

GET A WHIFF OF THIS

"At the very first whiff of it, my brain and imagination were beyond control" [DEVI]

One of the pleasures of collecting Sherlockian books is walking into old bookstores and—sniff—smelling that wonderful odor of old books.

It brings with it a sense of contentment and anticipation, that soon you'll be enjoying something between the covers of an old book.

One of the things we don't pause to reflect on though, is the odor of the streets in Victorian London.

Stepping out for a walk as Holmes and Watson did in "The Resident Patient," they must have been overwhelmed with the vapors emanating from the thoroughfare.

In the Winter 2016 Baker Street Journal (Vol.

66, No. 4) the late Peter Calamai, BSI ("The Leeds Mercury") referenced the "pervasive daily filth" that had "been largely scrubbed clean in the Canon."

And Steve Mason, one of the trio that provides us with Baker Street Elementary every fortnight—and an administrator at the EPA—gave a talk at the Norwegian Explorers conference three years ago on sanitation and smells in Victorian London.

As Calamai observed, the absence of mentioning the filth in the Sherlock Holmes stories could have been because it was such a commonly-experienced occurrence that it didn't warrant additional ink.

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"At the very first whiff of it, my brain and imagination were beyond control" [DEVI] (continued)

Certainly, Watson's (and Holmes's) olfactory senses were attuned to other scents:

- *In "The Dancing Men," Hilton Cubitt "seemed to bring a whiff of his strong, fresh, bracing, east-coast air with him as he entered."*
- *In "The Devil's Foot," Watson inhaled the substance and found "the very first whiff of it my brain and my imagination were beyond all control."*
- *Holmes detected "the distinct odour of lime-cream" in Henry Baker's hat in "The Blue Carbuncle."*
- *Watson noted the "subtle and aromatic aroma" of Thaddeus Sholto's hookah, and later the air in Bartholomew's chamber "was heavy with a peculiarly pungent, tar-like odor" in **The Sign of Four**. Fortunately, Toby was*

able to track "the pungent smell of the creosote [that] rose high above all other contending scents."

- *Holmes mentioned a "faint but incisive scent" from gloves "that the curious tarry odour was oozing" in "The Blanched Soldier."*
- *There was "a pleasant almondy odour" that arose from the jar of Prussic acid in "The Veiled Lodger."*
- *Josiah Amberley chose to fill "his house with strong odors" to cover up some other smell in "The Retired Colourman."*

There are certainly other instances; these are but trifles.

*Meanwhile, let's sniff out what's going on over at **Baker Street Elementary**...*

**MASTER WELLS, YOUR NEW FANTASY STORY
CONCERNING A MARTIAN ATTACK IN THE
SCHOOL NEWSPAPER WAS WONDERFUL...**



**I APPRECIATE IT... PART 2 WILL
COVER HOW WE CAN POSSIBLY
STOP THEM FROM CONQUERING US.**

**FEED THEM OUR
CAFETERIA FOOD ?**



**I LEAN TOWARD THE ALIENS
SUCCUMBING TO THE MICROBES
IN OUR ENVIRONMENT...**

SIMPLE BIOLOGY...



**MAYBE THEY ARE TAKEN DOWN BY OUR
MOST SIMPLE OF DISEASES THAT THEY
HAVE NO IMMUNITY TO...**

**I BET THE MUMPS COULD
DO IT... ALMOST TOOK
ME OUT.**



GOOD SUGGESTIONS...

**OR SIMPLY HAVE THEM TAKE IN A
BREATH... THE SMELL OF MANURE,
URINE, ROTTING FOOD, COLOGNES,
AND DEAD ANIMALS MAY BE ENOUGH
TO DO THEM IN...**

