

THE SHERLOCK HOLMES SOCIETY OF LONDON: Grapevine 30th August 1984
22, Wisteria Lodge, Lupin Drive, Chelmsford, Essex. CM1 5FT

Quite a lot to fit in this time, so here goes.

The new film starring Peter Cushing and John Mills as Holmes and Watson is being made for television by Tyburn Productions, who have largely inherited the mantle of Hammer Films. The Masks of Death, written by the well known thriller-writer N. J. Crisp from a story by Hammer stalwart John Elder (alias Anthony Hinds) is set in 1910; Holmes is called out of retirement to foil a sinister German plot which prefigures World War I. The director is Roy Ward Baker, and also appearing are Gordon Jackson, Anne Baxter, Anton Diffring and Susan Penhaligon. No cinema showing is planned. More news as it reaches me. (Thanks to David Stuart Davies for this information.)

From Heather Owen, the news that the famous Polka Children's Theatre in Wimbledon will present between January 30th and March 2nd next year Sherlock Holmes & The Sumatran Devil, a new play by Philip Pullman. Aimed at children between 7 and 12 years old, it should suit us Sherlockians very nicely! Dates of public performances are: February 2nd, 9th, 16th, 19th, 20th, 21st, 22nd, 23rd and March 2nd; Saturday shows at 2 pm and 5.30 pm, weekdays at 11 pm and 2.30 pm. Tickets: (adult) £3.60, (child, OAP, UB40) £1.80. The theatre is at 240 The Broadway, Wimbledon, London SW19 (box office: 01-543 4888/01-543 0363). If you're thinking of going, contact Heather at 64 Graham Road, Wimbledon, London SW19 3SS, as she's hoping to get up a little party.

Tim Owen reminds me that there is a unique tape/slide programme available on the subject of Sherlock Holmes and his world. The title is Sherlock Holmes; the Legend and the Stories; it consists of 25 slides and a cassette, and the cost is £12.42 (including postage) from Heritage International (London) Ltd, 3 Richard Court, Alston Road, Barnet, Herts. The first half of the programme covers the parallel careers of ACD and SH and the rise of Sherlockian studies, the second consists of a ramble through Victorian London with evocative 19th century photographs and vivid sound effects. The programme was reviewed in the SHJ a little while back; the editor said that "the choice of illustrations and old photographs is excellent". I'll just add that, although they have no financial interest in selling the thing, the programme was most capably compiled by - Tim and Heather Owen.

A couple of new books, both from America. Krieger Publishing Company Inc of P.O. Box 9542, Melbourne, Florida 32902, U.S.A. have published The Medical Casebook of Doctor Arthur Conan Doyle; from practitioner to Sherlock Holmes and beyond by Professor Alvin E. Rodin, M.D., M.Sc. and Professor Jack D. Key, M.A., M.S. This 500 page book, fully illustrated, covers Conan Doyle's days as a physician, his medical writing, fiction (medical and otherwise), detective activities and their relationship to medicine, a reappraisal of Dr Conan Doyle... The price is 28 dollars 50, postage almost certainly extra. (I should add that Krieger have a high reputation for their medical publications.)

On September 1st, from the Laranmark Press of 211 Main Street, P.O. Box 253, Neshkoro, Wisconsin 54960, U.S.A., comes Sherlock Holmes and Harry Houdini in the Adventure of the Pandora Plague, a pastiche by Lee A. Matthias. The first (paperback) edition of this novel has not been made available in Britain. For a not-unreasonable 6 dollars (including surface mail) accredited Sherlockians will receive a numbered and autographed copy. To count as accredited, you have only to order directly from the publisher AND MENTION THAT YOU ARE A MEMBER OF THE SHERLOCK HOLMES SOCIETY OF LONDON. Geoff Bradley tells me that the story is good fun.

Which brings me to two catalogues just out from specialist book dealers. From Mr Bradley comes his latest list of crime and detective fiction (not exclusively Sherlockian), full of good things and very reasonably priced. Available from G.H. Bradley, 9 Vicarage Hill, South Benfleet, Essex SS7 1PA. Sylvian Hamilton's new list is called SH 9, all of Sherlockian or related interest and again reasonably priced. Books, theatre posters, games, Persian slippers - it's all here. Mrs Hamilton's address is Parc, Caio, Llanwrda, Dyfed SA19 8PF, Wales.

Finally I'll draw your attention to the enclosed review of Philip A. Shreffler's The Baker Street Reader and remind you of the special discount offer now available by courtesy of the Solar Pons Society of London. Thanks to all for sending in information. Keep it up!

