Cremona, and the exact reasons for their pre-eminence in the manufacture of violins. It is one of those small outlying problems to which I am sometimes tempted to direct my attention."

Edgar Smith's, in 1947⁴:

"It is as easy as possible," said he, "and I leave its solution to your own ingenuity. In the meantime," he added, raising his paper, "you will excuse me if I return to this very interesting article upon the trees of Cremona, and the exact reasons for their pre-eminence in the manufacture of violins. It is one of those small outlying problems to which I am sometimes tempted to direct my attention."

The Daily Californian's, in 1969⁵:

"It is as easy as possible," said he, "and I leave its solution to your own ingenuity. In the meantime," he added, raising his paper, "you will excuse me if I return to this very interesting article upon the trees of Cremona, and the exact reasons for their pre-eminence in the manufacture of violins. It is one of those small outlying problems to which I am sometimes tempted to direct my attention."

Jack Tracy's, in 1980⁶:

"It is as easy as possible," said he, "and I leave its solution to your own ingenuity. In the meantime," he added, raising his paper, "you will excuse me if I return to this very interesting article upon the trees of Cremona, and the exact reasons for their pre-eminence in the manufacture of violins. It is one of those small outlying problems to which I am sometimes tempted to direct my attention."

³ VINCENT STARRETT, 221B: STUDIES IN SHERLOCK HOLMES 4 (Macmillan 1940).

⁴ THE FIELD BAZAAR: A SHERLOCK HOLMES PASTICHE 15 (Pamphlet House 1947).

⁵ THE DAILY CALIFORNIAN (University of California, Berkeley), Jan. 14, 1969, at 11, reprinted in Appendix A, pages 518-519 below.

⁶ SIR ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE AND ASSOCIATED HANDS, SHERLOCK HOLMES: THE PUBLISHED APOCRYPHA 9 (Houghton Mifflin 1980) (Jack Tracy ed.).

THE QUOTATION MARK PUZZLE

Richard Lancelyn Green's, in 1983⁷:

'It is as easy as possible,' said he, 'and I leave its solution to your own ingenuity. In the meantime,' he added, raising his paper, 'you will excuse me if I return to this very interesting article upon the trees of Cremona, and the exact reasons for their pre-eminence in the manufacture of violins. It is one of those small outlying problems to which I am sometimes tempted to direct my attention.'

You can see the critical, terminal difference: Unlike the original story from 1896, all the reprintings end with a closing quotation mark.

In 1934, when A.G. Macdonell commissioned the Athenæum Press to produce the first reprint edition of "The Field Bazaar,"⁸ either Macdonell ordered insertion of the additional quotation mark or someone at the press — perhaps a helpful typesetter — added it on their own initiative. I do not know why whoever did it did it, but I am inclined to suspect that it was a manifestation of the natural, good-spirited, often unconsciously exercised human impulse to correct errors, to tie up loose ends. It would have felt right to end "The Field Bazaar" with a closing quotation mark, marking the end of Holmes's comments on trees and violins, and the end of the story — because a story isn't over until the last speaker stops speaking.⁹ Later editors and publishers of "The Field Bazaar" either worked from the 1934 Macdonell edition (or a successor to it),¹⁰ or were moved by an impulse not unlike the one that was at work when the type was set in 1934.¹¹

⁷ SIR ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE, *THE UNCOLLECTED SHERLOCK HOLMES* 151 (Penguin 1983) (Richard Lancelyn Green ed.).

⁸ See Richard Lancelyn Green, *Introduction*, 23 *SHERLOCK HOLMES J.* (Winter 1996) (supplement), reprinted at pages 308-309 above.

⁹ Cf. Mary A. Celeste, *Oyez, Oyez: An Inside Look at Romer v. Evans*, 41 William Mitchell L. Rev. 44, 79 (2015) (making the same observation about litigation, and about singing); *FDIC v. Mmahat*, 907 F.2d 546, 553 n.8 (5th Cir. 1990) (same).

¹⁰ Though at least one returned to the primary source. See Green, *Introduction*, 23 *SHERLOCK HOLMES J.* ("The Centenary Edition [of "The Field Bazaar"] is set from the copy of the *Student* used by A.G. Macdonell and is published by The Sherlock Holmes Society of London as a supplement to the *Sherlock Holmes Journal* (Winter 1996).").

¹¹ The same holds true for more recent editions of the story. See, e.g., ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE, *THE RETURN OF SHERLOCK HOLMES* 323 (Oxford 1993) (Richard Lancelyn Green ed.); 23 *SHERLOCK HOLMES J.* (Winter 1996) (supplement); *THE VICTORIAN CRICKET MATCH: THE SHERLOCK HOLMES SOCIETY OF LONDON VERSUS THE PG WODEHOUSE SOCIETY* 3 (Sherlock Holmes Society of London 2001) (MC Black ed.); SIR ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE, *THE APOCRYPHA OF SHERLOCK HOLMES* 4 (Gasogene 2009) (Leslie Klinger ed.); see also *THE EDINBURGH STORIES OF ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE* 11 (Polygon 1981).

But what if there was no error to correct? It seems only fair to begin with the presumption — rebuttable, to be sure — that the editors and publishers of *The Student* did a good job in 1896 of faithfully converting Conan Doyle’s manuscript into type and then text. (Unfortunately, the manuscript itself is nowhere to be found.) This starting point is made more difficult to avoid by two facts: (1) *The Student*’s version of the story was the only one published in Conan Doyle’s lifetime, and (2) Conan Doyle seems never to have objected to it. Moreover, the best available evidence — contemporaneous issues of *The Student* (November 12 and 27, and the November 20 “Bazaar Number” containing “The Field Bazaar”)¹² — indicates that *The Student* was edited and published by meticulous punctuators of even the most elaborate dialogue.¹³ And with respect to closing quotation marks in particular, they were quite good. In those three issues of *The Student*, there are seven works — other than “The Field Bazaar” — that indisputably ought to close with a closing quotation mark. All of them do. So, in a magazine with impressively clean and complete punctuation,¹⁴ the nonexistent closing quotation mark at the end of “The Field Bazaar” is either an extraordinary error or an extraordinary adherence to an original text.¹⁵

¹² Facsimiles of all three issues in their entirety are at pages 310-436 above. For a snapshot of the context in which “The Field Bazaar” occurred, see Ross E. Davies, *Philanthropical (and Apocryphal, or Canonical?) Cricket in Edinburgh: The Geography and Scenery of a Sherlock Holmes Vignette*, 2016 GREEN BAG ALM. (supp.).

¹³ See, e.g., Louis Tracy, *Shooting the “Rapids”!*, THE STUDENT, Nov. 20, 1896, at 24, 28, reprinted above at pages 356-365.

¹⁴ More impressive, it might be said, than the 1934 Macdonell version. In addition to adding the closing quotation mark at the end of “The Field Bazaar,” the Athenæum Press made two other changes in punctuation that were undoubtedly wrong. First error: In the 19th paragraph of the story — which, like the paragraph at the end of the story, contained one of Holmes’s little speeches to Watson — the closing quotation mark (present in the original version in *The Student*) was left out. Second error: In the same paragraph, a comma (also present in the original version in *The Student*) was left out of the first sentence. With the comma in place, the original version fluidly introduces a paragraph of classic Holmesian reasoning. Without the comma, the Macdonell version opens in a slightly clumsy and confusing rush. This critique is, I must admit, of the pot-versus-kettle variety. The *Green Bag* has never put out a perfect publication.

¹⁵ The absence of a manuscript against which to check *The Student* does leave open one other chilling possibility: copyfitting by cutting. “The Field Bazaar” does fit very snugly onto two pages. It is possible that a tail end — a few lines? a few paragraphs? — was lopped off at a late stage in the publication process, after the point at which a good-spirited typesetter might have had an opportunity to spot and correct the resulting end-of-story

THE QUOTATION MARK PUZZLE

If *The Student's* original version of "The Field Bazaar" is indeed the true version, then attentive readers must take all of it — including the punctuation — seriously, as they do when reading anything else, from Shakespeare¹⁶ to the U.S. Constitution.¹⁷ And then what does the odd ending of "The Field Bazaar" mean? What could explain a nonexistent-but-not-missing closing quotation mark?

The most obvious possibility — the grammatical one — is that Holmes had at least one more paragraph of thoughts to express,¹⁸ perhaps about violins or cricket or medical education, or perhaps about some interesting case that had just come to his attention. In other words, the nonexistent closing quotation mark suggests that either (a) "The Field Bazaar" was longer than the vignette published in *The Student*, or (b) "The Field Bazaar" was itself just an excerpt, one scene, from some longer story.

There is precedent for thinking along these lines.

Consider the cutting and pasting of the opening scenes in two other Holmes stories — "The Adventure of the Resident Patient" and "The Adventure of the Cardboard Box" — both published in 1893. Holmes scholar Donald E. Curtis nicely encapsulates that business in "An Examination of 'The Resident Patient'":

["The Resident Patient"] opens at 221B Baker St. with Watson reading the paper and Holmes lying "in the very center of five millions of people, with his filaments stretching out" Here we are treated to an outstanding example of Sherlock Holmes's deductive abilities, for

defect. But, as unfortunate as such an event might have been, accepting that theory of the case would mean accepting that "The Field Bazaar" was part of a more substantial story than the one that appeared in *The Student*.

¹⁶ See, e.g., J. Dover Wilson, *Review: Shakespeare's Punctuation*, 23 REV. ENGLISH STUDIES 70 (1947); Peter Alexander, *Correspondence*, 23 REV. ENGLISH STUDIES 263 (1947); see also, e.g., J. Gavin Paul, *Performance as 'Punctuation': Editing Shakespeare in the Eighteenth Century*, 61 REV. ENGLISH STUDIES 390 (2010); Theodore Leinwand, *Charles Olson After Shakespeare*, 32 NEW ENGLAND REV. no. 4, 22, at 22, 30 (2011-12); Clifford Leech, *Studies in Hamlet, 1901-1955*, 9 SHAKESPEARE SURVEY 1, 5-6 (1956).

¹⁷ See, e.g., *Parker v. District of Columbia*, 478 F.3d 370, 378 (D.C. Cir. 2007); see also, e.g., *Sobranes Recovery Pool I, LLC v. Todd & Hughes Const. Corp.*, 509 F.3d 216, 223 n.19 (5th Cir. 2007); cf. *Masson v. New Yorker Magazine, Inc.*, 501 U.S. 496, 519 (1991).

¹⁸ CHICAGO MANUAL OF STYLE § 10.29 (14th ed. 1993) ("If a passage consisting of more than one paragraph from the same source is quoted and is not set off as an excerpt, quotation marks are used at the beginning of each paragraph and at the end of the last paragraph. That is, quotation marks are not used at the *end* of any paragraph in the quotation except the last one.").

as Watson drifts into a “brown study,” Holmes seemingly reads Watson’s mind! (This wonderful passage was originally part of “The Cardboard Box” as published in the *Strand Magazine*. [“The Cardboard Box”] was left out of the collected stories published as *The Memoirs of Sherlock Holmes* and later included in *His Last Bow*. When *The Complete Sherlock Holmes Short Stories* was published in 1928, this “mind-reading” passage was included in both [“The Resident Patient”] and [“The Cardboard Box”].)¹⁹

Why was this done? No one is certain (the evidence is sparse), but most commentators agree that the mind-reading scene that was originally part of “The Adventure of the Cardboard Box” was felt to be too good to lose when that story was excluded (perhaps because of its racy content) from most editions of *Memoirs of Sherlock Holmes*. So, the scene was moved to “The Adventure of the Resident Patient,” which was included in the *Memoirs*.²⁰ Whatever the reason, the fact that a scene was susceptible to excision from one story and engrafting onto another means that the “The Field Bazaar,” too, could have been excised or engrafted or both. That is, it might once have been, or have been intended to become, part of a complete Sherlock Holmes mystery.

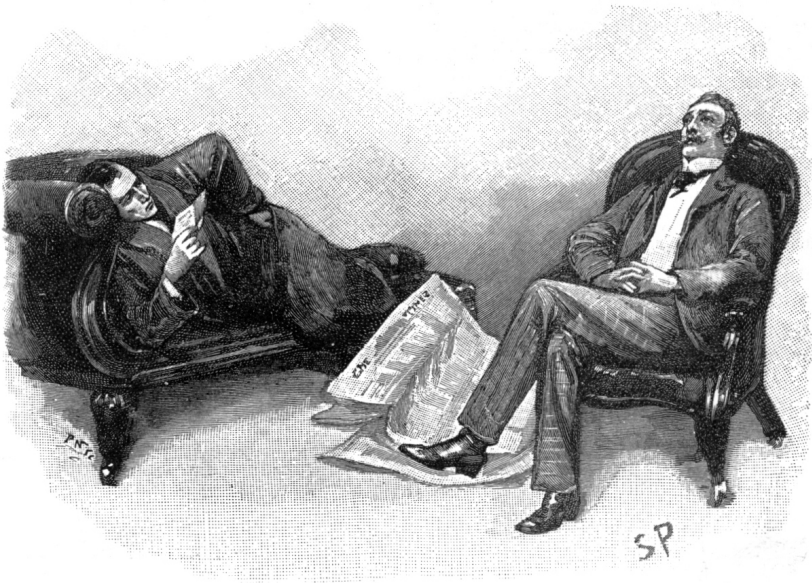
Consider also some Holmes stories with opening scenes that might, with slight revision and re-dovetailing, introduce a different mystery. For example, in just the first handful, published in 1891, there are:

- “A Scandal in Bohemia” — with Watson’s reflections on marriage, his visit to 221B Baker Street, and then Holmes’s deductions, based on Watson’s appearance, about his home and professional lives, which then segue into the case of the adventures of Irene Adler.
- “A Case of Identity” — with the fireside debate between Watson and Holmes, aided by a newspaper, about Holmes’s claim that “there is nothing so unnatural as the commonplace,” which then segues into the case of the romantic problems of Mary Sutherland.

¹⁹ Donald E. Curtis, *An Examination of “The Resident Patient,”* 50 BAKER STREET J. 41, 42 (Summer 2000).

²⁰ *Id.*; see also, e.g., H.W. Bell, *On the Variant Readings of The Resident Patient*, 1 BAKER STREET J. 312, 313-14 (July 1946). “The Adventure of the Cardboard Box” was included in the first U.S. edition of the *Memoirs*, published by Harper & Brothers in 1894, and in that edition it retained the mind-reading scene, while “The Adventure of the Resident Patient” remained in its original form, without any overt mind-reading. See A. CONAN DOYLE, *MEMOIRS OF SHERLOCK HOLMES* 29-32, 181-82 (1894).

THE QUOTATION MARK PUZZLE



“ I FELL INTO A BROWN STUDY.”

This illustration for the mind-reading scene in “The Adventure of the Cardboard Box” in *The Strand Magazine* (January 1893, page 61) was recycled to illustrate the same mind-reading scene in “The Adventure of the Resident Patient” in *Memoirs of Sherlock Holmes* (1894, page 168).

- “The Five Orange Pips” — with its inventory of unreported cases and discussion of the foul weather, followed by Holmes’s deductions about his prospective client, and only after all of that the segue into the case of the KKK’s vengeance on the Openshaws.

A complete list of promising candidates would be wearily long. And the point would remain the same. The structures of numerous stories about Holmes and Watson leave open the possibility of changeable, even interchangeable, opening scenes.

Questions about the substance of the story told in “The Field Bazaar” are beyond the scope of this little paper, which is limited to documenting one little punctuation puzzle. No doubt there are troubling inconsistencies between some facts presented there and some facts in other Holmes stories. For example, I doubt anyone could read Catherine Cooke’s

“Making Bricks without Clay: The Medical Training of Dr. Watson,”²¹ and fail to doubt the accuracy of Holmes’s statement in the “The Field Bazaar” that Watson received his Bachelor of Medicine degree from Edinburgh University. Inconsistencies abound in the Holmes stories, however, and some may even be of importance comparable to Watson’s academic pedigree. The number, identities, and lifespans of Watson’s spouses come to mind.²² So, it may be that the explaining away, or not, of inconsistencies cannot by itself resolve basic questions about the nature or status of “The Field Bazaar.”

“The Field Bazaar” has never been in the same league with the traditional Sherlock Holmes canon of 56 short and four novel-length works of detective fiction published under the byline of Arthur Conan Doyle. But is this little story something more than just a pastiche that happens to have the same Conan Doyle byline as the canonical stories? Is it — though not substantially canonical on its own — enough of a kernel or fragment or vestige of such a story to be treated as something more than a mere trivial echo? Could it be a demi- or semi-memoir of Sherlock Holmes (the full title in *The Student* is “The Memoirs of Sherlock Holmes. ‘The Field Bazaar.’”), doomed to perpetual imperfection?

On the other hand, could the nonexistent closing quotation mark in *The Student*’s original version really be just an editorial or typographical error at the end of an otherwise well-written and well-set short story, in an otherwise meticulously punctuated and typeset magazine? Yes, it could, though for the reasons given earlier in this paper that is not an answer to be accepted lightly.

In any event, the most interesting question about “The Field Bazaar” remains unanswered, at least for the moment: Is there an Arthur Conan Doyle scholar (or Sherlock Holmes artist) resourceful enough (or creative enough) to find (or fabricate) the fuller story of which it was (or should have been) a part?

²¹ Catherine Cooke, *Making Bricks without Clay: The Medical Training of Dr. Watson*, in NERVE AND KNOWLEDGE: DOCTORS, MEDICINE AND THE SHERLOCKIAN CANON 23 (2015) (Robert S. Katz and Andrew L. Solberg eds.).

²² See, e.g., Willis Frick, *Watson’s Wives*, 3 THE WATSONIAN 113 (Spring 2015); Leslie S. Klinger, *The Dating of The Five Orange Pips*, 45 BAKER STREET J. 70, 75 & nn. 45-54 (June 1995); Robert C. McGregor, *The Curious Affair of Watson’s Wives*, 30 BAKER STREET J. 26 (Mar. 1980); D. Martin Dakin, A SHERLOCK HOLMES COMMENTARY 250-51, 280 (1972).

THE QUOTATION MARK PUZZLE

APPENDIX A

THE FIELD BAZAAR
IN *THE DAILY CALIFORNIAN*
JANUARY 14, 1969, PAGES 1 & 11

actual size: approximately 11 inches wide by 17 inches tall

source: Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley

permission: *The Daily Californian*

There is one copy of the original of this version of “The Field Bazaar” in existence (other than any in inaccessible private collections), or at least that is what my exceedingly resourceful colleague Cattleya Concepcion and I concluded after a lot of digging. The top of page 1 (see below) is reproduced here only for information about provenance and citation. Page 11 (see next page) includes, in addition to “The Field Bazaar” in its entirety: (1) Edgar W. Smith’s introduction to his 1947 pamphlet edition of “The Field Bazaar,”²³ (2) Arthur Conan Doyle’s Holmes-Watson pastiche, “How Watson Learned the Trick,” and (3) a short explanation of the provenance of that story.²⁴ The “How Watson Learned the Trick” material is redacted because we are not 100% certain about its copyright status. The rest is reproduced here in facsimile for the convenience of readers who might otherwise have to exert themselves in order to see it.



²³ Edgar W. Smith, *By Way of Introduction*, in *THE FIELD BAZAAR: A SHERLOCK HOLMES PASTICHE* 7 (Pamphlet House 1947).

²⁴ “How Watson Learned the Trick” is available in a nice modern edition that includes a replica of the original miniature volume and a pamphlet containing a transcript and background information about the story. ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE, *A MINIATURE TREASURE FROM QUEEN MARY’S DOLLS’ HOUSE: HOW WATSON LEARNED THE TRICK* (Walker Books 2014).

Two 'New' Holmes Tales

The Field Bazaar

The corpus of the Sacred Writings consists of the sixty canonical tales brought forth in celebration of the saga of Sherlock Holmes—all of them, with four admitted exceptions, from the inspired pen of Dr. John H. Watson. Deriving from this Pauline source in the measure they do, the Writings are fixed and definitive as they are writ; their scripture body can know neither change nor accretion unless, some blessed day, the vaults of the bank of Cox & Co. at Charing Cross give up the secret they have held so long. Then, and only then, will there be further revelation to delight men's souls.

It is idle, obviously, to think that any secular tribute to the Master could bear scrutiny in the fierce light thrown out by the true word. The canon is jealous of its integrity and of the purity of its inspiration: even the non-Watsonian tales long since subsumed into its content—two of which, be it known, were written by Sherlock Holmes himself, with a third, only a little lower in the plane, ascribed to his brother Mycroft—stand awkward and uneasy in the sublime company they find themselves obliged to keep. No mere outsider, certainly, can ever hope to assault a bulwark so strongly built.

Yet for all that the canon is whole and impregnable in its own right, there is much material crowding close upon the threshold which must be held, if not in reverence, at least in deep respect. Superior to all else in this category, certainly is the Sherlockian product of Dr. Watson's close friend and associate, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, whose writings so closely resemble the Writings themselves that efforts have sometimes been made, by the uninitiate, to endow them with the full odor of sanctity. They are, in fact, in the order of the Apocalypse, as distinguished from the next lower order of the Higher Criticism, and they include the manuscript of a tale tentatively titled, "The Man Who Was Wanted," which was found, together with a scenario for another tale, among Dr. Doyle's papers after his death; a three-act play, *The Spectral Band*, taken loosely from Dr. Watson's story of the same name and published in 1912; and a short essay in the field of the parody-pastiche called "The Field Bazaar."

This amusing little piece appeared originally in the University of Edinburgh undergraduate magazine, *The Student*, in November, 1896, carrying the bare and still unlighted signature of A. Conan Doyle. It has been reprinted in a 100-copy private edition—by A. G. Macdonald in 1934—and in 221*B: Studies in Sherlock Holmes*—Macmillan, 1940—but in none of its appearances has it reached a wide circle of readers. As imitations go, it is a good one; it is, in fact, one of the best ever done, despite the readily-observed lapses and lacunae which stamp it as Conanial rather than canonical. Dr. Watson, who took his degree of Doctor of Medicine at the University of London in 1878, is blithely assigned, in deference to the purpose the tale is designed to serve, to the University of Edinburgh; and, as if this were not liberty enough, the author goes out of his way to have Sherlock Holmes assert that Watson was not really a doctor at all, since he had taken only a baccalaureate. Worse still, the final and climactic deduction in the tale is left dangling and without explanation, in completely un-Watsonian design.

Yet we must not carp or quibble when such an offering as this is laid before us. "The Field Bazaar" is ill-rounded, too short, and slightly mocking; it is true, but we shall take it to our hearts unchallenged, because it was written by that

great and good man who walked and talked with Dr. Watson, and who has done more than most of us are willing to admit to make the name of Sherlock Holmes a household word wherever right and justice are esteemed.

Edgar W. Smith
Summit, N.J., July 1, 1947

"I should certainly do it," said Sherlock Holmes.

I started at the interruption, for my companion had been eating his breakfast with his attention entirely centered upon the paper which was propped up by the coffee pot. Now I looked across at him to find his eyes fastened upon me with the half-amused, half-questioning expression which he usually assumed when he felt that he had made an intellectual point.

"Do what?" I asked.

He smiled as he took his slipper from the mantelpiece and drew from it enough shag tobacco to fill the old clay pipe with which he invariably rounded off his breakfasts.

"A most characteristic question of yours, Watson," said he. "You will not, I am sure, be offended if I say that any reputation for sharpness which I may possess has been entirely gained by the admirable foil which you have made for me. Have I not heard of debutantes who have insisted upon plainness in their chaparrons? There is a certain analogy."

Our long companionship in the Baker Street rooms had left us on those easy terms of intimacy when much may be said without offense. And yet I acknowledge that I was nettled at his remark.

"I may be very obtuse," said I, "but I confess that I am unable to see how you have managed to know that I was . . . I was . . ."

"Asked to help in the Edinburgh University Bazaar."

"Precisely. The letter has only just come to hand, and I have not spoken to you since."

"In spite of that," said Holmes, leaning back in his chair and putting his fingertips together, "I would even venture to suggest that the object of the bazaar is to enlarge the University cricket field."

I looked at him in such bewilderment that he vibrated with silent laughter.

"The fact is, my dear Watson, that you are an excellent subject," said he. "You are never *blase*. You respond instantly to any external stimulus. Your mental processes may be slow but they are never obscure, and I found during breakfast that you were easier reading than the leader in the *Times* in front of me."

"I should be glad to know how you arrived at your conclusions," said I.

"I fear that my good nature in giving explanations has seriously compromised my reputation," said Holmes. "But in this case the train of reasoning is based upon such obvious facts that no credit can be claimed for it. You entered the room with a thoughtful expression, the expression of a man who is debating some point in his mind. In your hand you held a solitary letter. Now last night you retired in the best of spirits, so it was clear that it was this letter in your hand which had caused the change in you."

"This is obvious."

"It is all obvious when it is explained to you. I naturally asked myself what the letter could contain which might have

this effect upon you. As you walked you held the flap side of the envelop towards me, and I saw upon it the same shield-shaped device which I have observed upon your old college cricket cap. It was clear, then, that the request came from Edinburgh University, or from some club connected with the University. When you reached the table you laid down the letter beside your plate with the address uppermost, and you walked over to look at the framed photograph upon the left of the mantelpiece."

It amazed me to see the accuracy with which he had observed my movements. "What next?" I asked.

"I began by glancing at the address, and I could tell, even at the distance of six feet, that it was an unofficial communication. This I gathered from the use of the word "Doctor" upon the address, to which, as a Bachelor of Medicine, you have no legal claim. I know that University officials are pedantic in their correct use of titles, and I was thus enabled to say with certainty that your letter was unofficial. When on your return to the table you turned over your letter and allowed me to perceive that the enclosure was a printed one, the idea of a bazaar first occurred to me. I had already weighed the possibility of its being a political communication, but this seemed improbable in the present stagnant conditions of politics.

"When you returned to the table your face still retained its expression and it was evident that your examination of the photograph had not changed the current of your thoughts. In that case it must itself bear upon the subject in question. I

turned my attention to the photograph, therefore, and saw at once that it consisted of yourself as a member of the Edinburgh University Eleven, with the pavilion and the cricket-field in the background. My small experience of cricket clubs has taught me that next to churches and cavalry ensigns they are the most debt-laden things upon earth. When upon your return to the table I saw you take out your pencil and draw lines upon the envelope, I was convinced that you were endeavouring to realize some projected improvement which was to be brought about by a bazaar. Your face still showed some indecision, so that I was able to break in upon you with my advice that you should assist in so good an object."

I could not help smiling at the extreme simplicity of his explanation.

"Of course, it was as easy as possible," said I.

My remark appeared to nettles him. "I may add," said he, "that the particular help which you have been asked to give was that you should write in their album, and that you have already made up your mind that the present incident will be the subject of your article."

"But how—" I cried.

"It is as easy as possible," said he, "and I leave its solution to your own ingenuity. In the meantime," he added, raising his paper, "you will excuse me if I return to this very interesting article upon the trees of Cremona, and the exact reasons for their pre-eminence in the manufacture of violins. It is one of those small outlying problems to which I am sometimes tempted to direct my attention."

How Watson Learned the Trick