

# The Cliveden Waxworks

Another Most Laughable Tale of All the Chums at Cliveden College.



## The First Chapter.

**Pointdexter Knows What to Do!**

"HAT are we going to do?" asked Lincoln G. Pointdexter, sitting on the table in No. 4 Study at Cliveden College, and looking at his chums, Neville and Price, "what are we going to do, kids? You thought?"

"Thought," said Mickey Flynn—"thought, is sure and I've been thinking all day, till I got a pain in my brain, and—"

"What's that?" asked Mickey Flynn. "That's what I said, I guess," said Pointdexter calmly. "A waxwork exhibition would be the Fifth Form's moulted old conjuring."

"Yes," said Neville sarcastically, "it's a jolly good wheeze! We could get a ripping set of waxworks for a couple of hundred pounds!"

"Or, sure, we could hire them for thirty quid," said Mickey Flynn. "I've got fifteen pence to put towards it."

"Which shall it be, Puntpusher—shall we hire 'em, or buy 'em outright?" the chum from Chicago laughed.

"My dear chaps, I know real waxworks would be expensive, and a bit beyond our means," he remarked; "but that's not the idea."

"What the dickens is the idea, then?" "Suppose we gave a waxwork exhibition, and got up a number of the Fourth Form as waxwork figures, and—"

Neville and Flynn gave a simultaneous jump. "Ripping!" shouted Neville, falling on Pointdexter's neck and hugging him. "It's a great wheeze! We'll take the shine out of the Fifth!"

"Faith, and we will!" howled Mickey Flynn, slapping Pointdexter on the back with all the strength of his arm—a powerful one. "Faith, and we'll take the Sixth out of the shine—sure, I mane the shine out of the shine—that is to say, the Sixth out of the spine—"

"Leave off thumping my back!" roared Pointdexter. "That's my spinal column you're dislocating, you howling maniac!"

"Sure, and what's a spinal column at a moment like this?" said Flynn, slapping away. Pointdexter tore himself away from Neville, and gave Mickey a shove which made him sit down in the fender.

"Then let's hear it!" "What price a waxwork exhibition?" Lincoln G. Pointdexter asked the question quite coolly. Neville and Flynn stared at him, finishing in a moment.

"What price a waxwork exhibition?" asked Dick Neville slowly. "My dear chaps, I know real waxworks would be expensive, and a bit beyond our means," he remarked; "but that's not the idea."

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and Price with us in this little game, or else we shall have them against us, and that would spoil the show."

"I guess that's so," said Pointdexter. "Well, they'll have to admit it's a good wheeze, and I've no doubt they'll come into line. Let's go and ask them!"

"Right-ho!" said Neville. "Come into the Close, I saw 'em walking there and jiving, and I suppose they were turning the idea over in their heads of getting up something to help the fund. I'll wager they don't think of anything half so good as this, though."

And the Combine sallied forth in search of their deadly rivals, who were their very best friends, all the same, whenever any good purpose could be served by an alliance.

## The 2nd Chapter. The Old Firm Join In.

PANKHURST and Price, the Combine's rivals in the Fourth Form at Cliveden, were indeed thinking over the matter, and trying to hit upon some wheeze which should add to the glory of the Fourth Form, and, incidentally, put the Combine into the shade.

They were striding under the elms in the Close, keeping pace, their hands thrust deep into their pockets, their heads bent forward, and their brows wrinkled.

Two more thoughtful-looking juniors could not have been found within the precincts of the ancient college. Yet, so far, the result of their reflections had been nil.

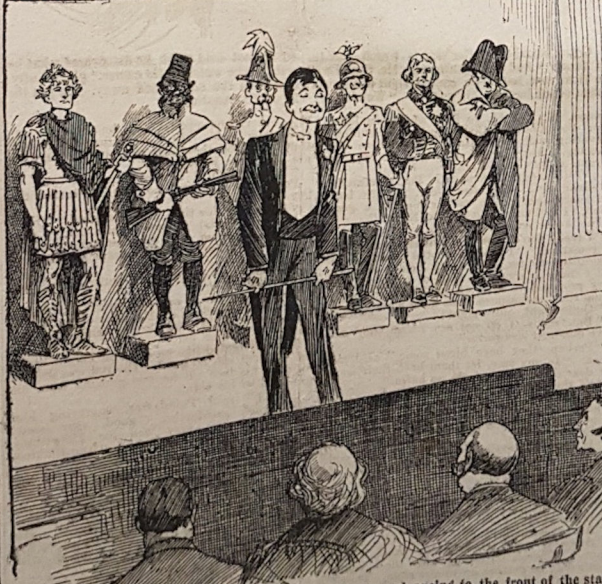
"You see, we've got to work up a wheeze," said Pankhurst; "if we don't, the Fourth Form will have to hide its diminished head, and the Fifth and Sixth will get all the kudos."

"Quite so," said Price. "Besides, if we don't do something, the Combine will, and we can't possibly allow the Combine to get ahead of the Old Firm."

"Exactly!" "Then what are we to do?" demanded Pankhurst. "Blessed if I know!"

"Oh, hang it!" said Pankhurst, running his fingers through his bright auburn hair, which some of the juniors called ginger—not within hitting distance of Pankhurst, however—hang

## THE FOURTH FORM'S WAXWORK ENTERTAINMENT.



"Ladies and Gentlemen," said Lincoln G. Pointdexter, advancing to the front of the stage, "you here behold the famous Cliveden Waxworks, the pride and glory of this ancient college, which have performed—I mean been exhibited, before all the crowned heads of Europe and America—" "How many crowned heads in America?"

it, Price! What's the good of having a brain if you don't use it?" "Hats!" said Price. "Who's senior partner in this firm?"

"Well, I am, but you might do some thinking sometimes! Hallo, here come the voters, and they look as if they had found something nice!"

"Hallo, kids!" said Pointdexter, coming up, with the other two members of the Combine at his heels, "we were looking for you!"

"Well, now you've found us," said Pankhurst, "what do you want? I'm afraid I can't be bothered with you youngsters now. I'm busy."

"Quite so," said Price. "Youngsters!" howled Neville and Flynn together, "why—"

"Pax," he exclaimed, "we haven't come here to row, Panky, old son, have you thought anything about the church fund, and what the Fourth Form ought to do?"

"Oh, I've just turned it over in my mind," said Pankhurst carelessly. "Have you found a plan?"

"I don't know. Haven't finished thinking it out. Have you found one?" "I guess so."

"I see, and you want us to advise you how to carry it out," said Pankhurst, with a nod of comprehension. "Well, I always like to help kids in difficulties, and—"

"Draw it out, Panky! I want you to join us if you like, but we don't want any advice. We want you to help us carry out the idea."

"That's what your ideas want," said Pankhurst. "Carry 'em out and bury 'em; that's the best thing you can do with 'em."

"I guess this is a ripping wheeze," the Cliveden Waxworks will knock the dramatic performance and the conjuring entertainment into a cocked hat."

"The Cliveden what?" Pointdexter explained. "By Jove," said Pankhurst, when he understood, "it's a good idea! And with a little knocking into shape by us, it will answer all right."

"If you put on any side about it, Panky, it's you that will get knocked out of shape," said Pointdexter warningly. "We mean business. Now, suppose we have off ragging one another till this affair is over, and put our heads together like sensible fellows and make a big success of it?"

"I'm agreeable," said Pankhurst immediately. "Quite so," said Price.

"You see," said Pointdexter thoughtfully. "It will need all our brain on the subject to make it a success. We shall have to pick out six or eight of the best, and make them up with green paint and wigs and theatrical costumes, to represent famous characters. The audience will suppose that they are real waxworks."

"Will they?" said Pankhurst, rather doubtfully. "Yes, I guess so, if we do the trick properly. I shall be spokesman."

"You mean, of course, that I shall be spokesman?" "No, I don't mean anything of the kind. I shall be spokesman, and make speeches explaining to the audience about the figures, and young Trimple can wind them up."

"Young Trimple can do what?" "Wind them up." "If young Trimple starts winding me up there will be ructions."

"Don't be an ass, Panky! He'll go behind you with a rattle and make a row which will make the audience think he is winding you up."

"Oh, I see! I don't mind that." "Then you'll all move your arms and legs and so on, and the people'll think we've got a set of waxworks that will knock spots off Madame Threewords!"

"Good!" said Neville. "Is there going to be a chamber of horrors, though? If so, that's he a chamber of horrors will come out strong."

"I'll chamber of horrors you!" exclaimed Pankhurst. "You—"

"Hold on! Don't start rowing! Neville, shut up. I'll keep peace in this party if I have to knock all your heads together!"

exclaimed Pointdexter. "Let's get on with the washing! I'm going to be spokesman, because I've got most sense."

"Most sense!" exclaimed Pankhurst willfully misunderstanding. "Do you mean the scent of the tinned beef your pater sells in Chicago?"

"Ha, ha!" cackled Price. "Quite so!" "Oh, give the tinned beef a rest!" said Pointdexter. "Let's talk business!"

"Seems to me you're doing all the talking!" "Look here, Neville can make up as Napoleon."

Dick Neville struck an attitude, and thrust his hand into his breast. Pankhurst looked at him curiously.

"Is he going to do that?" he asked. "I don't want to be critical, but what about the audience? They'll wonder if he's off his giddy rocker, you know!"

"Quite so!" Neville turned red, and Pointdexter went on hastily.

"Pankhurst will do Julius Caesar." "Good!" said Pointdexter. "That will suit me down to the ground! Aha, the Ides of March are come!"

"Oh, I say, he's not going to recite, is he?" asked Neville, in alarm. "If Panky recites, you mean, you can't expect me to stand in the same row with him? I'd be asking



the chums had forgotten 'testimo, and they accidentally made the discovery that they were awfully hungry. Poindexter made the tea and laid the table while the others removed the rest of the food.

"I say, Poin, do you think Crane and Cuffy will be in the show?" said Neville, as he took up the sardines.

"I don't know," Poindexter said, "I think they will be in it, but they'll keep mum, and the outsiders won't know any better. There will be a lot in from the village, and the farms around here. I'm putting a notice in the local paper, which comes out in the local paper. We shall have a crowd, and if any of our fellows tumble, they'll keep it dark."

"I say," remarked Pankhurst, rather nervously, "I hope the kids won't stick pins into me, if I'm real."

"Ha, ha! I'll make them keep their distance."

"Mind you do! A sudden howl from one of the fellows would give the show away."

"Oh, I'd pass it off as ventriloquism!" cried Poindexter. "Buck up with your tea, or we shall be late for the Sixth Form Piffle Society's dramatic performance. Luckily, we've got the chums of the Fourth came into the hall in pretty good time for the theatricals. The school lecture hall was pretty well filled. The chums of the Fourth were in the hall, and it partitioned off with scenes. There had been some difficulty with the curtain, but it had been arranged, and the boys, as they prepared to go on, had a few more or less comic pictures of Naiads bathing in a Nyan stream.

The masters were not there yet, the seats being reserved; but the unreserved seats were filling fast. The five found places, and as eight o'clock struck, the masters came in, then the curtain went up.

At all events, it started to go up, but it went up at only one side, the other remaining down. Poindexter and the audience had only a partial view of the stage.

"My hat!" murmured Pankhurst. "Something gone wrong with the works!"

Desperate efforts were made to drag the rest of the curtain up. It was done at last, only the corner hanging down in a rumpled condition.

The scene shown was that of Prince Arthur's prison in the 4th Act of King John. Trevelyan, as Hubert de Burgh, and Courtland, as Prince Arthur, looked very well; but the murderers were easily recognised as Hammond and Higgs of the Sixth.

It is not our intention to give a description of the Sixth Form dramatic performance. It must have been good, because all the Sixth in the front seats clapped and cheered most heartily, and Dr. Rayne and the vicar applauded.

But for those circumstances, some of the audience might have been saying: "What the Combine and the Old Firm applauded, too, but, as Poindexter remarked, they were not applauding the acting."

"The chaps don't know how to do things," Poindexter remarked. "But we ought to encourage them, and they'll make greater efforts in the future. They don't do things in our style, of course. But we ought to encourage the Sixth."

"Good!" grinned Pankhurst. "I'd like them to hear you say so. It's quite true. Let's applaud for all we're worth. But, I say, did you ever see anything in all your natural so absolutely rotten?"

"No, I don't think I ever did."

"It beats Chicago tinned beef for her rot."

"Trevelyan's good," said Poindexter. "The rest is silly cuckoo. Let's cheer the asses!"

The Fourth-Formers cheered the asses for the good of the cause. The scene finally ended amid a scene of enthusiasm. The vicar clapped because the fund was being raised for his church. The masters clapped because the cause was a noble one. The Sixth clapped because they were along with the Sixth. The Lower Form boys clapped because the Sixth clapped. And the outsiders clapped because everybody else did, and they thought the vicar must be doing something for the cause, and they were to be clapped or not. Consequently, there never was such a clapping heard before within the walls of Clivedon, and the cheering and clapping many times before the curtain to receive their calls.

"Awful piffle," said Poindexter, as the chums went out of the hall. "I guess our waxworks will give that stuff the tiddy knock."

agree that the airs the Sixth put on over that dramatic performance were simply idiotic.

"It's brought in the duca's," Poindexter remarked. "I hear that the fund has got in about five pounds over that piffle last night."

"Possibly," said Neville. "All the same, it's rot."

"Rot!" chimed in Crane, who was standing near, forgetting his enmity towards No. 4 in his excitement on the subject. "Rot! I should say so! We cheered, of course, and our entertainment was not over. But wait till we give Clivedon what an entertainment is, and we'll show 'em!"

"Wait till you see our waxworks."

"They'll be rotten rubbish!"

"You haven't got your rotten conjuring."

"They wouldn't care any waxworks, and if you show 'em," said Crane warmly. "You're talking out of the back of your head."

"Rats! We'll come to-night, just to encourage you."

"If you're looking for a thick car, Neville."

"If you're looking for another coat of paint, Crane."

Crane looked round, and saw that the odds were against him, so he swallowed his wrath and strode away. Poindexter chuckled.

"I guess his show will be awful rot," he remarked. "It remains for the Fourth Form to show what the school can do in the entertaining line. Let 'em wait."

Promptly to time that evening the chums of the Fourth were in the hall for the Fifth Form show.

There was no curtain to worry the performers this evening, the stage being open to the view. Crane and Cuffy, in evening-dress, were there to give their conjuring tricks, and the hall was very full. All Clivedon had come, and many from Clivebank and the countryside. The vicar was there, of course, and he had brought his wife and daughter. The performers

the smile died away. He held out his hand. Crane, turning quite pale, placed the smashed watch in it. The vicar's face was a study.

"This—this—is my watch!" he murmured.

"Ye-ees, sir," said Crane. "Something went wrong. I—I think—"

The vicar's feelings when he saw the wreck of the family timepiece may be imagined. But he proved himself an old sport, as Crane said afterwards. He put the broken watch quickly in his pocket, and worked up a smile.

"Wonderful!" he said.

The audience did not see the broken watch, or detect the sarcastic intonation in the vicar's words. Only a few near the vicar knew the truth. Crane's ears were burning as he listened to the applause and clapping.

Fortunately the entertainment improved as the conjurers regained their nerve. It ended in a cheer, and then the recitations began. The conjuring, the chums of the Fourth had decided, was rot. They came to the conclusion that the recitations were the same, only more so.

"The Charge of the Light Brigade" recited by a fellow who forgot half the words, and "Kissing Cup's Race," by a Fifth-Former, who forgot three-quarters of it, did not have an exhilarating effect upon the audience.

They began to melt away. When Harrison gave "Casabianca," the hall was half empty. When he finished it, only a dozen people remained.

Then Crane came on to give "The Women of Mumbles' Head," and the doctor and the vicar retreated quietly. Crane finished, and awoke to the fact that only the Combine and the Old Firm remained in the hall.

"Go on!" said Pankhurst encouragingly. "We're going to stick it out to the end, if it kills us!"

"Keep it going," said Poindexter. "They're all gone but us, but we're game."

It was Cuff's turn next, with "The Heroic

youngsters did very well. Poindexter promised to keep the audience as far away from them as possible, but was certain that most of the spectators would want to see the waxworks close at hand.

"You must simply stick it out," said Poindexter. "Do you see, that's all. Mind you don't forget what my signals mean when I make them. You look ripping in that giddy top, Panky—you do, really!"

Pankhurst, who wore his striped figure. He rather fancied himself as Julius Cesar.

"And you're all right as Nap," said Poindexter, turning to Neville. "Remember about the fire in the coast. Don't sneeze if you can help it."

"Right you are."

"You'll have to put on doaks to get down to the hall without being spotted," said the American chum. "We'll get into the hall by the entrance at the upper end, from the passage, so we're not likely to be spotted. It's getting near the time."

Young Trimble tapped at the door, and came in.

"Ready, Poindexter?"

"Yes. Have you got the rattles?"

"Here you are," said Trimble, producing it.

"I know what I've got to do. I say, you've made up your faces wonderfully. Anybody would think they were waxworks."

Trimble spoke truly. The make-up and the costumes were equally good, and Poindexter was a wonderful producer.

"Are they going into the hall, Trimble?" asked the American chum.

Trimble grinned.

"Rats! They're going in in crowds. There are a lot of people from Clivebank, and some from the town. All the school will be there, too."

"Good! We'll give them a good show."

"Most of the fellows don't believe there are any waxworks," said Trimble. "Of course, I've kept mum. They'll soon see for themselves."

Trimble was right there. Scpticism as to the reality of the waxworks was very rife in the school. Some of the fellows even declared that the whole thing was a gigantic hoax of No. 4 Study, but others pointed to the fact that Poindexter had certainly obtained the Head's permission to use the lecture hall, and that the notice could hardly have been put upon the board if the Fourth-Formers intended nothing to come of it.

There was a great deal of curiosity on the subject, and a scramble for seats. The hall was filled by a quarter to eight, and fellows were still dropping in. A good many people had to stand. It was pretty clear that, from the financial point of view at least, the waxwork exhibition would be a success.

The audience watched the clock. The curtain was down upon the stage. Poindexter was too businesslike to keep his audience waiting a minute after the appointed time.

Promptly as the school clock rang out the hour of eight the curtain went up. The curtain was held back by a quarter to eight, and out a hitch, and the scene prepared by the chums of the Fourth was disclosed.

There was a murmur of admiration in the hall. The scene was really a striking one. Poindexter, in evening-dress, with a gorgeous waistcoat, and a rose in his button-hole, stood as cool as a cucumber. The boy from Chicago had never been known to lose his nerve, and he was "all there" now.

Young Trimble stood at the back of the stage, looking rather self-conscious. Set in a row facing the audience were the waxworks. "Good!" exclaimed a score of voices.

They were really good. There was Napoleon, in coat and cocked hat, his arms folded, his features bearing a striking resemblance to the portraits of the great Corsican. There was Julius Cesar, in toga complete, with severe features and a wreathed brow, looking as natural as life. There were Nelson and Lord Roberts, Kaiser William of Germany, and an Irish moonlighter. Six waxwork figures, all of the best.

"Ladies and gentlemen," said Lincoln G. Poindexter, advancing to the front of the stage, "you here beside the famous Clivedon waxworks, the pride and glory of this ancient college, which have performed—I mean, been exhibited before all the crowned heads of Europe and America."

"How many crowned heads in America?" sang out Crane's voice from the body of the hall.

Poindexter ignored the frivolous question.

"They are now exhibited, positively for this night only, for the benefit of the fund, with whom object you are all acquainted," said Poindexter.

"Hear, hear!"

"You will understand" went on the showman, "that these are not common or garden waxworks. When wound up they move like real human beings, and by the aid of my wonderful gift of ventriloquism, when I cease to speak, they speak in voices that sound perfectly natural."

"Bravo!"

"Hear, hear!"

"Hear, hear!"

"Bunkum!"

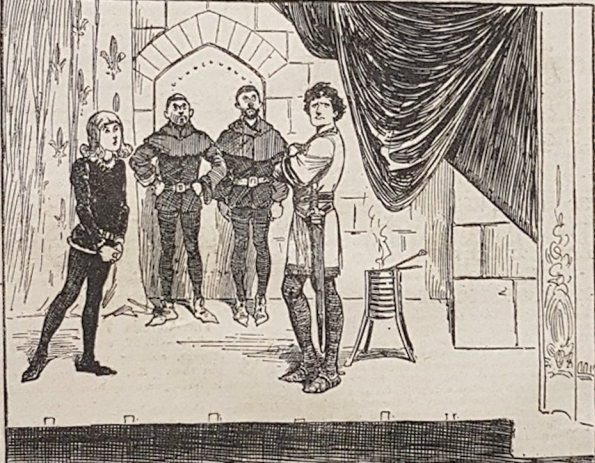
"I shall be pleased to put it to the proof for the satisfaction of the audience," said Poindexter. "Any gentleman who doubts the reality of the exhibition has only to get up on his hind legs, look at these—"

A fat, country lad rose from his seat.

"May OI come on and look at them close, mister?" he inquired.

Poindexter frowned.

THE SIXTH FORM'S DRAMATIC ENTERTAINMENT.



The curtain went up at last, only one corner hanging down in a rumpled condition. The scene shown was that of Prince Arthur's prison in the fourth act of "King John." Trevelyan, as Rupert de Burgh, and Courtland, as Prince Arthur, looked very well, but the murderers were easily recognised as Hammond and Higgs of the Sixth.

formers had nothing to complain of in their audience, a numerous one, and quite ready to applaud whatever was done on the stage, good, bad, or indifferent.

But the conjurers were nervous.

Crane asked for a watch to perform the ancient trick of smashing it up, and then restoring it intact to the owner.

The vicar, with an expansive smile, handed up an enormous silver watch. It was a watch which, to judge from its bulk and appearance, which, to judge from its bulk and appearance, if not had been in the vicar's family for years, if not for generations. Crane took it with a bow, and the trick proceeded.

Something went wrong. Afterwards Crane could not quite explain how it was. He blamed Cuffy. But as Cuffy blamed Crane as much as Crane blamed Cuffy, it was impossible to tell which was in fault. But certainly something was done wrong, for Crane did not smash up a bogus watch and then restore the vicar's timepiece with the usual flourish. He smashed up the vicar's watch, and turned almost cold when he discovered what he had done. He went on smashing mechanically, wondering what on earth he should do, and the audience clapped. He had so evidently broken up the vicar's watch, that even the chums of the Fourth were impressed.

"Well, that's cute of Crane," said Poindexter. "I guess he would have taken me in."

"I'd swear that was the real watch he was smashing."

"And now, gentlemen, Mr. Crane will restore the watch to its owner," piped Cuffy.

The vicar rose with a smile still on his face. But as he caught sight of Crane's expression,

Fireman." The comrades stood it out manfully, and waited for the next. Bingham was the next on the programme, with "King Robert of Sicily." The chums of the Fourth waited, but he did not appear. They shouted for him, but he did not come.

"My hat!" said Pankhurst. "They're gone."

The Fifth were indeed gone. When even their fellow-fellows could not stand it, they felt it would not do to go on. The rest of the fellows, however, remained unrecited, and the chums of the Fourth marched out of the hall.

"Waal!" said Poindexter. "I guess we shall knock that show, kids."

And the others "guessed" the same.

The 6th Chapter.  
The Waxworks.

THE following day was a busy one for the chums of the Fourth. The waxworks were to appear at eight in the evening, and most of the work fell upon Poindexter, as manager and master of the ceremonies. Simpson and Gatty had to be driven to the constant rehearsals of their parts in intervals between their work, and, of course, the hardest part was to make their stand still in the study of living pictures. One would find that the juniors found that hard. One would shift, or twist, or snuff, or sneeze every few moments. They were almost the despair of Poindexter. They were stuck to it.

And, indeed, after some practice, the

**The 5th Chapter.**

**The Fifth Form Entertainment.**

THE next day the Sixth Form Dramatic Society carried their heads very high. The scene from King John had been done to unbounded applause, and the Sixth were ready to inquire too closely into the reasons for that applause.

They went about, as Poindexter remarked, looking as if they were a Seventh or Eighth Form instead of a common or garden Sixth. The means needed for the performance of the Sixth Form jingled heartily in the snifing.

Crane and Cuffy seldom agreed with the chums of the Fourth in anything, but they did

"I am afraid you will obstruct the view of the audience," said Crane and Cuffy, who sat just behind the country youth. "Let him come on! Why shouldn't he? Go on, kid!"

"Certainly, if you like."

Poindexter had consented. The country youth advanced upon the dais, looking very red, but quite resolved to examine the waxworks closely, and satisfy himself as to their accuracy. The next moment there was a terrific yell that nearly made the countryman jump out of his boots.

He stared at the figure. Pankhurst had recovered his coolness in a second, and he was still staring straight before him, his hand held raised as if to address the Senate.

"Who, he be?"

"Ladies and gentlemen," said Poindexter blandly, "you see there the wonderful ventriloquism of which I told you. I ask you candidly whether that vocal sound is as if it came from the throat of the waxwork or from his boots."

"It did indeed!" said Dr. Rayno, smiling. "Wonderful!" gasped the vicar. "This is indeed marvellous!" Such skill in the difficult art of ventriloquism is exceedingly rare in a lad so very young.

The doctor smiled, but did not reply. The vicar, however, shouted the audience.

"But, master," began the country youth, gasping at Poindexter—"but—"

Poindexter hustled him off.

"You are interrupting the proceedings!" he said severely. "You've satisfied yourself, and now sit down, and don't obstruct the view."

And the country youth, with a gasp, said, "I believe" he be real flesh and blood, fither, I believe" he be confided to an old farmer sitting next to him.

The former sniffed the sniff of superior knowledge.

"This beest ever see a huming being with such a face as that? It's very good, for a waxwork, but it nothin' like a real huming face, my boy."

Julius Caesar heard the remark, and he looked daggers with his frazzled hair.

The farmer gasped as he saw it.

"The thing's bewitched!" he muttered.

"I'll swear I saw it's face move!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" shouted Crane and Cuffy. "Go on! Waxworks! There's a lot of lanky-panky about this, I fancy."

"Ladies and gentlemen—" "You've said that before."

"The exhibition of the wonderful mechanical waxworks will now proceed—"

"Let her rip!"

Trimbale did not move. "Boy! Wind the waxworks!"

"Are you talking to me, Poindexter?"

"Yes. Wind the waxworks."

"What do you mean by calling me boy? I'm in the same form as you are, and—"

"Wind the waxworks," hissed Poindexter. And Trimbale rattle sulkily obeyed.

**The 7th Chapter.**  
**The Fourth Form Takes the Cake.**

THE audience looked on with deep and intense interest as Poindexter gave his instructions to Trimbale. The latter moved behind the waxworks, starting with Napoleon. He made a noise with the rattle, keeping the latter well out of sight of the audience.

There was a gasp of amazement from the people in front.

Napoleon withdrew his hand slowly from the breast of his coat, and raised it as if to screen his eyes from the light, in the well-known Napoleonic attitude.

"Arrogance!" "Bravo!" "Splendid!"

Most of the Cliveden fellows in the hall looked scornful. They smelt a rat, so to speak. But they were too loyal to give the game away. They cheered, and the rest of the audience took it all in good faith. There were over a hundred strangers present, and to them the waxworks were waxworks, whatever they were to the boys of Cliveden.

"Boy!" Wind up the next figure!" said Poindexter, with a wave of the hand.

Trimbale stepped behind Julius Caesar, and the rattle rattled again. The spectators watched with great interest.

Julius Caesar lowered his oratorical rights hand, and gripped his sword. He acted as if he were about to solemnly draw it from the scabbard.

"Wonderful!"

Napoleon was standing shading his eyes, Julius Caesar with his sword in the air, motionless as statues—or waxworks!

Now, wind up the next figure!"

Trimbale went to Lord Roberts "Flowers grow while you wait." I and wound him up, 'Bobs raised (See our Conjuror Article).

his hand in salute to the audience, who cheered again.

So on with Kaiser William, and Nelson. Kaiser William raised a fist in the air, upon which was an enormous steel gauntlet, and the people laughed. Nelson put his telescope to his blind eye, and they cheered the moonlighter. Then Trimbale came to the Irish moonlighter. He gave an extra loud rattle, and the moonlighter was observed to give a start. Poindexter looked daggers at Trimbale, at the amusement of the spectators, the moonlighter spoke apologetically.

"Sure, and it's sorry I am, Pankhurst, but the beast started me entirely to be hid!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Crane. "Good old Micky Flynn!"

"Sure, and it's sorry I am—" "Shut up, my boy!" hissed Poindexter, forgetting himself for a moment. "You utter gasps!"

"Who are you calling an ass—"

"Silence!"

"Oh, all very well—"

"Ladies and gentlemen," said Poindexter hurriedly, "this is the climax of the show, the dialogue between myself and the waxwork figure, conducted by means of my ventriloquism."

"Arrah, and sure—" "Hold your tongue, you silly fathead!" whispered Kaiser William, bending a little towards the moonlighter. "Don't, you?"

"Sure, and I'm not going to!" called a what-do-you-know kid in No. 10 Study! "What do you mane by it intirely?"

"Shut up—"

"Rats to you!" "Who are you talking to?"

"Arrah, and are ye startin' too, intirely?"

Sure and—"

Poindexter gripped the unruly waxwork by the shoulder.

The audience were nearly in convulsions by this time. Micky's ungarded speeches had completely given the show away. They rolled in their seats, and simply howled at the sight of Poindexter's frantic efforts to still keep up appearances.

"Dear me," said the vicar. "They are living persons after all." "Ha, ha, ha!" yelled Crane and Cuffy. Poindexter shook the obstinate moonlighter violently. "Will you shut up!"

"Can't you see—" "Sure, and I can't see why Kaiser William brought down

the gauntlet with a thump upon Micky's head, and stopped him.

"Why don't you shut up!"

Micky Flynn staggered for a moment, and then he went for Kaiser William. The gauntlet, which was a shilling-folk in it. Then the Emperor of Germany in close combat with the Irish moonlighter.

"Buck up, Tipperary!"

"Let him have it, Bill!"

Kaiser William hurled the moonlighter down, and the latter fell on the floor. The audience could stand. The hilarity of the scene was increased by the sight of the Napoleon seizing Kaiser William by the shoulder to drag him off. It was time for the other member of the Old Firm to join in. Pankhurst lost no time about it, and Dick Neville, and Napoleon and Julius Caesar went rolling on the floor together.

Poindexter looked on in utter dismay, so did Nelson and Lord Roberts. The noise was terrible. The long-suppressed rivalry between the two parties in the Fourth had broken out again, more furiously than ever, and there was no stopping the combat. Poindexter ran down the curtain, and the scene was shut off from view of the audience.

The audience were almost in hysteria. Even the Head was laughing, even the vicar was cackling away, and the tears were running down his face. Crane and Cuffy were screaming, and throughout the hall rows were on wave of laughter.

The show was over; nothing more was to be seen. A single shot of strife could still be heard behind the scenes. The audience dispersed; and utterly as the waxwork show had been given away, they all agreed that the Fourth had put off a magnificent show, and previous ones completely—though in rather an unexpected manner.

"It was all through joining with those kids in No. 10 Study," said Neville afterwards, as he wiped off the grease-paint and bathed a black eye. "We might have known that they would make it up to us." "Sure, and we might intirely!" said Micky Flynn, who was far from admitting that he was the cause of the disaster.

"No, nor did I," grumbled Pankhurst. "Everybody says it's the best show they've seen for a long time, and so long as it was a success one way or another, we needn't grumble. We've had our fun, and that's enough for me." "And the other members of the Combia 'guessed' likewise."

THE END.  
("Philpot's Plot" and Cliveden story—next week.)

**THE IRON HAND.**  
A Story of Nelson Lee. — By Maxwell Scott.

**Conclusion.**

BACK! A revolver barked—it was Nelson Lee's—and a bullet struck Herman on the right wrist, shattering the bone.

With a piercing shriek Herman dropped the revolver and staggered to his feet, but even as the detective rushed towards him, with the object of securing him, Paul Herman swiftly stepped down, picked up the revolver with his left hand, and clapped the muzzle to his own temple.

Like an arrow from a bow, Nelson Lee leaped forward. But he was too late. Ere he could reach Paul Herman's side the latter's finger pressed the trigger, and the next instant a lifeless form, lying at Nelson Lee's feet, was all that remained of the former chief of the League of the Iron Hand.

The rest is soon told. The breakdown of the gunboat's engines had proved to be a very trifling matter, and as soon as the storm had abated the damage had been quickly repaired. The Radium had been driven in the gale—and had anchored off the south coast. Nelson Lee and Donald, accompanied by a squad of blue-jackets, had then rowed ashore, and had been on their way to Paul Herman's house—which they had sighted from the gunboat's deck—when they had heard the four shots which Nipper had fired in the wood.

What happened after that the reader already knows, and it only remains to add that after Nipper had told the story of his escape and his subsequent adventures, a move was made for the home.

By that time Vera had recovered from her faint, and had told the servants what Nipper had told her, namely that "Don Jose da Silva" was Paul Herman. The result was that the subsequent receipt of a detective and his companions with open arms, declaring—which was quite true—that they would have denounced their master long ago if they had known who he was.

Over the meeting between Vera and Donald they will draw a veil, since such reunions are too sacred to be described in cold print. Let it suffice to say that when the Radium returned to England, five days later, the reception which

**THE EASTER KING.**  
A Rousing Story of the East End and Detective Life.

**The Curtain Falls.**

"NO, uncle—no!" cried Hetty in a strange, choking voice. "Not the last time. No, I am coming here once again to fetch you away from this dreadful place."

Old Higgins shook his head. "She don't understand," he said faintly. "Tell her, some 'an, please—I can't. She don't understand, poor gel."

"No, it's you who don't understand, uncle!" Hetty interrupted. "You are saved—saved! Reprieved!"

But Higgins still shook his head and looked pained and alarmed. Plainly, he thought that grief had partially crazed the girl. Even the old chaplain seemed astounded and distressed.

Then Sexton Blake stepped into the light, a look of calm joy upon his features.

"Yes, it is quite true," he said. "You are reprieved, Mr. Higgins, and you may be sure that your release will speedily follow."

The older coster stared at him in blank wonder, and the detective hastened on.

The real murderer of Inspector Salt—John Roker, otherwiser Dirk the Butcher—has fully confessed, and that with his last breath, for he is already beyond reach of earthly justice."

It was quite true. Dirk the Butcher had died that very afternoon, but not without full confession of both his greatest crimes—the murders of Inspector Salt and of Nathan Flint. Blake and Forsyth made prompt use of this confession to obtain an instant reprieve for the condemned man, afterwards hurrying post-haste to the prison with the joyful news.

It was at the very gates that they met Hetty Merton and her two companions.

There is very little more to add before we ring down the curtain upon this drama of real-life.

The King's pardon speedily set Henry Higgins free. But he did not return to coster life. In a quiet country cottage he now passes a peaceful happy life.

Hetty Merton at present shares his home, but the day is not far distant when she will be leaving it to become the wife of the Honourable Bertie Ockendon, Mrs. Mawker, who, in spite of all her faults and blunders, was still tenderly attached to Hetty, so to be their housekeeper.

also became quiet, gentle, and subdued. But Shankey, whom she had not long ago, finds her in excellent health, and we hear they are doing well in the greengrocery line.

Portland Blake and his son, Huckle the Task, did not get the revivification which they so basely sought for. The Government generously gave them something else a little later in their careers.

Both being convicted of burglary, the excellent establishment which he derived his nickname.

Huckle was sent to a reformatory, where it was to be hoped he will develop into better stuff than he did amid the sordid pleasures of the East End.

The banquet came into her inheritance under Sir Charles Merton's will in due course, and "Coster's Mile" is now part of her East End property.

The costers have long been Joseph on their old pitch, for with the death of Josiah Pounce the opposition of the borough council entirely collapsed.

Then, Sexton Blake and Tinker's work in the East End was done, and well done.

But they both made one final appearance in the scene of this book—the final one in the East End before making their final exit from the scene of their labours.

This was at the grand banquet given to his coster friends by Jerry Stubbs and Barrow, entirely reopening of the new Mawker's at her own cost. Really, it was a big success.

The banquet was a big success. Sam Hawkins was a prominent place with "Addicks as vice. Tinker occupied a prominent place in the table. Sexton Blake made a telling little speech in real coster lingo, and then, for the first time, disclosed his true identity.

The costers were thunderstruck. Jerry Stubbs was the first to recover. He got up on his feet, and in a neat, if homely, speech called upon the assembly for a hearty cheer of thanks to the great detective for his splendid work amongst them.

This was responded to by an outburst of cheers from the costers.

Sexton Blake called for silence. Turning came in for the honours.

Then "Addicks again called for silence. Turning to the detective, he said, without a suspicion of moisture in his eyes:

"Let me tell the world kin call you Sexton Blake by other names, but down here, among us, if it wants to; or call her an 'kev' in mind, as Sam 'avin' will be known, an 'kev' in mind, as Sam 'avin' for the Coster King!"

THE END.  
(Some Grand New Serial Stories will be commencing shortly.)

THE END.  
(Now turn to our New Serial Story, entitled "Cornish Grit," which is commencing to-day, and which Your Editor is certain you will thoroughly enjoy.)