

Sherlock Holmes

by Harry Graham

The French "filou" may raise his "bock,"
The "Green-goods man" his cocktail, when
He toast Gaboriau's Le Coq,
Or Pinkerton's discreet young men;
But beer in British bumpers foams
Around the name of Sherlock Holmes!

Come, boon companions, all of you
Who (woodcock-like) exist by suction,
Uplift your teeming tankards to
The great Professor of Deduction!
Who is he? You shall shortly see
If (Watson-like) you "follow me."

In London (on the left-hand side
As you go in), stands Baker Street,
Exhibited with proper pride
By all policemen on the beat,
As housing one whose predilection
Is private criminal detection.

The malefactor's apt disguise
Presents to him an easy task;
His placid, penetrating eyes
Can pierce the most secretive mask;
And felons ask a deal too much
Who fancy to elude his clutch.

No slender or exiguous clew
Too paltry for his needs is found;
No knot too stubborn to undo,
No prey too swift to run to ground;
No road too difficult to travel,
No skein too tangled to unravel.

For Holmes the ash of a cigar,
A gnat impinging on his eye,
Possess a meaning subtler far
Than humbler mortals can descry.
A primrose at the river's brim
No simple primrose is to him!

To Holmes a battered Brahma key,
Combined with blurred articulation,

Displays a man's capacity
For infinite ingurgitation;
Obliquity of moral vision
Betrays the civic politician.

I had an uncle, who possessed
A marked resemblance to a bloater,
Whom Sherlock, by deduction, guessed
To be the victim of a motor;
Whereas, his wife (or so he swore)
Had merely shut him in the door!

My brother's nose, whose hectic hue
Recalled the sun-kissed autumn leaf,
Though friends attributed it to
Some secret or domestic grief,
Revealed to Holmes his deep potatoes,
And *not* the loss of loved relations!

I had a poodle, short and fat,
Who proved a conjugal deceiver;
Her offspring were a Maltese Cat,
Two Dachshunds and a pink retriever!
Her husband was a pure-bred Skye;
And Sherlock Holmes alone knew why!

When after-dinner speakers rise,
To plunge in anecdotage deep,
At once will Sherlock recognise
Each welcome harbinger of sleep:
That voice which torpid guests entrances,
That immemorial voice of Chauncey's!

Not his, suppose Hall Caine should walk
All unannounced into the room,
To say, like pressmen of New York,
"Er—Mr. Shakespeare, I presoom?"
By name "The Manxman" Holmes would hail,
Observing that he *had no tale*.

In vain, amid the lonely state
Of Zion, dreariest of havens,
Does bashful Dowie emulate
The prophet who was fed by ravens;
To Holmes such affluence betrays
A prophet who is fed by *jays*!

With Holmes there lived a foolish man,
To whom I briefly must allude,

Who gloried in possessing an
 Abnormal mental hebetude;
One could describe the grossest *bétise*
To this (forgive the rhyme) Achates.

'Twas Doctor Watson, human mole,
 Obtusely, painfully polite;
Who played the unambitious rôle
 Of parasitic satellite;
Inevitably bound to bore us,
Like Aristophanes's Chorus.

But London town is sad to-day,
 And preternaturally solemn;
The fountains murmur "Let us spray"
 To Nelson on his lonely column;
Big Ben is mute, her clapper crack'd is,
For Holmes has given up his practice.

No more in silence, as the snake,
 Will he his sinuous path pursue,
Till, like the weasel (when awake),
 Or deft, resilient kangaroo,
He leaps upon his quivering quarry,
Before there's time to say you're sorry.

No more will criminals, at dawn,
 Effecting some burglarious entry,
(While Sherlock, on the garden lawn,
 Enacts the thankless rôle of sentry),
Discover, to their bitter cost,
That felons who are found—are lost!

No more on Holmes shall Watson base
 The Chronicles he proudly fabled;
The violin and morphia-case
 Are in the passage, packed and labelled;
And Holmes himself is at the door,
Departing—to return no more.

He bids farewell to Baker Street,
 Though Watson clings about his knees;
He hastens to his country seat,
 To spend his dotage keeping bees;
And one of them, depend upon it,
Shall find a haven in his bonnet!

But though in grief our heads are bowed,
 And tears upon our cheeks are shining,

We recognise that ev'ry cloud
 Conceals somewhere a silver lining;
And hear with deep congratulation
Of Watson's timely termination.

Source:

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