

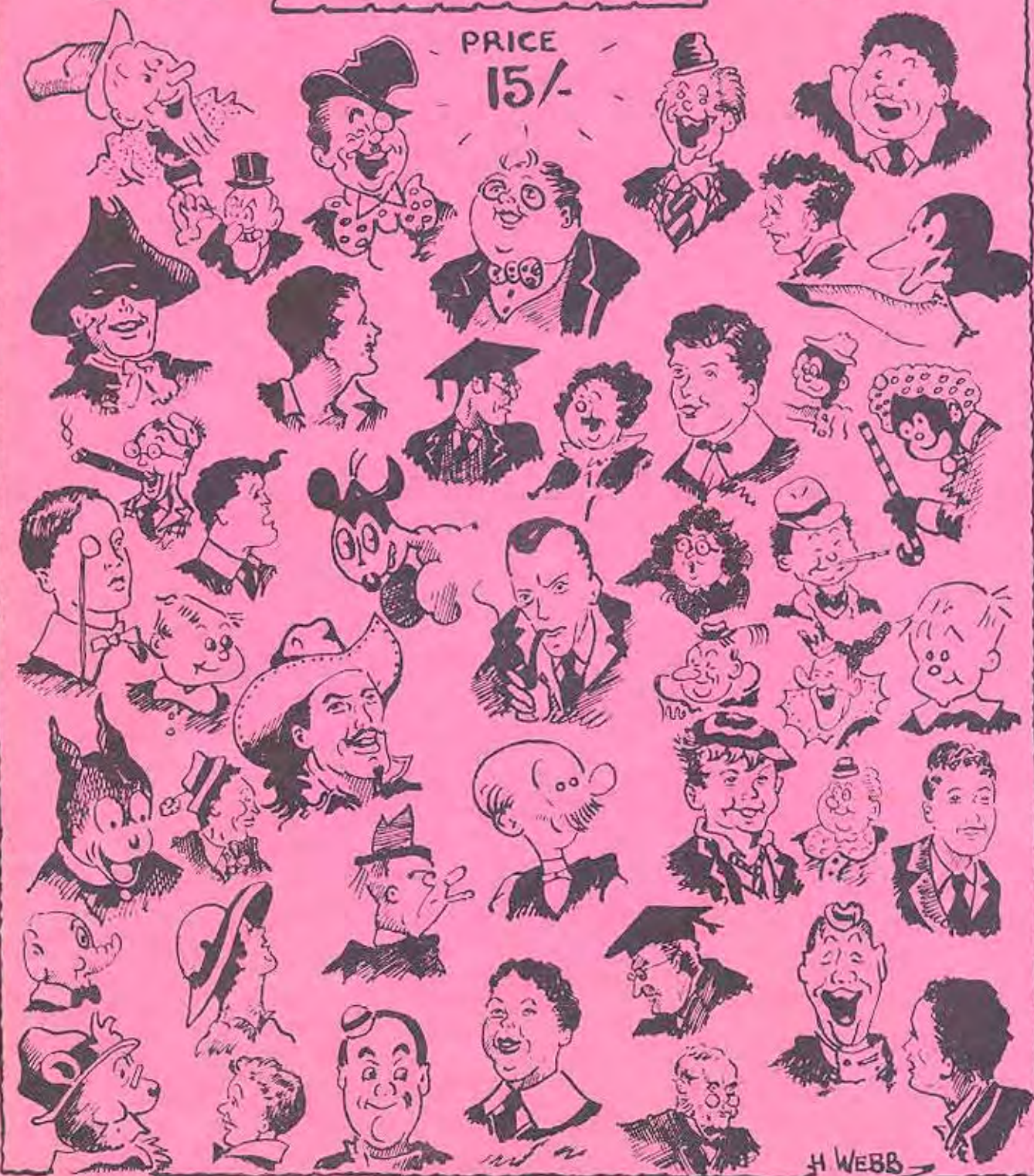
COLLECTORS DIGEST

1964

ANNUAL

1964

PRICE
15/-



Jameson Hilliard

COLLECTORS' DIGEST ANNUAL

Christmas 1964

Eighteenth Year

Editor:
ERIC FAYNE

EXCELSIOR HOUSE, GROVE ROAD,
SURBITON, SURREY, ENGLAND.

My dear Chums,

Once again it is my pleasure and privilege to present to you another edition of our Annual. I hope that it will give you the same joy to read it as was mine as I prepared it.

As the sands of the old year are running out, we tend to look back over the months which have gone. As we grow older, we scarcely seem to notice their passing. For most of us, those months would have been infinitely the poorer without the monthly Digest, and without the Annual which heralds the coming of Christmas. The Digest and the Annual have become so much a vivid part of our lives, as we have each become part of one another's lives. The essence of our hobby is Friendship. And Friendship and Affection are another name for Christmas.

I wonder whether, when the late Herbert Leckenby was preparing his first Annual, so long ago, he foresaw that the Annual would become so important a milestone in the lives of so many. So strong a link in the chain which binds us all to the days of far back. Maybe he did, for Herbert was a farsighted man. We owe him so much, and we remember him especially at Annual time.

My grateful thanks go in a flood to our loyal and gifted band of contributors who give unselfishly of their time and talent to keep the grand old hobby hale and healthy - to keep the Digest and the Annual as things unique in the world of reading. To our splendid artists who keep us pictorially in touch with the world we have always loved. To our readers, whose loyalty is as bright as Christmas itself, and whose thousands of enthusiastic letters have lit up the passing year with a golden gleam of encouragement and happiness. To the direction and staff of York Duplicating Services whose magnificent work reflects so eloquently their dedication which makes them so fine a firm with whom to work and plan.

I, as editor, have so much for which to be grateful - and gratitude to you all is my mood this Christmas and all the year round.

God bless you all.

Your sincere friend,

Eric Fayne

CONTENTS

Page	1	-	Foreword	
Page	2	-	Contents	
Pages	3 - 6	-	Gold Watches and Red Noses.....	Gerry Allison
Pages	7 - 9	-	It Was The Extras I Liked.....	Frank Shaw (of 'Punch')
Pages	10 - 16	-	Monday Morning at St. Frank's.....	Jim Cook
Page	17	-	Illustration - The Marvel	
Pages	18 - 22	-	A Very Special Magic.....	Robert Kelly
Pages	23 - 38	-	And Every Story NOT a Gem.....	W. O. G. Lofts
Pages	39 - 42	-	Was the Journey really Worthwhile:.....	Harry Broster
Pages	43 - 48	-	John Upton looks at "HOME CHAT" - Volume One	
Pages	49 - 51	-	The Making of Harry Wharton.....	Frank Richards
Pages	52 - 59	-	Magic Series.....	Roger M. Jenkins
Pages	60 - 62	-	The Golden Year	
Pages	63 - 73	-	"Edgar Rice Burroughs - King of Fantasy and Romance".....	W. J. A. Hubbard
Pages	74 - 75	-	Illustrations - Big Budget	
Pages	76 - 99	-	Christmas with Meredith.....	Eric Fayne
Pages	100 - 107	-	Sexton Blake in the Penny Popular.....	Victor Colby
Page	108	-	Frank Richards - Songwright	
Pages	109 - 110	-	The Unfinished Autobiography of G. H. Teed.....	W. O. G. Lofts
Pages	111 - 123	-	E. S. Brooks, Story Writer "Par Excellence".....	Robert Blythe
Page	124	-	Illustration	
Page	125	-	The Birth of the Sexton Blake Library	
Pages	126 - 130	-	The Schools' Olympiad.....	Donald B. Webster
Pages	131 - 136	-	Danny for Merrie Christmas	
Pages	137 - 139	-	Pensive Ramblings.....	Victor Colby
	139 -	-	Two Tenacious Prints.....	O. W. Wadham
Pages	140 - 142	-	Give-Aways.....	C. Wright
Page	143	-	A Forgotten Author.....	S. Gordon Swan
Page	144	-	Illustration	
Page	145	-	There's A Number Fifty-Eight Coming!	
Page	146	-	Illustration - New Zealand Reveries	

Gold Watches and Red Noses!

By GERRY ALLISON

"By the way," wrote John Jukes - that most spritely correspondent, in a recent letter, "when is someone in the O.B.B.C. going to write that article on old boys' paper advertisers? The fact that most of these adverts were catches for the simple and unwary should make good reading."

It should indeed. For good measure, John gave me some examples of his adventures in answering these alluring advertisements, to which I can add a few of my own. Perhaps, after perusing this nostalgic confessional, some other readers of the Collector's Digest Annual will come forward with their contributions. We do assure them that we shall not consider them simple or unwary today. But in those bygone years we were young and innocent. Geese ready for the plucking.

I was always fascinated by those adverts. Every paper had them, and they must have paid well. The following one ran almost unchanged for twenty years. The first two papers I opened - a 1910 PLUCK and a 1922 ROBIN HOOD LIBRARY both contained it. I am sure everyone will remember this:

G O L D W A T C H F R E E

C J K A

T O A L L C L E V E R

E T R B

R E A D E R S O F P L U C K

T K E A

The four lines of letters in this square stand for two boys and two girls names.

S O R E

We guarantee to send you ABSOLUTELY FREE one of our simulation 18 carat GOLD WATCHES (ladies or gents) if you send us the correct names. But you must comply with our condition; and promise to show the watch to your friends.

Who troubled to ask what 'simulation' meant, or spotted the semi-colon after 'condition'? (The condition was not the promise to show the watch to your friends.)

Now, I swear with my hand on my bound volumes of COLLECTOR'S DIGEST that I never fell for that advert, although I was amazed at my cleverness in being able to solve those anagrams. But perhaps some of my readers did send for one of those Gold Watches. Who will own up?

John Jukes - himself an artist who contributed to many old boys' papers - see page 1 of COMIC CUTS No. 2297 for an example of his work - goes on:- "I find I am still intrigued on "How To Increase My Weight," "Cure My Red Nose," "Win a Gold Watch By Selling Packets of Seeds," and "Acquire An Air-Gun and a Smashing O'Brien Bike from Coventry." I well recall answering one of those ads on "How To Grow Strong."

BE STRONG! I promise you Robust Health, Doubled Strength, Stamina and Dashing Energy in 30 DAYS or money back. My amazing course brings also an Iron Will, Perfect Self Control, Virile Manhood and Personal Magnetism, (Magnet No. 1243)

"I was invited to send up 9d in stamps for the Full Course. In return I got a badly mimeographed four pages on the evils of self abuse! Then there was that other favourite "HANDSOME MEN ARE SLIGHTLY SUNBURNT" You got the stuff from the Sunbronze Laboratories - what a fascinating concept! Pal of mine tried it, and we pallid Brummagem kids were completely awestruck with the tropical result. He was lovely, and quite before his time. He now runs a pork butchers emporium in Wolverhampton, and like most pork butchers, is naturally red in both face and neck.

So much for John, and many thanks to him for his suggestion. Before I relate my own story do let me recall some of the more lurid advertisements which I remember.

One which always fascinated me horribly appeared frequently in Henderson's YOUNG FOLK'S TALES, and took up half a page. It was a bedroom scene. Around the edge of the half-opened door, a boy's face peers timidly. In the balloon coming from his lips he is asking:

"MOTHER, IS THE BATTLE OVER? THOUSANDS HAVE BEEN SLAIN, THEY SAY!"

His mother stands on the far side of a bed which has the blankets turned back. The mattress is covered with the bodies of 'the slain' - killed by Keating's Powder. A juicy picture to accompany the fairy stories of Mabel and King Pippin.

In the same magazine, another Powder - Fennings - is recommended for the most tender babe, as it contains no Antimony, Opium, Calomel or Morphia. How times change! Those are just the things the tender babes of today like best, when they run out of their Purple Hearts.

I think the best value ever offered in any advert is the one which reads:-

100 CONJURING TRICKS; 57 Joke Tricks; 60 Games; 12 Love Letters; 420 Jokes; 10 Magic Pranks; 52 Money Making Secrets (worth £20); and 1001 more stupendous attractions. 7d p.o. the lot! Hughes & Co., Station Road, Harborne, Birmingham.

In all, 1712 different items, and all for 7d. The mind boggles at the job of packing them all. Suppose 11 Magic Pranks were sent and only 51 Money Making Secrets.

One preparation which might sell well today is 'MOUSTA' - contains Asiatic Herbs. "No More Boys. Beards and Moustaches for all - even at 15." As it is often impossible to tell the sex of some teenagers today, MOUSTA might help to solve the difficulty. But probably some of the 'fair sex' would use it for kicks. Then where should we be?

MAGNET 408 for 1915 has an advert which promises that the SMOKING HABIT CAN BE POSITIVELY CURED IN 7 DAYS. One might get the stuff on National Health today. But I suppose SPOTTY FACES and RED NOSES are not serious enough to come in for free treatment. As for that PROVED HOME TREATMENT FOR BLUSHING - well they might as well shut up shop. Lady Chatterley and Fanny Hill between them have wiped that right out. Pity.

HAIR CLIPPERS

These "special" Hair Clippers are made of the finest steel, and are most perfectly adjusted, so that "anyone" can use them with perfect ease. Length, 5 1/2 inches. Only 3/6 post free, with protective sheath for placing over blade when not in use. Complete in box with full printed instructions. Full satisfaction given or 3/6 refunded in full. **PAIN BROTHERS, Dept. 120, The "Presents" House, Hastings (Eng.)**

"ANYONE CAN USE THEM." ILLUSTRATED PRICE LISTS POST FREE

£1,000 TO BE GIVEN AWAY

In Prize Watches to all clever readers who can solve this puzzle. The letters, when correctly arranged, spell the names of three well-known fruits. If your answer is right, we will give you a **Real Lever Simulation Gold Watch**, guaranteed 10 years, entirely free of cost. Send your answer now, with stamped addressed envelope, for our reply. Remember, you are not asked to sell anything for us. But readers must comply with our one simple condition, and promise to show the Watch to their friends as a sample of our wonderful bargain.

P M L U
P R A Z
D T E A

Address **IMPERIAL SUPPLY CO. (Dept. 2)**
42 Junction Road, London, N.

TEN DAYS' FREE TRIAL



MEAD Coventry Cycles

Guaranteed Fifteen Years. Puncture-Proof or Double Tyres, Clusters, Speed Gears; full improvement, &c.

From **£2. 15s.** CASH OR EASY PAYMENTS.

500 Shipped and Second hand Cycles from 15s. Write for Free Art Catalogue and Special offer on Sample Machine. Agents wanted at once.

MEAD CYCLE CO., Dept. 1238
11, Paradise Street, LIVERPOOL.

IF YOU WANT Good Cheap Photographic Material or Camera, send postcard for **Sample and Catalogue. FREE - Works, JULY ROAD, LIVERPOOL.**

Be sure and mention this paper when communicating with advertisers.



A CYCLE for 1/- DEPOSIT & 1/- WEEKLY.

As an advertisement we will send to first 1,000 applicants our **28 2s. Od. "ROYAL EMBLEM" CYCLE** for 1s. **DEPOSIT**, and on last payment of 3s. weekly at 1s., making **£4 6s.** A **HANDSOME PRESENT IS SENT FREE.** Cash with order, **£3 15s. Od. only.** Write for Illustrated Catalogue of Latest Models.

ROYAL EMBLEM CYCLE DEPOT (C30), GREAT YARMOUTH.



A REAL LEVER SIMULATION GOLD WATCH FREE

The four lines of letters in this square stand for two boys' and two girls' names. We will send you **Absolutely Free** one of our famous simulation 18ct. **Gold Watches** (ladies' or gents') if you send us the correct names; but you must comply with our one condition, and promise to show the watch to your friends, as we wish to advertise our goods. It costs you nothing to try, so send your answer at once, with your name and address. A post card will do. **THE LONDON GENERAL SUPPLY ASSOCIATION (Dept. A1, 72, Finsbury Pavement, London, E.C.)**

O	J	K	A
E	T	R	B
W	T	K	E
S	O	R	E



1/3 WEEKLY.

We send this High-Grade Free-Wheel CYCLE, Mud Guards and Tools, fully guaranteed, to any address on receipt of 2/- DEPOSIT, and upon payment of the last of 22 Monthly Payments of 5/-, making total **£5 12s. Od.** Cash price **£5 5s. Od.** Sent on approval. **CYCLES from £2 10s. Od.** Write for Catalogue. **ERBINE CYCLE CO., WALTHAMSTOW, LONDON.**

GRAND 2/6 PARCEL FREE!!

To Stamp **COLLECTORS** applying for our **SOUVENIR**, 56 pages, handsonly, in treated, **GIVEN FREE** 72c parcel, contains **125 GENUINE STAMPS**, including **QUEENSLAND**, Romania, Japan, India, Canada, New Zealand, etc., a Packet of the **"SUPER" Stamp Mounts**, and a **Perfection Gauge**. Send your name and address, with a 3d. stamp (abroad 4d.) to pay for postage, etc., to—

HENRY ABEL & CO., WHITSTABLE.
COLLECTORS' DAUGHTER BEST PRICES PAID.

'AN ADVERTISEMENT PAGE FROM THE BLUE GEM, prior to the First World War'

Perhaps my favourite advert was the one for that **VENTRILOQUIST'S DOUBLE THROAT**. Fits roof of mouth. Sing like a canary; whine like a puppy; imitate birds and beasts. If only Billy Bunter could have been persuaded to recommend that item it would have sold like Mrs. Mimble's jam tarts.

"ARE YOU A BOY DETECTIVE?" So asks **GEM No. 1198** of its readers. If not, you were asked to send 11d for Marvellous New Boy's Service Box. Packed with novelty, fun and amusement - including Luminous Ink - shines in the dark. Boy Detective Supply Stores, Desk G, Greenock. Jack Drake probably sent up his 11d, and see how he got on. Good job his letter wasn't put on Desk H in mistake.

A browse through any old boys magazine brings many more delightful examples - one could fill pages of the Annual - but space is valuable. One final advert then - again from **PLUCK**.

£100 TO BE GIVEN AWAY! Count the hairs upon the head in the illustration. To those who send in the correct number (or nearest correct) we will give **£100 CASH**. This offer may not be repeated.

But as in the case of The Young Lady of Spain,
Who was horribly sick in the train, the advert
was repeated:-
Not once, but again,
And again, and again,
And again, and again, and again!

And now for my own adventures. When I was about thirteen I read this -

BECOME AN ARTIST IN FOUR LESSONS! Send One Shilling only, and we GUARANTEE that after the first lesson you will be able to draw Beautiful Scenery, Lovely Girls, Noble Horses, etc. After the full course of Four Lessons you should be able to earn up to TEN POUNDS A WEEK as a free-lance artist."

Well, that hit me for six! My secret ambition to become another Leonard Shields, Warwick Reynolds and Thomas Henry rolled into one was on the point of being realised. Somehow I managed to get the necessary bob, and off went my application form. Days passed; a week passed. Then arrived a bulky envelope - not too bulky - and with trembling fingers I tore it open. Inside I found four smaller envelopes. They were marked: LESSON 1. LESSON 2. LESSON 3. FINAL LESSON.

Hardly breathing for excitement I opened Lesson 1. I never even thought of cheating by opening the Final Lesson first. The envelope contained; a printed letter, a sheet of carbon paper, 4 cut out pictures of - yes, that's right! - a country scene, a ballet girl, a horse, and Mr. Vim - with his spotted bow-tie. (He was the 'etc').

I read the letter, and found that all I need do to become an artist was to trace each picture on to a sheet of plain paper through the carbon. I could add 'any extra touches or shading I thought necessary.' Generous, eh?

Lessons 2, 3, and 4 contained similar aids to becoming a free-lance artist. The 'Final Lesson' included a 'farewell message to our pupil.' "By now," I was told, "you should be able to draw pictures and illustrations without the help of the carbon paper. Good luck and prosperity!"

And that, my dear readers, is how Leonardo di Allison became the great artist he is today.

The Yorkshire Post for today - July 16th 1964 - reports that a youth told the Huddersfield Magistrate's Court that tiny mirrors fitted into his sun-glasses enabled him to see if he was being 'tailed'.

Shades of my SEEBAKROSCOPE! That was another advert for which I fell. Do you remember how it showed a boy with some black tube screwed into his eye, watching a suspicious character who was following him?

Why I sent for one of those things I just don't remember. Perhaps it was from reading "The School Bell" in CHIPS. I looked a bit like Percy Perks the Boy Detective, and anyhow I had a real dog of my own - not an invisible one, like his bloodhound, Blakey.

At all events, I did order and receive a Seebakroscope, and it gave me the stiffest neck I ever had in my life, with trying to see over my right shoulder without seeming to do so.

Of course, as a schoolboy, I often wrote to Errington and Martin's for their approval sheets of foreign stamps, and as a boy scout I ordered a 'Relco-bob' Haversack, price 1/-. These adverts however can hardly be classified as traps for the unwary. You did get what you expected. But I hope there will be a few letters in the correspondence columns of the Collector's Digest from other suckers.

I hope someone will be able to describe those New Year Novelties advertised

(continued on p. 16)..
.....

IT WAS THE EXTRAS I LIKED

by FRANK SHAW
(of "Punch")

MANY would as soon have the Yorkshire pudding as the roast beef, the apple sauce without the pork; I like red cabbage but, in Liverpool, cannot get it without scouse.

There are those who (mirabile dictu -- since there are so many schoolmasters in the O.B.B.C.) prefer the Scotch to the soda.

Yet it is a dangerous thing to announce such preferences in the company of epicures, in a sodality of connoisseurs.

So I feel it is venturesome to declare that in the dear old Companion Papers and the rest, delightful though the stories were, it was the "extras" fifty years or so ago which won my heart.

You experts who can spot a substitute writer at a hundred yards, are precisely knowledgable about dates and have reams of printed evidence, may even agree with me but my lack of expertise in giving my reasons may irritate.

It is teaching one's grandma to suck eggs, telling the Savoy chef how to make omelettes without breaking eggs, deserving the eggs always in myth thrown at politicians - and they were never curates' eggs even. But, as the Co-optimists said, 'maybe someone will wish me suck-sess.' As the "Funny Wonder" said, in its Special Easter Number, "eggs-selsior."

Forgetting dates, hoping to avoid false memories, dredging half-recalled notions from an overstuffed, fast-failing memory, confusing This maybe with That, I must risk the wrath to recall the treats.

What delighted my youth in the "Magnet" (Monday) or in Wednesday's "Gem," the "Boys' Realm" and the rest, in Jack, Sam and Pete and the Boys of the Bombay Castle, in Arthur S. Hardy and S. Clarke Hook were the pictures, so well wed to themes, to the periodicals (rather scruffy little jobs, paper-wise and as to print weren't they?), to the authors' styles. - Briscoe for St. Frank's, Lewis for Sexton Blake.

I doubt if many boys knew their names. I fancied myself as a bit of an artist, as I fancied myself as a bit of a writer, and I studied them closely. They were as prolific as the writers but drew very well.

In the comics, to which I graduated from "Mab's Fairy Tales," about 1916, aged 7, in a Kerry convent-school, the artists who delighted me had often academic honours. Actually the chap who did the Mulberry Flats - and so much more - for years and years - should have been made a knight.

Then of course came Warwick Reynolds in the "Gem" of the first World War and the cover of "Holiday Annual" Number One - for which a kind uncle divvied up the five bob (wasn't it?).

Reynolds, like Caton Woodfield in the B.O.P., may have been too good for

boys. In that field C. H. Chapman, long may he be with us, was the daddy of them all. And I imitated his grinning schoolboys, popping out of the corner of the cover, in my first pictorial efforts. We all start by emulation - as you will see, more fully, in a moment.

I liked Clarke too and was delighted to see how closely, on T.V., a boy playing Just William resembled a grinning lad in the first "Gem" drawings (before my time - I forget the artist's name - but I obtained, in the 'twenties, back numbers for a copper or so all over Liverpool - gone, alas, like our youth...).

When Frank Richards wrote for the ill-fated "School and Sport," I suppose without the consent of Amalgamated Press, the artist - Ernest Ibbotson? used a false signature; but he was as recognisable as the great Val Reading.

Like the writers they can little have dreamed that they were creating for grey-haired men of the 1960's as well as for urchins, with a penny to spend their masters wanted, of the 1920's.

As with Sherlock Holmes and Mr. Pickwick it might be said that the illustrator played his part in creating Billy Bunter.

I was by no means as close a student of literary style though I was reading Dickens at the same time as "Henry St. John's Schooldays" and the sophisticated "Passing Show" when still devouring my brother's "Film Fun". ("P.S." was my father's - and I had my sister's "School Friend" too.) But I did, at about the age of 15, spot that Frank R. was Martin C. and Owen C. However, I, many years later, congratulated the great Charles himself on "A Very Gallant Gentleman"!

My tendency was, spotting a genius when I saw one, to credit more to F.R. than even he could do, as some credit the whole of Elizabethan literature to Bacon and maybe will yet blame Sydney Webb (Lord Passfield) for the complete works of Bernard Shaw. I thought he did all those delightful Herlock Sholmes items in the "Greyfriars Herald" (my favourite, "Popular" being second).

I think now Samways did much I admired. I liked, still do, the occasional verse, especially the parodies like "Hoskins arise, pollute the happy morn" and the one about Gussy's topper - "Take it up gently, treat it with care" and "Maid of Athens ere we part, Give, oh, give me back my heart, Or, since that has left thy breast, Give me veal and ham compressed." Remembered for years—.

Another appreciated bonus was the "Greyfriars Gallery." Jokes appeared from time to time and some you'll still hear on T.V. This, recently endured, was in the "Gem" in 1913— oh, I won't bother— but this I saw on a seaside postcard last week, "He was bound over to keep the piece" which occurred in a police court case in the G.H. about 1920: someone (was it in the immortal "Clue of the Blood-stained Putty Knife"?) had bitten the defendant's ear.

Supplements were my greatest joy. As with the pictures of footballers in the "Champion," outstanding for a brief spell, and in "Boys' Magazine" where I first saw print (was there a football team which played Everton, Spurs and the rest, never lost and had a goalkeeper who wore a bowler?)

I cherished giveaway stuff as my mother did patterns, an older brother those "News of the World" songsheets recalled by Danny in C.D. for July, my father the "Red Letter" prints of Charlie Chaplin films like "At the Bank" and "In the Pawnshop."

Greatest of these were "The Greyfriars Herald" during the first World War,

"Tom Merry's Own" and "Nipper's Magazine." "The Fifth Form at St. Dominic's" had set me off. From these I had more ideas, I still edit papers, I still hope to equal those fancied publications, though I never believed for one minute Peter Todd and the rest wrote them. In my first grammar school I took on the editing of a class magazine, "Utopia." I illustrated it too, rather smudgily, and wrote most of it. And one thing I wrote was based on the rather clever "Greyfriars in the Trenches" though the first war was now actually ended.

A boy in a rival form spotted the crib. The Head punished me severely. But it was not for plagiarism, it was for having read such papers, still confused in adults' minds with "Springheeled Jack" and the like - whereas, at puberty, some of us found the books rather over-pi.

There were so many bonuses besides the long complete stories and the magnificent serials, though "Rodney Stone" was a bit of a puzzle. There was the snow on the Christmas number title-pages which, like the scrolls C.P. artists rather fancied, I became a dab hand at. There were those puzzle contests when W and hen were WHEN and what was WHAT? - W and a hat of course.

"Hampers" for prizes. I never had one. Inexplicably the Editor of one of the papers sent me a cheap print of the painting in Liverpool's Walker Art Gallery "When Did You Last See Your Father?" (Is that a dream? - I certainly haven't the picture.) There was the limerick contest with the clever last line -

"There was a young soldier of Wipers,
Whose gun was so riddled by snipers,
That the tunes that he played,
Through the holes that they made"

(Wait for it--) "Beat the Argyle and Sutherland pipers."

Did a schoolboy really write that? Or ask the questions editors sometimes caustic ally replied to? A real puzzle to me is the correspondence about public schools in which a Lancashire "scholarship lad" took well-off grousters to book. But the whole lot had been in the "Captain" years before! I think we were kidded sometimes. What about Frank Richards meeting H. A. Hinton on a bicycling holiday?

It was just for boys and we were given good value. Sometimes superlative stuff. "Union Jack" in the 'twenties - and of all papers, some might say - gave us a poem by a young murderer actually written in gaol, "The Stitchwort," I rank with the best.

There were the ads for bicycles, airguns, foreign stamps. The ads, long before C.D. and this Annual, for back issues. I made a lifelong friend in U.S.A. by selling him a copy of "Bob Cherry in Search of His Father" at a colossal 100 per cent profit - that is for one shilling.

A strange series wandered into the "Gem" about natural history which gave me a life-long interest. H.A. Hinton in a "Boys' Friend" editorial led me to the works of E. C. Bentley by quoting his "Sir Cristopher Wren, Went to dine with some men--" If I'd only had a straight left like Tom Sayers!

From Utopia" I went to a life of writing and I have read deeply in many languages. But it was mainly the "Greyfriars Herald" and F.R.'s rich feast of literary allusions which set me on my course.

And I never created anything as good as "The Toff" or made anyone laugh as much as Billy Bunter in his Turkish bath made me. They wrote and drew and took

(continued on p. 17) ..

By
JIM COOK

Monday Morning at St. Frank's

By
JIM COOK

*

*

The early morning sun had peeped over the French coast line and dispelled the slight mist that hovered over the English Channel.

A sea bird, drifting in from the sea, flew over the Sussex coast and became interested in the movements of a young roach that played in the waters of the River Stowe.

The bird decided to investigate and leisurely swooped down. But its own reflection caught in the water of the fountain in the Triangle of St. Frank's College and he suddenly veered and descended on the stonework of the fountain, the young roach passing out of the bird's mind.

Puzzled the visitor from the sea looked round at some buildings but became attracted at a sparrow that was having his breakfast in the leafy chestnut tree on the far side of the Triangle.

The sparrow moved over as the sea bird alighted and they both stared at each other. The sparrow said: "You'd better not stay here."

"Why?" asked the bird.

"Well, it's Monday, you see," replied the sparrow, "and things are not healthy around here on Mondays" he added thoughtfully.

"Whatever are you talking about?" twittered the bird. "What has Monday to do with it?"

"Look" cheeped the sparrow. "Look through that window. That's the Remove class-room. They all go mad in that room on Mondays!"

"Is that so?" remarked the bird who had come in from the sea. "Well, I'll take your advice. I'm off!" And he flew over the school buildings in the direction of Bannington moor happy in the thought he had missed contact with a lot of mad schoolboys. By the time he had traversed the moor and returned to the river Stowe and collected his breakfast the sun had disappeared and a huge bank of clouds, black and forbidding, had put in an appearance.

It was becoming warmer as the morning progressed and by the time the rising bell clanged out it was obvious the area was in for a thunderstorm. A situation that wasn't conducive to a bright and early beginning of the day.

By the time the Remove began to assemble for lessons the outlook was distinctly ominous. But work had to go on and the juniors waited the arrival of Mr. Crowell, their form master, with indifference.

And Mr. Crowell was late. Two minutes late! He fairly flew down the passage in his hurry to get to the classroom and admit the juniors and this always made him irritable for the rest of the morning. Being punctilious himself he detested lateness in others and he always contrived to be on time in all things. But today, it was Monday. The weather was thundery and humid and an uneasy quiet had settled over the school. It was getting dark as the black clouds gathered and one or two boys were already yawning at the prospect of working in that stuffy atmosphere.

The lesson was geography. At the best of times geography was not a welcome lesson and it seemed as if there was a conspiracy that morning to bring out all those pent-up furies that had collected over the last week. The terrible arrival of Monday morning was no different at St. Frank's as it is in Sydney, or Singapore or Southend. Monday morning is just one of those mornings when everybody hasn't really got over the week end and here the work begins again. William Napoleon Browne, the lanky Fifth former, has always declared the world will end on a Monday.

Outside not a leaf stirred, even the birds had succumbed to the premature night and were silent. In the distance the faint whistle of the local train could be heard and from somewhere towards the village the barking of a dog. It was the calm before the storm; the brooding anger that precedes the fury of the elements.

Mr. Crowell patted his forehead with his handkerchief for perhaps the twentieth time. The sultry heat hung over the form room making the atmosphere leaden and oppressive. Only the buzzing of the weary flies as they danced a perpetual jig broke the silence.

Suddenly and like a bomb into the stillness a book thunders to the floor. The crash brings everybody upright.

"What was that?" shouted Crowell, jumping up with a startled look in his eyes.

"Long dropped a book, sir" explained Nipper.

Teddy Long, the sneak of the Remove, bent down and retrieved the fallen book.

"Long, bring that book to me!" snapped the form master. He was really awake now. He had that look about him that spelled trouble for somebody. An outlet had presented itself that would let out the irritation he had acquired since he entered the classroom. The listlessness of the juniors, the depression brought about by the terrible humidity, his lateness, a Monday morning, all these things had joined forces and created in Mr. Crowell a hostile feeling towards schoolboys.

Teddy Long approached Mr. Crowell in the same way a spy approaches his execution, with the inevitability of finality. The tubby junior of Study B knew more than anybody perhaps the havoc old Crowell could inflict on Teddy's ideas of happiness.

He handed the book nervously over.

"So," purred Crowell glancing at the title on the cover. Inside on the flyleaf was written B. Forrest. "So it seems you are taking an interest in Gibbon's Decline and Fall of the Roman empire?"

"Yes, sir" replied Teddy. "It's jolly interesting!" he added excitedly.

Crowell looked at Long, searching his eyes for the truth. He didn't believe the junior for Long was the laziest boy in the school and Crowell was in no mood for surprises of this nature. But Long had the book in his possession and if it were true that he had been reading it - even when he shouldn't - then he wanted to feel kindly for the boy. But he had doubts. It seemed too good to be true. And doubt being a greater mischief than despair old Crowell was in the mood to investigate.

"Well, Long, I congratulate you. I am sorry if I thought you an obtuse boy, a lazy boy and an untruthful boy. You must forgive me for thinking these

things. After all, I did not expect that one day you would peruse such a splendid book."

The Remove tittered. The scene was set. It had all happened before. Some luckless junior would bring out that acid in Crowell's temper at the right moment and although it did a world of good and freshened up a weary session it behoved careful attention for nobody was safe from the form master's wrath. No-one was concerned at Teddy Long's fate but the fact was that Crowell had got his rag out and the band was beginning to play as Vivian Travers remarked to Cecil DeValerie.

The truth is Teddy Long was between the devil and the deep blue. For one particular junior was watching the proceedings with more than casual interest. Bernard Forrest of Study A did not want Crowell to open the book. If he did he couldn't fail to see a letter that reposed in between the pages.

Old Mudford, the village postman, had also fallen foul of the evils that attend Monday mornings and had risen late. Thus the post was received later than usual and Forrest had only just managed to collect a letter and take a quick glance at its contents before going into the form room.

Forrest had given the book to Long for that junior to pass on to Claude Gore-Pearce. Not that Gore-Pearce cared how the Roman Empire declined and fell. But the letter informed Forrest that a certain horse that was running that day at the Bannington Races would win. The information had come from one of Forrest's racing pals and backing gee-gees being a favourite pastime with the cads of Study A Forrest was urged to put everything he had on the horse named.

The wily Forrest, observing the uncertainty of the form master's tantrums, wanted to make sure the horse was backed and Gore-Pearce, the millionaire's son, would get the bet on if Forrest was detained. It was a case of a secret shared for a common gain - the bookmaker's most probably.

It was quite possible Crowell in his present mood would dish out lines and gatings thick and fast and Bernard Forrest not being one of Mr. Crowell's most popular pupils would be the recipient. The plan was after Gore-Pearce had seen the name of the horse to pass on the book to Gulliver and Bell and so preventing any mischance of the horse not being backed. At least, one of these juniors would be able to cycle down to Bannington during the dinner break to get the bet on. Thus reasoned Bernard Forrest.

Placing the book on his desk Crowell waved Long to his seat. If Teddy expected the incident to peter out there and then he should have known better for the Remove knew to a man that it was only the end of act one. Act two was now fast approaching.

As Long bent to sit down Crowell raised himself from his chair. "Just one moment, Long" he said mildly. This was it; the preliminaries over, round two was imminent, as Sir Montie Tregellis-West described it afterwards.

"To whom does this belong?" Teddy was asked.

"It's mine, sir, it belongs to me" replied Long.

Mr. Crowell held the book in his hand eyeing the covers thoughtfully. "Then am I to assume Forrest gave it you?"

"Yes, sir. No, sir, that is.."

"Well, Long, perhaps if you will be a little more coherent I may get at

the truth?" Old Crowell was getting dangerous now. He had reached the stage when sarcasm took over from the gentle purr and trouble loomed ahead for anybody. Archie Glenthorne who had taken only a mild interest in the scene had succumbed to the drowsy atmosphere and suddenly lolled back with his mouth open. He was on the point of going straight off to sleep.

"Glenthorne!" rapped Mr. Crowell. "How dare you sleep during lessons! Wake up at once!"

"Good gad! Phipps, lions and all that..." exclaimed Archie, looking at Mr. Crowell. But Archie, being a gentle soul, was excused very often by the form-master and Mr. Crowell turned to Long.

"Now, Long. You tell me you are reading this book?"

"Yes, sir," replied Long. "But I haven't read all of it."

"Well, will you kindly inform me how far you have managed to read it?" demanded the form master. "I do not wish you to be too precise in your estimation" he added tartly.

The Remove sniggered loudly. Mr. Crowell accepted that. If the Remove agreed with his form of wit then the Remove was allowed to snigger.

Teddy Long was busy forming an answer to what was for him an open trap. He knew, as did the rest of the fellows, that Crowell was leading him along to a point where Teddy would be rudely exposed.

Long decided to play with small stakes first.

"I-I have read only three chapters, sir" he replied.

"Three chapters, Long?"

"Yes, sir" said Teddy, gaining confidence. "But I'm going to read it through to the end" he added with gusto.

"I have, of course, read the book, but certain passages escape me for the moment." Crowell stroked his chin thoughtfully. "I forget Gibbon's comment on the various modes of worship which prevailed in the Roman world. Now, Long, if, as you state, you have read three chapters you must remember chapter two in which Gibbon's comments are made" he added.

Long, looking wildly round at Forrest, saw that junior deeply immersed in the school atlas. The cad of Study A was taking no part in these proceedings if he could help it. But Long's glance at Forrest was not missed by Mr. Crowell.

"He's bowled out!" whispered Handforth to Church.

"I-I forget, sir. I always forget anything I read" wailed Teddy.

"Then let me assist you, Long. You will write out the words I shall write on the blackboard five hundred times!" and Crowell walked over and commenced writing. "The various modes of worship which prevailed in the Roman world were all considered by the people as equally true; by the philosopher as equally false; and by the magistrate as equally useful."

"Five hundred lines, sir!" cried Teddy. "I was passing the book for Forrest, sir, and he told me....!"

"Sneak, sneak!"

The word came mostly from Forrest's set. Forrest & Co. and their cronies upheld the unwritten laws of the school only when it suited them. But the rest of the juniors had no sympathy for Long. He deserved all he got.

And old Crowell, feeling much better, stalked in front of the class. "Come boys, look alive!" he ordered sharply. "The weather is very humid but work

has to go on. Little! Somerton! Boots! pull yourselves together. What is the matter with everybody this morning?"

"It's Monday morning, sir" grinned Nipper.

"I am well aware it is Monday today, Nipper" retorted Crowell acidly! "I am also aware tomorrow is Tuesday!" he addly glaring at the form. A few titters rang round the class-room but they were quickly stifled as it became obvious Crowell was on the warpath again.

Calmness prevailed once more in the Remove form room. The minutes seemed to drag and there was a tendency for the juniors to wish something would happen to relieve the awful monotony which hung over the room. A violent thunderstorm would liven things up but although the sky was still dark there was no sign of rain. Even the clock on the wall seemed to have stopped. First morning break looked years away. Actually it was another hour before the juniors would be able to leave the class-room. But with their form master looking for trouble anything could happen. When it became so gloomy that it was difficult to see Handforth asked for the lights to be switched on but it gave Crowell another chance to display his crusty mood and he gave Handy fifty lines for wasting his time.

By the time first break came well over fifteen boys had been ordered to remain in class. With Crowell in the state he was in it was a miracle the whole Remove was not detained.

The juniors discussed the situation excitedly as they gathered in the Triangle. It wasn't often that an open spirit of rebellion against old Crowell was a general topic of conversation but when they learned other masters were acting in similar fashion there was a feeling of utter despondency. Everybody blamed the weather for the feeling that ran through the school since no other reason could be attributed to the extraordinary conduct of the masters.

Almost everybody that morning complained of something that had gone wrong. Old Josh Cuttle, the head porter, who usually found an inverted delight in gloom and trouble was heard grumbling about the moaners.

And still the storm did not break. In fact, as the school reassembled for second school it was a little brighter, and within minutes it was possible to see the meadows from the windows in the Ancient House. The dense layer of cloud that had hung over the countryside for most of the morning was now thinning and the sun was struggling to show himself.

In the Remove form room the boys were settling down to a history lesson. If the weather was showing signs of improvement it made no difference to Mr. Crowell. He was still testy and crabby. Edward Gibbon's Decline & Fall Of The Roman Empire still lay on his desk and Forrest was puzzling how to get the book without Crowell finding that letter. Forrest had to step very carefully. Crowell would be suspicious immediately Forrest asked for the return of his book. That was the trouble with old Crowell. He seemed to read your thoughts. And it wasn't really Forrest's book at all. It originally belonged to Gore-Pearce when the latter was leader of Study A, but when Forrest had returned to St. Frank's and kicked Gore-Pearce out the book had been left behind. Gulliver had written Forrest's name on the fly leaf to prevent Gore-Pearce claiming it. It was a little habit of Gulliver's to juggle with other people's property.

And so the morning wore on.

Still very warm, the August sky became very much brighter and little

patches of blue appeared when the clouds had broken up.

The threat of a storm was passing. Bernard Forrest glanced towards the book so often that Crowell instinctively knew the volume contained more than casual interest for Forrest. And Forrest, catching Crowell's eye on him, just as readily knew Crowell's thoughts. And Crowell began to transfer his attention from the rest of the class and concentrate on Forrest. It pleased him, in his present mood, to play cat and mouse with the leader of Study A.

For the form master was sorely tempted to look more closely at the book, yet he felt it would be too easy. In his irritable frame of mind he wanted to play with Forrest. And it was going to be interesting to see how the battle ended.

It soon became apparent to Nipper that something was on and the silent war being fought out between Crowell and Forrest was soon common knowledge. Each time the eyes of Mr. Crowell would seek those of Forrest and Crowell would give a glance through his glasses at the book on his desk. And each time when he looked up Forrest would be deep in his lesson. It was fascinating to watch them. It was a strange morning altogether. But the entire form were enjoying the by-play. Travers was offering odds on Crowell winning, but Forrest was no mean adversary in a battle of wits.

Forrest had to puzzle out a way in which he could extract the letter from the volume without Crowell seeing him.

As the minutes went by old Crowell had become decidedly cheerful. The weather was improving too, and the sunshine was streaming through the windows as the last of the clouds passed over.

The time was eleven fifty. Dinner break was at twelve noon. Forrest had ten minutes to get that letter and after he did that Crowell could do whatever he liked with the book - he could stuff it down his throat if he wished, such were Forrest's thoughts as he struggled furiously for a plan.

The cad of Study A gave little attention to History at that moment. He was thinking of a way to create a diversion in which he could quickly take the letter away unseen. And he was getting desperate as the hand on the clock approached noon.

It was five minutes to go now and he thought he saw a way out. And Crowell seemed to sense it too. Nipper, Pitt, DeValerie and the rest of the Remove also felt the tenseness in the air. They were waiting to see the final move as the clock showed four minutes to the hour.

Suddenly Crowell picked up the book and Forrest nearly had a heart attack. But the book was replaced on the desk and Crowell looked up with a slow smile. If he saw any relief on the face of Bernard Forrest he misread it for Forrest was settled now.

Forrest was playing an entirely lone hand. The juniors he chose to call his friends were fully aware of his predicament but not one glance of sympathy did he see. In fact, since he only was involved they viewed the proceedings with boredom.

But they forgot Forrest was clever. The leader of Study A, although a rascal, a smoky rotter and a gambler he nevertheless possessed good brains. The pity of it was he used those brains for the wrong purpose.

Two minutes to twelve.

Mr. Crowell looks up in alarm and steps hurriedly towards the stricken junior. The Removites leave their seats and gather round the inert figure of Long.

"I don't know, sir" replied Nipper. "He suddenly puts his hands to his stomach and yelled out. I think he's fainted now!" Nipper added looking at Long curiously.

"There goes the dinner bell! Now boys, leave Long to me. I will get Dr. Brett to see him."

"I'm alright now, sir" he said rising to his feet. "The pain's gone now..."

"Oh I'll be alright, sir" Long repeated. And he left the class room with rapid strides as Crowell looked after him wonderingly. Then quick as thought Crowell glanced at the top of his desk. The book was still there. He had missed Forrest in the scramble to get to Long. Picking the book up he idly flapped through the pages. There was nothing in between them. Had he misjudged Forrest? He looked out to the beautiful sunshine, the blue skies and the singing birds. He felt much better. In fact, he was looking forward to afternoon school.

"Scream, then faint for £2." That's all he would have read. But it did the trick. It was the diversion Forrest had planned. Long had his £2. Forrest his letter. Crowell was his old self and Monday morning was over. Unhappily the horse that Forrest and his cronies were told to back came nowhere. A gee-gee who rejoiced under the name of Roman Empire came first in that particular race.

SHEET LIGHTNING: DRAGON'S BREATH: PRISMATIC GRANULES:
SERPENT'S EGGS: THE DEMON SMOKER: JAPANESE SCINTILLATES:
LUMINOUS PAINT: THE FIRE KING: and all the others.

It was a wonderful world in which we lived as gullible teenagers despite the dangers and hardships of World War I.

SPECIAL HOLIDAY NUMBER!



THE MARVEL commenced its life as early as 1893 as a halfpenny paper. In 1904 it started again at No. 1 (new series), now as a penny paper, and publication went on continuously till 1922, a total of 1485 issues. It came from the Amalgamated Press stable.

THE MARVEL, like many of its contemporaries of pre-1914 years, offered healthy adventure stories in great variety. Our picture shows the cover just about the time of the outbreak of the first world war. Two famous series had been running for a long time: stories of Tom Sayers and his companion character, the Fighting Parson, by Arthur S. Hardy; and the rather slapstick tales of Jack, Sam, and Pete, by S. Clarke Hook.



IT WAS THE EXTRAS I LIKED (continued from p. 9)...

their pay. And gave us more than they could ever have guessed.

I enjoyed most their hors d'oeuvres and savouries. I always preferred the shorts to the big picture too.



A Very Special Magic

By ROBERT KELLY

The paradox about Charles Hamilton's work for the Magnet is that all his great gifts did not mature at the same time. This is perhaps inevitable in any writer's development and there is no doubt that Hamilton's plots began to have a tired look at the very time he was reaching the peak of his powers in characterisation and descriptive writing. Of course it cannot be ruled out that a team of ideas men at Fleetway House may have supplied Hamilton with ready made plots but this does not mean that Hamilton was unable to do his own plotwork. In the Bunter Court series (1925) one can almost hear the machinery clicking as the situations which allow Bunter to take over Combermere Lodge fall into place. But the only aim of all this elaborate preparation is to give Bunter the starring role so that his comic potentialities can be exploited to the full. The Whiffles Circus series (1928) has on the other hand an almost classical simplicity of plot but the end result is the same. Bunter Court is the greater series but Whiffles Circus is purer Hamilton.

From 1922 to the end of 1932 Hamilton - with or without help - was able consistently to provide well worked out plots for his series. And here one must stress that if ideas men were employed for Hamilton it was only because of his vast output of work. It would be wrong, in any case, to place too much importance on their existence. This type of set-up is almost inevitable between an organisation as large as Fleetway House and a star author.

From the Jim Valentine series (1932-33) onwards the basic plots of the Magnet series were never so consistently good again. For long periods Hamilton avoided the labour of elaborate plot construction by writing series in which each issue was more or less complete in itself. As Eric Fayne once put it when describing a series of this type: "In the Carter series, Carter wished to discredit Bunter and each story told how he tried some trick and failed."

The seeds of this decline can be seen in the Valentine series, the Hiking Holiday series (1933) and the Smedley series (1934). The Smedley series in particular is a flawed diamond, spoiled by being played out for too long. The series gets off to a slow start and not until the second number is the basic theme exploited - that Mr. Vernon Smith, tired of his son's escapades, will disinherit him unless he mends his ways. Running over 14 issues, the series never really gathers momentum despite an interesting deterioration in the character of Vernon Smith's schoolmaster rival for riches. The climax is also played out. The penultimate issue, set against the background of Vernon Smith's cricketing triumph, provided all the opportunities for a satisfying ending but the denouement was left until the following week.

It may have been editorial policy that dictated the length of the Smedley Series owing to its popularity with contemporary readers. No doubt this is what happened with the Hollywood Series of 1929. Unfortunately the Smedley Series was a pointer of what was to come later.

Hamilton in his autobiography claimed the Magnet was at its best in the 1930s. For Roger Jenkins the years 1930 to 1934 represent the "golden age." An examination of the series which graced the early 1930s tends to support his claim. Some of the freshness - and what can only be described as youthful high spirits - has disappeared from the Magnet by 1931 but the quality of the writing definitely improved. There is a new maturity which reaches fruition in the Stacey series.

This series, published in 1935, shows at once the danger of classifying Hamilton too rigidly. It is probably the author's greatest work despite an episodical framework. Perhaps Hamilton was aware for the first time of declining powers and had mustered his towering genius for one final series in the grand manner to compare with such earlier top-flight series as the two Wharton Rebel Series, Bunter Court, the Courtfield Cracksmen Series and the Lancaster Series. It is interesting to note that the Stacey series appeared shortly before Chaplin's film "Modern Times." Both masters tend to repeat earlier tricks of the trade - typically in Hamilton's case a scene where Wharton is suspected of frequenting the Three Fishers - but both on screen and print there is the feeling that this is the final draft, the definitive version.

The early scenes of arrival at Greyfriars for the summer term was one of the last occasions that Greyfriars was to appear so large and teeming with life and vitality. By 1939 the school had shrunk perceptibly. These scenes are written with great verve and indeed the writing is consistently excellent with long sustained passages which give the impression of being produced at white heat.

Yet if 1935 was the year of Hamilton's greatest triumph, it was also the year in which the tired plotting first became really noticeable - of Caffyn trying to disgrace his cousin Coker, of Harry Wharton threatened by his relative and near double Ralph Stacey, and of one Warren impersonating another.

The Warren series is unjustly neglected. The basic theme has nothing to do with the Lancaster series, with which it has been compared, apart from the use of a Hamilton device whereby Warren is suspected of being an imposter by different Greyfriars characters, and their differing reactions to their suspicions. Like the Stacey series of the previous term, the Warren series gives a fascinating picture of Greyfriars and its panorama of characters.

The year was rounded off with the very fine Polpelly series, a Christmas tale set in a ghostly Devon mansion. This series is the peer of the Cavendish Abbey, Mauleverer Towers and Reynham Castle series. There is a fine sense of atmosphere and many thrilling passages. Yet up to quite recently it was a rather neglected Christmas series.

There is, in fact, a good case for including 1935 rather than 1934 as the last of the great vintage years of the Magnet.

Going back over the years one finds that Hamilton was producing excellent series as early as 1923-24. It was about this time that single stories were replaced by series as the main fare of the paper. Many of these series are neglected by collectors simply because they appeared in between too many substitute stories, making the period as a whole less rewarding than the later 1920s when substitute stories had almost disappeared. But for the substitute stories, most critics would probably agree that the golden age began about 1923. The Sahara series (1924) was a definite landmark and the series about Bunter's expulsion (1924) has that fresh as paint quality that disappeared from the Magnet as the 1920s merged into the 1930s.

Even the substitute authors cannot cloud 1925 as one of the Magnet's great years. It began with the First Wharton Rebel series (the first issues of which appeared in 1924). Bunter Court appeared over the summer holidays and the year was rounded off with the Loder Captain series.

Nineteen twenty six was not quite such a vintage year but 1927 inaugurated a long period of almost continuous excellence which lasted till the end of 1932. Sometimes a dull series did appear but it was always followed up by a string of series varying from above average to excellent. The era commenced with the Dallas, First South Sea Series, Toad Series, Mr. Quelch Dismissed, Da Costa Series, Whiffles Circus and the Carboy Series. In 1929 came the Hollywood Series, Famous Five v. Loder Series, Trail of the Trike and Ravenspur Grange Series. All these 1929 series were up to the standard now expected from Hamilton, but 1929 as a whole was less perfect than 1928.

But in 1930 Hamilton was on his best form throughout. The Brander Rebellion is the greatest of the barring out series and the China Series challenges the First South Sea Series in the foreign travel stakes. Although I stated at the beginning of this article that Hamilton's talents did not all mature at the same time, the year 1930 is perhaps the exception. The early zest and high spirits had not yet departed and the stories of this year had a greater power and depth than those of a few years earlier.

As often seems to be the case with Hamilton's work during this period, a great year was followed by one not quite so satisfying despite the appearance in 1931 of the Lancaster, Kenya and Mauleverer Towers series. Probably there were too many single stories in 1931. And perhaps the appearance of so many magnificent series had rather spoiled us for single complete stories.

The Flip series launched 1932 off to a good start and it was followed smartly by the Vernon Smith Captain series, sometimes referred to as the Harry Wharton Swot series. In the opinion of many collectors this series deserves classic status. But the next generally recognised classic series, the Second Wharton Rebel Series appeared in the autumn term of 1932. The only criticism one can make about this series is that Wharton is in such dire trouble throughout, the reader cannot resist racing through to see how he pulls out of his difficulties. It may be a strange complaint to make about a story, but there is almost too much unbearable excitement and tension. Whether the series can be savoured over and over again as can the Stacey series is something the individual reader must decide for himself. What is certain is that, apart from a somewhat contrived ending, the Second Wharton Rebel Series is an achievement of the highest order. The writing is dazzlingly brilliant and the dialogue is a model for any aspiring writer.

My opinion of the Valentine series, which started in December 1932 and continued well into 1933, has already been given. And for the first time since early 1927 the lost ground was never quite made up.

Outwardly 1933 and 1934 were successful years for the Magnet. Readers must have coasted along happily with such series as the Easter Cruise, Hiking Holiday, Strong Man Series, Wharton Lodge, Smedley Series, Popper Island Rebellion, Billionairing with Bunter and Secret Seven Series. If the flame of his genius was to flare less frequently in the middle and later 1930s, Hamilton was far too much a craftsman to ever consciously lower his standards.

The deterioration in the Magnet was so gradual that it is only when

comparing series several years apart that one realises that it has taken place - by comparing for example the China Series (1930) with the Brazil Series (1936), or the First and Second South Sea Series, or Whiffles Circus (1928) with Muccolini Circus (1936), or the Courtfield Cracksman series (1929-30) with the Mr. Lambe series (1939-40). And even then, many readers will deny that any decline took place.

My own view is, however, that after 1932 the Magnet did to some extent decline. Up to the end of 1935 this had not become serious, although the position was held with some difficulty. In 1936 and 1937 standards were definitely lowered although many series can be defended by saying that they must have pleased contemporary readers.

Anyone limited to the 1936 and 1937 volumes would still find a mass of excellent reading and in early and mid 1937 some effort was made to break away from the episodic type of series which had dominated the paper for two years.

The Tuckshop Rebellion which appeared early in 1937 is a very entertaining series. Greyfriars seems to have shrunk a little since the days of the Brander Barring Out but there are plenty of compensations, not least in the presence of the ripest set of toughs ever created by Charles Hamilton. These rogues are brought in by headmaster Mr. Hacker to break the rebellion and the scenes in which they are featured are masterpieces of comedy. In this respect the series has the edge over the greater Brander Barring Out. The Gold Chain and Seahill series were also notable series from this era but the same standard was not maintained for the rest of the year. Indeed the rather sullen and unlikeable character of Skip, the waif featured in the autumn term series, seemed to infect the whole story. The Skip Series also marked an almost permanent return to a more episodic type of series, although in justice it should be stated there was a certain amount of development.

The year was rounded off with the Reynham Castle series and with Bunter in the starring role success was assured. Meanwhile in the Skip series a rather surprising development had taken place. About halfway through the series the familiar orange and blue covers of the Magnet were replaced by salmon coloured covers.

Possibly the cover artist Leonard Shields was not too happy about this development. At any rate the first cover under the new regime looked very ancient indeed, not unlike a Red Magnet cover, although within a few weeks Shields was to adapt himself to the new medium.

Leonard Shields became the principal artist for the Magnet some time in 1926. He replaced C. H. Chapman who had been artist for the paper for almost 15 years.

Shields' illustrations can be differentiated immediately from Chapman's work. During the vintage years of the paper they were a definite asset. Oddly enough the artist's development seemed to parallel Hamilton's. Pictorially the Magnet was probably at its most attractive in the late 1920s. If anything the workmanship is even better in the early 1930s although the line illustrations of Bunter are not so good. After 1930 the difference between the members of the Famous Five, apart from Inky, is also less apparent.

In his cover illustrations Shields employed a vein of caricature that was absent from the interior line drawings. There are grotesque studies of Bunter, almost as gigantic as a barrage balloon, in various attitudes of discomfort - sitting in the rain on a milestone marked "Miles from anywhere;" haunted by the

Christmas ghost of a stately home; surprised by a genuine marauder when stealing tuck at night; or pulling out his empty pockets in dismay.

There were splendid covers well into the 1930s. Two series on which Shields lavished great care, both in cover and interior illustrations, were the Flip and Popper Island Series. The latter series is notable for some fine river scenes. And the vintage period was rounded off with some superbly sinister covers of Loder held captive by "The Secret Seven" wearing old raincoats and Halloween (?) masks.

Strangely enough Shields did not do justice to the Stacey series, particularly in the cover illustrations. Two exceptions are the last cover in the series - a portrait of a triumphant Harry Wharton - and another called "The Ordeal of Harry Wharton." With the Warren Series dullness set in although the series is far from dull (the earlier covers and drawings in the Warren Series were by Chapman who often deputised for Shields at holiday periods and are good of their type). In 1936 Chapman took over the interior illustrations once more and Shields continued to do the covers.

The Muccolini Circus Series showed Shields back on form and he also produced some fine covers for the later issues in the Compton Series and the Tuckshop Rebellion.

The dropping of the familiar blue and orange covers was a tragedy for the Magnet. It coincided with Hamilton's final switch to long episodic series. Shields never seemed entirely at ease under the new regime and only a handful of cover illustrations show him at his best including a magnificent cover of Bunter doing the Lambeth Walk. One wonders whether the combination of long series and salmon coloured covers served to put off potential readers. Up to the end of 1937 the Magnet - whatever cracks lay beneath the surface - gave the impression of ever-renewed vitality to the casual reader. But in the last two-and-a-half years boredom set in.

By 1938 the Magnet had become quite dated in appearance. Yet even in the salmon coloured era we were to have such worthwhile series as Bunter v. Carter, the Second South Sea Series and the Tracy Series. With a well developed plot the Carter Series would have been a triumph and a disciplined story line would also have done wonders for the South Sea Series which is by no means lacking in invention.

It is difficult to suppress a yawn as one looks over the Magnet for 1939 (at this point I almost hear readers complaining "Speak for yourself"). The Water Lily Series lacks the vices of the earlier Hiking Series - in which the unpleasant Ponsonby was featured too heavily - but it rambles on without really getting anywhere. Only in the Bertie Vernon Series is there any refutation of what we have begun to fear, that time is taking its toll of the greatest author of schoolboy stories. And by the time of the Mr. Lambe Series we are in a twilight era, only too well reflected in the dark and brooding illustrations. One recalls with a sigh the magnificent illustrations which graced another mystery series, the Lancaster Series of 1931, and the bound volume is put back on the shelf.

As readers, spoiled by the riches of the past, we have come to expect more than craftsmanship and competence both in the writing and illustrations. It is not enough for the Magnet to be the leading boys weekly in a competitive field. We prefer to believe, like the late Charles Hamilton himself, that the Magnet is in a world of its own. And this is the tragedy of the (continued on p. 38)..

IN the foreword of the GEM Catalogue published by the London O.B.B.C. a few years ago, I made a promise that when my research was completed of all the substitute authors, I would publish them in future C.D. Annual. This has now materialised, and I am now able to present to readers, the most accurate (from official records) list of substitute writers of St. Jim's stories in the GEM.

To the many readers who may have a copy of the GEM catalogue, I wish to make a sort of apology. My foreword being written long before the finished product, left much to be desired, when the catalogue was completed. To elucidate, members of the London O.B.B.C. will be fully aware that Horace Roberts who had the task of duplicating and checking the proofs fell seriously ill, and was not able to do justice to the task. As he handed over the material to his son, it was not to be wondered at that errors occurred in the circumstances. Indeed, apart from many cases where the wrong author had been inserted, there is an instance where some titles were missed out altogether. (e.g. Nos 63-67) whilst another very prominent error was where No. 225 was classed as a substitute story instead of No. 226 'The St. Jim's Picture Palace' - plus also as it turns out the wrong author!

Another basis of strong criticism, which I personally feel was justified, was not indicating the substitute story as such, even though the author was not known. This I should like to point out, was out of my control. It was decided by a committee, who were producing the lists of titles that they should be left blank without any indication as to whether they were genuine or not. So I bowed

And every story NOT a Gem

By W. O. G. LOFTS

to the wishes of the majority. For readers, who no doubt will note differences at times between the GEM catalogue and the lists produced here, I hope the above explanations will suffice.

In closing this foreword, I should like to emphasise that this article is not meant to take away any of the just credit due to Mr. Charles Hamilton for his wonderful creation of the school of St. Jim's, and only he, in my opinion, could write stories that brought the characters really to life. But in view of the very high prices demanded today for copies of the GEM it is only right that collectors should know which stories were written by him, and which were not! On the other hand, readers who collect material by other writers such as E. S. Brooks and John Nix Pentelow, may also find the lists useful and interesting.

* * * * *

All the St. Jim's Stories in the 1st GEM were written by Charles Hamilton

	<u>Title</u>	<u>Author</u>
No. 43	1908 The Schoolboy Jockey	C. M. Down
53	1909 D'Arcy's Chum	H. Clarke Hook
55	The Terrible Three's Revolt	Percy Griffith
57	The Feud of the Fourth	Percy Griffith
59	The Rival Editors	Percy Griffith
62	Tom Merry, Scout Master	H. Clarke Hook

No.	Title	Author
65	The Hypnotist of St. Jim's	Percy Griffith
68	Hip-Hip Hooray	Percy Griffith
77	The Terrible Three's Air-Cruise	Harry Harper. (Revised by Charles Hamilton - see Autobiography)
81	The St. Jim's Motor-Cyclist	C. M. Down
88	The D'Arcy Cup	H. Clarke Hook
90	Tom Merry & Co in the Rink	H. Clarke Hook
95	The St. Jim's Sportsmen	C. M. Down
98	Tom Merry's Christmas Number	Percy Griffith
100 1910	Kildare of St. Jim's	Percy Griffith
105	The Terrible Three's Tour	Percy Griffith
108	The Terror of St. Jim's	Percy Griffith
109	Figgins & Co's Plot	H. Clarke Hook
113	Skimpole's Comet	Alfred Barnard
114	The Third Former's Raid	H. Clarke Hook
118	The St. Jim's Pageant	H. Clarke Hook
120	The Terrible Three's Committee	Alfred Barnard
122	The Scallywag of the Third	H. Clarke Hook
125	The Jape against St. Jim's	H. Clarke Hook
128	The St. Jim's Regatta	Assumed sub - author not known
131	Cousin Ethel's Treat	C. M. Down
133	The Form Master's Mistake	H. Clarke Hook
135	The Outsider's Chance	H. Clarke Hook
137	Lumley Lumley's Rival	H. Clarke Hook
143	Tom Merry's Birthday	Presumed sub - author not known
146	The Terrible Three's Sub.	E. S. Brooks
156 1911	The Turncoat of the Fourth	Presumed sub - author not known
164	All Fools Day at St. Jim's	Presumed sub - author not known
226 1912	The St. Jim's Picture Palace	C. M. Down
256 1913	The New Boy's Secret	H. Clarke Hook
257	Winter Sports at St. Jim's	H. Clarke Hook
258	Tom Merry's Promise	E. S. Brooks
259	The Third Form Mystery	H. Clarke Hook
260	The Head's Prize	H. Clarke Hook
264	Fatty Wynn - Professional	E. S. Brooks
268	Hidden Treasure at St. Jim's	E. S. Brooks
273	The Schoolboy Informer	E. S. Brooks
285	Misunderstood	E. S. Brooks
314 1914	D'Arcy's Mysteriour Present	E. S. Brooks
319	The Housemaster's Peril	E. S. Brooks
333	Ordered Off	E. S. Brooks
347	Tom Merry's Find	Presumed sub - author not known
374 1915	A Waster's Reward	E. S. Brooks
388	The Four Conspirators	John Nix Pentelow
391	A Captured Chum	E. S. Brooks
392	For the Old School's Sake	John Nix Pentelow
396	The St. Jim's Volunteers	G. R. Samways
398	Mason's Last Match	G. R. Samways
408	The Great Sport's Tournament	H. A. Hinton
411	True Blue	E. S. Brooks
418 1916	The Grammar School Mascot	John Nix Pentelow

No.		Title	Author
420		The Sportsmen of St. Jim's.	G. R. Samways
427		The Eleventh Man	H. Clarke Hook
429		A Mission of Mystery	E. S. Brooks
430		The Conquering Heroes	G. R. Samways
438		A Schoolboys Sacrifice	G. R. Samways
442		The Schoolboy Reporter	G. R. Samways
444		Every Inch a Hero	G. R. Samways
447		Holiday Camp	John Nix Pentelow
448		Heroes of the Fourth	G. R. Samways
452		Redfern to the Rescue	Presumed sub - author unknown
453		By Cousin Ethel's Wish	H. Clarke Hook
458		In the Seats of the Mighty	John Nix Pentelow
460		Herries' Orchestra	G. R. Samways
463		The Cross Country Cup	John Nix Pentelow
470	1917	The Intruder	John Nix Pentelow
471		Arthur Augustus' Ally	John Nix Pentelow
474		Parker the Prodigal	John Nix Pentelow
482		Grundy's Secret Society	John Nix Pentelow
483		Grundy, Grand-Master	John Nix Pentelow
485		D'Arcy Minor's Bolt	R. T. Eves
490		The St. Jim's Competition Syndicate	John Nix Pentelow
493		Kildare of the Great Heart	G. R. Samways
497		D'Arcy's Deal	John Nix Pentelow
498		Bonny Lad's Race	John Nix Pentelow
500		A Queer Bargain	H. Clarke Hook
501		Trouble in the Third	John Nix Pentelow
506		The St. Jim's Parliament	John Nix Pentelow
507		Grundy the Patriot	John Nix Pentelow
508		Pepper's Gold	John Nix Pentelow
511		Ratty's Legacy	R. S. Kirkham
512		The Schemer of the Shell	R. T. Eves
515		Rivals in Sport	G. R. Samways
517	1918	The St. Jim's Cadets	John Nix Pentelow
519		Racke's Revenge	John Nix Pentelow
520		The Man of Mystery	R. S. Kirkham
523		The Fourth Form Detectives	John Nix Pentelow
526		The St. Jim's Ruins	R. S. Kirkham
527		Rival Forms	John Nix Pentelow
528		Shell v. Fourth	John Nix Pentelow
529		A Stern Chase	John Nix Pentelow
530		A Drawn Game	John Nix Pentelow
531		The Three Minors	John Nix Pentelow
534		The Shell Scores	John Nix Pentelow
536		The Skipper of the Shell Second	John Nix Pentelow
539		Against all comers	John Nix Pentelow
541		Herrie's Special Turn	R. T. Eves
543		The Wheeze that went Wrong	L. E. Ransome
551		The Final Event	John Nix Pentelow
552		Doing his Best	John Nix Pentelow
554		Two in the toils	John Nix Pentelow
555		The Prisoners of the Moat House	John Nix Pentelow

	<u>Title</u>	<u>Author</u>
No. 556	Raid and Rescue	John Nix Pentelow
559	Cousin Ethel's Champions	H. Clarke Hook
560	The Black Sheep of the Shell	John Nix Pentelow
561	In Honour of the Head	John Nix Pentelow
566	Caught out by Kerr	John Nix Pentelow
567	The Chums of No. 5	John Nix Pentelow
568	Denounced as a Coward	R. S. Kirkham
569 1919	Left Behind	John Nix Pentelow
570	Rival Detectives	John Nix Pentelow
575	The Owl's Nest	John Nix Pentelow
580	The Rival Entertainers	G. R. Samways
583	Two of a Kind	John Nix Pentelow
584	Heroes of Sport	G. R. Samways
590	Riding to Win	G. R. Samways
591	For School and County	G. R. Samways
593	Schoolboy and Boxer	G. R. Samways
606	Redfern's Great Adventure	G. R. Samways
607	The Fag's Honour	S. E. Austin
609	Talbot's Girl Chum	G. R. Samways
610	In Search of Marie	G. R. Samways
611	Rivals on the Warpath	F. G. Cook
612	Playing a Part	G. R. Samways
613	Grundy's Delusion	S. E. Austin
614	The Tyrant of the Fourth	F. G. Cook
615	The Disappearing Fourth	F. G. Cook
616	A Link with the Past	G. R. Samways
617	Loyal Miss Marie	G. R. Samways
618	The Schoolboy Employers	Noel Wood-Smith
619	The Lovelorn Grundy	John Nix Pentelow
620	A Christmas Adventure	G. R. Samways
621 1920	Trimble Minor	F. G. Cook
622	The Naturalist of St. Jim's	F. G. Cook
623	The Mystery of the Mill	John Nix Pentelow
624	Malcolm's Secret	S. E. Austin
625	The Fall of Mr. Ratcliff	Noel Wood-Smith
627	The Shadow of Doubt	F. G. Cook
628	Fighting for the Fags	Noel Wood-Smith
629	Skimpole's Rest Cure	Julius Herman
630	Fingo of the Fourth	Julius Herman
631	The Disappearance of Baggy	S. E. Austin
632	The School House Allotment	F. G. Cook
633	The Secret of the Castle	Noel Wood-Smith
634	Tom Merry & Co's New Role	F. G. Cook
635	Trimble's Tandem	F. G. Cook
636	Miss Priscilla - Form Master	Julius Herman
637	The Refugee of St. Jim's	S. E. Austin
638	Talbot's Stolen Story	John Nix Pentelow
639	Brought to Light	John Nix Pentelow
640	The Fighting Spirit	G. R. Samways
641	Well Won	G. R. Samways
642	Foiled at the Finish	F. G. Cook

No.	Title	Author
643	At Figgy's Expense	L. E. Ransome
644	Talbot's Find	S. E. Austin
645	The Tuck Dopers	F. G. Cook
646	Australia to the Rescue	G. R. Samways
647	Dick Brook's Trial	F. G. Cook
648	Troubled Waters	G. R. Samways
649	The Final Reckoning	G. R. Samways
650	Grundy's Great Raid	L. E. Ransome
651	The St. Jim's Overall Club	F. G. Cook
652	The Tyrant Tamers	F. G. Cook
653	Beaten Hollow	G. R. Samways
654	A Battle of Honour	H. Clarke Hook
655	All Through Baggy	S. E. Austin
656	Spoofing the School	H. Clarke Hook
664	A Stern Chase	Presumed sub - author unknown
665	Fallen Amongst Foes	G. R. Samways
666	For Freedom and the Cup	G. R. Samways
667	The Sacred Idol	S. E. Austin
669	The Outsiders Betrayal	F. G. Cook
670	Lowther on the Warpath	F. G. Cook
671	A Christmas Bombshell	G. R. Samways
672	Put to the Test	L. E. Ransome
673 1921	Champions of the Cause	G. R. Samways
674	The Mystery of the Manor	G. R. Samways
675	Talbot's Master Stroke	G. R. Samways
676	Redfern's Perilous Mission	F. G. Cook
681	Cardew Makes Amends	G. R. Samways
682	The Best of Pals	John Nix Pentelow
684	Through a Terrible Ordeal	John Nix Pentelow
685	Gore's Great Conquest	F. G. Cook
688	Gussy Gets Going	F. G. Cook
690	The Rebels of St. Jim's	F. G. Cook
691	Exiled from School	F. G. Cook
694	Baggy Trimbles' Great Swindle	F. G. Cook
696	Bound By a Promise	L. E. Ransome
697	The Plot Against St. Jim's	Noel Wood-Smith
702	Levison's Great Secret	John Nix Pentelow
703	Tom Merry & Timothy	F. G. Cook
705	Tom Merry's Mission	F. G. Cook
706	Glyn's Wonderful Invention	F. G. Cook
707	Trimble the Truthful	John Nix Pentelow
712	Tom Merry & Co's Trip	F. G. Cook
718	An Old Man's Secret	F. G. Cook
719	Blake's Debt of Honour	Noel Wood-Smith
725	Tom Merry's Glee Party	F. G. Cook
740 1922	Mr. Racke's Protege	L. E. Ransome
741	Sons of the Empire	John Nix Pentelow
752	Top of the River	S. E. Austin
775	The Fag's Rebellion	S. E. Austin
785 1923	Looking After the Professor	F. G. Cook
786	The Pluck of Edgar Lawrence	G. R. Samways

No.	Title	Author
No.793	Glyn's Scareophone	John Nix Pentelow
794	St. Jim's at the Cup Final	G. R. Samways
796	Discovered by his Father	F. G. Cook
798	Fifty Pounds Reward	S. E. Austin
802	In Another's Name	S. E. Austin
803	Impostor and Hero	S. E. Austin
806	Sportsmen of the River	S. E. Austin
809	Sportsmen All	G. R. Samways
810	From School to Circus	S. E. Austin
811	True Chums	S. E. Austin
819	The Spectre of the Past	G. R. Samways
820	The Professor's Peril	G. R. Samways
823	Pongo's Triumph	S. E. Austin
832 1924	Eric Kildare's Secret	S. E. Austin
833	A Vendetta at St. Jim's	F. G. Cook
834	The Hermit of Moat Grange	F. G. Cook
835	The Refugee of St. Jim's	F. G. Cook
840	Gussy's Grocery Store	Presumed sub - author unknown
843	Racke the Renegade	Presumed sub - author unknown
848	The Kidnapping of Kerruish	F. G. Cook
849	Figgins at Fault	S. E. Austin
850	A Cowardly Hero	F. G. Cook
851	The Heroic Coward	F. G. Cook
854	Glyn's Colour Ray	C. D. Lowe
857	Grundy's Feud	F. G. Cook
859	Tom Merry & Co in Camp	S. E. Austin
860	Ructions under Canvas	S. E. Austin
861	The Great Camp Mystery	S. E. Austin
868	The Lightning Shaft	S. E. Austin
869	A Traitor in the School	S. E. Austin
870	The Mayor's Cup	S. E. Austin
872	Dick Julian's Trial	F. G. Cook
873	The Fool of the Form	S. E. Austin
874	The Chinnee of St. Jim's	F. G. Cook
875	The St. Jim's Football Tournament	G. R. Samways
876	The Shipwrecked Seven	S. E. Austin
877	The Secret of Stark Island	S. E. Austin
879 1924	Gussy's Christmas Guests	G. R. Samways
880	Lumley-Lumley's Coup	H. C. Hook
881	Rivals of the New House	F. G. Cook
884 1925	The Prefects Dilemma	S. E. Austin
885	The Knight of the Pump	John Nix Pentelow
886	Trimble the Hero	Presumed sub - author unknown
887	The Mystery of the Mill	C. D. Lowe
888	The Boy from Broadway	F. G. Cook
889	Grundy on the Trail	S. E. Austin
890	The Crossword Craze at St. Jim's	G. R. Samways
891	The Schoolboy Refugee	F. G. Cook
892	Chums at Loggerheads	S. E. Austin
893	The Spy of the Fourth Form	F. G. Cook
894	Rebels of the School House	F. G. Cook

No.	Title	Author
896	Rough on Levison	S. E. Austin
900	The Dark Horse	G. R. Samways
901	Glory for Grundy	G. R. Samways
902	The Third Form Adventure	John Nix Pentelow
903	D'Arcy's Dilemma	G. R. Samways
904	A Disgrace to the Shell	S. E. Austin
905	Cardew Takes a Hand	S. E. Austin
910	Saving the Head	H. Clarke Hook
911	The Plundered School	S. E. Austin
912	The Hour of Atonement	S. E. Austin
913	Study No. 9 on the Warpath	John Nix Pentelow
914	Camp and Caravan	S. E. Austin
915	The Shadowed Caravan	S. E. Austin
916	Kidnapped	S. E. Austin
917	The Stranded Caravanners	S. E. Austin
918	The Boy with a Secret	S. E. Austin
922	Trimble the Terrible	G. R. Samways
925	Gussy's Good Turn	S. E. Austin
926	Cardew's Big Bluff	John Nix Pentelow
929	Gussy the Motorist	F. G. Cook
932	The Spoofer of the School House	S. E. Austin
933	The Impossible Schoolboy	F. G. Cook
934	1926 Grundy the Ventriloquist	S. E. Austin
937	The St. Jim's Treasure Chest	G. R. Samways
938	Football Rivals	H. C. Hook
939	Fatty Wynn's Folly	F. G. Cook
940	In the Toils	F. G. Cook
941	A Spectre of the Past	S. E. Austin
942	Scorned by the School	S. E. Austin
943	Friends Divided	G. R. Samways
944	The Night Raiders	G. R. Samways
945	Grundy the Artist	G. R. Samways
946	Rivals and Chums	G. R. Samways
947	April Fools All	G. R. Samways
949	His Honour at Stake	S. E. Austin
950	Trimble's Cup Final Party	Hedley O'Mant
956	D'Arcy's Night Out	Lewis Carlton
957	The Madness of Manners	John Nix Pentelow
958	The Schoolboy Inventor	F. G. Cook
959	Chums Under Canvas	S. E. Austin
960	Honours Even	S. E. Austin
961	Grundy's Feud	K. E. Newman
962	The St. Jim's Hotel Keepers	G. R. Samways
963	Fighting for the Ashes	K. E. Newman
964	The Schoolboy Sportsmen	K. E. Newman
965	The Motor Boat Boys	S. E. Austin
966	Chums Afloat	S. E. Austin
967	The Mystery of the 'Silver Spray'	S. E. Austin
968	The Secret of the Lonely Island	S. E. Austin
969	The Spoofer of the 'Silver Spray'	S. E. Austin
975	The Champion of St. Jim's	Lewis Carlton

No.	Title	Author
977	A Split in the School	K. E. Newman
978	Gussy's Newspaper	G. R. Samways
979	Standing up for Justice	K. E. Newman
981	The Man from Bootleg Ranch	Hedley O'Mant
982	The Ghost of Drere Manor	Hedley O'Mant
983	The Mark of the Hawk	Hedley O'Mant
984	The Secret of a Hundred Steps	Hedley O'Mant
985	1927 Out for Trouble	S. E. Austin
986	Tom Merry's Enemy	S. E. Austin
987	Captain and Cad	S. E. Austin
992	A Merseyside Mystery	S. E. Austin
993	D'Arcy's Comic Opera	G. R. Samways
994	Inventors All	E. S. Brooks
995	Skimpole's Thought Reading Machine	E. S. Brooks
996	Rival Inventors	E. S. Brooks
997	The Bogus Inventor	E. S. Brooks
998	The Boy from Russia	K. E. Newman
999	The Siege of St. Jim's	K. E. Newman
1001	Under Paddist Rule	S. E. Austin
1002	St. Jim's in a Quandary	S. E. Austin
1003	The Jape of the Term	S. E. Austin
1004	Wally's Secret Society	S. E. Austin
1005	The Hidden Hand	S. E. Austin
1008	Baggy Trimble's Charity	G. R. Samways
1009	Grundy's Barring-Out	K. E. Newman
1010	The Faithful Fag	John Nix Pentelow
1011	Saved from the Sack	C. D. Lowe
1012	Grundy the Rebel	S. E. Austin
1013	Grundy sees it through	S. E. Austin
1022	Under Gussy's Wing	E. S. Brooks
1023	The Boy who held his Tongue	E. S. Brooks
1024	The Changeling of St. Jim's	E. S. Brooks
1025	Under False Colours	E. S. Brooks
1026	The New House Recruit	S. E. Austin
1027	Who wants Grundy?	S. E. Austin
1028	The Spoof Champion	H. C. Hook
1029	Anybody - seen our Guy?	S. E. Austin
1030	Monty Lowther's Masquerade	S. E. Austin
1032	Wally D'Arcy's Feud	S. E. Austin
1033	Backing Up Wally	S. E. Austin
1036	The Missing Fourth Former	S. E. Austin
1037	Kidnapped	S. E. Austin
1038	1928 Grundy's Great Adventure	W. L. Catchpole
1039	At War with the Grammar School	F. G. Cook
1040	The Triple Alliance	F. G. Cook
1041	Grundy the Prizefighter	K. E. Newman
1042	Standing by a Rascal	S. E. Austin
1043	Under a Cloud	S. E. Austin
1044	Lowther's Love Affair	S. E. Austin
1045	A Chum's Test	K. E. Newman
1046	The Jape of the Term	S. E. Austin

	<u>Title</u>	<u>Author</u>
No.1047	Prefect and Rascal	C. M. Down
1048	Trimble the Truant	C. M. Down
1049	On the Trail of the Truant	C. M. Down
1050	Cardew the Knight Errant	C. M. Down
1051	Grundy's Movie Camera	W. L. Catchpole
1052	The Slacker's Awakening	Hedley O'Mant
1053	Cardew Comes a Cropper	Hedley O'Mant
1054	Japing the Fifth	C. M. Down
1055	Trimble's Reformation	W. L. Catchpole
1056	Farmers All	C. M. Down
1057	The Secret of the Farm	C. M. Down
1058	For Friendship's Sake	John Nix Pentelow
1059	Handforth at St. Jim's	E. S. Brooks
1060	Playing for the First	E. S. Brooks
1061	Handforth's Third Test	E. S. Brooks
1062	Handforth's Triumph	E. S. Brooks
1063	The Boy they could not Sack	E. S. Brooks
1064	The Schoolboy Journalist	L. E. Ransome
1065	The Imposter	John Nix Pentelow
1066	Cardew's Burden	John Nix Pentelow
1067	In Honour Bound	Presumed sub - author unknown
1068	Ratty's Bid for fame	L. E. Ransome
1073	Who shall be Captain?	S. E. Austin
1074	He thought he was Captain	S. E. Austin
1075	Captain Gussy	S. E. Austin
1076	Captain and Freak	S. E. Austin
1077	A Schoolboys Temptation	S. E. Austin
1078	No Good as Captain	S. E. Austin
1079	Tomkins the Valiant	S. E. Austin
1080	Tom Merry's Triumph	S. E. Austin
1081	Bound by his Promise	Francis Warwick
1082	The Sport's Crank	Presumed sub - author unknown
1083	The Conscript Fags	Hedley O'Mant
1084	My Lord Trimble	S. E. Austin
1085	The Jazz Schoolboy	W. L. Catchpole
1086	Just Like Cardew	S. E. Austin
1087	The Haunted School	S. E. Austin
1088	The Curse of the D'Arcy's	S. E. Austin
1089	The Mystery of Eastwood House	S. E. Austin
1090	1929 Under Suspicion	W. L. Catchpole
1091	Talbot's Sacrifice	Francis Warwick
1092	Up Against It	Francis Warwick
1093	Grundy Lends a Hand	S. E. Austin
1094	Taggles Barring Out	S. E. Austin
1095	The Mystery of Spalding Hall	Francis Warwick
1096	A Fortune at Stake	Francis Warwick
1097	Two Forms at War	S. E. Austin
1098	A Split in the School	S. E. Austin
1099	The Schoolboy Fire Fighters	W. L. Catchpole
1110	Standing by a Fag	K. E. Newman
1101	Selby in the Soup	S. E. Austin

No.	Title	Author
1102	Fun on the First	S. E. Austin
1103	Grundy Goes to War	W. L. Catchpole
1104	George's Aunt	S. E. Austin
1105	Vote For Tom Merry	Francis Warwick
1106	Captain Tom Merry	Francis Warwick
1107	Friendship or Duty	Francis Warwick
1108	A Traitor in the School	S. E. Austin
1109	Condemned in the School	S. E. Austin
1110	The Boy who wanted the Sack	S. E. Austin
1111	The Inseparable Three	K. E. Newman
1112	The Trouncers Triumph	F. Warwick
1113	The Downfall of the Toff	S. E. Austin
1114	Talbot's Enemy	S. E. Austin
1115	Tom Mix Junior	Francis Warwick
1116	Grundy's Cricket Match	W. L. Catchpole
1117	For Love of Lady Peggy	Francis Warwick
1118	The Mystery of River Grange	Francis Warwick
1119	Uncle Does the Trick	L. E. Ransome
1120	Who Kissed Ethel?	Francis Warwick
1121	The Secret of the Cave	Francis Warwick
1122	On the Trail of Treasure	Francis Warwick
1123	The Prisoner of the Rock	Francis Warwick
1124	Grundy's Treasure Hunt	S. E. Austin
1125	Baggy's Bargain Sale	S. E. Austin
1126	The Silent Witness	W. L. Catchpole
1127	Grundy's Noble Sacrifice	S. E. Austin
1128	Grundy's Ambulance Brigade	S. E. Austin
1129	The Man from Australia	W. L. Catchpole
1130	Skimpole's Simple Savage	Francis Warwick
1131	Leaving it to Gussy	S. E. Austin
1132	Detained	Francis Warwick
1133	The Haunted Study	W. L. Catchpole
1134	The Fifth at St. Jim's	S. E. Austin
1135	The Tyrant	S. E. Austin
1136	No Surrender	S. E. Austin
1137	The Jester of St. Jim's	W. L. Catchpole
1138	The Menace of the Wolf	Francis Warwick
1139	Betrayed	Francis Warwick
1140	The House on the Mountain	Francis Warwick
1141	The Return of the Wolf	Francis Warwick
1142	1930 All Through Pongo	Francis Warwick
1143	The Fugitive Schoolboy	Francis Warwick
1144	Under Trimble's Thumb	Francis Warwick
1145	A Rogue's Reward	Francis Warwick
1146	The Shanghaied Schoolboys	Francis Warwick
1147	£100 Reward	Francis Warwick
1148	Rivals of the River	W. L. Catchpole
1149	Glyn's Tank Corps	S. E. Austin
1150	Gussy's Talkie	W. L. Catchpole
1151	Sent to Coventry	Francis Warwick
1152	Cock O' the Walk	Francis Warwick

No.	Title	Author
1153	The Bully of the Shell	Francis Warwick
1154	The Fall of the Tyrant	Francis Warwick
1156	The Message in Morse	W. L. Catchpole
1157	Grundy the Protector	Francis Warwick
1158	The Phantom Motorboat	W. L. Catchpole
1159	The Secret of the Flower Pot	W. L. Catchpole
1160	Skimpole the Superman	S. E. Austin
1161	Held to Ransom	S. E. Austin
1163	Under Petticoat Rule	W. L. Catchpole
1164	Dizzy Desmond - Daredevil	S. E. Austin
1165	The Schoolboy Airman	Francis Warwick
1167	Speedman of the River.	W. L. Catchpole
1168	Broadside Gussy	Francis Warwick
1169	The Kidnapped Cricketers	W. L. Catchpole
1170	Glynn's Submarine	S. E. Austin
1171	Pep for the Saints	Francis Warwick
1172	Cousin Ethel's Champion	Francis Warwick
1173	Baggy Trimble's Guests	Francis Warwick
1174	The Mystery of the Broads	Francis Warwick
1175	Hands up St. Jim's	Francis Warwick
1176	Gussy the Channel Swimmer	W. L. Catchpole
1177	Gussy the Sloven	S. E. Austin
1178	Grundy's Simplified Spelling	W. L. Catchpole
1179	The Mystery Makers	S. E. Austin
1180	The Prisoner of the Moat House	Francis Warwick
1181	The Mystery Schoolboy-Schoolgirl	Francis Warwick
1182	The Treasure of the Douvars	Francis Warwick
1183	Won By a Foul	Francis Warwick
1184	The Heavyweight Hero	S. E. Austin
1185	The One Man Rebellion	S. E. Austin
1186	The Glorious Fifth	S. E. Austin
1187	The School in the Clouds	Francis Warwick
1188	The Snake Men of Zundaki	Francis Warwick
1189	The Valley of Slaves	Francis Warwick
1190	The Red Man's Vengeance	Francis Warwick
1191	The Tyrant of Urudor	Francis Warwick
1193	Skimpole the Spartan	W. L. Catchpole
1194	1931 St. Jim's on the Bust	Hector Hutt
1195	Captain and Cheat	Francis Warwick
1196	Kildare of the Foreign Legion	Francis Warwick
1199	The Vengeance of the Hawk	S. E. Austin
1200	Gussy the Optimist	W. L. Catchpole
1201	The Rabbit of the Shell	K. Orme
1202	The Taming of the Tyrant	W. L. Catchpole
1203	The Lighthouse Mystery	S. E. Austin
1204	Lionhearted Gussy	Hector Hutt
1206	Mr. Justice Grundy	W. L. Catchpole
1207	Who Sacked Selby?	Hector Hutt
1208	Down on Grundy's Farm	S. E. Austin
1209	Fatty Wynn's Legacy	S. E. Austin
1210	Linton in Revolt	Francis Warwick

	<u>Title</u>	<u>Author</u>
No.1211	The Fighting Formaster	Francis Warwick
1212	The St. Jim's Flying Squad	Francis Warwick
1213	Flats and Sharps at St. Jim's	Francis Warwick
1214	The Flying Fugitive	W. L. Catchpole
1215	The Midnight Cricketers	W. L. Catchpole
1216	Terror from the East	S. E. Austin
1217	The Conway Cup	Francis Warwick
1218	Gussy the Waiter	S. E. Austin
1219	Skimpole's Musical Spasm	W. L. Catchpole
1304	1933 Hero and Cad (Reprint No. 53)	H. C. Hook
1327	The D'Arcy Cup (Reprint No. 88)	H. C. Hook
1370	1934 The St. Jim's Jockeys (Reprint No. 137)	H. C. Hook
1377	The Mechanical Man (Reprint No. 125)	H. C. Hook
1378	Tom Merry & Co's Regatta (Reprint No. 128)	Author unknown
1448	1935 The New Boy's Secret (Reprint No. 256)	H. C. Hook
1449	Under Suspicion (Reprint No. 258)	E. S. Brooks
1466	1936 Rivals on the Treasure Trail (Reprint No. 268)	E. S. Brooks
1478	They Called him a Coward (Reprint No. 285)	E. S. Brooks
1512	1937 The Housemaster's Peril (Reprint No. 319)	E. S. Brooks
1541	The Boy who spoofed St. Jim's (Reprint No. 391)	E. S. Brooks
1576	1938 The Schoolboy Band Conductor (Reprint No. 460)	G. R. Samways
1577	Tom Merry & Co's Dog Show (Reprint No. 453)	H. C. Hook
1586	St. Jim's Under Canvas (Reprint No. 959)	S. E. Austin
1587	Rival Campers (Reprint No. 960)	S. E. Austin
1608	Gussy's Christmas Party (Reprint No. 620)	G. R. Samways
1622	1939 The Schemer of the Sixth (Reprint No. 607)	S. E. Austin

Notes on Stories and Substitute Writers:

It must be presumed that all stories not appearing in the lists were written by Charles Hamilton. This I am pleased to say (except in a few cases in the very early days when indifferent stories by the genuine 'Martin Clifford' appeared) confirms the opinions of the majority of experts such as Eric Fayne, Roger Jenkins, and John Shaw, who have mentioned many of these stories in articles.

According to Mr. C. M. Down, controlling editor of the GEM - Mr. Stanley E. Austin was the best substitute writer of the St. Jim's stories; and that is probably the reason why he was commissioned to write over 125 tales of Tom Merry & Co. Modesty probably forbids Mr. Down for mentioning his own stories. According to several sub-editors he was easily the best of them all! Certainly John

Shaw in his original GEM lists accepted several stories written by the editor as having been the work of Mr. Hamilton.

Probably the best story of all the substitute tales was No. 285 'Misunderstood' by E. S. Brooks (originally titled by him 'The Sneak of St. Jim's') and reprinted in issue No. 1478. This is the opinion of several of the experts.

As mentioned in the January 1964 C.D. (No. 205 page 22) I cannot emphasise too strongly the fact that many of the substitute stories were rewritten editorially, and so it's practically impossible to tell in many cases simply by the style who actually wrote the tale. Mr. John Nix Pentelow, the war-time editor, as is generally known, even inserted items of his own in the genuine Charles Hamilton material, and there is proof that he rewrote a considerable number of indifferent stories, by statements from various writers I have contacted. Apart from this, Mr. G. R. Samways, the chief sub-editor was also given many a task to rewrite stories, and even at times worked in collaboration with Mr. Pentelow in producing stories. With both their styles being poles apart, the basis on the authorship is simply the one as given in the official records compiled at the time of publication.

Editorial staff were also inclined to make more than one story out of an original manuscript. Mr. Clive Fenn has stated that he once submitted a story to John Nix Pentelow, had it rejected; then was astonished to see that Mr. Pentelow had carved out five complete tales from his idea. This explains how it is possible for more than one author to be credited to a series.

Brief Notes on Substitute Writers:

Percy Griffith: First editor of the Magnet and Gem. Mentioned quite a lot in the Frank Richards Autobiography - though I doubt if Mr. Hamilton ever knew that the 'pushful Percy' as he called him, had written many of the early tales. Percy Griffith left Amalgamated Press suddenly about 1911. No trace of him since.

H. A. Hinton: Chief sub-editor of the Magnet and Gem. Became editor on the sudden departure of Percy Griffith. In 1921 also left suddenly, and became editor and owner of 'School and Sport' - a short lived boys' paper. Later became connected with 'Dalton's Weekly' an advertising paper - died in very tragic circumstances 1941 - killed whilst alighting from train in the blackout.

C. M. Down: On the staff of the Gem and Magnet from first to last issues! Became chief editor in 1921. Extremely pleasant and a perfect gentleman in every way. The writer has been privileged to meet him several times, and is in regular correspondence. Very co-operative in giving information on authors and details of the papers under his control in the past. Considers that Charles Hamilton's best work was in the Magnet, and on the feuding between masters. Thinks that Horace Coker if persevered with could have become as great a name as Billy Bunter today.

H. Clarke Hook: Son of the creator of Jack, Sam, Pete, - S. Clarke Hook. Wrote a lot for Chums and school stories in other papers. I have never been successful in tracing him, but he is probably still alive.

G. R. Samways: On the staff of the Companion Papers from about 1914 - and is easily the leading contributor of stories, short tales, verse and the creator of the St. Sam's stories in the Magnet. Wrote a considerable amount for the Greyfriars Herald, and is a great admirer of all Charles Hamilton's work. The writer first discovered him several years ago, when he had not been heard of for over 30 years. Now living in the heart of Gloucester; Mr. Samways keeps extremely fit by

long walks, and is an extremely pleasant conversationalist and a good sort.

Alfred Barnard: I must admit that I was greatly astonished to find his name amongst the records. A writer of many boys' stories in early papers; he was also a playwright, and had connections on the stage.

E. S. Brooks: Most famous for his St. Franks stories in the Nelson Lee Library, and really needs no details. Has visited the London O.B.B.C. several times. A very keen Magnet and Gem reader in his youth.

Reginald S. Kirkham: Best known for writing many of the Cliff House stories in School Friend, and retired from writing around 1940. Became a successful business man in fruit-growing and left a fortune of £32,000 when he died some years ago. A very popular man at the A.P. and known by all as 'Kirks.'

Julius Herman: As mentioned in the June 1962 C.D. a South African who was a schoolteacher. Came to this country, and whilst studying wrote a great number of short bits and pieces for the Companion Papers. I will always be grateful for the great help from South African friends Charles Van Renen and Kenneth Kirby for their help in trying to trace him. He died some years ago, and wrote at least four Gem stories - but there is no trace of them being published, under his own titles, at least. Readers may be interested to locate them in the 12 substitute stories, where the author is unknown.

John Nix Pentelow: War-time editor of the Companion papers, and probably the most controversial writer and editor of all time, for killing off one of Charles Hamilton's characters in the Magnet. An expert at cricket - he edited a magazine of the same name. Being extremely deaf, and refusing to wear a deaf aid made conversation or editorial talks very difficult. But a very pleasant man, and many an author I have met has reason to thank him for the help he gave them when they just started. Died in 1932.

Stanley Austin: The most prolific of all Gem authors, and was contacted by Tom Hopperton many years ago, when first knowledge was gained of his tremendous output as a 'stand-in' for Charles Hamilton. He seems to have done little in original contributions - though girls' material appeared under the 'Sheila Austin' nom-de-plume - and school stories under his own name. Died some years ago.

Francis Warwick: When I first wrote to this author a few years ago in connection with his Sexton Blake stories, a sudden afterthought made me put a P.S. enquiring whether he had written any school stories. His reply that 'he had written dozens for the Gem' was a real revelation, and all his statements on stories written seem to have been correct, as they compare with official records. Most surprising thing is that he never read the Gem as a boy, but was fond of The Magnet. Son of Sydney Warwick, he never seems to have reached the same fame as his father.

F. Gordon Cook: Extremely friendly and prolific writer of boys' stories in Chums and boys' magazines. First met him some years ago, at White City, London. Attended Grammar School 100 yards from where I lived when a boy. Was greatly shaken when he found out that he had sold his hundreds of Magnets for a song! Plus the fact that he had also thrown in 1st Gems 1-48 for nothing as a token of good will. Was wireless Engineer the last I heard of him, but probably now retired, as was in ill health.

Hedley O'Mant: Chief sub-editor on the Magnet and Gem at various periods, and an extremely popular fellow by all accounts. Wrote boys' stories under various names

and was also editor of 'Ranger.' Died in 1955 - but I met his charming daughter a short while ago. She has all the personality that Hedley seems to have had.

Kenneth E. Newman: Free-lance writer of school stories - and who produced his own school paper entitled 'School Yarn Magazine' some years ago. Met him thanks to a collector living in Berkshire. Most vivid impression of him, was his astonishing memory of Greyfriars stories, and he thought that 'Lame Bunter' Magnet 806 the funniest school story ever written. Was a civil servant - the last I heard of him.

L. E. Ransome: Wrote his first Gem story at the age of only 17, and was a great admirer and reader of all Charles Hamilton's writings since an early age. Winner in the famous Greyfriars Story Competition held in 1915 - since that date he has written thousands of stories for boys' and girls' papers - including Bessie Bunter under the 'Hilda Richards' pen-name - after Mr. Hamilton. Has been a mine of information on inside information - he worked in the Boys Friend (Rookwood) and other departments before turning free-lance. In my opinion, an extremely clever and co-operative person.

Hector Hutt: A new name in the field of authors - but certainly one whose name so far has been shielded behind his contributions to the Gem and Magnet. Wrote verse, St. Sam's, and short pieces for the Companion Papers and Holiday Annuals in the last few years before the coming of the second world war - probably after W. L. Catchpole. Also wrote 'Cokers Cake' - Holiday Annual. Must have been very young as when I contacted him first by phone, I spoke to his father! Now works in the telephone department of the Post Office.

William L. Catchpole: Another winner in the Greyfriars Competition 1915, and now holds a high position in Insurance in the City. First heard of him via another substitute writer, and soon was able to trace him. Pleasant and co-operative type and attended the June meeting of the London O.B.B.C. Has appeared on T.V. to talk about financial affairs.

Noel Wood-Smith: Another sub-editor on the Magnet and Gem, and also a writer of stories under the nom-de-plume 'Norman Taylor.' Died many years ago, but was reputed to be a clever inventor in his time with many patents to his name. Used to go to football matches with G. R. Samways and could write a good authentic yarn about the game.

K. Orme: Nothing known about this individual at all, and probably a lone outside contributor who was fortunate to get his story published. The editorial office as can be imagined had hundreds of would be 'Martin Cliffords' but as to be expected many were totally unacceptable. Favourite theme (so I am told) of story seems to have been 'The Butcher Boy at St. Jim's' giving his trials and tribulations at a public school before being accepted by all and sundry.

Lewis Carlton: Former editor of the Union Jack way back in 1917, and later played Tinker in the Sexton Blake plays on the stage. Returned to free-lance writing much later on, and wrote Blakes and schoolgirl fiction under the name of 'Louise Carlton.' Probably still alive, but I have never succeeded in tracking him down. Could no doubt have a lot to tell.

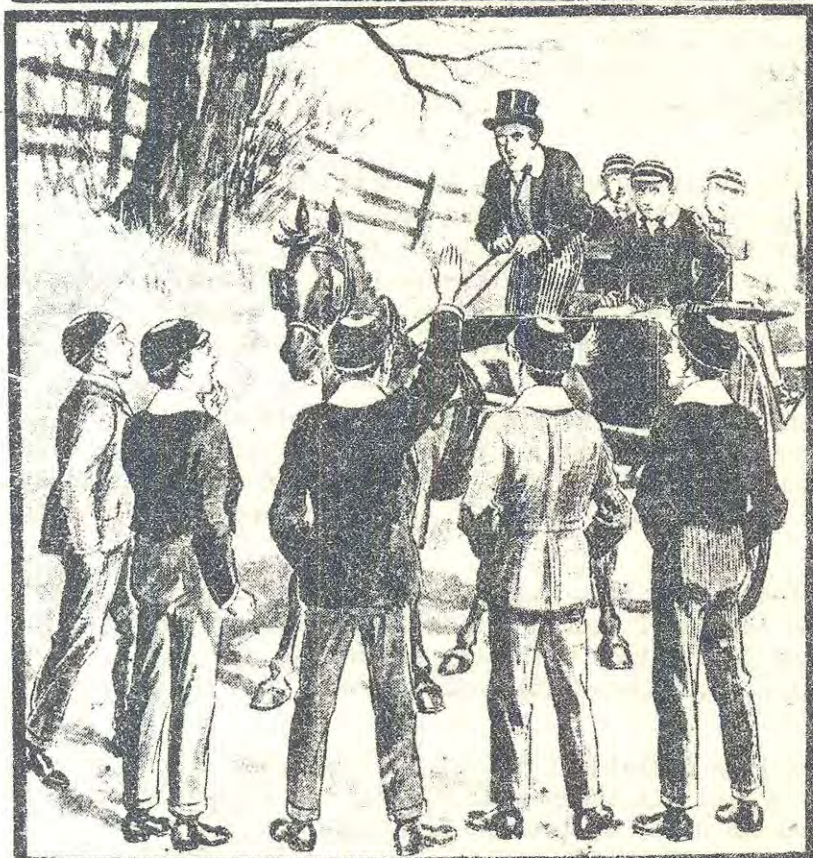
C. D. Lowe: Very little known about this author except he was connected with the 'Tom Merry Film' which never materialised in H. A. Hinton's time. Was probably a script-writer by profession.

illustration on following page...

* * * * *

A MISSION OF MYSTERY!

A Magnificent New, Long, Complete Tale of School Life at St. Jim's.



THE GRAMMARIANS HOLD UP THE "SAINTS"!

(An Exciting Scene in the Magnificent Long, Complete School Tale in this issue.)

wear Eton collars. One wears a Norfolk jacket, one a blazer, and the boy on the extreme left seems to have a soft collar and a modern-looking sports jacket.)

A VERY SPECIAL MAGIC (continued from p. 22)..

later Magnet. It is no longer the spell binder of the past. In the Magnet of the vintage years you must read on, held captive by a very personal magic.

(EDITORIAL NOTE: We are almost sure that Mr. Kelly is in error in crediting the magnificent picture of Harry Wharton which graced the last story of the Stacey series to Leonard Shields. The picture was an outstanding example of the work of Mr. C. H. Chapman.)

(EDITORIAL NOTE: Here we have one of the best substitute stories listed by Mr. Lofts in his article. I read it as a very small boy, and loved it. It was just the theme to appeal to a small boy, in fact. Arthur Augustus was given a large sum of money which he had to spend within a few days. He found it difficult. It was many, many years before I obtained the story again, and then, alas, I was disappointed with it. But the episode bears out the truth of what some people allege - that some of the substitute stories appealed to us as children. The story was, in fact, written by Edwy Searles Brooks, and very few of the substitute stories were of this quality. I believe that Mr. Brooks used this theme later in one of his famous St. Frank's tales.

As a matter of interest, note the attire of the Grammarians in Macdonald's picture. I do not recollect seeing the Grammarian cap so well conveyed at any other time. Also, two boys are in Etons. Four

Was the journey really worthwhile?

By Harry Broster

Untouched by time. How many places in this England of ours have not been spoiled, in some way, by modernisation?

Wherever you go changes have gone on all around. Often we journey back to places we knew and loved in our earlier days, in some instances back to where we were born and spent happy years of childhood. We know we are in the right place but what a difference. Probably the old beloved home is gone; the houses we knew all around it too have vanished. The school where we were taught has gone the way of many old buildings. Some needed replacing but not all and I suppose there was not room to let them stand. Time marches on and social improvements demand the sacrifice of all we knew and loved in those never to be forgotten days of childhood.

Only the most important of old buildings, ancient monuments, are protected by law and in a lot of cases only then after a hard fight. The trouble is the fight is not so hard; people are glad generally to accept the glitter and gold of modernisation. Modern cars on wonderful motorways, road houses, hotels, garages meet us everywhere. There are a few places which have escaped the axe and in these you can roll back the years and indulge your little bit of nostalgia.

In all probability you will have to take advantage of the 'modern car' to get you there. Dr. Beeching has taken, or will soon be taking away the old and interesting way of reaching that old world village you remember so well. How thankful we can be that he cannot take away all the railways. The powers-that-be are unable to destroy the places we read about and love so much. We being the reading public of Britain amongst which the old boys book clubs are an important part. The literature which we revere so much is beyond the changing due to modernisation and the places in those stories will go on for ever as they were.

Some unfortunately are real places and when we have the luck to come across those places on our travels we find our moments of sadness and disillusion. Often we make a special journey to indulge our interest. We try to find this landmark, this building, wood, hill or beauty spot mentioned in the book we have just read. The people are gone but we do expect some reward for our travels by finding some familiar land mark or place. Maybe there are a few left untouched and you can re-act the scene on the proper stage.

What well-known stories come into this category? Apart from old boys' books I read all sorts of yarns to do with adventure and open-air life. Maybe the boys' classics bring the most reward when I try to indulge my love for finding out these old geographical marks and link them up with the book.

A few weeks ago I was at Shrewsbury, to watch the 'Highland Games.' Yes, the 'Highland Games,' organised by the local Scotch brigade. They were very interesting, but most important to me was the famous school across the river from the 'Old Quarry' where the games were held. I thought of Lycidas Marsh and 'Bending of a Twig' by Desmond Coke. If I had been able I could have explored

the old town, and places mentioned in that grand book would have been only too apparent. When I went to Windsor a year or so ago the castle was only too absorbing but my great moment was the sail up the river and a sight of the great public school Eton. You can get a grand view of this from the top of the keep, also. As I went up the Thames I thought also of the famous Magnet series - 'The Water Lily.' Was I travelling in the wake of Harry Wharton, Bunter & Co?

A day spent at Rugby could be a worthwhile pleasure after you had read and absorbed that classic of school life 'Tom Brown's Schooldays.' That's a pleasure to come.

In July I was in Tewkesbury, where we stopped for an hour before going on to the Cotswolds. 'John Halifax, Gentleman' by Mrs. Craik is not essentially a boys' book, but what boy with a reading mind has not read and been none the worse for so doing (for a time perhaps). It has always been a favourite of mine and many times have I read it. There was the great Abbey with its famous chimes, the chimes which kept Ursula March awake at night. The Abbey was worth looking at, inside and out, but my main interest was the house right opposite. 'Abel Fletcher's House.' There it was - but alas! now a hotel - 'The Bull.' Well, part of it anyway. Walking round I looked for the famous 'Yew edge.' Presumably it vanished with the garden which is now a parking place for cars and coaches. Down Mill Lane a hundred yards away was the River Avon with the old flour mill belonging to Abel Fletcher still there. The old mill wheel still working, but sad to relate - the place is now used as a cafe. The row of old cottages nearby all recalled the story of 'John Halifax, Gentleman.' I would have liked to discover again where John Halifax lodged with Sally Watkins, where the doctor lived, the Mayor's house, but time was lacking. On the road to the Cotswolds I looked for Enderly Hill, for a possible 'Beechwood' but like the town of Tewkesbury which was 'Norton Bury' in the book I presume they had different names really.

It was in the Cotswold country at Chetworth that we came to the famous 'Roman Villa.' A perfect example of re-discovered remains of Roman civilization. Well worth a visit and though out of the scope of this article, I could bring back thoughts of books we read about the Romans, and their way of life. There are more than a few.

A visit also to Stamford in the Fenlands was a treat to me when thoughts of 'Hereward the Wake' came to mind. All boys have read about Hereward, Godiva his mother, Torfrida his first wife, his adventures in France, Norway and the Netherlands after being banished by his own father Leofric. We did not have time to visit Crowland and none of the other places mentioned in the book by Charles Kingsley, but they were there. Here too at Stamford fought Boadicea - that war-like queen who made the Romans scatter a bit. These few instances I have mentioned are based on true history or have proper places for their 'stage.' There are many others.

We could go on to the various Robin Hood stories. There's 'Ivanhoe' by Walter Scott. A pleasant day (with a car, of course) could be spent delving into the geography of that absorbing tale. Places like Nottingham and Leicester to mention the most important. Sherwood Forest and Charnwood are still there (in parts) and you can link up many names with the places mentioned in Ivanhoe. Another one of these Robin Hood epics is 'Black Arrow' by Stevenson. Talking of Robert Louis Stevenson we could go outside England to Scotland and travel the road of David Balfour and Alan Breck of 'Kidnapped' fame. In 'Treasure Island' we could only go as far as Bristol with Jim Hawkins and Doctor Trelawney. Maybe the

inn on the waterfront where they first met Long John Silver is still there. We could trace it maybe but then we should stop. We could not go on to the Treasure Island.

Twice when we have been on holiday in Devon or Cornwall we have passed through Doone Country - Exmoor. Well, is 'Lorna Doone' a boys' classic or isn't it? A day or two spent there would have been a pleasure - with a copy of 'Lorna Doone' at hand. Further on and I will jump from boys' and girls' literature to 'Jamaica Inn.' Daphne Du Maurier wrote more than one story based on real places like this inn. Bodmin Moor recalled for me a yarn by Victor Gunn (Edwy Searle Brooks) of Inspector 'Ironsides' Cromwell, 'The Mystery of Bodmin Moor.' Yes, not a true yarn but I had to push that one in - we were on the way to Cornwall and possibly would not pass the same way back.

There's a lot of yarns based on historical facts and real places and all very interesting and worth hunting out. Then again there are many yarns for boys and girls with realistic settings. The personnel is imaginary but the places are real and afford many chances of pleasurable investigation. The tales by Arthur Ransome are set on the 'Broads' in one series. Real places and you can travel along with Tom, Dick and Dorothea and the Three Pirates to your heart's content. So, too, can you join in the adventures of the Swallows and Amazons on that 'Lake' in the Lake District. Whether that Lake is a reality you can easily find out. 'Rio' can be one place only. 'Kanchenjunga' is easily identified by its proper name. Absorbing tales those by Arthur Ransome.

I am told that some of the tales by Malcolm Saville are all about the Myndds and the district round Church Stretton. Monica Brown (I hope I have the name right) writes about the 'Punch Bowl' country of the South Downs. Some of the yarns by Olivia Fitz Roy are all of the one place - the Highlands of Western Ross. Sometime I hope to be able to check on the mountains and lochs in those yarns. She altered the names quite a lot but they are easy to distinguish. Brett Young, our local author, wrote his stories round the Black Country and Bewdley and are easy to re-discover. 'Bladys of Stewponney' is our own immediate 'true' story and has been filmed (in the silent days). The places are all around us though the characters were the imagination of the author.

When Snowdonia happens to be the subject of conversation I recall the stories, detective yarns that is, by Glynn Carr. His particular detective was unusual, an actor-manager-cum amateur sleuth named Sir Abercrombie Lewker with a 'bent' towards mountain-climbing. Two particular yarns especially I read brought back memories of certain places and mountains I visited when in Snowdonia. Quite a number of detective yarns are about places we know (till we get there and then we stop). The Sexton Blake and Nelson Lee authors have seen to that. Instead of real places we expect, there is only the name. We have no chance of going over the stage. That's the trouble with most fiction. The place becomes of minor importance. You read, you enjoy, but that is the finish. Good as the story may be, - it could be termed a 'classic' of its kind - you cannot get any further enjoyment by a visit to the district described in that story. The others I have recalled you can; the enjoyment of reading is enhanced each time you visit the scene of the story.

To many of us other and numerous stories would be all the more absorbing if we could go over the locale of those stories. The Westerns we read - I mean the good ones by Zane Grey and Mulford, the travel stories of Staples, Ballantyne,

True, such little things like gas light has given way to electricity. Motor cars have put the old horse drawn brakes (and dogcarts) out of business. Eton jackets have given way to school blazers. Oh! a lot of little oddments like those but the countryside is still the same. No one can change that, none of Hitler's bombs or Beechings 'butcherings.' The sun will shine at Charles Hamilton's dictation, it will rain just to suit him and he alone - no weather forecasts for us. No television maybe - an odd wireless set will pop up in the Remove passage but the settings will be there for ever as they were in the early days. England as it should be but the pity of it all we cannot visit it, for all we know where it is, to the exact mile or so. We can find it in the Magnet, in the Gem, in the Greyfriars Holiday Annual, in the B.F.L. and S.O.L. To keep it in our minds come the new Bunter Books and making doubly sure that grand little magazine the C.D. Our tickets to that unspoiled little world of Charles Hamilton's England.

E. THOMSON, 6, Ritchie Place, Edinburgh, 11.

P. HANGER, 10, Park Square, Kings Heath, Northampton.

John Upton looks at "HOME CHAT" - Volume One

"It is becoming quite the smart thing nowadays to write operatic librettos" ... "Sunday skating on real ice, regardless of the state of the thermometer, at Niagara, is still very much the rage. There you may meet duchesses and actresses, the last literary lion, and, in fact, almost everybody who is anybody."

So ran two items in the Lady Greville's 'Chit Chat' columns for issue number one of 'Home Chat,' dated 23.3.1895, which, with 'Home Notes,' proved to be one of the most successful women's journals ever to be launched - it ran till 1959.

In number one it was emphasised, again by the Lady Greville, that it was the first time the work of the authoress Helen Mathers (whose most famous novel was, of course, 'Comin' thro' the Rye') had ever been sold for a penny. Her serial for the first volume, 'The Lovely Malincourt,' was well tailored to the tastes of those to whom the paper set out to appeal - "those who love dainty homes, dainty dress, dainty fiction, dainty tables, and dainty engravings." It would, added Lady Greville, "aim at rendering signal service to the mothers, wives, and daughters of the British Empire" - which it did, with eminent success, for 64 years; an amazing record.

Many and varied were the practical features which Volume One contained. 'The Re-Arrangement of Ugly Mantelpieces,' 'How to arrange a Hall' and 'What to do with Recesses' were three typical articles; while the health, beauty and fashion departments offered a wealth of advice to the said mothers, wives and daughters, more than 200,000 of whom purchased the first issue.

Some of the contents inevitably strike a curious note when read in the so-changed world of the 1960's. The slight tone of censoriousness, exemplified in the 'Answers to Correspondents' columns of the 'B.O.P.,' is well to the fore, and was evidently regarded as an essential feature of a soundly conducted paper. The irritable mother, for example, who ordered her little boy to be quiet when he was 'strumming on the table and kicking about most disagreeably and annoyingly' was advised not to show the child any "unpleasant crossness," but instead to say: "Jack, look out of the window a moment, then come and tell me how many things you saw, then I will look and tell you." What happened if Jack then retorted: "Shan't!" the writer did not illuminate. It would be essential to do so today, one feels. On the same page, incidentally, was a suggested cure for hiccough: "a sudden exclamation just as the hiccough begins" - whether an irritable exclamation or not was not divulged.

An article on 'Why Women should walk' had some distinctly discouraging news for the slovenly walker. An eminent authority had suggested the following posture for the human body in walking: the toes turned outward, the chin tilted as if looking at the eaves or roof of a house, the hands placed behind the back. As if this were not bad enough - "Good walking means neither the stride nor the hop," ran further advice on another page, "but to place the foot firmly and deliberately on the ground, the heel touching the earth very lightly before the rest of the foot." As for sitting, one was doomed to an early demise if one failed to press "the lower-part of the spine against the chair back."

The writer went on: "Undoubtedly, to obey to the letter all these instructions would be somewhat difficult when walking in towns or cities" - this was generous. But for nice girls, who wanted beautiful complexions and figures, "walking with the arms crossed at the back, or.. placed over a stick held firmly against the waist" was deemed quite essential. She went on, with some relish, to describe the results of holding the chin forward or in a drooping position: a distorted spinal column and, "with a sad precocity," the development of a bent, enfeebled aspect, compressure of the lungs and a sallow, muddy complexion.

Walking, however, also had its snags: excellent in itself, it was capable, when perverted of causing "much and permanent damage." Young men and women were coming back from their holidays "suffering from innumerable little aches and pains, and with a sensation of 'feeling tired all over'," concluding that "the place could not have agreed with them." The cause was the excessive walking they had done - "ten, fifteen or twenty miles a day."

All in all, it was small wonder that so many readers were, instead of walking, buying Rudge-Whitworth bicycles at from £18 to £50, and presumably availing themselves of the bicycling costume which was pictured on P.359 of Volume One: the material navy-blue serge, the edge of the skirt hemmed up with tan leather, the Norfolk jacket opening smartly, with a square-shaped collar, to show a skirt of fine brown Holland. A blue girth webbing belt, fastened with a Norwegian silver buckle, and beneath the dress, 'discreetly hidden from view,' serge knickerbockers, also brown cloth gaiters, completed the ensemble.

The doubtful were counselled that so well established was the institution of cycling throughout the land that "a lady a-wheel does not excite notice in even the most remote rural districts." Anything "slovenly or slip-shod," however, was not to be seen on a cycle: it was essential to be neat and trim, and to this end, gloves of dark chevette or dog-skin were to be worn, with a small plain travelling hat, trimmed with plain dark ribbon, and great care was to be exercised to have the skirt well-cut, warned the writer, "and constructed to meet the requirements of the saddle" or it might "ride-up and prove both inconvenient and indecorous, especially when its wearer has to face a strong head-wind." As to the racing and record-breaking, both of which "objectionable tendencies" had been observed of late, the writer was adamant - "they cannot be indulged in by women without the most harmful results."

Mrs. Mansergh ran to a series for her 'Adventures in search of a Servant,' under the collective title: 'My Mary Janes.' One of these articles reduced to shreds the deplorable character of one "Russell," a "slim-waisted person with references from so many titled ladies that it seemed quite a condescension on her part to consent to live with commoners." Alas, although Russell succeeded in making her mistress's hair look "just three times as abundant as it had ever done before," and kept her things in beautiful order, she was very far from a treasure in other ways. Mrs. Mansergh's suspicions were aroused when, on her entering her bedroom unexpectedly, Russell was disconcerted and flurried, as if surprised "in the midst of some illegitimate act." The shrewd mistress did the obvious thing, returned earlier than usual from her afternoon drive - to find the iniquitous Russell "comfortably seated in the bow window" with her morning's correspondence spread out before her, and so engrossed in this that Mrs. Mansergh was able to take a seat and await further developments. When, at length, Russell caught sight of her - "my goodness, how she did jump," recalled Mrs. Mansergh, who, but for her great anger, "must have laughed." She trounced the servant roundly for her "detestable habit," whereupon Russell threw herself full length on the ground,

sobbing and wailing, beating at her breast and plucking at her fringe, in a "thrilling scene." "I forgave her," said the writer. "How could I do otherwise?" And Russell staggered from the chamber, holding both hands to her head.

More disappointments were in store for Mrs. Mansergh when she engaged a lady-help whose uncle, she later gathered, had been Mayor of Swansea, and who "seemed much surprised to be called upon to prepare the dinner." This obviously would not do: she was replaced. Sad to say, with her successor came missing handkerchiefs; the third was too easily hurt, and cried all day long; the fourth was "a poor, faded creature who had been a governess," sweet and willing - and because Mrs. Mansergh "could not bear to see her looking fagged out by her unaccustomed duties" she did three-quarters of the work herself and fell ill in consequence, and lay prone on her bed, "reflecting on the mystery of life, and paying ten and sixpence a day for a doctor's visit." It was all very frustrating.

Apart from the serial episode, each issue of 'Home Chat' contained one very short story. 'Mrs. Gascoigne,' the author of which was not mentioned, contains such gems as the following:

"Do you know the Cravens?" asked Lane abruptly.

"You mean the Grosvenor Place people - yes, I know them. Surely you're not in love with Dorothy. Why, my dear boy, she's thirty-two at least, and wears a fringe."

At this, Edgar Lane frowns at the speaker - Mrs. Gascoigne, his old friend, recently widowed. No, it is not Dorothy, he explains, but her cousin Milly Craven, who is staying there for the season.

When the said Milly subsequently breaks off the engagement in the following terms: "Dear Mr. Lane, You will, I imagine, scarcely be surprised when I tell you that all further correspondence between us must end instantly," Edgar visits Mrs. Gascoigne once more, and basks in her pretended sympathy:

"I have been awfully ungrateful to you lately, Vi," he said remorsefully.

"No, dear," she whispered. "Don't think of it any more, you poor worried person," and leaning forward she kissed him.

Exulting at the turn of events, Mrs. Gascoigne goes off to search out a bundle of love-letters, that Edgar wrote her "so long ago," then returns with them to the drawing room - to find a somewhat changed man:

"You fiend!" he hissed, striding up to her. "You— Pshaw! What is the good of words? You are beneath feeling an insult!"

"Edgar - what do you mean?" cried the woman, blanching with sudden terror.

"This is what I mean," he said sternly. "After you left the room I sat down to write a note."

"Ah!" She clutched at a chair to save herself falling.

And well she might. It is, of course, the old trouble - the servants, in this case leaving 'bits of paper' scattered about the floor. "With some trouble" Edgar has pieced together a letter, evidently a 'rough copy,' in Mrs. G.'s writing: "Miss Craven, 'aving herd that you are ingaged to Mister Lane, for your own sake, Miss, I warn you don't have nothing more to do with him. He is a married man, and has been this last three year. He has neglected me an' treated me shameful. Yr obedient Esther Lane."

"You should have burnt these scraps," chides Edgar, shaking himself free "with a shudder of disgust" as Mrs. Gascoigne, now sobbing, tries to hold him back.

And off he goes to his somewhat gullible fiancée, with the hope that he may never see Mrs. G. again. One presumes he never did.

Other stories include 'Said in my Haste,' by 'Surg. Lieut.-Col. Manifold Craig, author of 'Santy Riordan's Red Light,' etc.' In this one Sybil, the heroine, pretends poverty to test the newly-met Julian Proctor's reactions. He laughs "uneasily" as he replies:

"I don't know what my guardian will say to our engagement, then! Should he know that I wished to marry a penniless maiden, I fear he has both will and power to be very disagreeable."

He suggests, therefore, that Sybil should let him go abroad and work: "I have been shown how I can make my fortune very quickly, and for your sake I shall do it."

Sybil later hears of the forthcoming marriage of Julian Proctor with the well-to-d- Beatrix Aylmer, of Upland Hills, whose land "marches with what will be his ultimately." Appalled, she stretches dizzily on her bed. But all is not lost. A year later Sybil, keeping herself well acquainted "with the doings of a small band of colonisers and administrators who had made steady progress in redeeming land of great importance out of the hideous bondage of a savage monarch," learns that one of them, Lord Jocelyn Peverill, has been playing his part in the work under an assumed name, being in reality heir to a peerage. Lord Jocelyn turns up, and is shown into Sybil's presence: "a tall bronzed-bearded man" who stretches out his hands to her. "Julian!" she gasps, as she sinks upon an ottoman.

"But your marriage to -"

The explanation is simple (?): Lord Jocelyn had travelled with Julian Proctor from Cambridge and, wishing to be loved for his own sake, had assumed Proctor's identity, as "our initials were the same." "Let the love of all my life be my atonement, my beloved!" he adds.

"Could I throw the first stone?" Sybil appeals to the baffled reader. "I who had said I had not a penny?" And she asks the real Julian Proctor and his "good and charitable" wife to their betrothal feast.

"His Other Girl," too, runs along stock lines. Gerald Fraser, while on a visit to a college friend, falls in love with his sister Janet. There are obstacles, however, in the path of romance:

"Wait, I want to tell you something. I -" The colour rushed to her face, and she shook off his hand with a convulsive movement.

"Jan! Jan! I am weak, and, God knows, the most miserable man on earth; but I am no cad. It - it isn't that! Won't you listen, dear?"

She nodded.

"Jan, I am not the rich man you think me



"WHAT IS THIS IMPORTANT NEWS?" SHE ASKED, INDIFFERENTLY.

- at least, not the millionaire I am regarded by the world."

Janet Selkirk - too pale, with irregular features, but also a "look of gentleness and sweetness about her that was attractive and restful to persons with jaded nerves" - is not perturbed by the financial angle so much as the fiancée Gerald has left in London, and before whom he has already laid his millions. (A letter, discovered in turning out an escritoire, has implored him to hand over the said fortune to his guardian's remaining heirs.) With "steadfast resolve," when Gerald tries to kiss her, she places her hand upon his lips, saying they are his fiancée's in the present as well as the future - "we should not be happy in doing wrong, dear." He leaves her with passion and anguish in his eyes.

And so back from Scotland to Park Lane, where Gerald finds Adela Carew reclining wearily in a low chair, "the dark circles beneath her eyes and hot-house pallor of her cheeks" testifying that "the fatigue of the season" is beginning to tell upon her. The languour rapidly disperses, however, when Gerald explains about the money, and "a wave of colour" tinges the hot-house pallor. "I certainly shall not permit so senseless a sacrifice," she declares, and then, realising that Gerald is adamant: "I absolutely refuse to be your wife." To which Gerald retorts: "Thank God!" and departs, to sign away £50,000 and claim his Janet.

Amongst many interviews with celebrities in this volume there is one with George Alexander which coyly begins:

"Mr. Alexander, won't you please tell me how——" I paused and coughed a little, for the question, in its elaboration, sounded a difficult one to my own ears, "how you - er - make love?"

The handsomest pair of eyes in England stared at me severely.

"On the stage, I mean, of course."

"Oh! No doubt my enemies say - very badly."

Fortunate it was that Mrs. Alexander, who had come in with her hands full of flowers, did not mind the discussion before her of this "extremely delicate matter." It transpired that like most "great lovers" Mr. Alexander was bored with playing "noble, dreamy, self-sacrificing heroes," and had been much encouraged when Bernhardt said he had exactly the face for Scarpia, the villain in "La Tosca."

Another interview was with Eleonora Duse, who confided that she studied her parts lying on a couch or bed and (good news for athletic readers) was inordinately fond of walking along the Embankment "at a rapid pace."

The very first interview was with Helen Mathers herself. Asked why her heroines were such favourites, she answered that she always made a point of making them "nice, healthy-minded girls." "I have no great faith in this craze for the New Woman," she went on, "and such extremely advanced ideas. To my mind a girl can be highly educated and well up in all that is going on around her without necessarily making her less of a companion to her mother." The interviewer left her busily at work on "The Lovely Malincourt."

One cannot leave the book without a final glance at the advertisements: the 10/6d ladies' costume; "knockabout frocks" for girls from 1/6; a "Marvel" tea-pot, electro-plated with real silver, for 7/6; a dinner service of 50 pieces, a china service of 28 pieces finished in gold and "a lot of useful kitchen crockery" for a guinea; a sale price of 9/6 for a parcel containing a sheepskin hearthrug, a silk bed rug, two goat-skin doormats and a free gift: a leather purse . . .



LADIES' COSTUMES

10/6
Post Free.

Made from our noted Avondale Cheviot Serge, in the Improved Scarborough Shape, Fast in Colour, very strong and durable, and highly recommended for hard wear.

In Navy, Grenat, Brown, Tan, Myrtle, Grey and Black

Price only

The New Scarborough Costume consists of full-pleated front with pointed Yoke at the back and turn-down Collar, with fashionable full Sleeves, Yoke and Sleeves well lined, bound Seams, Collar and Cuffs with Belt, plain stitched.

Fashionable tailor-made Skirt, with deep hem of own material, and five rows of plain stitching.

The Costume is guaranteed to be thoroughly well made and finished.

We have received thousands of Testimonials from all parts of the world. Every purchaser surprised and delighted. A perfect wonder at the price.

In ordering please state length of Skirt in front and size of waist and bust measure under arms. The Costumes can be packed in a strong leather board box for 6d. extra.

TRY OUR GIRLS' "ELSIE AVONDALE" CHEVIOT SERGE FROCKS,

Trimmed Black or Cream Braid.

SIZES	22	25	28	31	34	37	40	43	46	49	52	inches.
PRICES	1/9	2/3	2/9	3/3	3/9	4/3	4/9	5/3	5/9	6/3	6/9	each.

The measurements stated are from the shoulder seam to the bottom of dress.
SPECIAL OFFER.—Ladies' Tailor-made Avondale Cheviot Serge Dress Skirts, fashionable shape, with deep hem of own material and five rows of plain stitching, price only 5/6 each, post free. In ordering please state waist measure and length of Skirt in front.

Our latest Novelty—the GOLF BLOUSE—price only 4/11 post free.

FREE GIFTS! FREE GIFTS! FREE GIFTS! are given with all orders of 20/- and over.

Write for our Illustrated Price Lists and Patterns sent Post Free on application to the

SHAKESPEARE MANUFACTURING CO. (Dep. 64), 1, Milk St., MANCHESTER.

A mirror to a long-vanished age, this book offers so many clues to the ideas and attitudes of that age. It is worth its weight in gold as an historical document – yet it cost no more than 6d, when found, alone and unwanted, on a rack outside a junk shop!

Will exchange Frank Richards' Auto-biography for two Bunter Books.

T. SATCHELL, 63, Cantwell Rd, Plumstead, London, S.E.18.

My grateful thanks to Harry Broster, Eric Fayne, Bill Gander, Frank V. Lay, Henry Webb, Ben Whiter, Albert Watkins, and Best Wishes to All for 1965.

STAN KNIGHT, 288 High St., Cheltenham.

WANTED: Schoolfriend 1919–1921; Schoolgirls' Own Libraries 1st Series; Holiday Annual 1922, 1934–1941; Boys' Cinema 1919–1921.

LACK, 4, Rushmere Road, Northampton.

WANTED: Rovers 696–772 (would be grateful even for one odd copy).

P. HANGER, 10, Park Square, Kings Heath, Northampton.

MR. R. GUEST, Flat 7a, 72 Westwood Hill, S.E. 26, SYD 9795, wants Gunby Hadath, John Mowbray Books, S.B.Ls., Thrillers, Detective Weekly, also S.P.C. 1–50.

Would be pleased to have particulars of "Fun and Fiction," "Cheer, Boy Cheer," and "Dread-noughts" and similar for sale. Thank you.

F. A. SHAW, 5 Grongaer Terrace, Pontypridd, Glamorgan.

WANTED TO PURCHASE: Dixon Hawke Case Books Nos. 1,2,3,4,6,7,8,9. Also any Dixon Hawke Libraries; pre-1940 Wizards, Adventures, Hot-spurs. I have some Nelson Lees and Monster Lib. No. 12 which I would exchange for any of the above. J. McMAHON, 54, Hozier Crescent, Tannochside, Uddingston.

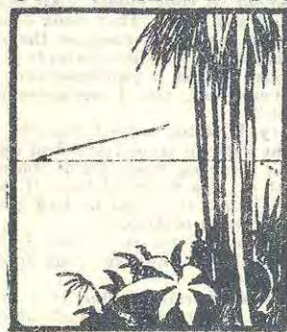
EVERY TUESDAY



THE Magnet LIBRARY

A Complete Story-Book,
attractive to all Readers.

ONE HALFPENNY



THE MAKING OF HARRY WHARTON.



A Long, Complete School Tale, by **FRANK RICHARDS.**

THE FIRST CHAPTER. Sent to School.

SEND Master Harry to me!" Colonel Wharton filled his glass from the decanter, held it up to the light, and then slowly sipped the contents, a dark shade of thought upon his bronzed face the while.

The colonel had dined, and he was alone now in the old, dark, oak-panelled dining-room at Wharton Lodge. A bronzed, grim-visaged old soldier was the colonel, but under the rugged exterior a kindly heart beat.

The door of the dining-room opened, and the colonel set down his glass, only half emptied, and compressed his lips slightly as he looked at the boy who came into the room.

A handsome, well-built lad, finely-formed, strong and active. Handsome indeed was the face, with its well-marked features and large, dark eyes. But there was a cloud upon it, a cloud that seemed habitual there, and in the dark eyes was a glint of suspicion and defiance. The whole manner of the boy was one of suppressed hostility, and the colonel realised it keenly enough without words being spoken.

"You sent for me, uncle."

In the tones of Harry Wharton, too, was a half-hidden hostility and defiance, as if he knew that he had not been sent for in a friendly spirit, and was ready to meet anger with anger.

"Yes, Harry." Colonel Wharton's voice was very mild. "Sit down, my boy. I want to speak to you."

Harry Wharton did not move. The colonel raised his eyebrows.

"Sit down, Harry."

"I suppose you are not going to keep me long," said the boy doggedly. "I want to go out on my pony before dark—"

The colonel half rose from his seat, a flush of anger darkening his cheek.

"Sit down!" he thundered.

For a moment it looked as if the order would be disobeyed, but there was something in the colonel's face that impelled obedience. Harry Wharton slowly moved to a chair and sat down, but the sullen cloud was darkening on his brow.

"Now, Harry," said the colonel, in a more kindly voice. "I want to speak to you seriously. I hope you will take all I am going to say in a friendly spirit. I am your uncle; you are the only son of my only brother, and you should understand that I have your truest interests at heart."

The boy's lips slightly curled, but he did not speak.

"I have come home from India," resumed the colonel, slightly raising his tone, "to find that you have run completely wild under the charge of my sister, and I should not be doing my duty to my dead brother if I did not take you in hand and make at least an attempt to put you on a better road. You have grown up wilful and headstrong; you have grown into the habit of dictating to Miss Wharton, and of overruling your tutor. Your education has been neglected—"

"Mr. Pynsent says I am quite as advanced as most boys of my age," said Harry, with a sulky look.

"Possibly, because you are naturally a quick and intelligent lad; otherwise, you would be a perfect ignoramus by this time. You have done exactly as you liked, and you have not the least idea of discipline. During the month that I have been at home I have tried to improve you—"

"Perhaps I don't want improving."

"You probably think so," said the colonel patiently. "But I think otherwise, and, as your guardian, I have my duty to do. You are obstinate and wilful, and inclined to

be insolent to your elders. All that must cease. You have run wild too long. That must come to an end. But I cannot bring myself to exercise the severity necessary for the purpose, and my feeble attempts in that direction have made the house almost a pandemonium. You are determined to have your way, and I am determined that you are not to have it."

Harry Wharton smiled slightly. He knew perfectly well that the veteran from India had undertaken his reform, and, without thinking much about the matter, he had set himself against it. He flattered himself that the colonel would find it a thankless task, but he had not been quite prepared for this confession of failure.

The smile on the boy's face irritated the colonel, and he had to make an effort to speak calmly and dispassionately as he went on:

"I have, therefore, come to a new decision, Harry, which is what I want to tell you about now. I am going to send you to school."

Harry Wharton's face fell.

"To school?"

He repeated the words blankly. He had not thought of that.

"Yes, to school! I have written to Dr. Locke, the headmaster of Greyfriars—the school where I was educated—and he is ready to receive you. You will go to Greyfriars to-morrow morning."

Harry Wharton sat dumb.

"I should like you to believe," said the colonel quietly, "that I have taken this step entirely for your own sake, and for your happiness in the long run. You will probably find life at a public school a little rough at first, especially until you change some of your ways, but I have no doubt that after you have roughed it a little, you will fall into the way of it, and—"

"I won't go!"

The words burst out passionately from the boy. Colonel Wharton frowned darkly.

"Harry!"

"I won't go! I won't be sent away! We were happy enough here till you came. Why can't you let me alone?"

"I cannot let you alone in the way you were going, Harry. I have my duty to do. The very way you are speaking to me now shows how much you are in need of proper training," the colonel said quietly.

"I won't go!"

"You will go, Harry. I shall give your aunt instructions to see your box packed to-night, and you will go by the nine o'clock train in the morning."

Harry was silent. He was quivering with anger and indignation and utter dismay. He had never thought of a blow like this falling upon him. And he knew, in spite of his passionate words, that he could not resist.

"I will, if you wish, come with you to the school, and—"

"I don't want you to—"

"It would make it better for you—"

"I don't want you!"

The colonel compressed his lips hard.

"I am sorry you should take my guardianship in this spirit, Harry. It only shows how necessary it is for us to part for a time, and for you to have the benefits of a strong discipline. You can go alone if you choose, but you must give me your word of honour to go directly to Greyfriars and report yourself to Dr. Locke."

The boy did not speak.

"With all your faults," the colonel resumed, in a kinder tone, "I have observed one quality which outweighs them all—truthfulness, and a strong sense of honour. If you give me your word, I know that you will keep it; and it is mainly this which leads me still to have hopes of you."

Harry Wharton set his teeth.

"Will you give me your word, Harry?"

"No!"

"Then I shall take you to the school to-morrow morning. You may go!"

Harry Wharton rose from his seat. His lips were white with the passion that was surging in his breast.

"You have me at your mercy!" he said thickly. "The law makes you able to play the tyrant if you choose. I will go; you need not come with me! I will go; but I won't stay there! If there's no other way, I'll soon make them glad to get rid of me!"

"My dear lad—"

But Harry Wharton was gone. The door of the dining-room closed with a slam, and the colonel was alone.

"And that is Henry's son!" he muttered. "It is hard on me, but I must do all I can for him; and the boy has the makings of a man in him, I am sure of that. Greyfriars is just the place!"

And with that comforting reflection the colonel finished his wine.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

A Row in the Train.

"CHANGE 'era for Greyfriars!"

Harry Wharton started out of a moody reverie. For hours the express had been speeding through the green countryside, without a stop. Harry Wharton sat in a corner of the carriage, his eyes turned unseeing upon the fleeting landscape. Sometimes his fellow passengers had glanced at him, but his expression did not encourage anyone to speak.

His lunch-basket was unopened, his book lay on the seat. He had left home in a sullen passion against his guardian, against the school he was going to, against everything. He was not in a humour to eat or to read. His thoughts were black and bitter.

"Melthorpe! Change for Greyfriars!"

The boy rose to his feet. He picked up his book and left the carriage. The lunch-basket lay on the seat. The colonel had thoughtfully provided it, and Harry Wharton left it where it lay.

The local train which was to take passengers on the little country line to the station for Greyfriars was waiting on the other side of the platform. Harry Wharton glanced towards it, to ascertain if it was his train. A boy in Etons was sauntering down the platform, evidently having just alighted from the express as Harry had done, though the lad had not seen him before.

Harry looked at him with some interest. He guessed that he was a youngster going to Greyfriars, and, as a denizen of the school he hated the mere thought of, Harry felt an instinctive dislike for him. Yet there was certainly nothing in the boy's looks to inspire dislike in any but a prejudiced mind. His age was about the same as Harry's, he was well built, and had a frank, open face and honest, blue eyes. His hair was thick and curly, and there was a school-cap stuck on the back of his head. He had a book under his arm, and a packet of toffee in his hand.

He glanced at Harry and met his eyes, and gave a nod and a grin.

"Hallo!" he exclaimed, coming up. "Are you for Greyfriars?"

"Yes," said Harry shortly.

"New kid, of course?"

"I am going there for the first time," said Harry, not much liking the easy familiarity of the stranger's manner.

The other boy chuckled.

"You needn't tell me that, kid; I can see that. I'm going back late in the term; had an extra holiday, you know. The Nugent of the Remove—the Lower Fourth Form, you know. What's your name?"

"I don't see how that concerns you," said Harry.

Nugent of the Remove stared at him.

"Eh? Where were you brought up, kid? What kind of a place did they dig you up from? Can't you answer a civil question?"

Harry Wharton coloured.

"What's your name, if you're not ashamed of it?" said Nugent.

"My name's Harry Wharton!" said the boy angrily.

"Well, that's all right, and there no reason why you couldn't say so at first, that I can see. But if you don't want to speak, I don't, and be hanged to you!" said Nugent.

And he stepped into the local train. During the colloquy the latter had got its steam up, and the guard was waving his flag. Harry Wharton hastily followed Nugent of the Remove into the carriage, and the door was slammed.

Harry sat down in a corner seat, and the train glided out of the station. Nugent was sitting opposite him, and he kept his eyes studiously fixed upon the countryside. The train ran on between deep green embankments, with here and there a glimpse of wood and meadow.

Harry sat with a moody brow. He was feeling hungry now, and beginning to regret the sulky abandoning of the lunch-basket. Nugent turned his eyes from the green banks, and stole a look at him. Harry, as it happened, was glancing at him at the same moment, and their eyes met. Harry coloured.

Nugent of the Remove burst into a laugh.

"I say, Wharton," he exclaimed, "we're stuck in this carriage by ourselves for nearly half an hour! What's the good of being sulky?"

Harry Wharton did not reply.

"What Form are you going into at Greyfriars?" went on Nugent, not to be rebuffed.

Again Harry was silent.

"If you come into the Lower Fourth, we'll soon knock the sullenness out of you!" his new acquaintance said confidently. "We wouldn't stand it, you know!"

"Wouldn't you?" said Harry, with a gleam in his eyes.

"Not a bit of it! Been to school before?"

"No."
"Brought up at home by a maiden aunt, I suppose, and spoiled!" grinned Nugent.

Harry turned very red.

Carelessly spoken as the words were, Nugent had hit upon the exact truth, and it came as a sort of painful shock to Harry to realise how he was looked upon by a disinterested outsider.

"Ah, he blushes," said Nugent. "The shot tells! My dear chap, Greyfriars is the last place in the world for mammy's own boy to come to! We sha'n't coddle you there, I promise you. What are you coming for?"

"I don't want to come; my guardian sends me."

"Oh, I see! That's rough—on Greyfriars!"

"What do you mean?" exclaimed Harry angrily.

"Oh, keep your wool on! I can foresee a high old time for you at Greyfriars. Your airs and graces won't go down there, I can tell you!"

"I don't want to go to the rotten place at all!"

"Hallo, what's that?" exclaimed Nugent, looking warlike at once. "What are you calling a rotten place?"

"That beastly school I am going to."

Nugent rose to his feet.

"I don't want to be hard on mammy's darling," he said; "but anybody who calls Greyfriars a rotten place and a beastly school stands in need of correction. I shall take it kindly if you will apologise for those rude remarks."

"Oh, don't be an ass!" said Harry.

"Look here," said Nugent. "I don't know what sort of a lunatic asylum you were brought up in, but this won't do, you know. Do you know that there isn't a fellow in the Remove I can't lick into a cocked hat? I've wiped up the ground with bigger fellows than you, for far less cheek than you've given me."

"Don't talk rot!"

"Don't what? Are you hunting for a thick ear? Because, if you are, I'm the very individual to give you one. My special thick ears for beastly bounders are just what you want, and there's for a start!"

And Nugent gave the new boy a flick, more in jest than earnest; but it was enough for Harry Wharton.

In a flash he was on his feet, hitting out straight from the shoulder. All the passionate exasperation of the morning seemed to be thrown into that angry blow. It took Nugent by surprise, and he went down with a bump that shook the floor of the carriage.

Harry stood over him, his eyes blazing, his fists clenched.

Nugent of the Remove lay on his back on the carriage floor, staring up at him with an expression of almost idiotic bewilderment.

It took him a full minute to realise that he—he, Nugent, the great fighting man of the Remove at Greyfriars—had been flogged with a single blow by a new boy. But when he did realise it, he jumped up.

"Take off your coat, Wharton!" he said.

"Sha'n't!"

"Very well, fight with it on, then," said Nugent. "Are you ready?"

Harry did not reply. Nugent was squaring up to him in a businesslike way. Harry knew little about the manly art of self-defence, but he put up his fists in the way he saw Nugent do it.

"Ready?" asked the Greyfriars boy considerably.

"Yes, hang you!"

"Then here goes for your boko!"

And Nugent came on sharply. His left swept Harry's feeble guard away with ease, and his right crashed on the new boy's nose.

Harry went down as if he had been shot. Nugent of the Remove stared at him.

"My hat! Don't you know how to box?"

"No, hang you!"

Harry Wharton scrambled to his feet. His nose was bleeding and already swelling, and the pain had brought the water to his eyes. He was in a fury at the thought that Nugent might think that he was crying.

"I didn't know you were such a muf!" said the Remove boy, rather apologetically. "I thought you could fight, as you tackled me. Let's chuck it!"

"Look out for yourself!" said Harry Wharton thickly.

He sprang at Nugent. The Greyfriars lad guarded himself well, and retreated until the carriage door prevented his retreating further.

"I say, chuck it!" he exclaimed. "I don't want to hurt you, you know. You gave me a one, and I gave you one, so we're even. I tell you, I don't want to lick you."

Harry Wharton did not reply. He closed in on his enemy, as he deemed him, and hit out right and left. Nugent had no choice in the matter left him, and his own temper was rising now. He struck out in return, harder and harder, and the new boy was soon getting decidedly the worst of it.

At arm's length Harry realised that he was a child in the hands of his adversary, and he made desperate attempts to

EVERY TUESDAY, The "Magnet." ONE HALFPENNY.

close. Had there been more room, Nugent would have laughed at it, but in the confined space of the carriage he had no room to manoeuvre.

Harry succeeded in grappling with him, and Nugent stumbled against the seat, and was for a moment powerless. In that moment Harry got his head into chancery, and began to punish him.

Nugent roared and struggled, but it was a full minute ere he could get his head free, and those sixty seconds were painful ones to him, for Harry Wharton was lashing out with all the passionate force of his arm.

Then Nugent's turn came. He tore himself loose, grasped the new boy round his neck, and the "chancery" was reversed.

Harry Wharton struggled and gasped, as the pummelling fists rained on his face, but he could not get loose, and he had to take his punishment until Nugent chose to let him go. Then, with a twist of the arm, the Greyfriars boy flung him upon the seat, where he sprawled, dazed and sick.

"There, you bounder!" panted Nugent. "Have you had enough, or—"

Harry Wharton made an effort to get on his feet. He was game to the backbone, but he sank back again on the seat from very exhaustion.

The angry face of the Remove boy cleared. He had received a good hammering, but he was used to hard knocks at a public school, and he was too good-natured to bear malice for them.

"I say, I'm sorry I've hurt you," he said. "You came for me like a giddy wild-cat, you know, and I had to hit out."

Harry Wharton scowled savagely.

"I—I will give it all back to you some time!" he gasped faintly.

The Remove boy's lip curled.

"Oh, shut up about that, kid! Don't bear malice; it's a rotter's game! You've given me pretty nearly as much as I've given you. Don't be a cad!"

Harry did not reply. He was sick and furious and miserable. This was the beginning of his Greyfriars career! What was it to be like later?

He sat in his corner, silent, breathing hard, with a black brow, while the train rushed on. He had been hurt, but his pride had been hurt more than his body. It was the first time Harry Wharton had been licked; but licked he now was without a doubt about it. It was a new experience and a painful one.

Nugent went to the other side of the carriage, and looked out of the window. Only once he glanced towards Harry, and then he held out his packet of toffee.

"Have some toffee, kid?" he asked.

Harry Wharton did not reply. Nugent gave an expressive shrug of the shoulders, and ate the toffee himself. The train slackened down at last, and stopped in the little local station of Friardale—the station for Greyfriars.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

Real Pluck.

NUGENT of the Remove jumped out of the train, and Harry Wharton followed more slowly. The one and only porter of Friardale grinned at Nugent, as he touched his cap. The Remove boy seemed a popular character in the neighbourhood of Greyfriars. He passed the barrier, and left the little station, and the driver of the one and only hack touched his cap, and grinned, too.

"Stick my box on the top, chappy!" said Nugent. "I've come back, you see. Aren't you glad to see my bonnie face again?"

"Haw, haw!" grinned the driver. "You're a funny one, Master Nugent."

"Rats!" said Nugent. "I'm not the funny one; I've brought the funny one with me. Look at him! Isn't he a prize-packet?"

And he nodded in the direction of Harry Wharton, who had just followed him out of the station.

Harry knut his brows, and looked daggers at the Remove boy. The driver, seeing the bruised faces of the two youngsters, chuckled as he drew his own conclusions.

"Is this the only hack here?" asked Harry abruptly.

"Yes, rather!" grinned Nugent.

"I wasn't speaking to you, but to this man."

"I beg your lordship's pardon!"

"If it's the only one, I suppose I must take it!" said Harry, with a disparaging glance at the ancient hack, and almost equally ancient horse. "I want to—"

"This young gentleman has just engaged me," said the driver, none too civilly, for Harry's manner could not be called prepossessing.

MAGIC SERIES

By Roger M. Jenkins

THERE were many fine series in the Magnet and Gem, humorous and dramatic, at school and on holiday, at home and abroad. Charles Hamilton was undoubtedly an unusually gifted writer but, as in the case of nearly all authors, some of his stories were better than others. No sensible critic would pretend that every story he wrote was a masterpiece: there were good years and bad years, and often variations in the standard of performance in a particular year. Even so, he maintained a high average in the quality of his work, and among his best series are a few, a very few, which may be called magic series. These are series which can be read repeatedly and at frequent intervals without any diminution of enjoyment. The reader may know the plot by heart, but nevertheless the series exercises an ineluctable fascination: the style of writing, the plot, and the interplay of characters in each episode all display such an exquisite dramatic skill that the series will always give a thrill of enjoyment: the charm is perennial, the magic will never fade.

Fond though I am of Rookwood, there is no use in pretending that any of Owen Conquest's stories can merit inclusion here. The Rookwood stories have an intimate, polished charm all of their own, but they are too short to achieve this kind of greatness. Equally, the red Magnet and the blue Gem are excluded: fine though many of these tales are, they are nearly all single stories, and it was only in the series form that Charles Hamilton achieved his greatest effects. Only the first two Talbot series have any claim for inclusion here, and I consider that these are too highly charged emotionally and written in a style that is too simple and straightforward to bear continual re-reading. So nearly all the magic series will come from the Golden Age, but there are two early items that cannot be omitted - the famous pair of Boys' Friend 3d libraries published in 1915 and centred around Highcliffe - No. 288, "The Boy Without a Name" and No. 328, "Rivals and Chums."

Tom Hopperton has not inaptly pointed out the absurdity of the missing heir theme that Charles Hamilton used so often, and which occurs in the first number of this pair. Furthermore, there is no denying the essential crudity of such characters as Ponsonby and Mr. Mobbs. Mr. Mobbs is drawn in the ignoble tradition of Mr. Ratcliff and Mr. Selby, though his tendency to toady to the aristocracy is an added refinement. Ponsonby is so thoroughly evil that it seems well-nigh impossible in a boy of his years and upbringing. These defects hardly suggest that the two volumes constitute a magic series, but so they do. What triumphs over the drawbacks is the author's own unwavering confidence in his ability to carry it through. It is a drama, not a melodrama, and the feud between Ponsonby and Clare (or Courtenay), who is assisted by the whimsical de Courcy, is described with a cut and thrust incisiveness that never fails to delight, and there are a number of moving passages as well. In addition, the sequel is unique in that it lives up to the standard of its predecessor, and has several memorable chapters dealing with Mr. Banks's roulette game, showing de Courcy's gradual disillusionment which culminates when the police raid the gambling den. These two stories represent Charles Hamilton's first magnificent success, paradoxically enough about a school which was destined never to be more than a mere adjunct of Greyfriars in the future, but the Ponsonby-Courtenay-de

Courcy set up was to have its echoes in the Magnet right down to the end.

War-time is often referred to as the years the locusts have eaten. Be that as it may, the ten years following the publication of these two Highcliffe stories contain nothing of supreme importance, worthy of inclusion here. And as I look through the later Gem stories, those of its Indian Summer in the early and middle 'twenties, I feel a tinge of sadness, because in its heyday, when it sported a blue cover, it had featured some glorious stories, helped by having a length which was denied to the St. Jim's stories in the Indian Summer, and this later restriction hampered the development of the plot. So, rather sorrowfully, I can find no place for the episodic Old Bus series in this article, nor for the Christmas barring-out because it lacks a satisfying connection between Tom Merry and the real thief, nor for the Cardew Cup series which tails off after a brilliant start. Having disposed of so many famous Gem series rather cursorily, it remains to be seen what St. Jim's stories really do fulfil the exacting requirements.

One Gem series never fails to engross the reader, and that is the Cardew captain series in Gems 824-831 (S.O.Ls. 258 & 260). Cardew was in trouble for cutting games practice, and in the first number he twisted and turned in a most devious fashion to avoid retribution. When it was clear that he could not succeed in his defiance, he determined to oust Tom Merry from the captaincy and, by cunningly putting Tom Merry in the wrong, he eventually achieved his object. What is so fascinating in this series is the manner in which Tom Merry is shown as having some faults himself: he is too easy-going and too proud to canvass votes when the election is forced. In a way, he assumes a new dimension, as it were, and the reader is made to take up almost a neutral position in the struggle, half-sympathising with Cardew whilst at the same time knowing that he is in the wrong. It is a mark of a great writer that he can attract sympathy for the villain of the piece, and this Charles Hamilton convincingly achieved, mainly by giving Cardew such a cheerful air of insouciance that it was impossible not to laugh at him:-

Ralph Reckness Cardew was stretched in an easy attitude on his handsome new sofa. He gave the captain of the Shell an affable nod.

"Come in!" he said. "I was just gettin' bored with my own company. Let me be bored with yours for a change."

"You've got me into a row. Kildare has been slanging me, and the trouble is that he's right," said Tom. "I've been slack."

"Thomas has been slack!" said Cardew, addressing space in a tone of wonder. "No wonder common mortals like little me get a little slack if the strenuous Thomas has been slack."

Airy bandinage of this quality, used in an intensively dramatic story, must always demand to be read and re-read with continual enjoyment.

Any story featuring Cardew is bound to have its attractions, and the same applies to another occupant of study No. 9 - Ernest Levison. Of all the villains who reformed, he alone became more interesting to read about afterwards, and the finest series in which he appeared is the one about Mr. Selby's banknote in Gems 906-909 (S.O.L. 196). Mr. Selby had purchased, as an investment, a French banknote for 10,000 Francs at a cost of £200, hoping that the Franc would attain its pre-war value, and double his money for him. Instead, it had perversely dropped in value, and the banknote was now worth only £110. While he was wondering whether to sell and cut his losses, the banknote disappeared, and Levison minor was suspected. Mr. Selby was then in the mortifying position of having to tell Dr. Holmes of his rather shady transactions:-

"You have the right to call in the aid of the police if you so decide. But I must tell you that if the police are called into this school, owing to your carelessness with your own property, I

shall expect you to resign your position here."

"Dr. Holmes."

"It is better to speak frankly, Mr. Selby. In the first place, it is expected of a form-master in this school to be above the temptation to dabble in risky speculations. In the second place, having the banknote in your possession, it was your duty to keep it locked up and avoid placing temptation in the way of any weak or unscrupulous character. You have therefore been guilty of two faults in this matter."

"Sir!" breathed Mr. Selby.

There is no doubt that Mr. Selby's predicament and Ernest Levison's intervention to save his younger brother help to give this story an adult flavour which can always be relished by the discriminating collector.



Here we reproduce the cover of the final story in the first Wharton-Reb series, referred to in his article by Mr. Jenkins.

To my mind none of the foreign holiday series can really qualify for the title of a magic series. Many of them have some very exciting passages, but their strange backgrounds invest them with an air of unreality and, although the author succeeds in inducing a "willing suspension of unbelief" as Coleridge puts it, the absence of the school background robs them of a vital element. So the first magic series in the Magnet is the first Wharton the rebel series in Magnets 879-888 (S.O.Ls. 257, 259 and 261). It is no secret that it created a sensation among the readers at the time, and it is easy to see why. Although it displays a logical extension of Wharton's character, never before had his tantrums outlasted a single issue. Furthermore, the technique of the Cardew captain series was used again, forcing the reader to view the two protagonists - Wharton and Mr. Quelch - in a new light, and from an unbiased viewpoint. The series began on a relatively minor note, with a quarrel between Wharton and the Famous Five that led him to spend Christmas apart from them, first with the Bander at Nice:-

Boats with brown sails dotted the waters. Motor-cars roared by on the road, leaving a wake of white dust. Brown-faced children played and shouted in scented gardens. It was a scene of

loveliness and idleness, strangely contrasting with his own land far away - his own land where nevertheless, he longed to be that Christmastide. His whole heart was in the sea-girt isle where his friends were, where Christmas really was Christmas, where snowflakes danced on the healthy north wind.

and later he joined Jimmy Silver at the Priory, a fact that was duly recorded by Owen Conquest in the contemporary Boys' Friends. When term began in the New Year the downward path continued, with Wharton meeting trouble with his form-master and becoming more and more of an outcast in the form. The conclusion was on a very mild note, quite like real life, with Wharton repenting and Dr. Locke deciding to give him a second chance despite Mr. Quelch's bitter opposition. The series was undoubtedly a milestone in the history of the Magnet. For the first time Charles Hamilton had plumbed the deep wells of human character. Few authors can achieve this, and none can maintain it for very long.

When I visited Charles Hamilton he told me that everyone referred to the Bunter Court series and that it had the most contrived beginning of any story that he had ever written. It is probably the sheer audacity of the idea that a school-boy, by trickery, should manage to instal himself in a stately mansion at a rent of forty guineas a week, avoid paying the servants their wages, and run up enormous bills with local tradesmen that makes so utterly unforgettable the Bunter Court series in Magnets 910-917 (S.O.Ls. 301 and 304). Bunter borrowed off his guests and, when the estate agent and later the butler became too awkward about money, he contrived to lock them in the wine-cellar. Even D'Arcy was invited over to join the merry party at Bunter Court:-

"Here we are!" said Bunter, as the great gates came in sight, opened by the lodge-keeper as the car appeared.

"Is this Buntah Court, deah boy?"

"Oh, yes!" Bunter groped in his pocket. "Dash it all, I've left my purse indoors! Have you a pound note about you, Gussy?"

"Certainly, deah boy!"

"I generally tip the man when he opens the gates," said Bunter. "I believe in encouraging good servants when they know their place - what?"

"Bai Jove!"

At Eastwood House, Arthur Augustus had never heard of encouraging the good servants by tossing them pound notes. But he was not there to criticise Bunter's methods. He was there, indeed, to supply Bunter with the wherewithal to carry on his magnificent methods. The lodge-keeper touched his hat with great respect as one of D'Arcy's pound-notes was tossed to him by Billy Bunter, and Bunter, fortunately, did not see the wink which the man exchanged with the chauffeur.

Bunter's character in this series was vastly different from what it became a year or two later: he was utterly detestable from beginning to end, and, though it was often stated that he was more a fool than a rogue, it must have seemed to the reader that his roguery was of a very high order indeed. In any case, where an author has to tell his readers what the true nature of one of his characters really is, you can usually depend upon it that that particular character is not behaving exactly as his author wishes. So, despite this defect here, and despite the fact that Bunter really deserved to go to Borstal at the end of this series, there is a great pleasure to be had in watching him astonish the Removites by bringing Bunter Court to life, and in seeing him stave off disaster from one week to another by the most ingenious frauds. Another pleasure is the author's style, which shows an increasing use of literary allusion, astonishing in a weekly paper for boys. When Wharton feels that the mysteries of Bunter Court are likely to equal the mysteries of Udolpho or the castle of Otranto, the ironic reference to the horror novels of the eighteenth century comes as a great delight to the adult reader.

Loder's captaincy series in Magnets 923-931 (S.O.Ls. 277, 280 and 283) must inevitably challenge comparison with the Cardew series in the Gem, but the Magnet series, of course, revolved around the senior school, a situation which Greyfriars

seemed to feature much more than St. Jim's and Rookwood. Loder's ambition was achieved by working through the young scamp Wingate minor, and forcing George Wingate to resign rather than reveal his brother's misdeeds, but it was not always an easy manoeuvre, as Loder discovered when the Remove gave him the frog's march:-

"There has been a riot, Mr. Quelch," said the Head.

"Indeed, sir?"

"Your form seems to have broken out into an utterly lawless demonstration, Mr. Quelch."

"Oh!" said Mr. Quelch, with a glitter in his eye.

"Loder of the Sixth has been attacked - I myself saw him struggling in the grasp of a mob of Remove boys, Mr. Quelch. This is a very serious matter, as you will perceive."

"Undoubtedly, sir," said the Remove master. "It is a matter that calls for exemplary punishment. You need have no doubt, sir, that it will be administered, if you leave the matter in my hands."

"I propose to do so, Mr. Quelch," said the Head graciously. "Your boys have, for once, failed to do credit to your very excellent and efficient training."

"You are very kind to express it in such a way, sir," said the Remove master.

This typically Hamiltonian exchange of courtesies between two masters (which the Removites listened to in hopeless silence) was in essence the unsympathetic view of authority towards the Removites' feelings and, when Loder succeeded in becoming captain and began to persecute them, they had only their wits to rely upon to keep their end up in the struggle. But, interesting as this aspect of the story is, it was worked out far more successfully in the Secret Society series nine years later, and it is not this that makes the Loder's captaincy series so remarkable: what is so special is the role of Wingate, tricked by Loder, humiliated by suffering the ordeal of a prefects' beating, and yet loyally supported by Gwynne, sometimes in a rather unorthodox manner. As with the Cardew series in the Gem, there was treachery in the snow at Christmas, treachery that ended in a rather unexpected way. Perhaps the most striking aspect of the series is the impression it gives that the Magnet really centred around the Sixth form, and that the Remove was of no more importance than the Third form. Charles Hamilton was adept in forcing the reader to change his viewpoint at will.

I make no apology for passing over four years of the Golden Age of the Magnet, missing out many a favourite series of yours - and mine - but the rigorous limitations defining a magic series must impel us to turn our attention next to the Courtfield cracksman series in Magnets 1138-51 (S.O.Ls. 355, 358, 361 and 364). It began in a most unobtrusive fashion, as though it was going to be a single story, but it blossomed out into one of the longest and most enchanting series of all, with two mysterious newcomers instead of the usual quota of one, and a film of gossamer-like humour covered almost every episode: even Bunter succumbed to the spirit of goodwill that Christmastide:-

"Well, we've always been pals and chums and bosom friends," said Bunter. "At Christmastide a fellow might as well say so - what?"

"Um!"

"That being the case," said Bunter, "here we are, six fellows, united in the bonds of a deep and lasting friendship, and -"

"Phew!"

"I don't say you've always treated me well," said Bunter. "You haven't! On more than one occasion, when I've been temporarily short of money, you've refused to oblige a chap with a small loan. That was mean! More than once you've doubted my word. That was ungentlemanly! In a lot of ways you're rather a poor lot!"

"Oh crumbs!"

"But a fellow forgives the faults of his friends at this time of the year," said Bunter. "I forgive you fellows freely for all the beastly tricks you've played and all the mean, rotten things you've done!"

Nearly everything is delightful in this series - Dr. Locke and Bunter at Wharton

Lodge, the new Remove master, the return of Mr. Quelch, and the amazing return of Billy Bunter after being rusticated from Greyfriars. For the first time, there was a magic series in the Magnet without any noticeable fault at all.

The Brander rebellion series in Magnets 1169-74 (S.O.Ls. 245 and 247) has always been a firm favourite with collectors, and on first sight it may be rather strange that it should be so, since in essence it contains nothing really new at all. The tyrant head, the barring-out, the assault by the prefects, the arrival of the policeman, and the final attack by a gang of tramps were featured previously at Greyfriars as well as Rookwood and St. Jim's. Moreover, Billy Bunter had on a previous occasion performed the seemingly impossible task of travelling beneath a railway seat, thus overhearing incriminating conversation. What, then, distinguishes this series? Perhaps it is the Golden Age of the Magnet that sheds its radiant glow over all the episodes. Perhaps it is the spirited narration that so enlivens the scenes of conflict. Perhaps it is the unfailing attraction of the theme, the pleasure of seeing the Establishment overthrown. Perhaps it is the novelty of the tyrant Head's nephew also being at the school to heighten the sense of conflict. Whatever the reason, there is no doubt that the series deserves to be included in the special list:-

"It is extremely unfortunate," said the Remove master. "Dr. Locke certainly cannot resume his duties for a very long time. A temporary headmaster must be appointed."

"A temporary headmaster has been appointed, by the special request of Dr. Locke to me!" reminded Mr. Prout.

"Oh, quite so! But the matter, of course, will be referred to the Board of Governors."

"Surely you do not think they are likely to disagree with the Head's selection," said Mr. Prout, anxiously. "I am prepared to carry on. Without conceit, I may say that Greyfriars will not suffer under my guidance."

Mr. Quelch looked at him again.

He read Mr. Prout's thoughts and stiffened. If there was any master at Greyfriars who was worthy of stepping into the Head's shoes, he did not think his name was Prout. Mere regard for facts would have forced him to admit that the name was Henry Samuel Quelch.

Poor Mr. Prout - and Mr. Quelch - had some shocks in store when the new headmaster came to take over the reins of the old school.

The only magic series about Greyfriars which revolved around a new boy was the Lancaster series in Magnets 1209-1219 (which was very adequately reprinted in S.O.Ls. 307, 310, 313, 316). It was of course the Talbot theme all over again - but how differently presented! Dick Lancaster was a Sixth former, but known to the criminal world as the Wizard. What had been slightly unconvincing in Talbot was credible enough in a boy of Lancaster's age, and the plot developed in a very satisfying way, with various members of the school suspecting him in return - Coker, Loder, and Wharton. Coker was a fool, and was quite easily hoodwinked; Loder was a knave, and susceptible to blackmail; but Wharton was neither fool nor knave, and had to be removed. The whole series was played out in a delightful summer atmosphere, the emphasis being laid on the contrast between the charming, talented cricketer that Lancaster appeared to be on the surface, and the unscrupulous, selfish cracksman that lay beneath the veneer:-

Like a fellow in a dream, Lancaster was hustled away by the laughing crowd. He went to supper in Hall, stunned by the roar of cheering that greeted him as he appeared there. Masters as well as boys joined in the cheering. Old Prout was purple with his vocal efforts; Capper was squeaking in his high-pitched voice; Quelch was grinning like a good-tempered gargoyle; Lascelles was shouting as loud as any schoolboy. Sixth and Fifth roared and thundered. Supper in Hall was a great function after such a match as that at St. Jim's. The hero of the hour had a smiling face, and no eye could read the thoughts behind it.

Shame, disgrace, all the fellows knowing the truth, these ringing cheers turned to hisses or scornful silence, these bright, friendly faces averted in contempt, disgust, horror! No, he could not

face that! He was strong, but it was beyond his strength to face that! Silence - silence, and the boy must take his chance. The smile lingered on Dick Lancaster's face, hiding the bitterness of death in his heart.

It is interesting to note that Lancaster's true nature is fully revealed to the reader throughout: his conversations with his confederates are described as fully as his conversations with Sixth formers. Charles Hamilton quite reasonably decided that he was writing a character drama, not a mystery story, and in emphasising Dick Lancaster's moral dilemma he correctly highlighted the part of the story that possesses such enduring interest for the reader. Charles Hamilton also quite reasonably decided to remove Lancaster from the Greyfriars scene at the end of the series, and thus we were mercifully spared an unending procession of stories about Lancaster's past. Nevertheless, long after the series has been read, the reader will find that he cannot quite eradicate from his memory the vision of the handsome, popular schoolboy, the brilliant cricketer with a dark secret.

Probably no series that Charles Hamilton ever wrote contained so much high drama as the second Wharton the rebel series in Nos. 1285-1296 (badly reprinted in S.O.Ls. 331, 334, 337, 340, with an entirely altered ending). It differed from the first series in many ways: as Eric Fayne has pointed out, in the second series Wharton was only suspected of being a blackguard, whereas in the first series he actually did kick over the traces; furthermore, the second series was much closer-knit and had no gradual approach to the conflict - it plunged in at once right at the deep end and, if the reader was left breathless, it was not merely shock: there must be admiration, too, for the tense atmosphere so skilfully evoked in the very first number:-

Wharton's eyes glittered.

"You are going to cane me, sir?"

"Assuredly!"

"For speaking as I did in Hall?"

"Yes, Wharton."

"Then I shall appeal to the Head, sir."

"What?"

"I shall appeal to the Head," said the rebel of the Remove, with icy coolness. "The Head said that I was not to be punished. I have a right to appeal to him."

There was a tense silence.

The Remove master had never been so angry. But he realised, in an instant, that this rebellious junior had him on the hip, as it were. Obviously he could not punish a boy for an offence which the headmaster had pardoned.

For once the Remove master had placed himself in a false position in dealing with a boy of his Form. And the young rascal was in a mood to take merciless advantage of it.

The cane trembled in his hand.

Harry Wharton eyed him coolly with a glimmer of mockery in his eyes. Mr. Quelch's face was pale with anger and mortification. But he was in a false position, and he had to retreat from it. He was beaten in a contest with a junior boy.

He laid down the cane at last.

"Leave my study, Wharton!" he said, in a choking voice. "You are the worst boy in my Form!"

Wharton left the study.

He went down the passage with a light step. He had made an enemy of his Form-master, and he knew that he would not be forgiven. And he did not care. He whistled as he walked out of the House.

It is very easy to see from this extract how we are intended to view the series. Wharton is described as a rascal, and Mr. Quelch is in a false position: the key-note is thus one of conflict, and neither party is wholly in the right. The Head is depicted as having serene wisdom that enables him to judge calmly and fairly, but the Remove master is keener and more perceptive, and better able to understand the veiled insolence of Wharton that the Head does not notice. Of course, Loder is the nigger in the woodpile, his deep annoyance with Wharton helping to place the junior in one predicament after another, with Mr. Quelch always willing to believe

the worst of the worst boy in his form. The series is full of situations that are unique in Hamiltoniana: for example, when Wharton breaks bounds and happens to save Sir Hilton Popper's life, he discusses this with Bunter in Mr. Quelch's hearing as though he is fabricating some story as an excuse. When Sir Hilton comes and congratulates Mr. Quelch on having such a fine boy in his form, the Remove master is inarticulate with frustrated rage. Only the ending of the series is, perhaps, less than perfect, in which a reconciliation occurs when Mr. Quelch and Wharton are cut off by the tide, and in danger of drowning: it is psychologically acceptable, but one cannot help casting a longing glance back at the ending of the earlier series. But, despite this, the second Wharton the rebel series is the most magic of all the magic series: open it at any page, and you will read on, entranced. At this period the Magnet was losing a little of the charm of the Golden Age, but intense drama had certainly lost none of its power.

The Stacey series in Magnets 1422-1433 was founded on an inherent implausibility - that a distant relative of Wharton's should resemble him as closely as an identical twin. There was also too much reliance placed on a repeated co-incidence, that when Stacey was seen acting as a blackguard Wharton should happen to be on his own, too, so that no one could prove which of them was to blame. Even so, the Stacey series has often been called the greatest Magnet series of all, and it is not difficult to see why. The strife and contest in the story are on a four-square basis, with Mr. Quelch, Wharton, Stacey, and Vernon-Smith all taking part. Though Wharton was quite capable of making a fool of Mr. Quelch, it took a rascal like the Bounder to deal with an unscrupulous young rogue like Stacey. The Famous Five stuck together on this occasion, with the consequence that the painful passages of the two rebel series do not occur here, though Wharton found plenty of trouble with authority. Furthermore, there was no steady downward path: Stacey and Wharton were on a see-saw, as it were, and as the reputation of one advanced, the fortunes of the other declined, but as the see-saw was always on the move there was plenty of scope for dramatic advances and reverses. The gradual see-saw rhythm was maintained to the end, with Mr. Quelch slowly growing suspicious of Stacey: there was no sudden denouement, just a creeping doubt as might happen in real life. It is only fitting that the last outstanding success in the Magnet should rank among the very best of all.

Such, then, are Charles Hamilton's magic series. They are, in a sense, my desert island selections. I expect that most readers will have some different favourites to put forward, but I hope at least that I have supplied adequate reasons for each choice I have made. Incidentally, of all the series I have listed, the Stacey series is the only one that I read in my youth - the others were before my time. So, though I may be accused of misjudgement, I cannot be accused of partiality, of viewing the stories through the rose-coloured spectacles of nostalgic memory. My theories about the Golden Age are also comparatively recent, and were formed by focussing adult criticism on stories intended for boys. It is astonishing how well Charles Hamilton's best stories stand up to this rigorous examination.

Finally, let me make it clear I am not implying that only the eleven series listed here have any real claim to merit: the Carboy series, for example, has parts which rank among the most hilarious of all Magnet series; the Whiffles circus series shows Bunter at his most delightful; the Cavendale Abbey series is probably the best of all mystery-Christmases; the Secret Society series would be hard to beat for plot and counter-plot; and the Methuselah series breathes the very air of rural England at its best. But when a selection is made, (continued on p.)...

The Golden Year

Surely no year in the history of periodicals ever produced such an abundant crop as 1919. The recovery of the boys' book empire was astounding, especially when one compares it with what happened after 1945.

The war had been over for just two months when in January, 1919, the Penny Popular returned, less than a year after publication had been suspended. In format it was unchanged. It looked exactly the same. Though it was still to be called the Penny Popular for a while, the price was now 1½d. The contents were the same - early stories of Greyfriars, St. Jim's and Rookwood, - but in one important detail there was a difference. The Rookwood stories which had come into the Penny Popular in April 1917 were described as "the early adventures of Jimmy Silver & Co," but, as we pointed out in last year's Annual, they were nothing of the sort. It is most likely that they were new substitute stories, though the possibility exists that they may have been an old series of tales with the name of the school and the names of the characters changed.

But in the revived Penny Popular of January 1919 the Rookwood stories were actually the early adventures of Jimmy Silver. They started right at the beginning with the arrival of Jimmy Silver at Rookwood and his settling-in which was covered in about three tales. Then came the early barring-out series which had marked the very early days of Rookwood in the Boys' Friend.

But after about a couple of months, the editor blithely announced that, as the result of "a great scoop," brand-new stories of each of the famous schools would in future grace the Penny Popular. They were, of course, all substitute stories, and I have no doubt at all that the paper lost a great many readers as the result.

Actually, the new Rookwood stories only ran for a short time, and soon the old Rookwood tales were back. The new substitute Greyfriars stories ran for over a year, but the new St. Jim's tales soon came to a close, to be replaced with an adventure serial.

As we know, the really great days of this paper still lay ahead. It is sufficient to say that in 1919 it came back with a bang which soon died away to a whimper.

In March 1919 another famous paper was in the shops again - the Boys' Realm. "Tales of St. Frank's" were a feature of the revived Realm, plus a series of Henry St. John's schooldays, at his own famous school of St. Basil's.

In April came the Prairie Library with tales of Buffalo Bill, and the Robin Hood Library with regular stories of the outlaw. Published initially every fortnight, they soon saw weekly issues, so they seem to have been popular.

In May came the School Friend, with stories of Cliff House, and Barbara Redfern & Co, with Bessie Bunter newly created for the paper. In preparation for this, Bessie Bunter had made sporadic visits to the Magnet. It is generally believed that Charles Hamilton expected to write all the Cliff House stories for the School Friend, but I am rather doubtful of this. He had too many irons in

the fire already.

Into the shops, along with the School Friend, that May of 1919, came another paper destined for fame - the Picture Show. With its initial issue it gave a free art plate of Mary Pickford, who had been the reigning queen of filmland for quite a few years already. It was clearly intended as a rival to the Odham's publications, Pictures and the Picturegoer.

A less well-known paper which saw the light in May 1919 was called Good Luck. This featured stories of the Turf, and lucky horseshoes were given away with the first issue.

In June came Tiger Tim's Tales, which eventually was to become one of the best loved of coloured papers as Tiger Tim's Weekly. Another periodical was Wonderland Tales, which featured fairy stories. Both these periodicals appeared fortnightly for a time, but eventually changed to weekly issues.

Young Britain, considerably discussed in Collectors' Digest early this year, saw its first issue in June 1919.

July brought the Detective Library, first at fortnightly intervals and then weekly. The resident detective seems to have been Nelson Lee, with a second story featuring a less well-known detective. The first issue had a story of Nelson Lee and another of Gordon Gray.

August of this amazing year brought a lull apparently, but the publishers were back in the fray come September. That month saw the first edition of the Holiday Annual which to-day is the most sought book of its type in the world. The initial volume was priced at 5/-, but in every succeeding year up till 1940, the price was 6/-. It was wonderful value for money. It is quite astonishing that the Amalgamated Press and Fleetway Publications never revived this Annual after the war. It seems to us that, for the Christmas trade, it could not have failed.

All-Sports Illustrated Weekly came on the market that September, priced at 2d, and another, aimed at feminine taste, was Bow Bells. Family Pictorial was yet another, probably with young married women as its target.

October brought The Home Mirror which was apparently aimed at young ladies, and, of course, the Greyfriars Herald. This latter was entirely different from the old Greyfriars Herald of 1915-1916, and it can be almost regarded as a new publication and not a revival. With the first issue was given away an art plate of the Prince of Wales. For the Greyfriars Herald Charles Hamilton had yet another iron in the fire by creating Jack Drake and the boys of the Benbow. Viewed now, it was a hackneyed series, though it had the novel setting of a school on an old sailing ship. The first of this series was printed concurrently in the Boys' Friend, the readers of which paper were invited to purchase the Greyfriars Herald each week if they wanted to continue the series.

The Benbow series held its own for over a year, until the ship was fitted out and put to sea, after which the stories became run-of-the-mill adventure yarns. Charles Hamilton wrote all the Benbow stories, and most of the Greyfriars tales which followed them in the paper which eventually became the Boys' Herald.

November brought a new paper with the curious name of Cheerio. This seems to have been a coloured comic weekly though it ran a serial with the intriguing title "The Fellow Who Loved Violet Hopson." Violet Hopson was a British screen star, very popular in her day.

Finally, in December, came a paper named Boys' Cinema, which ran stories based on films. No. 1 had William S. Hart on the cover and a free art plate of Tom Mix. It seems to have been a well-liked periodical, for it ran for many years, eventually being amalgamated with Modern Boy just before the 1939 war.

What on earth caused this glut of new papers in the year immediately following the end of the first World War? Those named in this article are all Amalgamated Press publications. Some of them are merely names to us now, but others lived on to become famous. No doubt there were plenty of others from other publishers.

One can understand the revival of papers like the Penny Popular and the Boys' Realm, which obviously had a following before the paper shortage closed them down. One can understand that there was an opening for a paper like Picture Show. The commencement of the Holiday Annual was a feasible move, as was the new Greyfriars Herald, for there seemed an insatiable demand then for the Hamilton schools. But the glut of other papers is rather inexplicable. Youngsters had a limited amount of pocket money, and the majority could only purchase one or two papers a week. It would seem that all these new issues were in competition, not only with one another, but also with those papers which had lived through the war.

Did the Amalgamated Press expect this lot to pay? Or was it that there was competition from other publishers, and the A.P. was in a position and prepared to glut the market in order to choke out their rivals? It seems a possible explanation.

Whatever the reason, 1919 was a wonderful year for the juvenile reading public. I doubt whether its like was ever seen again.

MAGIC SERIES (continued from p. 59)...

it is inevitable that some must be discarded, and in making my choice I have tried to do justice to all the best aspects of Charles Hamilton's writings. The collector who possessed only these eleven series would never be at a loss for something worthwhile to read.

Magnet duplicates, good condition, WANTED. Will pay good price. Please write issue Nos. available:

W. D. NEILL, 258 Hornchurch Road, Hornchurch, Essex.

Heartfelt thanks to Gerald Allison, Eric Fayne, Jim Swan, Tom Lambert, J. Yaffe, for making 1964 a Happy and Wonderful Year.

From: J. McMAHON

WANTED: Lees, B.F. Libs. containing St. Frank's, S.O.Ls. Greyfriars, St. Jim's. State Prices.

J. COOK, 178, Maria St., Benwell, Newcastle upon Tyne, 4.

GREYFRIARS HERALDS, Early CJs, Digests, wanted.

FRANK SHAW, 5 Nyland Road, Huyton, Liverpool.

B y
W. J. A.
Hubbard

Edgar Rice Burroughs

KING OF FANTASY AND ROMANCE

B y
W. J. A.
Hubbard

*

*

I presume I shall be subjected to some criticism in writing an article about Edgar Rice Burroughs for this magazine. No doubt my critics will claim that as an adult novelist, Mr. Burroughs, and his work, have no place in the "Collectors' Digest" Annual which is devoted almost entirely to articles about old boys books. I feel, however, that as Mr. Burroughs' books were undoubtedly read by literally millions of boys and girls, although in fact he only wrote one story specifically for children, he deserves to have an article written about him. We have had articles written about the "William" books and their creator, Miss Richmal Crompton, which are largely intended for adult consumption. Why cannot we have, therefore, an article about the creator of "Tarzan," the first super-man of fiction. Incidentally, I believe that at least one of Mr. Burroughs' stories, I think it is "At the Earth's Core" was published in the Amalgamated Press paper "Pluck" in the 1920s. There is, I feel a connecting link between Mr. Burroughs and old boys books fiction.

I suppose that as a writer who dealt almost entirely with Fantasy and Romantic Adventure, Mr. Burroughs is regarded by the so called "Modern" reading public, avid for large doses of sex and sadism, as old fashioned and out of date. It is pleasing to note, however, that in recent years, and particularly in the U.S.A., where all of Mr. Burroughs' books originated, there has been a great revival of interest in his work. A most pleasant and well written little Bibliography, by a Mr. Bradford M. Day, to which I owe many of the facts given in this article, and which was published in the U.S.A. in 1962, indicates that many of Mr. Burroughs' out of print books are being re-published. It also appears that some of Mr. Burroughs' magazine stories, hitherto unpublished in hard covers are being produced in book form, so great is the recent demand for his stories, once again proving, if it required proving again, that no well written story, and Mr. Burroughs' yarns were always that, can ever be "out-of-date."

Edgar Rice Burroughs was born in Chicago on the 1st September, 1875. It appears that his parents were quite well off and he did not attend the usual American High School made so familiar to all of us in many Hollywood films. He went, in fact to no less than three "Public" schools (private in the U.S.A.), the last of which was a very well known Military School, Michigan Military Academy at Orchard Lake, Michigan. The author was apparently intended for a military career for which he had a great liking.

It is surprising to learn, therefore, that Mr. Burroughs' efforts to obtain a commission in the American Army met with no success. Why this was so I do not know. He seems to have been physically fit - he was throughout his life an out-of-doors type of man. Perhaps his academic ability did not come up to the required standard. He was also refused a commission in the Chinese Army. Who knows whether this action on the part of the Military Authorities of the countries concerned may have deprived the World of an outstanding soldier? The Army's loss was most certainly literature's gain.

Mr. Burroughs did join the 7th U.S. Cavalry in the famous campaign against

the Apache Indian leader Geronimo. He was found to be under age, however, and was quickly discharged. Granted a commission later on in life in the Illinois Militia, he served as a Major in the latter part of the 1914/18 War.

Mr. Burroughs was married twice, the first time in 1900. He had three children by his first wife. Between 1900 and 1913 he was engaged in a number of unprofitable business ventures. He worked in a large variety of jobs all over the Western part of the U.S.A. - he is reported to have been a Cowboy and Store-keeper in Idaho, a Railroad Policeman in Salt Lake City and a worker on a gold dredge in Oregon and as connected with a Correspondence School - but never settled down to any of these professions. By the time he was thirty-five years of age he regarded himself as more or less a complete failure.

He had, however, a very strong streak of the romantic in his nature as his liking for military life shows. He may, in fact, be regarded, along with the late Mr. Ivor Novello, as one of the last of the "Romantics." Constantly dreaming of heroic and fantastic adventure, his reading of stories published in magazines that he had to take home for checking advertisements while working for a patent medicine firm, inspired him, as it has inspired others, to try his own hand at writing, particularly as the stories in question seemed of such a poor standard. Incidentally Mr. Burroughs' romantic leanings can be seen in the very appropriate titles of many of his books - "The Land that Time Forgot," "Thuvia, Maid of Mars" and "Beyond the Farthest Star" are but three prominent examples.

Mr. Burroughs' first story, "The Outlaw of Torn," a historical romance set in the Middle Ages in England, was not accepted, although, in fact, it was published later - in 1914. His second effort "Under the Moons of Mars" (later re-published as "A Princess of Mars") appeared, as a serial, in the February to July, 1912 issues of the "All-Story" magazine. Then came the now world famous "Tarzan of the Apes." Both yarns were quite out of the ordinary and were an immediate "hit" with readers, and this naturally encouraged Mr. Burroughs to continue with his efforts. He never looked back.

It may come as a surprise to many of my readers that Edgar Rice Burroughs was regarded as essentially a magazine writer in his own country. Of course nearly all his stories appeared in hard covers shortly after publication in magazine form and it is as a writer of books of fantasy and romantic adventure that he is chiefly known outside the U.S.A. His stories appeared in many well known magazines - "All-Story," "Argosy," "Blue Book," "Munsey's" among others. He also contributed to leading Science-Fiction magazines, the chief of them being "Amazing Stories." He was also emphatically a serial story writer, a fact that should endear him to readers of this article.

Mr. Burroughs' first book "Tarzan of the Apes" was actually published in 1914. This was shortly followed by "The Return of Tarzan" (1915) and "The Beasts of Tarzan" (1916). The first book of the "Martian" series, "A Princess of Mars" appeared in 1917, and the first "Pellucidar" story, "At the Earth's Core" in 1922. From 1914 onwards Mr. Burroughs published one or two books a year, practically every year until 1940. The last book published in the author's lifetime, "Llana of Gathol" came out in 1948.

Mr. Burroughs received 400 dollars (about £80) for his first story. As his fame grew, however, he became a very wealthy man, the publication of his stories in book form, film rights and royalties all helping to swell his income. Heavy income tax demands compelled the author to incorporate himself in 1923 and this was

followed by the formation of his own publishing Company in 1931. A very fast writer Mr. Burroughs was said to have made a wager with a friend that he would write a novel in a week-end and to have won his bet. He possessed a splendid reference library, a most necessary essential when one considers the varied type of subjects he tackled.

A great lover of an open-air type of life Mr. Burroughs travelled a good deal outside the U.S.A. He was very fond of the South Seas, particularly Hawaii, and spent a great deal of his time there in the 1930s. He was in Hawaii in 1941 when the Japanese made their infamous bombing attack on Pearl Harbour.

Although much over age - he was actually 66 - Mr. Burroughs was accredited as a War Correspondent to a well known American newspaper. He played a most active part in the War taking part in a number of bombing raids as an observer and covering the actions on Bougainville and into the Marianas. There is no doubt, however, that this strenuous activity had an adverse effect on his health despite the fact he was very fit for his age. He experienced two heart attacks and was eventually invalided back to the U.S.A. He died on the 19th March, 1950 at his home at Tarzana, California, at the age of 74 years.

It seems as though Mr. Burroughs was more proud of his service in the second World War than anything else. He made no extravagant claims to be an outstanding writer since he maintained he wrote for money. He is said to have remarked "my writing helped me escape being broke and it helps the readers go off into another realm and share adventures that they'd never have themselves." Nevertheless he was said to have been very pleased that a number of his stories were quoted as examples of good literature. Something like over 40,000,000 copies of his books, printed in fifty-eight languages, have been produced and it may be safely said that he gave great pleasure to an extensive reading public for close on forty years.

A General Review of Edgar Rice Burroughs' work:

I should imagine that very few of my readers are unfamiliar with the name of "Tarzan." The exploits of this superman of fiction, a forerunner, so to speak, of the present day "Dan Dare" and "Super-man" are world famous and they brought equal fame to his creator, Edgar Rice Burroughs. But so much has the character of "Tarzan" impressed itself on the mind of the reading public that it has almost given rise to an impression that Mr. Burroughs wrote no other books than those featuring this famous fictional character. Mr. Burroughs did, in fact, write many other books, two of which may be reckoned as among the best novels he ever wrote.

He covered a very wide field. A very interesting series, my favourite one, in fact, was all about the fantastic adventures of an Earthman on Mars, while there was an equally interesting series of similar kind situated on Venus. There were a number of stories about the "Wild West," several romantic novels with a Ruritanian setting and at least one yarn of medieval times. Mr. Burroughs also wrote modern novels, science-fiction stories, and yarns about both re-incarnation and space travel. He was very fond of the "Lost World" theme and wrote some very fine stories on the subject. There were tales of the past and of the future, on the Moon and in a drawing room. Another good series was all about "Pellucidar," a lost land situated inside a fictional hollow Earth which was populated by human beings and terrifying creatures and animals from the Reptile and Stone Ages. Like all novelists, and particularly those with a large output, Mr. Burroughs was not

always at his best in every yarn but he was often very good and at least three of his stories were outstanding. His success lay, I think, in the pace of his narratives; the reader is hurried along from one breathless incident to another. And his stories were all told in a fantastic yet curiously fascinating style with plenty of strong romantic overtones. Of course they would not appeal to the so-called "sex and sadism" school. Reading over a large number of them again quite recently, I must confess I find them very attractive and extremely readable.

Mr. Burroughs owed much of his success to "Tarzan of the Apes" which was the first story he wrote to be printed in book form. The whole theme of this book was entirely different from anything which had appeared before and there is no doubt that public interest was aroused in this new style author and his work. In his Bibliography, Mr. Bradford M. Day rates "Tarzan of the Apes" as Mr. Burroughs' best book. Personally I do not agree with this contention and rank other stories as my favourites. There cannot be any doubt, however, that the story is extremely well written and it must be included among the best half-a-dozen stories that the author ever wrote.

The story of "Tarzan of the Apes" is, I think, too well known to readers for me to go into full detail. It will suffice to say that "Tarzan" is a tiny European boy adopted by a tribe of Great Apes in the jungles of West Africa. He learns to speak the language of the apes, develops an enormous strength for a human being and eventually becomes the leader of the tribe. Tarzan befriends a party of treasure seekers led by an American, Professor Porter, and falls in love with the Professor's daughter, Jane. After some wonderful exciting adventures and hairbreath escapes from death, Tarzan is actually proved to be John Clayton, Lord Greystoke. He visits America to return part of the treasure which he has taken to Professor Porter and declares his love for Jane, which she reciprocates. Certain difficulties arise, however, which prevent their marriage and the story ends with Tarzan returning alone to West Africa.

The situation obviously demanded a sequel and the result was "The Return of Tarzan." This yarn, a good one, although like most sequels not up to the standard of its predecessor, is also full of exciting adventures in the jungles of West Africa. After discovering a "Lost City," another huge treasure and experiencing many breathless escapes from danger and sudden death, Tarzan and Jane are finally united on the last page of the book.

Mr. Burroughs wrote a further twenty-six stories of "Tarzan." They all tell of thrilling, fantastic and romantic adventures in the jungles of West Africa and elsewhere and feature quite a few "Lost Cities" and "Lost Races," a theme that the author obviously had a great liking for. These yarns are, on the whole, very good and only one of them can be considered a failure and this curiously enough is the only "Taran" story Mr. Burroughs wrote for children, "Tarzan and the Tarzan Twins, with Jad-Bal-Ja, the Golden Lion." The popularity of these stories is immense and they have been reprinted on many occasions.

The "Martian" series, which consists of ten books, is my favourite Burroughs series. The central character in the opening stories is John Carter, an American soldier of fortune who besides being immortal, possesses the power of transmitting his spirit in bodily form through the void which separates the Earth from Mars. He finds a planet in high state of civilization and full of various races belonging to City States engaged in almost perpetual war. After an incredible series of adventures, with much wonderful swordplay and feats of strength and agility, many escapes from evil and dangerous men and fantastic beasts which seem

to populate Mars, the hero eventually triumphs over all vicissitudes and wins the hand of his Princess. The series begins with "A Princess of Mars" and is continued in "The Gods of Mars" and "The Warlord of Mars." Then follow "Thuvia, Maid of Mars" and "The Chessmen of Mars" which tell of the adventures of John Carter's son and daughter. The first five stories in the series are very good indeed and I have read them again and again, while the remaining yarns are all very readable, if not quite up to the same high standard. These books include a good deal of science fiction as well as fantastic romantic adventure. "Thuvia, Maid of Mars" features a lost race who have achieved a mastery of mind over matter and who have evolved a theory that everybody only exists in the imagination of everybody else. "The Master Mind of Mars" tells of a famous Martian scientist who has perfected an operation which enabled the brain of an aged person to be transplanted to a younger body, thus prolonging life. Although the inhabitants of Burroughs' Mars were entitled to live for a thousand years they were apparently not satisfied. According to the author the Martians were also familiar with such Earth scientific marvels as Radar, Anti-Gravity, Teletype and the Radio Compass. They were also extremely athletic and a close study of eugenics had given them the bodies of Greek Gods and Goddesses. What more could anybody want?

The "Venus" series, which consists of four books, "Pirates of Venus," "Lost on Venus," "Carson of Venus" and "Escape on Venus," is on similar lines to the "Martian" series, although together they are really one long complete story. They tell of the adventures of a rich young Anglo-American amateur scientist, Carson Napier, who plans a voyage to Mars in a space ship. Diverted from his course by the gravity of the Moon, owing to mathematical miscalculations, his space ship is drawn into the orbit of Venus on which planet he is eventually forced to land. Napier finds Venus a planet of seas and islands covered with heavy cloud layers, which reduce the heat of the sun and have enabled men to develop and produce civilized forms of life.

Napier lands in an area where huge trees grow thousands of feet into the sky. He finds a kingdom established among the branches maintained by a highly civilized race of Venusians who have been forced into hiding by class war and hatred for like us the Venusians are bedevilled by an advanced form of National Socialism which has brought about anarchy and a near collapse of civilization. Needless to say, Napier, in true Burroughs romantic style, falls in love with the virgin daughter of the King of the Tree Kingdom whom he rescues from one peril after another and with whom he experiences thrilling adventures and many narrow escapes from battle, murder and sudden death. For Napier's democratic and knightly ideals do not meet with the approval of many of the Venusians, particularly of the followers of National Socialism, who realise what a potential danger the Earthman is to their ambitions of world domination. Eventually Napier wins his Princess and presumably lives happily ever after. Like the "Martian" stories, the Venus yarns feature quite a lot of science fiction. They are extremely difficult to obtain which leaves no doubt of their popularity among admirers of Mr. Burroughs' work.

Another very interesting group of stories is the "Pellucidar" series which consists of five books, although the number is actually increased to six if one of the "Tarzan" yarns, "Tarzan at the Earth's Core" is included. "Pellucidar" is another lost world situated at the Earth's core in a gigantic cavern something like 7,000 miles across, lighted by a tiny hot sun, which includes continents, seas and mountains, and which is inhabited by Cave-men, Stone-Age beasts and fearsome reptiles of the Jurassic and other ages.

The chief characters are two young engineers, David Innes and Jason Gridley, who have invented a giant earth-boring machine of which they lose control. They drill right through the Earth's crust for some 500 miles and eventually emerge in Pellucidar. They become friendly with a race of Stone-Age white people and do all they can to help them, sometimes with indifferent success, for the two adventurers find it is not easy to produce many of the advantages of civilization. Romance intrudes with David Innes falling in love with Dian, a beautiful Stone-Age white girl. Dian misunderstands David's intentions and flees into the terrible jungle of Pellucidar while David follows in an attempt to rescue her. The lovers have many thrilling and fantastic adventures which feature Sabre-toothed Tigers, Giant White Bears, huge Reptiles and savage Cave-men before Dian is convinced of the sincerity of David's love and devotion and they finally win their way back to her home.

All this and much else is told in the opening story of the series "At the Earth's Core." With the addition of certain other characters, the Pellucidar story is continued in "Pellucidar," "Tanar of Pellucidar," "Back to the Stone Age" and "Land of Terror." There are also a number of magazine stories which fit into the general pattern of the yarns. "Land of Terror" is not a particularly outstanding story but all the other tales are very readable and the series is little inferior to the stories of Mars and Venus.

Mr. Burroughs wrote four stories of the "Wild West." Two - "The Deputy Sheriff of Comanche County" and "The Bandit of Hell's Bend" - are typical cowboy yarns. They make pleasant reading but lack the novelty and freshness of his other books.

The other two Western yarns, "The War Chief" and "Apache Devil" concern Indian tribal life. Mr. Burroughs had a great admiration for the Apaches and went to considerable trouble to get his historical facts perfectly correct. Both books give a fine presentation, with much picturesque detail, of a savage and brave people.

Mr. Burroughs also wrote a large number of single stories on various themes. "Beyond Thirty and The Man Eater" (two stories in one book) deal with futuristic adventure in Europe and jungle adventure mainly in Africa, respectively. "The Cave Girl" is a Stone-Age story, while "The Girl from Hollywood" is a modern novel whose setting is obvious. "Jungle Girl" employs a "Lost Race" theme, in the jungles of Cambodia. "The Mad King" and "The Oakdale Affair and The Rider" (two stories in one book) are romantic Ruritanian yarns. All these stories are good without being particularly outstanding.

"The Moon Maid" is Burroughs at his best. It is a very long and perhaps rather rambling story the action taking place in the future, mainly on the Moon and it tells in a thrilling romantic style of the greatness and cruelty of a long line of Julian monarchs.

My favourite Burroughs story and in the opinion of many of his admirers the finest he ever wrote, "The Land That Time Forgot" is another very long yarn. This is on the author's favourite "Lost World" theme and concerns a group of Americans, Englishmen and Germans on board a German U-boat (the story takes place during the 1914-18 War) who are forced by lack of food and fuel to take refuge on an uncharted island situated near the Antarctic. They find, instead that the whole place is simply teeming with an amazing collection of animals and reptiles from every age of the Earth's history. This really is a first class story and I

entirely agree with Mr. Bradford M. Day's remarks on this book in his Bibliography, "422 splendid pages and far too short."

Very many newspapers in the U.S.A. reprinted stories by Mr. Burroughs particularly during the 1914/18 War, and after. From 1929 onwards they also carried comic strips, mainly based on the "Tarzan" books.

A very large number of "Tarzan" stories were also adapted for reading by children. They were published mainly by the Whitman Publishing Company in America from 1933 to 1950 as part of a series under the title of "Big little books and Better little books." Each book had an illustrated front cover with each page of text facing a full page illustration. At least one of the "Martian" series was also published in this way. A large number of "Tarzan" comic books were produced for juvenile reading mainly in the U.S.A.

Many of Mr. Burroughs' books were published all over the world. Editions were published in Braille, for the blind, while one British edition of "A Princess of Mars" was actually produced in Esperanto.

All foreign editions other than in English were, of course, translations of Mr. Burroughs' books. It seems, however, that Spanish editions of "Tarzan" stories, appearing mainly in Latin America were not written by or authorised by Mr. Burroughs. Something like thirty books were produced in this way. So much for world copyright.

Films: It appears that about thirty-five films were based on books and characters created by Mr. Burroughs. A large number of them, more than thirty, featured Tarzan as the "star." The first book written by Mr. Burroughs to be made into a film was "The Lad and the Lion," a story of jungle adventure in Africa. It was not a success. The next film, "Tarzan of the Apes" was the first of a long series of pictures that have been generally very popular. The part of Tarzan in this film, a silent one, was taken by an American actor named Elmo Lincoln. Tarzan was also portrayed on the films by Johnny Weissmuller, Buster Crabbe, Herman Brix (Bruce Bennett), Jon Hall, Lex Barker, James Pierce, who married Mr. Burroughs' daughter, Joan, and a number of others. Weissmuller, with his wonderful swimming powers, was probably the most efficient "Tarzan" from the athletic point of view. Jon Hall, however, was probably the best actor and I seem to recall him taking part in quite a number of films, apart from those in which he played "Tarzan" in the 1930s. I think these were mainly based on South Seas stories and themes. There was at least one radio series, based on the "Tarzan" stories.

Illustrations: Most of Mr. Burroughs' books were illustrated by J. Allen St. John, a first class artist. Mr. Burroughs' eldest son, John Coleman Burroughs, and one of his nephews, Studley Burroughs, also illustrated a number. John Coleman Burroughs drew the comic strip, "John Carter of Mars" from 1942 to 1944.

Conclusion: A number of magazine stories by Mr. Burroughs have not been published in hard covers. Why this is so it is hard to say. Quite a number were published during the last War which probably caused them to be overlooked. Some of them were most certainly not good enough and this includes at least two novels of modern life, "The Girl from Farris's" (1916) and "The Efficiency Expert" (1921). The third unpublished novel, "The Quest of Tarzan" (1941) is quite good and may eventually be published in book form. Then there are ten short stories still in magazine form, "The Resurrection of Jimber-Jaw" (1937), "The Scientists' Revolt" (1939), "Tarzan and the Champion" (1940), "Tarzan and the Jungle Murders" (1940), "John Carter and the Giant of Mars" (1941), "Beyond the Farthest Star" (1942),

"Skeleton Men of Jupiter" (1943), "Return to Pellucidar" (1942), "Men of the Bronze Age" (1942) and "Tiger Girl" (1942). The revival of interest in Mr. Burroughs' books, and the release, by the Burroughs' family, of certain hitherto unpublished manuscripts, has turned the attention of publishers to many of these magazine stories, a number of which have now been shown to be excellent tales, by any standards.

"Return to Pellucidar," "Men of the Bronze Age" and "Tiger Girl" are part of the "Pellucidar" series and have now been published as one book under the title of "Savage Pellucidar." It is quite good. The most outstanding of these new books, however, is "Tales of Three Planets" which is made up of four stories, "Beyond the Farthest Star," "Tangor Returns" (an unpublished yarn and Part II of the preceding tale), "The Resurrection of Jimber-Jaw" and "The Wizard of Venus" (an unpublished part of the Venus saga). "Beyond the Farthest Star" and "Tangor Returns" are the start of a new planetary series on the lines of the "Martian" and "Venus" stories, and are Edgar Rice Burroughs in his finest form. What a pity that he was not able to finish off the series. Then there is "John Carter of Mars" which consists of "John Carter and the Giant of Mars," "Skeleton Men of Jupiter" and a critical and well written study of Mr. Burroughs' work. It is reported to be very good. Another new novel is "Tarzan and the Madman" (hitherto unpublished in any form). I have no details as to the standard of this particular book. Readers will understand, however, that should any further unpublished manuscripts come to light they should be regarded with suspicion especially in view of a rumour some years ago that another author "ghosted" a number of stories in the "Pellucidar" series, almost certainly with Mr. Burroughs aid and approval. Whether this is true is not known but some of the later "Pellucidar" stories are certainly not Edgar Rice Burroughs at his best. The reprinting of practically all of Mr. Burroughs' past work, however, not only in hard cover form, but as "paperbacks" by "Ace" books (an American firm) and "Foursquare" books (a British firm) leave no doubt of this fine author's continued popularity and should ensure that his books will be read for many years to come.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

<u>Title of Book</u>	<u>Date first published</u>	
	<u>In Magazine form</u>	<u>In Book form</u>
<u>The "Tarzan" series</u>		
Tarzan of the Apes	1912	1914
The Return of Tarzan	1913	1915
The Beasts of Tarzan	1914	1916
The Son of Tarzan	1915/16	1917
Jungle Tales of Tarzan	1916/17	1919
(Originally published as "New Stories of Tarzan")		
Tarzan and the Jewels of Opar	1916	1918
Tarzan the Untamed	1919/20	1920
(Originally published as two separate stories, "Tarzan the Untamed" and "Tarzan and the Valley of Luna")		
Tarzan the Terrible	1921	1921
Tarzan and the Golden Lion	1922/23	1923
Tarzan and the Ant Men	1924	1924
The Tarzan Twins	-	1927
Tarzan, Lord of the Jungle	1927/28	1928

<u>Title of Book</u>	<u>Date first published</u>	
	<u>In Magazine</u> <u>form</u>	<u>In Book</u> <u>form</u>
Tarzan and the Lost Empire	1928/29	1929
Tarzan at the Earth's Core	1929/30	1930
Tarzan, the Invincible	1930/31	1931
(Originally published as "Tarzan, Guard of the Jungle")		
Tarzan, Triumphant	1931/32	1932
(Originally published as "The Triumph of Tarzan")		
Tarzan and the City of Gold	1932	1933
Tarzan and the Leopard Men	1932/33	1935
Tarzan and the Lion Man	1933/34	1934
Tarzan's Quest	1935/36	1936
(Originally published as "Tarzan and the Immortal Men")		
Tarzan, the Magnificent	1936)	1939
(Originally published as "Tarzan and the Magica Men" and	1937/38)	
"Tarzan and the Elephant Men" - two separate stories)		
Tarzan, and the Tarzan Twins, with Jad-Bal-Ja, the Golden Lion	-	1936
Tarzan and the Forbidden City	1938	1938
(Originally published as "The Red Star of Tarzan")		
Tarzan and the Champion	1940	-
Tarzan and the Jungle Murders	1940	-
The Quest of Tarzan	1941	-
Tarzan and the Foreign Legion	-	1947
<u>The "Martian" series</u>		
A Princess of Mars	1912	1917
(Originally published as "Under the Moons of Mars")		
The Gods of Mars	1913	1918
The Warlord of Mars	1913/14	1919
Thuvia, Maid of Mars	1916	1920
The Chessmen of Mars	1922	1922
The Master Mind of Mars	1927	1928
A Fighting Man of Mars	1930	1931
Swords of Mars	1934/35	1936
Synthetic Men of Mars	1939	1940
John Carter and the Giant of Mars	1941	-
Llana of Gathol	1941	1948
(Originally published as four separate magazine stories, "The City of Mummies,"		
"Black Pirates of Barsoom," "Yellow Men of Mars" and "Invisible Men of Mars.")		
<u>The "Venus" series</u>		
Pirates of Venus	1932	1934
Lost on Venus	1933	1935
Carson of Venus	1938	1939
Escape on Venus	1941/42	1946
(Originally published as four separate magazine stories, "Slaves of the Fish Men,"		
"Goddess of Fire," "The Living Dead," and "War on Venus")		
<u>The "Pellucidar" series</u>		
At the Earth's Core	1914	1922
Pellucidar	1915	1923
Tanar of Pellucidar	1929	1930

<u>Title of Book</u>	<u>Date first published</u>	
	<u>In Magazine form</u>	<u>In Book form</u>
<u>The "Pellucidar" series</u> (cont'd)		
Back to the Stone Age (Originally published as "Seven Worlds to Conquer")	1937	1937
Return to Pellucidar	1942	-
Men of the Bronze Age	1942	-
Tiger Girl	1942	-
Land of Terror	-	1944
<u>Miscellaneous Stories</u>		
The Cave Girl (Originally published as two separate magazine stories, "The Cave Girl" and "The Cave Man")	1913/17	1925
The Monster Men (Originally published as "A Man without a Soul")	1913	1929
The Outlaw of Torn	1914	1927
The Eternal Lover (Originally published as two separate magazine stories, "The Eternal Lover" and "Sweetheart Primeval")	1912/15	1925
The Mad King (Originally published as two separate magazine stories, "The Mad King" and "Barney Custer of Beatrice")	1914/15	1926
The Mucker (Originally published as two separate magazine stories, "The Mucker" and "The Return of the Mucker")	1914/16	1921
Beyond Thirty and The Man Eater (Originally published as two separate magazine stories, "The Man Eater" and "Beyond Thirty")	1915/16	1957
The Girl from Farris's	1916	-
The Lad and the Lion	1917	1938
The Oakdale Affair and the Rider (Originally published as two separate magazine stories, "The Oakdale Affair" and "H.R.H. The Rider")	1918	1937
The Land that Time Forgot (Originally published as three separate magazine stories, "The Land that Time Forgot," "The People that Time Forgot" and "Out of Time's Abyss")	1918	1924
The Efficiency Expert	1921	-
The Girl from Hollywood	1922	1923
The Moon Maid (Originally published as three separate magazine stories, "The Moon Maid," "The Moon Man" and "The Red Hawk")	1923/25	1926
The Bandit of Hell's Bend	1924	1925
The War Chief	1927	1927
Apache Devil	1928	1933
Jungle Girl (Originally published as "The Land of Hidden Men")	1931	1932
The Resurrection of Jimber-Jaw	1937	-
The Scientists Revolt	1939	-
The Deputy Sheriff of Comanche County (Originally published as "The Terrible Tenderfoot")	1940	1940
Beyond the Farthese Star	1942	-
Skeleton Men of Jupiter	1943	-

AppendixBritish Magazine appearances of E. R. Burroughs' works

Tarzan of the Apes	Boys Cinema	11 issues	Aug. 28 1920 to Nov. 6 1920
The Return of Tarzan	"	10 "	Nov. 13 1920 to Jan. 15 1921
The Beasts of Tarzan	"	10 "	approx. Mar. 11 1922 to May ?
The Son of Tarzan	"	"	Jan. 22 1921 to Apr. 23 1921
Tarzan and the Jewels of Opar	?	?	believed to have been published in Boys Cinema latter part of 1921 but verification lacking.
Jungle Tales of Tarzan	Boys Cinema		early 1922 but details lacking.
When Blood Told (part of Tarzan the Untamed)	Sovereign Magazine		June 1920
At the Earth's Core	Pluck		Mar. 31 1923 to Jun. 9 1923
Pirates of Venus	The Passing Show		Sep. 30 1933 to Nov. 25 1933
Lost on Venus	"		Dec. 2 1933 to Feb. 3 1934

These two were illustrated by Fortunino Matania and only 6 complete sets are known.

Information extracted from A Golden Anniversary Bibliography of Edgar Rice Burroughs by Henry Hardy Heins published Donald M. Grant, Rhode Island, U.S.A. \$10.00 and available from F. V. Lay, 52 Oakleigh Gardens, Whetstone, London, N.20. £3. 15. 0. post paid.

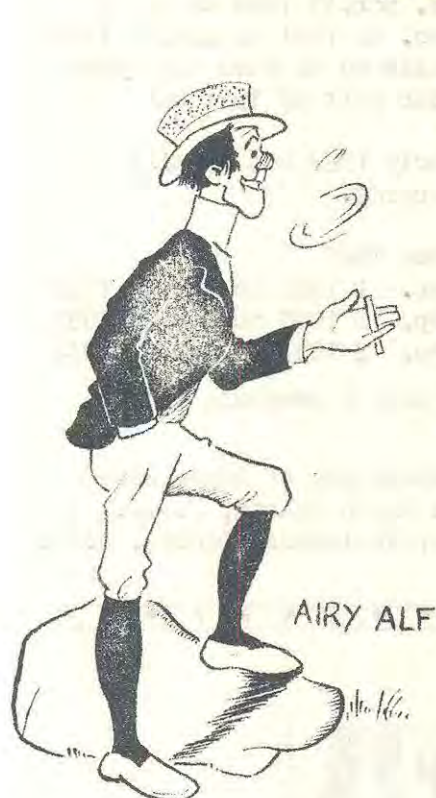
THE BIG BUDGET was a comic paper put out by the firm of Pearsons. It ran for 614 issues, from 19th June, 1897 till 20th March, 1909. Our New Zealand artist Geoffrey Harrison looks at the paper at one stage in its career.



SOME

Big Budget.

CHARACTERS



AIRY ALF



CLARENCE
MONTGOMERY



'UNGRY
'ENERY
THE
TRAMP



SAM SIMMONS



WALTER
THE CROCODILE



BOUNCING
BILLY

Jokes from "Big Budget"

NOTE FROM A
MOTHER'S DIARY



"CLARENCE LOOKED
A LITTLE YELLER
THIS MORNING!"

INDEED
NOT



"LET'S HAVE A WHIFF, JIMMY." "NOT
AN' THEN BE BLAMED FOR STUNTIN'
YER GROWTH! NOT LIKELY."



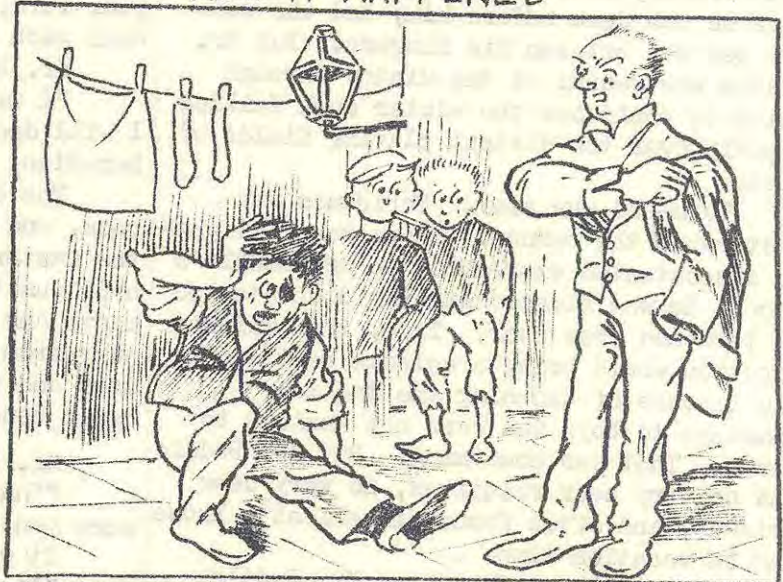
CHOLLY: "CONFOUND IT! HOW
THIS CIGAR DOES SMELL OF STRA

AN AD. FROM "THE
MARRIAGE MART."



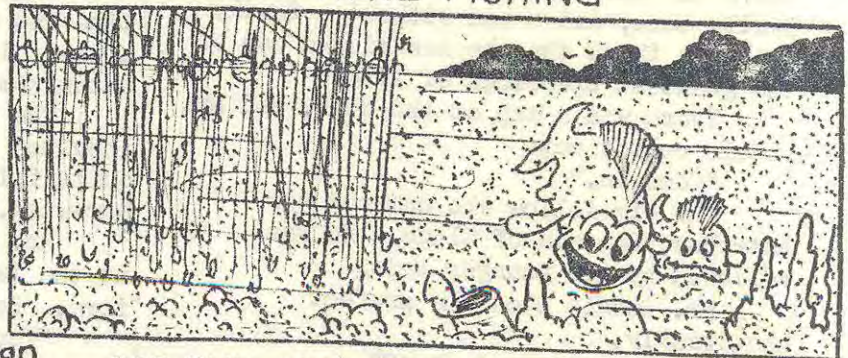
"MATRIMONIAL."—young nobleman
desires to correspond with lady
of means with view to marriage
Advertiser is tall and considered handsome; athletic build.

HOW IT HAPPENED



THE CONQUEROR: "I THOUGHT YOU SAID YOU COULD LICK ME WITH
ONE HAND IN YOUR POCKET." THE CONQUERED: "WELL I FORGOT
TO PUT ME HAND IN ME POCKET—YAH."

THE GUESTS WERE FISHING



BOB FISH: "I'VE LOST MY BEARINGS JIMMY. OH,
I SEE, THAT'S THE HOTEL PIER!"
C. HARRISON.

CHRISTMAS with MEREDITH

by Eric Fawcett

Mr. Buddle sat at the desk in his study. Afternoon classes at Slade had ended about thirty minutes ago, and Mr. Buddle now had exercises to mark. He was not working, however. The exercise books were on the desk before him, and the red-ink pen was between his fingers. But Mr. Buddle was gazing at the window through which he could see the winter dusk falling rapidly over the distant playing fields of Slade.

Term-end was near. Christmas was just round the corner. There was a slightly discontented expression on Mr. Buddle's face. He was always slightly discontented as term-end drew near. True, the imminent vacation would bring a welcome rest from his labours of teaching the English Language to boys who were not anxious to learn. That was something. But Mr. Buddle had no very near relatives, no very dear friends, and often found himself at a loose end in vacation time.

Especially at Christmas Mr. Buddle would ask himself whether he had been wise to remain a bachelor. For Christmas time, above all the seasons of the year, is family time, and a man without a family tends to think that he has missed one of the greatest blessings of life.

There was a tap at the door, and Mr. Buddle called out:

"Come in."

The big fellow who entered was Antrobus, Captain of Slade. He was followed by two younger lads.

Mr. Buddle eyed the prefect enquiringly.

"What is it, Antrobus?"

"I found these two juniors fighting in the Mulberry Walk, sir. Hunwick's nose is bleeding, and Meredith's blazer is torn. I brought them to you, sir, as they are both in your form, but if you would like me to deal with the matter —"

Mr. Buddle shook his head.

"I am obliged to you, Antrobus. I will deal with them. I wanted to see Meredith, in any case."

The Captain of Slade left the room, and the two juniors stood before the master's desk. Meredith's golden hair was tousled; one pocket of his mauve and white blazer was nearly torn away from the main garment. Hunwick, dark and on the plump side, had a red smear beneath his well-shaped nose.

Mr. Buddle frowned upon them both.

"You boys should know better. Why were you fighting?"

It was Hunwick who answered.

"It was nothing, sir. Just a friendly scrap. We just disagreed. We don't like the same papers."

"You fought because you do not like the same papers?" Mr. Buddle arched his brows in exaggerated astonishment. "Are you demented?"

"He insulted the Gem and I insulted the Nelson Lee. They were quite friendly insults," explained Merewith.

Mr. Buddle peered over his glasses at the two dishevelled members of his form. He spoke in exasperation.

"You must be half-witted to

quarrel like small children over the merits of periodicals. As you are both aware, such papers are not permitted within the walls of Slade. If you introduce them into the college, you are breaking strict rules."

"Oh, I don't have the Nelson Lee in term time, sir," said Hunwick piously. "Only in the vac, sir. Nelson Lee is a schoolmaster detective, sir."

"A schoolmaster detective," echoed Mr. Buddle. He pursed his lips. Mr. Buddle had often thought that he himself would have made a good detective had Fate not directed his career into scholastic channels. It had never occurred to him to combine the two professions. "It seems highly unlikely that any schoolmaster would have the time to be a detective also, Hunwick. No doubt these periodicals are innocuous, but it is stupid to disagree about them. Only politicians disagree over trivial matters. In years to come you will be ashamed that you ever found interest in such puerile literature."

"I shall always read the Gem, sir," said Meredith sturdily.

"My father reads the Gem, sir! He's not awfully old, sir, but he's like you, sir. He's no chicken, if you'll excuse me mentioning it."

His gaze was innocent and very serious.

"I shall always read the Nelson Lee - even when I'm ninety," said Hunwick with warmth. "But not in term time, sir. My parents buy the Nelson Lee every week and save it for me to read in the vac. I read the Nelson Lee every single day of the holidays, sir."

"Masochist!" muttered Meredith.

Mr. Buddle frowned grimly. He drew a blank sheet of paper towards him on his desk, and wrote upon it as follows:

"It is not he who gains the exact point in dispute who scores the most in controversy - but he who has shown the better temper."

Mr. Buddle rose. He handed the slip of paper to Hunwick.

"I have written out a quotation from

Samuel Butler which is worthy of remembrance. After tea each of you boys will go to the form-room and copy out that quotation six times in your best handwriting. You will then translate it into French. You may use your French dictionaries, if necessary. In addition, you, Meredith, will take your blazer to the matron for repair, and you, Hunwick, will wash your face."

As the two boys turned away, Mr. Buddle went on:

"You may go, Hunwick. You will remain, Meredith."

Hunwick left the study hastily, and Meredith stood eyeing his form-master uneasily.

Mr. Buddle sat down. From a drawer he drew a sheet of paper. With knitted brows he scanned the paper for a few moments. Then he raised his eyes to the golden-haired youth.

"I have here your end-of-term report, Meredith. I find it dismaying in the extreme."

"Oh, sir!"

"At the end of last term, Meredith, your good mother approached me. She had been distressed by a succession of poor reports. She pointed out that unless there was just one remark of merit, your uncle would refuse to take you on a continental holiday. There was, however, just one worthy comment. Mr. Crayford saw fit to speak well of your sporting activities."

Meredith nodded sorrowfully.

"I was very much obliged to Mr. Crayford, sir."

Mr. Buddle tapped the paper.

"This term, Meredith, the same thing prevails. Once again only your games merit the slightest praise."

"I'm pretty fair at games, sir."

"You could be more than fair at your studies, if you wished, Meredith."

Meredith moved slightly round the desk. He pointed to a spot on the report form.

"Doesn't that word say 'expert' about physics, sir?"

"It does not, Meredith. The word Mr. Crathie uses is 'inept'."

"Oh, sir, look there! Surely that word is 'excellent'."

"That word is 'execrable', Meredith. It is the way Mr. Greenleaf describes your mathematics."

Meredith looked depressed.

"I'm sorry, sir. I'll do better next term."

"You said that at the close of last term, Meredith."

"Well, sir --" Meredith gazed at something behind his form-master. "My parents are very satisfied with my progress, sir. They've said so."

"That is beside the point, Meredith. I am not satisfied, and the Headmaster is not satisfied. Your lack of progress reflects upon me, as you have been in my form for several terms. I may say that sometimes it seems to me like several years."

"I'm not the bottom of the class, sir," said Meredith sulkily. "I came twelfth, and there are twenty-two in the lower fourth."

"What you say is true, Meredith, but results are judged against a boy's capabilities. You are, I hope, acquainted with the Parable of the Talents in the New Testament? Brazenbean, who came 18th in the form examinations did far better than you. You have a first-class brain, and I am convinced could easily have come in the first three had you bothered yourself to do so. You are, in fact, wasting your time and wasting my time. The Headmaster is reaching the opinion that Slade is no place for you."

Meredith's eyes opened wide.

"Oh, sir, I wouldn't want to go to a better school than Slade."

"There is no better school than Slade," said Mr. Buddle.

He sat back in his chair, and clasped his hands on the desk before him.

He said suddenly: "You live at Taunton, I believe, Meredith."

"Yes, sir," said the boy miserably.

"Quite so. I shall be spending my Christmas with friends at Bath, which is not far from your home. Mr. Scarlet has asked me to call upon your parents to discuss with them the advisability of

your being removed from this school."

Meredith looked aghast.

"Removed from this school? Do you mean me leave Slade, sir?"

"That is exactly what I mean, Meredith."

"But, sir --" Meredith was almost panting with emotion. "I don't want to leave Slade, sir. I love Slade, sir."

"No doubt!" said Mr. Buddle drily. "That is immaterial, Meredith. Slade has a large waiting list of boys who are anxious to come to this college to work. You do not want to work, Meredith. In fact, you do not intend to work. You read cheap magazines when you should be studying. You are a poseur. You get some warped satisfaction out of pretending to be an ignoramus when you are nothing of the sort. If you were a slow boy, making slow progress, I should be satisfied, and so would Mr. Scarlet. You are not. You are a bright boy who deliberately refuses to use the brain which the good Lord has given him. You may do better elsewhere. Slade will be infinitely better off without you."

Meredith's eyes were wide with horror. He said, in a stifled voice, his words pregnant with reproach:

"Oh, sir - you mean I'm to be expelled - for reading the Gem?"

Mr. Buddle made a gesture of impatience.

"I mean nothing of the sort. The Gem - if that is the absurd name of the paper you read - is probably no worse than any other modern magazine. It may even be better than most. Taken in moderation it might even be good for you. Reading broadens the mind and quickens the brain. You, I am convinced, could be a credit to Slade. I am equally convinced that you have no desire to be a credit to Slade. This school has a long list of sound boys who are waiting for entrance. We have no room for them. It is an absurdity that we have a boy here who is wasting his time when his place could be occupied by one who would benefit from the Slade system."

Meredith was staring at Mr. Buddle. For once the golden-haired youth had

nothing to say.

"I shall arrange to see your parents within a few days of breaking-up," said Mr. Buddle decidedly. "I shall place before them the views of Mr. Scarlet and myself. I think it probable that they will decide to remove you immediately. Now you may go to the matron with your torn blazer. You can, if you like, tell her that you will take your best blazer into general use for the remaining days of term, as you will be unlikely to need a Slade blazer at all next term. You may go, Meredith."

Meredith turned away. Slowly he moved to the door. He looked back at Mr. Buddle. But Mr. Buddle was now marking exercises.

After the boy had gone, Mr. Buddle threw down his pen. He switched on his table light, and then rose and drew the curtains.

He stood and moved his fingers slowly over the bust of Shakespeare on his mantelpiece.

"I fear, William," said Mr. Buddle softly, "that Slade would seem an empty shell without Meredith."

.

That evening Mr. Buddle wrote to Meredith's father who lived at Taunton:

Dear Mr. Meredith,

The Headmaster and I are concerned and anxious at the poor scholastic progress which your son appears to be making at Slade.

I shall be passing through Taunton on my way to Bath, where I am spending Christmas. I should appreciate the opportunity of breaking my journey and calling upon you to discuss your son's future. Perhaps you will notify me as to whether the afternoon of December 23rd would be a convenient time for me to call.

Yours truly,

Joseph Buddle.

On December 19th, the day on which Slade broke up for the Christmas vacation, Mr. Buddle received a letter from Meredith's mother who lived at Taunton:

My dear Mr. Buddle,

We shall be very pleased to see you on the afternoon of December 23rd. If, when you arrive at Taunton station, you will telephone us, my husband will drive over and collect you. Or there are taxis at the station. Or it is a very pleasant walk to the Grange which is on the outskirts of the town on the Frome Road.

We have heard from Cedric how very interested you are in Gems. My husband has a most wonderful collection which he looks forward to showing you.

Yours sincerely,

Doreen Meredith.

Mr. Buddle frowned over that letter. Certainly he had an interest in Gems. On several occasions he had confiscated copies from Meredith, and had enjoyed reading them. His newsagent delivered the current issue to him every week. It was Mr. Buddle's secret vice. At least, he had hoped it to be secret, though he had wondered sometimes whether Meredith suspected. From Mrs. Meredith's letter it seemed clear that Meredith had more than a suspicion.

Mr. Buddle remained at Slade for several days following the end of the school term, but on the morning of December 23rd he boarded a train at Ever-slade station. He had packed a Gladstone bag and sent it on in advance to await collection at Bath railway station. Now, carrying only an attache case with his immediate needs, he was at last on his journey.

He was on his way to an hotel. Invariably Mr. Buddle spent Christmas in a crowded hotel, and among the crowd of merry-makers he always ended up by feeling inexpressibly lonely. Last year it had been an hotel at Eastbourne. This year it was to be an hotel at Bath. Mr. Buddle often wondered why he went to hotels at Christmas. Probably it was because he had nowhere else to go.

It was a bitterly cold December day, and the local train from Everslade to Brent was not heated. There had been a light fall of snow during the night, but the morning had started with some misty

sunshine. Now, however, the snow was falling again.

In a corner of the compartment of which he was the sole occupant, Mr. Buddle shivered and drew his woollen scarf more closely round his neck. He rubbed at the window which was opaque with frost on the inside, and looked out. The little train was puffing its way through the glorious Devonshire countryside, now hidden by a sheet of snow. Mr. Buddle began to wish that he had not agreed with the Headmaster to break his journey at Taunton in order to visit the Merediths.

At Brent Mr. Buddle left the local train. There, accompanied by his attache case, he walked up and down and shivered in a fireless apology for a waiting-room. The train for Exeter was late. When it arrived, thirty minutes behind schedule, it was packed, and Mr. Buddle had to stand in the corridor where the draughts were unpleasant.

Upon arrival at Exeter, he found that he had lost his connection to take him on to Taunton. Fuming with annoyance, he looked up at the large clock over the exit door of the platform. It was after one o'clock, and he had fifty minutes to wait for the next train.

He debated whether he should go into the town and find a restaurant, or make a hasty meal at the station buffet. Viewing the snow which was still falling, he decided on the buffet.

He had a hot sausage roll. There seemed to be plenty of roll, but it was difficult to trace the sausage. Had Mr. Buddle been a humorist it might have occurred to him that, when the roll was called, the sausage reported absent. He had a ham sandwich of which the bread was stale and the ham tasted of soap. He had a cup of coffee which was scalding hot but tasted like nothing on earth.

His light meal completed, Mr. Buddle left the buffet. His train was not due to leave for some time, but it stood in the bay, its engine pouring out smoke and giving off occasional hissing sounds. Mr. Buddle boarded the train. There were

but few passengers travelling by it, so the schoolmaster passed along the corridor and entered an empty compartment. It was pleasantly warm, and he sank down gratefully into a corner seat. An abandoned newspaper lay on the seat beside him, and Mr. Buddle took it up and read.

The minutes passed. At long last a whistle sounded up the platform. The train jerked into motion. The door on the corridor opened, and Mr. Buddle glanced up. A man entered, moved across the compartment, and dropped into the corner seat opposite Mr. Buddle.

Mr. Buddle returned to his paper. He read for a while, and then, beyond the bottom of his page, he noted a yellow sock bobbing up and down as the man opposite swung his crossed leg to the rhythm of the train. Mr. Buddle eyed the yellow sock and the brown shoe which partially encased it. He moved his paper, and let his eyes travel upwards over grey trousers and a thick, dark overcoat. His eyes met those of the man opposite, and the stranger smiled.

He was a man of about thirty, wearing a tweed cap. His face was pleasant and friendly.

"Seasonable weather!" he observed.

"Very much so!" agreed Mr. Buddle.

"We're moving very slowly. Train must be late," added the stranger.

"Quite!" said Mr. Buddle.

He resumed reading his paper. He was not a gregarious man, and, though not of unfriendly disposition, did not wish to strike up a conversation with a stranger.

The train rattled on for a few minutes, and then, with a squealing of brakes, drew up at a small station. A minute later and it was on the move again.

The man opposite spoke once more.

"Not many people travelling. Weather, of course. The snow's quite deep out there."

"I fear so!" said Mr. Buddle.

"Used to like the snow, as a kid. Don't like it now. I had a hell of a job getting clear of Dartmoor this morning."

Mr. Buddle started.

"Dartmoor?"

The stranger laughed.

"That sounds bad, doesn't it? Don't be alarmed. I'm not an escaped prisoner, though I've been to the prison this morning. Had to interview the governor. Not nice weather for visiting Dartmoor." The young man slipped his hand inside his overcoat, and drew out a card. He held it out to Mr. Buddle. "This may explain matters."

Mr. Buddle took the card, adjusted his glasses, and glanced at it. He read:

CAPTAIN W. PUNTER.

C.I.D. Scotland Yard. W.

Mr. Buddle returned the card. He viewed the other man with interest.

"You probably know my name," said Captain Punter. "I've had a few modest successes during my career. The newspaper reporters don't give me much peace."

"The name is familiar," admitted Mr. Buddle.

It was familiar, too. But not as that of a Scotland Yard detective. Mr. Buddle had read of Captain Punter more than once in the Gem. Captain Punter, of Gem fame, was a wily gentleman who specialised in gambling with schoolboys on trains, apart from other dubious activities.

Mr. Buddle's lips twitched. Captain Punter of Scotland Yard was not likely to attempt to gamble with Mr. Buddle on a slow train to Taunton.

Captain Punter half turned in his corner, lifted his long legs, and spread them across the other empty seats. The yellow socks made a vivid splash against the dusty red of the compartment upholstery.

"Just finished another job," mentioned Captain Punter. "I'm on my way back to Scotland Yard now."

"This is not the London train," said Mr. Buddle.

"You've said it! I have to break my journey to report to the Taunton police. Then I can get a fast train to Paddington from Taunton."

"I see!" murmured Mr. Buddle.

The train crawled on through the snowy countryside. The light outside was fading, though it was not yet late in the afternoon. The train drew up at another small station.

Captain Punter spoke again.

"You heading for Taunton?"

Mr. Buddle had been dozing. He came back to reality with a jerk.

"I beg your pardon. You spoke?"

Captain Punter gave his pleasant smile.

"Sorry if I roused you. I asked if you were heading for Taunton."

"Oh, yes, indeed. Do you know the district?"

"Fairly well."

Once more the train was puffing along. Smoke from the engine eddied across the carriage windows.

"I am calling upon friends in Taunton," said Mr. Buddle. "A place called — Now, what was it?"

He took his wallet from his breast pocket, opened it, and extracted the letter which he had received from Mrs. Meredith.

Scanning it, he said: "A house called 'The Grange' on the Frome Road on the outskirts of Taunton."

Punter nodded.

"Should be easy to find. I don't know the house, but anybody will direct you to the Frome Road."

Mr. Buddle replaced the letter, and slid his wallet back carefully into his breast pocket.

Stifling a yawn, he peered through the window.

"Have you any idea where we are, Mr. Punter?"

Punter slid his feet to the floor, and turned to look out of his own window.

"I think we're approaching Fitzwarren. About another fifteen minutes run to Taunton, if we're lucky. At this speed we shall arrive there with the milk."

Mr. Buddle clicked his tongue. He put his head back against the cushion, and closed his eyes. It was warm and

comfortable in the compartment. The steady clackety-clack of the wheels on the rails was soothing. Mr. Buddle dozed. Then he slept.

Suddenly he started up. Somebody was shouting.

"All change! All change!"

Mr. Buddle looked round the compartment. He was alone. His pleasant travelling companion, Captain Punter, was gone.

Hastily Mr. Buddle jumped up. Captain Punter had volunteered the information that he was alighting at Taunton. The horrible thought entered Mr. Buddle's mind that Punter had left the train at Taunton while his companion was sleeping, and that might have been any number of stations back down the line. Yet Captain Punter had known that Mr. Buddle was travelling to Taunton also. It was inexplicable that he would have left the train at Taunton without rousing his companion.

Mr. Buddle seized his case, went into the corridor, lowered a window, and looked out. The train was now at a fairly large station. A porter came along.

"All change!" he bellowed.

"What station is this?" demanded Mr. Buddle.

"Taunton! All change!"

In some relief Mr. Buddle alighted. He joined the small number of people who were hurrying for the exit. His late travelling companion did not seem to be among them. Mr. Buddle fished his ticket from his glove, gave it up, and passed the barrier.

He looked up at the station clock. It was only just turned three-thirty, yet the December dusk had fallen, and all the lights were switched on.

Mr. Buddle consulted a time-table. He found that there was a train on to Bath at 7.15. He would have ample time to visit the Merediths and then get back into the town for a meal before catching the train.

Outside the station, Mr. Buddle stood thinking. It had stopped snowing,

but there was plenty of snow underfoot. It gleamed white in the lights from the decorated shops.

Mrs. Meredith had written that, if Mr. Buddle telephoned, her husband would drive over and collect him. Mr. Buddle shook his head. It was unlikely that Mr. Meredith would be very happy to take his car out in such weather.

Again Mr. Buddle considered. He was tempted to abandon his visit to the Merediths, and to proceed instead to Bath. He decided that now he had come so far he might as well carry out his original intentions.

He looked round the station forecourt, but there was no sign of the taxis of which Mrs. Meredith had spoken. Probably the taxi-drivers also were deterred by the prevailing elements.

Enquiry from a kindly policeman produced the information that a bus would be leaving in five minutes and that Mr. Buddle could alight at the Frome Road signpost.

Mr. Buddle caught the bus. He alighted at the Frome Road signpost. It was a lonely spot, but Mr. Buddle made further enquiry from a woman, laden with shopping, who had left the bus at the same place.

"Excuse me, madam." Mr. Buddle raised his hat. "Do you know of a house named 'The Grange' in the vicinity?"

The woman stared at him through the gloom as the bus slithered away over the snow-covered road.

"'The Grange'? I ought to know it. My husband and me have worked for Mr. and Mrs. Meredith for over fifteen years."

"How very lucky for me!" murmured Mr. Buddle. "If you will kindly show me the way - and allow me to carry your packages, madam -"

"You'll carry nothing, sir. I'm used to it. You'll have your work cut out in this snow to stop yourself falling down on your antimacassar."

It was almost dark now. There was no street lighting. Mr. Buddle felt glad to have found a guide. It occurred to him that, with night coming on, he might have groped around for a long time

before finding the Meredith home.

"A lonely spot!" observed Mr. Buddle.

"Beautiful in the summer - but it isn't much like summer now, is it?" chuckled the woman. She seemed a bright soul. "Tuck up your trousers, sir."

"My - my --" Mr. Buddle wondered whether he had heard aright. "My trousers?"

The lady who had worked for the Merediths for over fifteen years peered at him through the murk. She spoke a little impatiently.

"You'll get your trousers soaked. Roll them up above your knees."

"No, no," said Mr. Buddle. "I could not appear before Mrs. Meredith with my garments rolled above my knees. I'll manage."

"You men and your pride! There's a foot of snow in the Grange drive. You won't want to sit for hours with soaked breeches. Put the leg-ends under your socks then, for goodness sake, sir."

"Ah, that is a better idea!" ejaculated Mr. Buddle. He deposited his attache case in the snow, bent down, and thrust the ends of his trousers into his socks. He retrieved the attache case.

They crossed the road, the snow crunching softly under their feet.

"Keep close to me, sir. You don't want to fall into a ditch. I'm used to the country, and I don't suppose you are."

"The school where I teach is in a fairly rural district," panted Mr. Buddle. It was not easy-going through the snow.

They had arrived at a gap between hedges, and Mr. Buddle could see the snowy outlines of wrought-iron gates. Beyond the gates he could see, not far distant, the welcome lights of a house, previously obscured by the hedges.

"I'm Mrs. Camp," said his kindly guide. He heard the click of a latch, and the gate swung open. "This way, sir. Camp and me have been with Mr. and Mrs. Meredith since before our cherub was born."

Mr. Buddle wondered as to the

identity of "our cherub," but he did not enquire.

With Mrs. Camp by his side he plodded along towards the house, the lights from which were gleaming over snow-covered lawns and leafless trees.

"So you're a schoolmaster, sir? Would you be the Gump, sir?"

"Merely a nickname, madam," he said. Mrs. Camp chuckled.

"It's the only name our cherub uses. He often speaks of you, sir. I think Mr. Meredith was expecting you earlier."

Mr. Buddle grunted. Obviously "our cherub" was Meredith of Slade.

"Well, here we are, sir. You ring the front door bell. I'll go in at the side door with all this shopping."

Mr. Buddle raised his hat.

"You have been a friend in need," he said courteously. "I am much obliged to you, Mrs. Camp."

"Camp!"

"Oh, yes, Camp! Thank you for your kindness."

Mrs. Camp trod away towards the side of the house, and Mr. Buddle stepped into the brilliantly-lit porch and pressed the bell. He removed his hat.

After a few moments the door opened. A lady, clad in a tight pink woollen jumper, surmounted by the frilly collar of a white blouse, threw up her hands.

"Oh, it's Mr. Gump. We'd given you up. We thought you wouldn't face the snow." She turned her head and called: "Lionel, sweetie, it's Mr. Gump. He's come after all."

Mr. Buddle stared into the large hall. Warm, and thickly carpeted, tastefully decorated for Christmas, it looked inviting.

A tall, middle-aged man hurried into the hall.

"Not Mr. Gump, Dor! Mr. Buddle! Come in, Mr. Buddle! We're delighted to see you. Excuse my wife. She's so pleased that you were able to get here in spite of the weather."

Mr. Buddle, rather dazed, carrying his attache case, with his trouser legs tucked into his socks, entered the Grange.

Mr. Buddle was touched by the genuine warmth of the welcome accorded to him by the Merediths. Mrs. Meredith was dithery and excitable. In her pink jumper, with its frilly trimmings, she reminded Mr. Buddle of a butterfly. But there could be no doubt that she was happy to be entertaining her son's schoolmaster. Mr. Meredith, with hair turning iron-grey, was cordial and kindly.

Meredith of the Lower Fourth came forward to greet his form-master. He surprised Mr. Buddle by seeming to be almost shy.

"Lionel, show Mr. Buddle where to put his hat and coat," said Mrs. Meredith. "Your shoes must be wet after coming through the snow. Lionel, sweetie, you must find Mr. Buddle some slippers so that we can dry his shoes in the kitchen."

"A kind thought, Mrs. Meredith," said Mr. Buddle. "If you will kindly put my shoes somewhere to dry, I have my own slippers with me in my case."

In a cloak-room off the hall, Mr. Buddle divested himself of his hat and coat, and donned his slippers while Mr. Meredith carried away the wet shoes.

Five minutes later Mr. Buddle found himself seated before a big fire in the lounge. He was charmed with the room. It was large, but not too large. High, but not too high. The furniture was modern, but not too modern. The atmosphere of the room, to Mr. Buddle, seemed redolent of a pleasant feminine personality. There was a feeling of sheer homely comfort. The Christmas decorations which adorned the walls and the electric chandelier were bright and colourful and in the best of taste. An illuminated Christmas tree added to the homeliness of the scene.

"Cedric is too old for a Christmas tree, of course," explained Mr. Meredith, "but the Camps, who are our only resident servants, love to prepare it every year. They say it wouldn't be Christmas without a tree."

"I think it most attractive," said Mr. Buddle.

He bent forward and stroked a huge

tabby cat lying prone on the rug before the fire. The cat looked up lazily, winked, and sprang on to Mr. Buddle's knee. He ran his fingers through the soft fur, and leaned back comfortably.

Mrs. Meredith came floating into the room. She spoke breathlessly:

"Mrs. Camp is bringing us some tea. You will be ready for it, Mr. Gump —"

"Mr. Buddle!" muttered her husband.

Mrs. Meredith laughed self-consciously.

"Oh, I am a silly puss. Forgive me, Mr. Buddle. Of course, Cedric always calls you Gump. Where do boys find these nice little nicknames for their masters, Mr. Buddle?"

Mr. Buddle shook his head in defeat.

"Oh, you naughty Pumpkin!" went on Mrs. Meredith, and Mr. Buddle regarded her with astonishment. "You know it is forbidden for you to jump up on visitors. Some people don't like cats. I hope you do, Mr. Buddle. Pumpkin has taken it for granted."

Evidently Pumpkin was the cat. Mr. Buddle stroked it again.

"I'm very fond of cats. I think they're homely," he said.

"Cedric is having his tea in his own den," explained Mrs. Meredith brightly. "He thought you would like to talk to his father and me alone."

"We dine at seven, Mr. Buddle," put in Mr. Meredith. "We hope that you will join us."

"You're very kind." Mr. Buddle smiled his appreciation. I'm afraid that my train for Bath leaves just after seven. But a cup of tea will be most welcome."

"Oh, what a shame. We were looking forward to having you for dinner," said Mrs. Meredith. "How silly that sounds, doesn't it?" She drew a chair towards the fire and sat down.

Mr. Meredith crossed to the windows, and peered between the curtains.

"It's a wretched night for continuing your journey, Mr. Buddle." He came back to the fire, and adjusted the cushions in his armchair. "Can't we

persuade you to stay the night here? I want to show you my collection of old papers, and once I get talking I take some stopping. If you would stay, we can accommodate you easily, and it would make us happy. Cedric would be delighted. I would drive you to the station in the morning --"

The ormulu clock over the mantelpiece struck five. Mr. Buddle regarded the glowing fire for a moment, and thought of the wintry night outside.

"You tempt me!" he said doubtfully.

"Then it's settled," exclaimed Mrs. Meredith. "After tea you can telephone your friends at Bath --"

"That will be unnecessary. They will expect me when they see me."

"Then there's nothing to worry about, is there? Lionel, sweetie, you must find Mr. Buddle a suit of pyjamas. You must provide him with a razor and anything else he wants --"

"I have everything I need," said Mr. Buddle. "My luggage was sent on in advance to Bath, but I have all my immediate requirements in my small case."

"Then we're all happy," said Mrs. Meredith. She beamed upon Mr. Buddle and her husband. "I will have a fire lit in your bedroom, and if there is anything you find you want, you must just let us know."

Mrs. Camp brought in a trolley with a dainty tea laid out upon it.

"Debby, this is Ceddie's schoolmaster," said Mrs. Meredith with pride.

Mrs. Camp favoured Mr. Buddle with an approving smile.

"We came along on the bus together," she said. "We had a talk about our cherub."

"How nice, Debby!" Mrs. Meredith fluttered over to the trolley. "Debby, Mr. Buddle is staying the night with us. We must have a fire lit in the Painted Room for him."

"The Painted Room!" echoed Mr. Buddle.

"That's what Lionel always calls it," explained Mrs. Meredith. "I think there was a Painted Room in one of the stories he is so fond of."

"Very appropriate at Christmas time," murmured Mr. Buddle. "Please don't trouble about lighting a fire, though."

His protests were waved aside.

"I'll tell Camp to see to it at once," promised Mrs. Camp. "We must see that our cherub's schoolmaster is comfortable."

It was quite evident to Mr. Buddle that he was regarded as a very important person, simply because he was "our cherub's" schoolmaster. He smiled faintly, and inclined his head in thanks.

Mrs. Camp poked the fire, collected Pumpkin - "Ceddie wants to give you your tea, duckie" - and bustled out.

Mrs. Meredith poured out tea, and handed round dainty sandwiches.

"You wanted to talk to us about Cedric," said Mr. Meredith. "We must not forget the purpose of your visit, Mr. Buddle."

Suddenly Mr. Buddle felt conscience-stricken. He almost wished at that moment that he had not accepted the hospitality of the Merediths quite so readily. It was difficult to tell these kindly people that he was displeased with their son.

Mr. Buddle stirred his tea thoughtfully.

"Your son is a good lad," he said, awkwardly.

"We think so," agreed Mr. Meredith.

Mr. Buddle coughed. He hardly knew how to begin.

"He is a keen sportsman. On the playing fields he gives the greatest promise. It might be true to say that, among his fellows, he is one of the most popular of our juniors," said Mr. Buddle.

Mrs. Meredith twittered.

"Oh, Mr. Gump, those are the nicest words I have ever heard from man or beast."

Mr. Meredith fidgeted.

"Mr. Buddle, Dor - not Mr. Gump."

Mr. Buddle nibbled a sandwich, and drank some tea. After a few moments he said:

"In class he is deplorably lazy. So much so that Mr. Scarlet has debated

whether the boy is not wasting his time and also wasting your expenditure in school fees."

Mr. Meredith gave an uneasy chuckle.

"He's had some bad reports certainly," he admitted. "But, after all, scholastic attainments are not everything. Wasn't it Clive who made a hash of things at school, and then lived on to become one of the nation's Empire builders? At a school like Slade boys learn a way of life, they take a tone, they acquire self-confidence and a sense of sportsmanship which are worth far more than the scholastic education. Do you not agree, Mr. Buddle?"

"To some extent," said Mr. Buddle cautiously. "There is more to it, however. Your son is not an ignorant, brainless boy. He merely poses as one. He could be top of the class if he so desired."

"He passed the Slade entrance examination," put in Mrs. Meredith defensively.

"He is capable of doing well in any examination in due course," said Mr. Buddle. "He is intelligent, but he uses his intelligence to the wrong ends. He makes stupid answers and writes stupid things simply to cause laughter among his friends. Unless he shows improvement next term, it is possible that the Headmaster might ask you to remove him from Slade."

"What nonsense!" Mrs. Meredith tossed her head of fair hair. "Ceddie passed the entrance examination, and he is entitled to be a pupil at Slade. I do not really approve of entrance examinations, Mr. Buddle."

"There must be some form of selection to assure that we get the right type of boy - those who will benefit from the Slade system," Mr. Buddle said mildly.

"Tests of character, certainly - but not scholastic tests. At Slade you have the finest schoolmasters in the country. Am I right, Mr. Buddle?"

"We take pride in our staff," admitted Mr. Buddle modestly.

"All first-class teachers in their

own sphere?"

"Quite!"

"Then why skim off the cream?

Why give entrance exams to assure that you only get intelligent boys? Brainy boys will learn anyway. They do not need first-class tutors. They only need slight guidance in their studies, and they will forge ahead. You, Mr. Buddle, with your great gifts of teaching, are wasted at Slade. Your talents should be devoted to really backward boys who would benefit from a first-class teacher."

Mr. Buddle creased his brows. The conversation seemed to be straying from the point at issue.

"Entrance exams do tend to skim off the cream, Mrs. Meredith, but plenty of boys are coached for these exams, and scrape through by the skin of their teeth. Despite the entrance exams, I often seem to get boys who are almost unteachable."

Mr. Meredith proffered a cigar which Mr. Buddle declined.

"I think I follow the gist of your remarks, Mr. Buddle," said Mr. Meredith. His blue eyes were twinkling. "Mr. Scarlet wishes us to have a straight talk with Ceddie. To read the riot act to him, as it were. To make him understand that unless he pulls his socks up, he may have to leave Slade. I think it unlikely that Mr. Scarlet would want a boy removed from Slade for laziness - but we have to make Ceddie think that such a thing might happen."

Mr. Buddle drew a deep breath. He felt that, under the circumstances, there was but little he could add.

"You are quite right, Mr. Meredith," he said. "I am much obliged to you."

.

After tea, Mrs. Meredith insisted upon taking Mr. Buddle for a conducted tour of "The Grange." He found it entirely to his liking, and even enjoyed listening to the good lady twittering.

It was Meredith of Slade who took his master to see "Cedric's Den" which was a room on the ground floor at the

end of the hall. Comfortably furnished, with bright curtains drawn across French windows, it showed evidence of the untidiness of the typical schoolboy. Pumpkin, the cat, was stretched on the rug before a coal fire.

"I call it 'Nobody's Study,' sir," said Meredith ingenuously. "Do you like it, sir?"

"Very much," said Mr. Buddle. "You are a fortunate boy."

"Pilgrim and Garmansway are coming to spend a week with me from Boxing Day, sir. We're going to have a good time this Christmas, sir."

"I hope so," said Mr. Buddle.

He went to his own bedroom to freshen himself up in readiness for dinner. A bright fire was burning in the grate. Mr. Buddle looked around him.

"The Painted Room!" he murmured. He smiled as he recalled a Gem he had once read concerning a "Painted Room." That apartment had been very different from the room which Mr. Buddle was now occupying, but imagination can work wonders, especially at Christmas time.

At last Mr. Buddle moved over to the window, and peeped out into the darkness between the curtains. Icicles were hanging on the exterior of the window frames. The snow seemed to have stopped falling, but lights from the house showed up snow-covered flower-beds. He felt glad that he had accepted the invitation of the Merediths, and had not again to face the bitter wintry weather that night.

About seven a gong sounded, and Mr. Buddle descended to the dining room. Mr. and Mrs. Meredith were cordiality itself, obviously pleased to have Mr. Buddle at their table. Their son sat opposite to Mr. Buddle.

The Camps brought in the various dishes, and Mrs. Meredith served them. There was a rich tomato soup, followed by roast duck, sprouts, and potatoes. A dainty sweet wound up the meal. Mr. Buddle had not eaten much that day, and did full justice to everything. A rosy glow of contentment had stolen over him.

He was most surprised by the behaviour of Meredith of Slade. It is said that home is the place where boys are treated the best and behave the worst. Such was not the case with Meredith. It was difficult to realise that this polite, pleasant youngster was the same fellow who so often was Mr. Buddle's hair-shirt at school. He joined in the conversation occasionally without being presumptuous; he would express an opinion without being precocious; more often he was silent without being painfully shy.

His parents were obviously deeply proud of him. That was no criterion. Parents are often proud of the most unpleasant of offspring. But Mr. Buddle was more impressed by the attitude of the Camps. Mrs. Camp clearly adored her "cherub." Mr. Camp had privately observed to Mr. Buddle that "Ceddie is a very fine boy."

If the servants of the house regarded the son of the house as being from the top drawer, then clearly there was a side to Meredith's character which Mr. Buddle had never noted at Slade.

Dinner over, Mrs. Meredith mentioned that she would now withdraw to her kitchen, where she had arrangements in hand for Christmas. Meredith adjourned to his den.

Mr. Meredith and Mr. Buddle returned to the lounge, where, in armchairs before the fire, they sipped coffee, and Mr. Meredith smoked a cigar. Mr. Meredith was an entertaining conversationalist, and Mr. Buddle was enjoying himself immensely.

Time slipped by and it had turned nine before Mr. Meredith broached the subject of Gems.

"Cedric tells me that you are interested in the Gem, Mr. Buddle," said Mr. Meredith.

"Well —" Mr. Buddle clasped his hands across his waistcoat. "That is, perhaps, an overstatement. As a schoolmaster —"

He paused and blushed.

Mr. Meredith smiled.

"As a schoolmaster you would regard

it as 'infra dig' to read the Gem?"

"Not exactly. I think I was about to say that as a schoolmaster I am compelled to cultivate a modicum of dignity. I have seen quite a number of copies of the Gem - chiefly those which you have sent to - er - Cedric. Strictly speaking, Mr. Meredith, Slade boys are not allowed to have papers of that type in term-time."

Mr. Meredith laughed.

"No living boy has ever been harmed by the Gem. Quite the reverse."

"I think I would agree with you," confessed Mr. Buddle. "No doubt some periodicals would be harmful for growing lads. When school rules are made, it is difficult to make exceptions."

Mr. Meredith shrugged his shoulders.

"Rules must be kept, of course. After all, we send our sons to Slade to learn discipline. I daresay that some rules are kept more in the breach than in the observance."

"In your son's case, that is certainly true," said Mr. Buddle drily. "He is often found reading the Gem when he should be deep in his studies."

Mr. Meredith laughed heartily this time. Too heartily, Mr. Buddle thought.

"The young rascal. A chip off the old block. I did exactly the same when I was his age, Mr. Buddle. It hasn't retarded me as an adult. I've done as well as the next man."

"Quite!" said Mr. Buddle

"I should like to show you my collection of Gems, Mr. Buddle. You can rely on my discretion. If you enjoy yourself browsing over them, I shall not pass on the information to my boy."

"I shall be very happy to see them," said Mr. Buddle. He tried not to speak too eagerly.

"I have them all," remarked Mr. Meredith modestly.

"Wonderful!" breathed Mr. Buddle - and really meant it.

The two men went to Mr. Meredith's library. This was another room off the hall. Only half the size of the lounge, it was well-appointed and comfortable.

Book-shelves lined the room. Heavy curtains were drawn across the windows, and an electric fire was sending out a kindly warmth.

Mr. Meredith opened the door of a bookcase in which were standing several dozen books, all elaborately bound in blue calf. He drew out one of the volumes and handed it to Mr. Buddle.

"Gems beyond price!" said Mr. Meredith with a smile.

Mr. Buddle opened the book. Slowly he turned the pages. After a few moments, he glanced at his host.

"I see this paper is marked as selling for one halfpenny. It seems an incredibly low price," he said.

"Yes, the first forty-eight were published at a halfpenny. Then it started again at Number One as a penny paper. During the war it rose to three-halfpence. Now it is tuppence. Time marches on, Mr. Buddle!"

"Would these be worth a lot of money, Mr. Meredith?"

Mr. Meredith did not reply for a moment. He drew a stack of volumes from his bookcase, and carried them over to the table near the fire. He indicated an armchair.

"Make yourself comfortable, Mr. Buddle. Browse anywhere you like in the books. You asked about the value of these. Not high, I imagine. More than the price marked on them, of course. I daresay if anybody wanted them badly he might make a substantial offer for them, but I reckon it unlikely that many people would be interested in them. Some of my friends think I'm mad to have affection for old papers I read years ago. I hope you don't feel the same about it, Mr. Buddle."

"Decidedly not!" exclaimed Mr. Buddle. "If I had a collection like this, I should be proud indeed."

"Well, that's something from a schoolmaster," said Mr. Meredith with a dry chuckle.

"I presume that you do not send volumes like this to your son at school," murmured Mr. Buddle.

DOUBLE-LENGTH TALE OF TOM MERRY in this issue.



The First Ever Christmas Number of the Gem in 1907.
So long ago!

"I draw the line at that! Cedric can use them when he is home. I possess, however, large numbers of unbound duplicate copies. I let him have a few of those at school."

Mr. Buddle smiled.

"I have seen some of them. I recall

reading one called 'Baffled,' and its sequel."

"Ah, the Captain Mellish stories. First-class of their type, would you not agree, Mr. Buddle?"

"Quite first-class!" concurred Mr. Buddle.

"That story you have open on your knee is the very first Christmas Number of the Gem. A long, long while ago, Mr. Buddle."

Mr. Buddle scanned the book. He saw a seasonable picture on a blue cover - a plump schoolboy, with a turkey about to land on his head. Mr. Buddle turned the cover, and looked at the title of the story.

"'Tom Merry's Christmas'," muttered Mr. Buddle. "So long ago!" He touched the copy almost reverently.

"Have you come upon any of the Talbot stories?" enquired Mr. Meredith.

And so the two gentlemen browsed and chatted as the seconds ticked away. Inhibition slipped from Mr. Buddle, and he grew more and more animated. Mr. Meredith's boyish enthusiasm was infectious. It was a

long time since Mr. Buddle had enjoyed himself so much.

At nine-forty-five, Cedric came into the library to say good-night to his father and his formmaster. There was the slightest glimmer of fun in his blue eyes. He departed with a volume of Gems

under his arm.

It was after ten when Mrs. Meredith entered.

"I'm going to bed now, Lionel, sweetie," she said. "You will excuse me, Mr. Buddle?"

Mr. Buddle had risen to his feet, and he made an appropriate reply.

Mrs. Meredith smiled as she viewed the many volumes of Gems spread over the table.

"Men never grow up, do they, Mr. Buddle?" she said brightly. "I'm sure you two will be talking Gems until midnight."

"I'll lock up, Dor!" said Mr. Meredith, and after a few more comments, Mrs. Meredith fluttered from the room.

Mr. Buddle and Mr. Meredith resumed their happy browsing, the host acting as a guide. Obviously, what Mr. Meredith did not know about Gems was not worth knowing.

It was after ten-thirty when a bell sounded.

Mr. Meredith had a puzzled expression on his face. He placed on the table the volume he had been holding.

"That's the front door bell! Who the dickens can it be at this time of night? Excuse me, Mr. Buddle, while I see who it is. The Camps are in bed, and I don't want my wife to come down."

He hurried out of the library. Idly, Mr. Buddle turned over the pages of a volume. Unconsciously, he spoke the succeeding titles aloud: "Seven School-boys and Solomon," "Cardew and the Campers," "Camp, Caravan, and Cricket."

There was the sound of men's voices in the hall, and then silence. After a few moments Mr. Meredith came back into the library. He was smiling broadly.

"An unexpected visitor, Mr. Buddle. A police officer - to see YOU!"

"A police officer - to see ME!" Mr. Buddle stared at him in amazement. "Really, Mr. Meredith --"

"It seems that you have lost your wallet, Mr. Buddle. It was handed in at Taunton police station. An officer has brought it here for you. It transpires that he knows you --"

"My wallet!" Mr. Buddle's hand flew to his breast pocket. He rose hastily to his feet. "Calamity! I have lost my wallet. It's gone! How on earth --?"

"You had better come and see the officer," said Mr. Meredith good-humouredly.

"Goodness gracious, yes, certainly." Mr. Buddle was agitated.

He followed his host from the library into the hall. At the bend of the staircase Mrs. Meredith was standing, clad in a pale blue dressing-gown. She called out in enquiry.

"What is it, sweetie? I heard the front door bell."

Mr. Meredith answered reassuringly.

"It's nothing, Dor! Just a policeman brought back something Mr. Buddle lost in Taunton."

"How nice!" said Mrs. Meredith. She beamed. "Give the dear man a drink before you send him out in the cold again, Lionel."

"I'll do that. Get back to bed, dear. You mustn't land yourself with a cold over Christmas."

Mrs. Meredith turned to return to her room, while Mr. Buddle and Mr. Meredith entered the lounge.

A man was standing before the dying fire in the grate. He was clad in a thick overcoat, sprinkled with melting flakes of snow. He was wearing gloves. He smiled pleasantly at Mr. Buddle.

"We meet again, Mr. Buddle."

"Captain Punter!" ejaculated Mr. Buddle.

"You have a good memory, sir," said Captain Punter.

"The name, for some reason, impressed itself in my mind," said Mr. Buddle. "I never expected to meet you again. I do not understand --"

Captain Punter had a brown wallet in his gloved hand. He held it out to Mr. Buddle, and the schoolmaster moved forward and took it.

"Is that your wallet, sir?"

"It looks like it." Mr. Buddle opened the wallet and gave a quick

glance inside. "It is certainly my wallet. I hadn't missed it. I haven't even thought of it all the evening. I have been enjoying myself so much --"

Mr. Meredith gave an appreciative chuckle.

"You're a lucky man to get it back," he said.

There was a puzzled expression on Mr. Buddle's face.

"But I'm dazed, Captain Punter, as well as extremely grateful. How did the wallet come into your hands, and how on earth did you know it was mine?"

The Captain thrust his hands into the pockets of his overcoat. He leaned back against the mantelpiece.

"I think I told you that I was calling at Taunton police station. While I was there a young woman brought the wallet in. She had picked it up outside Taunton railway station. I recognized it as yours."

"Amazing!" muttered Mr. Buddle. "It is a very ordinary wallet. It astounds me that you should have associated it with me."

"We are trained to be observant in the C.I.D.," said Captain Punter modestly.

"You have certainly given proof of that. I dozed in the train, Captain Punter. I was roused at Taunton station, and was surprised to find that you had gone."

"A natural reaction," said Captain Punter. "As a matter of fact, not realising that we were so close to Taunton, I went along to the toilet. While I was there, the train drew up at Taunton station... I had to hustle."

"That explains it," murmured Mr. Buddle. "When I found you gone, I feared for a moment that you had left the train at Taunton, and that I had been carried on in the train."

"A nasty moment for you," agreed Punter. "When we examined the wallet at the police station, we found the letter to which you had referred in the train. You mentioned 'The Grange'. The letter gave the actual address, and the envelope gave your name. Owing to the weather I had decided to stay the

night in a Taunton hotel, so I thought I would run out here in an effort to return your property to you. I am glad to have been of service to a very pleasant travelling companion."

"I am most deeply obliged to you, Captain Punter," said Mr. Buddle.

"Don't mention it, sir. Perhaps you will just examine the wallet to make sure that the contents are intact."

Mr. Buddle examined the contents of the wallet.

"Everything is here, Captain Punter. My chequebook, and £20 in currency notes."

There was an odd expression on his face. He regarded Captain Punter curiously.

"Luckily there are still some honest people about," remarked Mr. Meredith.

"Lucky for me," said Mr. Buddle.

"I can only repeat my thanks, Captain. But you are very wet --"

"It's nothing!" said the Captain.

"I have a police car outside."

"We did not hear your car," said Mr. Buddle.

"I left it in the lane. I wouldn't risk our driver carrying away part of your gate post in the dark."

"Well! well! you have done your good deed for Christmas," commented Mr. Meredith. "You will, at least, join us in a drink, Captain Punter. Something to keep the cold out till you reach your hotel."

"You are very good, sir," replied the Captain.

Mr. Buddle had been standing motionless, with that rather thoughtful expression on his face. He said suddenly:

"May I use your telephone, Mr. Meredith? I must ring the local police and thank the station officer. I have been saved a considerable loss, and must make arrangements to reward the finder--"

Mr. Meredith arched his eyebrows, but it was Captain Punter who spoke.

"Quite unnecessary, Mr. Buddle. You can call at the station to-morrow and get the address of the woman who turned your wallet in."

Mr. Buddle shook his head obstinately.

"One must show appreciation to the local police, Captain Punter. I insist! You have no objection to my ringing them?"

"No, sir." Captain Punter shrugged his shoulders. "I can only assure you it is quite unnecessary."

Mr. Buddle looked at his host.

"May I use the telephone, Mr. Meredith —?"

There was a look of mild surprise on Mr. Meredith's face.

"The 'phone is in the hall. Help yourself, Mr. Buddle. But as Captain Punter is here —"

"Thank you very much. In just a few moments I will be back with you, Captain Punter, to drink your health and wish you a merry Christmas."

Punter did not speak. There was a fixed smile on his lips. He turned towards the fire and stretched out his gloved hands. Mr. Meredith crossed to the sideboard. Quietly Mr. Buddle left the room. He drew the door shut behind him.

He stood still for a couple of seconds. He noted that the door of Meredith's den, situated to the rear of the staircase, was half-opened. Meredith was peeping round the door.

"I heard the bell, sir," explained Meredith. "Wondered who it was —"

Mr. Buddle hastened towards him. He spoke softly.

"You should be in bed, at this hour, Meredith."

"I always have a read in my den, sir, before I go to bed."

Mr. Buddle placed a finger to his lips to indicate silence, and Meredith stared at him in astonishment.

"Keep silent, Meredith. Stay here. I may need you."

The boy watched his master tread silently down the thickly-carpeted hall to the telephone which stood on a small table. Mr. Buddle stood for a short time with the receiver to his ear. Then he replaced the instrument, turned, and beckoned to Meredith.

The boy hastened down the hall, and

joined Mr. Buddle.

"Meredith," said Mr. Buddle, speaking quietly and calmly. "Do not be alarmed! A man has just called. He is with your father now. I met him on the train. He calls himself Captain Punter."

"Captain Punter!" echoed Meredith. His cheeks dimpled into a grin. The name had the same literary associations for him as it had for Mr. Buddle.

"He claims to be a Scotland Yard man calling to restore my wallet to me. I believe he is a rascal who intends to rob your father."

Meredith gazed incredulously at Mr. Buddle.

"Crikey! What are you going to do, sir?"

"This telephone is dead, Meredith." Mr. Buddle's voice dropped nearly to a whisper. "I cannot get the exchange. The lines may be affected by the weather. On the other hand, Punter may have cut them outside the house. Is there a public telephone near?"

Meredith's blue eyes were dancing with excitement.

"There's one down the road, against the signpost, sir."

"Good! Here are a few pence in case you need them. Go to that telephone box, Meredith. Put an emergency call through to Taunton police station. Ask them if they have sent a Captain Punter of Scotland Yard to your father's house with a wallet. If they have not, then ask them to send us assistance immediately."

"And if that telephone is out of order, too, sir?"

"Then go on into the town as fast as you can, and call at the police station. It is very cold. You had better get a coat —"

"I'll sprint better as I am, sir. I'm a pretty good sprinter."

Silently Mr. Buddle opened the front door.

"Meredith, Punter says that he has a police car standing in the lane. If you find that is so, then just return

quietly - and say nothing. I shall be surprised if you find a car there."

"Rely on me, sir," said Meredith in a low voice.

The boy was away like the wind, and Mr. Buddle watched the lithe form disappear into the darkness down the snow-covered drive.

Mr. Buddle left the door ajar. The night was still, and it would not blow open. He drew a deep breath. With his heart thumping a little, he crossed the hall and entered the lounge.

Mr. Meredith and Captain Punter were standing by the fire, which had been poked into a blaze. Both men held glasses in their hands.

Punter eyed Mr. Buddle reflectively.

"Did you get through?" he asked carelessly.

"Indeed, not!" Mr. Buddle clasped his hands and spoke a trifle breathlessly. "Your telephone is out of order, Mr. Meredith. I waited quite a time, but was unable to contact the exchange."

"I'm not surprised," said Captain Punter. "It's the weather. We've had many reports at the station of wires being down."

"Very vexatious!" muttered Mr. Buddle.

"You can call at the police station in the morning," said Mr. Meredith. "In any case, Captain Punter will convey your thanks to the station officer. And now, Mr. Buddle, you will join us in a drink? What can I get you?"

"Normally I do not take alcohol," said Mr. Buddle. "However, on an occasion like this —"

His eyes strayed to the clock over the mantelpiece.

"You have something to celebrate," suggested Captain Punter. "Also - it's Christmas time."

"A small port, perhaps, Mr. Buddle," said Mr. Meredith, moving over to the sideboard.

"A brandy, I think, Mr. Meredith," said Mr. Buddle. He sank down in a chair.

"Good idea!" commented Mr. Meredith.

If he was surprised to receive a request for brandy from a gentleman who did not normally take alcohol, he did not show it. He poured brandy into a glass.

"Soda, Mr. Buddle?"

"Er - no - yes - a splash, perhaps."

Mr. Meredith took the glass to him, and Mr. Buddle rose to his feet again. He squared his shoulders, and lifted the glass.

"A merry Christmas to you, both, gentlemen," he said jerkily.

The two men raised their glasses and both murmured a response. Mr. Buddle took a sip. He coughed. Then he took a larger sip. Then another.

Captain Punter placed his glass on a tray.

"I suppose I must face the elements again," he said. "I must say that I shan't be sorry to be tucked into my little bed at my hotel. I've had a busy day."

"You lead more exciting lives than we more prosaic folk," said Mr. Meredith.

"I suppose so, sir. Too exciting sometimes." Captain Punter smiled.

"Well, I will say good-night, gentlemen, and be on my way."

He held out his gloved hand, and Mr. Meredith grasped it. Then Mr. Buddle shook hands, and rather breathlessly expressed his gratitude once again.

The three men moved across the room. Mr. Meredith opened the door, and stood back for Captain Punter to pass through first.

Captain Punter stood in the doorway. He glanced up and down the brightly-lit hall, and up the wide staircase. Then he turned, his hands in the pocket of his overcoat.

"I failed to apologize for calling upon you so late in the evening," he said. "I hope I did not disturb any members of your household, Mr. Meredith."

Mr. Buddle was watching him. He thought he detected a note of mockery in the man's voice.

Mr. Meredith answered unsuspiciously.

"My two servants go to bed fairly early. I doubt whether an earthquake

would awaken them. My wife and son have also retired. Both Mr. Buddle and I are grateful to you for coming."

He stepped forward, anticipating the exit of Captain Punter. The man did not move. Slowly he drew his right hand from his pocket. Mr. Meredith uttered a startled exclamation when he saw that Punter was holding a small automatic pistol.

"What the dicken --?"

"Ah!" muttered Mr. Buddle.

"Back, both of you!" snapped Captain Punter. His expression was now hard and grim. He made a gesture with the weapon. "This gun is small, but it's quite deadly."

Mr. Buddle and Mr. Meredith took a few steps to the rear, and Punter stood inside the doorway again.

"Are you mad?" gasped Mr. Meredith. "Who are you? You said you were a police officer."

Captain Punter smiled.

"I'm not a truthful man, Mr. Meredith. A regrettable confession, but a fact. I will now trouble you for the little bits of glass."

"Glass!" ejaculated Mr. Meredith in astonishment. "Is this some mad jest?"

"The sparklers!" explained Captain Punter. "That valuable collection which is the pride of your heart. I'm relieving you of it."

"Collection!" Mr. Meredith spoke mechanically. "I have no collection of glass. You're crazy, man."

"Don't waste my time!" said Punter softly. "I want those gems, whatever and wherever they are. Where do you keep them? We'll get them together, all three of us. Come quickly. Pony up, if you don't want your wife to be scared to death by the racket of my gun blowing your fingers off."

Mr. Buddle had paled. He was breathing hard, but he spoke calmly.

"This man is under the impression that you have a collection of precious stones, Mr. Meredith. He read your wife's letter to me, in which she referred to a collection of Gems, and his greedy mind misinterpreted what was

meant. Show the man your collection of gems, Mr. Meredith."

"My collection of - Gems!" muttered Mr. Meredith.

Captain Punter looked from one to the other. He shook the automatic menacingly.

"I'm losing patience. I give you five seconds," he said.

Mr. Buddle turned on him the gaze with which he had often withered unruly schoolboys.

"Mr. Meredith's gems are in his library - across the hall. I will lead the way, if you wish, while you cover me with that revolver of yours."

"That's more like a sensible little man!" said Punter. He made a gesture.

Once again Mr. Buddle's eyes strayed to the clock. Then he moved forward slowly, followed by the dazed Mr. Meredith. They passed Captain Punter, and he followed them into the hall, darting a look to right and to left as he did so.

At the library door, Mr. Buddle paused.

"Hurry!" hissed Punter.

Mr. Meredith threw open the library door, and they went in. He indicated the volumes of Gems which lay haphazardly on the table, in the chairs, even on the carpet near the electric fire, as he and Mr. Buddle had left them.

"Those books are my collection of Gems," said Mr. Meredith. "I value them - but they would be of no commercial value to you."

Mr. Buddle picked up one of the volumes, and opened it at a red, white, and blue cover. He pointed to the name of the periodical.

He said contemptuously: "The Gem, Captain Punter. Merely a boys' story paper. One which I am sure you never read in your youth."

Punter strode forward. Still with the automatic levelled he opened another volume, and glanced down at it.

"A collection of Gems!" he said between his teeth. "A collection of kids' papers. And I fell for it."

He picked up the book and flung it into a chair. With glinting eyes he regarded the two men who stood together.

"You can give me that wallet back."

With a grim face, Mr. Buddle drew his wallet from his pocket and dropped it on the table.

"I was expecting to have to return it to you," he said.

"Then you're not disappointed," said Captain Punter. He slipped the wallet into his pocket. The wicked-looking little automatic pistol was still held steadily. "I don't want your collection of nursery books. My fence would think me a looney if I took him those for disposal." He cast an eye round the room. "But this little love nest isn't run on air. You're well-heeled, Mr. Meredith. You've got plenty of the necessary. I reckon your missus has plenty of sparklers. We'll go and get them together. You won't try anything stupid, if you don't want your wife to have a heart attack when she finds you with a bullet in your head. I'm not leaving empty-handed."

"Don't disturb my wife and son," said Mr. Meredith in a low voice. "I have money in my safe. I will hand it to you - £50 or a little more - if you will take it and leave quietly."

There was a sneer on Punter's face.

"Move quickly - before I get impatient."

Mr. Meredith, taut and pale, turned as Punter moved forward. Mr. Buddle stood like a rock in the doorway.

"Wait!" he said. There was a tremor in his voice, but he looked determined. "I think I should tell you, Captain Punter, that at this very moment the police are on their way to this house."

Punter came forward and Mr. Buddle backed into the hall.

"Get out of the way, you old fool! Shut up!"

"I sent for the police twenty minutes ago," said Mr. Buddle. Tense though he was, he showed no sign of fear.

The three of them were in the hall now. The house seemed still and silent. Mr. Meredith was looking doubtfully at

Mr. Buddle.

"Get the boodle," said Punter, in a low, furious voice. "Money from your pockets first."

Hurriedly Mr. Meredith slipped a hand into his breast pocket, but Mr. Buddle interposed again.

"Listen!" he said.

From the distant roadway came the sound of a car engine.

Punter stood with glittering eyes.

"Just a car in the road. You never telephoned the police, you old liar!"

"No!" Mr. Buddle spoke breathlessly.

"I didn't telephone the police, as you know only too well. You cut the telephone wires somewhere outside the house. But I sent Mr. Meredith's son to use the telephone down at the road junction. The front door still stands ajar, as he left it when he went out."

The sound of a car engine was coming nearer outside the house. With a suppressed oath, Captain Punter leaped towards the door.

"Help!" shouted Mr. Buddle.

He sprang after Punter with a speed which would have amazed his form at Slade. Mr. Meredith rushed to his assistance.

Punter opened the door as Mr. Buddle was upon him. The man swept a heavy arm round and Mr. Buddle went spinning to crash into the hall-stand. Mr. Meredith jumped on one side as the automatic pistol was hurled at him.

Men's voices sounded from the porch. Punter turned, looked around for a moment, and then sped towards the staircase.

A lithe figure came through the doorway, and Meredith of Slade was after the lawbreaker with a speed he had never exceeded on the soccer field. In another second, even as his father shouted an agonised warning to him, Meredith had caught up with Punter and leaped on to his back as he ascended the staircase in a vain effort to escape.

Two burly policemen pounded across the hall as Punter and Meredith rolled together on the staircase.

.....

It was nearly an hour later. Outside the Grange a waning moon was rising to shed a ghostly light over the snow-covered countryside. There the cold was intense, but in the comfortable lounge of the house a couple of logs had been thrown on the embers of the fire, and everything looked cosy and seasonable as the lights shone on the Christmas decorations.

Captain Punter had long gone off in the police car with three officers, to spend his Christmas in far less festive surroundings. Mrs. Meredith, roused and alarmed by the disturbance, had descended the stairs clad in her blue dressing gown, looking more like a night moth now than a butterfly.

After the police officers had departed with their prisoner, well-satisfied with their evening's work, Mr. Meredith, Mr. Meredith's son, and Mr. Buddle had seated themselves by the fire, while Mrs. Meredith fluttered away to make coffee.

Now Mr. Meredith was seated on the settee with his wife. Mr. Buddle was in a large armchair, his slippered feet outstretched towards the blazing logs. Meredith of Slade was sprawling in the other armchair.

Mr. Buddle stirred his coffee.

"I hope that you do not feel too distressed by this unfortunate affair, Mrs. Meredith," he remarked kindly.

"Distressed?" Mrs. Meredith gave an excited little giggle. "I don't feel distressed at all, Mr. Gump - I mean, Buddle. It's the most wonderful thing we've ever had happen at the Grange, and we owe it all to you. I shall tell all our friends about your bravery, Mr. Gump - I mean, Buddle. You were - were superb. I am so proud to think that you are Ceddie's schoolmaster. I am so sorry that you were injured in the battle with that fiendish criminal."

Mr. Buddle blushed. He guessed that the little adventure of that night would lose nothing as Mrs. Meredith told of it in days to come. He passed his hand over his chin, where a bruise was forming.

"Cedric must tell all his friends at

school," went on Mrs. Meredith. "You, Lionel, must give a pot - or something - to be competed for at Slade in perpetual memory of Mr. Buddle's heroism."

Mr. Buddle shuddered.

"I doubt whether Mr. Buddle would favour the idea, Dor," said Mr. Meredith mildly.

"Certainly not!" yapped Mr. Buddle.

"Nonsense!" said Mrs. Meredith decidedly. "You must blow your own trumpet, Mr. Buddle. If you don't blow it, we must blow it for you. You mustn't hide your light under a bushel."

Mr. Buddle shook his head.

"I hope you won't embarrass me by blowing anything, Mrs. Meredith."

"What puzzles me," said Mr. Meredith, his brows puckered, "is how you came to suspect the man in the first place. I can't think what roused your suspicions of him. I, myself, was thunderstruck when he produced that revolver, yet you obviously were expecting something of the sort."

Mr. Buddle stared at the dancing flames in the fire. Once again he passed his hand over his chin which was quite painful.

"In the first place, something psychological, perhaps," he said slowly. "After all, to meet on a train a man named Captain Punter --"

The boy in the armchair chuckled.

"Any Gem reader would know what to expect from a Captain Punter, dad," he said slyly.

Mr. Buddle coughed.

"A false name, in this case, I haven't much doubt," exclaimed Mr. Meredith. "I gather from the police that there have been several robberies in the south of England carried out by a man who obtained entry to houses by posing as a police officer. He was unlucky in his choice of a name. Of course, he knew nothing of the Gem - or of Gem readers."

Mr. Buddle coughed again.

He said, rather self-consciously:

"The name - well, of course, that was merely a passing thought with me.

There were his yellow socks —"

"Yellow socks?"

"It seemed out of character that a Scotland Yard official would wear yellow socks. And he wore a cap. Somehow, one always thinks — probably inaccurately — of a detective in a bowler hat."

Meredith of Slade spoke impulsively.

"That's worthy of Nelson Lee, sir. I must tell Hunwick all about it next term."

"Do nothing of the sort!" said Mr. Buddle. "I don't suppose for a moment there is any reason why a detective should not be named Punter, and wear yellow socks and a cap. They were just rather idle and facetious thoughts which passed through my mind in the train. I cannot claim that I had any genuine suspicion of the man at that time."

"Then why suspect him when he calls at the house to return your wallet?" demanded Mr. Meredith. "Surely it should have been proof of his honesty."

Mr. Buddle smiled complacently, and settled himself a little more comfortably in his armchair.

"To me, it was certain proof of his dishonest intentions," he said.

"Mr. Buddle, you have a wonderful brain," murmured Mrs. Meredith. "I've always heard it said that small men have big brains."

"Dor!" muttered her husband.

"It was just common sense, Mrs. Meredith. You see, I knew that I had not lost my wallet. I remembered quite clearly placing it securely in my breast pocket. It could not have been lost, and I was certain on that point. It could only have been stolen — and the only person who had the opportunity of stealing it was the man with me in the railway compartment. He took it while I was dozing. He then left the compartment, and probably left the train at the next available station."

"Yet he returned the wallet to you with your money intact," said Mr. Meredith.

"Quite so! At first, no doubt, he congratulated himself on acquiring £20

so easily, but after reading Mrs. Meredith's letter he saw possibilities of much greater gain. He saw her reference to a valuable collection of Gems — and, naturally enough, assumed that the collection was of precious stones. He came to the house late in the evening, when he could assume that many members of the household would have retired. The returning of the wallet was an excuse for him to obtain admittance, and I was certain of that, as soon as I saw that the contents of my wallet were intact. His intention was to dispel any possible suspicion. It gave him the chance to spy out the lie of the land, as it were."

"You actually thought about the Gems, Mr. Buddle?"

"It seemed the only explanation," said Mr. Buddle. "The man claimed to have come in a car, but his coat was very wet. It had stopped snowing, and he would not have got wet in walking up your drive. Clearly he had been scouting among the snowy bushes round the house, and that was how he got wet. He has a veneer of refinement, which is necessary in his odd profession, yet he wore his gloves all the time in the house."

"I noticed that!" admitted Mr. Meredith. "Were you not surprised to find that the telephone had been tampered with?"

"I should have been surprised had it not been," answered Mr. Buddle. "An experienced housebreaker has no trouble in finding the place where the telephone wires enter a house. In your case, the wire goes down inside the front porch, as the police noted. When I found the line dead, I had no doubts at all. The man had no worry that he had not completely deceived us, but he would never have allowed me to use a telephone which was in order. I should add that, without the presence of mind and athletic ability of your son, Mr. Meredith, we should still have found it a hard task to foil the lawbreaker in his designs."

Meredith of Slade grinned, and turned pink.

"Ceddie is a wonderful boy," agreed Mrs. Meredith. She turned a look of

affectionate pride in the direction of her son.

"I have come to the conclusion to-night," said Mr. Buddle, "that scholastic attainments are not everything. The acquirement of a healthy body, an alert brain - and courage - is also a major part of any boy's education."

The clock was chiming. The night was growing old.

Mr. Meredith rose to his feet.

"We're all losing our beauty sleep - and it's Christmas Eve," he said thoughtfully. "But for you, Mr. Buddle, I might have suffered serious loss this Christmastide. Our Christmas would certainly have been spoiled."

"You give me far too much credit, sir. After all, but for me that villain would never have visited your home at all."

Mrs. Meredith joined her husband, and slipped her arm through his. She smiled down happily at Mr. Buddle.

"We shall always remember how you risked your life in dealing with that dreadful man, Mr. Buddle," she said brightly.

Mr. Buddle stood up. He shook his head.

"There was not much risk, Mrs. Meredith. The police discovered that the gun which Punter carried was not loaded."

"But you didn't know that!" said Mrs. Meredith with emphasis. "Your bravery was enormous. We can never forget it."

"May I ask you a special favour, Mr. Buddle?" asked Mr. Meredith.

Mr. Buddle looked curiously at his host.

"Anything, Mr. Meredith," he replied. Mr. Meredith smiled.

"Grant us the favour of your company for Christmas, Mr. Buddle. We should be very happy indeed if you would spend Christmas with us."

Mrs. Meredith gave a little chirp of delight.

"Oh, Lionel, sweetie, what a lovely thought! Please say you'll stay,

Mr. Buddle. We shall have a very quiet Christmas Day, but, after all, it really is a religious festival, isn't it? But we have a little party of friends coming in on Boxing Day. We have two of Ceddie's friends coming - the nice boy Bunyan -"

"Pilgrim!" put in Ceddie.

"We shall have a lovely Christmas," said Mrs. Meredith, "and we shall enjoy it all the more if you are here."

"Please stay with us, Mr. Buddle," added her husband.

Mr. Buddle's face was beaming. He thought for a moment of the loneliness he would endure in the crowded hotel at Bath, and compared it with the kindness of these warm-hearted people and the gentle spirit of Christmas which was so evident in their comfortable home. Much water had flowed under the bridges since Mr. Buddle had last enjoyed what he would have called a family Christmas; thirty years at least had passed since he had, as a young man, spent Yuletide in homely surroundings. At that moment Mr. Buddle could think of nothing more attractive than Christmas with the Merediths, who so obviously wanted his company.

He spoke softly. There was a lump in his throat.

"You are very kind to me. I can only say -"

He was about to accept the invitation with pleasure when his eyes fell on the face of Meredith of Slade. That face was woebegone. As Meredith realised that Mr. Buddle was looking at him, his expression changed instantly. He smiled.

But in that woebegone expression, before the smile transformed it, Mr. Buddle had read the boy's thoughts, as surely as though they had been spoken aloud. A schoolboy could not be expected to welcome his schoolmaster's presence in his home at Christmas time. For the schoolboy, it would be a tragedy, putting a damper on his high spirits.

"You are very kind," repeated Mr. Buddle. "I wish I could stay with you, and I shall never forget the compliment

you have paid me. But - Mr. Scarlet would not approve of a member of his staff accepting such generous hospitality from parents of a Slade boy. And my arrangements are made. I cannot - disappoint - my friends."

"Oh, what a shame!" cried Mrs. Meredith.

Cedric Meredith was on his feet now. As Mr. Buddle had read his thoughts, so, in his turn, the boy read Mr. Buddle's thoughts, and detected the deeper tragedy. In those few seconds, breeding told, and Meredith was conscience-stricken.

He went quickly to the form-master's side, and touched his sleeve shyly.

"Please stay, sir," he said in a low voice. "I want you to stay - for Christmas, sir --"

Mr. Meredith looked curiously at his guest.

"You hear what the boy says, Mr. Buddle?"

Mr. Buddle stood in silence, undecided, for a moment or two. Then he smiled. Suppressing a sigh, he said:

"I must leave on the morning of Boxing Day. But, if I may, I will accept your kind invitation, and spend to-morrow and Christmas Day with you."

"Hurrah!" shouted Meredith. "A Merry Christmas everyone!"

.

When, after breakfast on Christmas morning, Mr. Buddle went to his "Painted Room," he found a small package, bearing his name, on his bed.

He opened it, and drew out two periodicals. One was a Gem, with a slightly faded blue cover showing a plump youth with a turkey on his head. It was the very first Christmas Double Number of the Gem.

The other periodical was a Nelson Lee Library which was obviously new, and gave off the slightest pleasant scent of printer's ink. Probably Meredith had gone into Taunton on the previous day to purchase it.

Pinned to the Nelson Lee Library was a card, on which was written, in Meredith's round hand:

"To Our Own Schoolmaster
Detective. To Remind
Him Of One Exciting
Christmas."

* * * * *

WANTED: Famous Fights.

Thomas Langley, 57 Sandgate Road, Birmingham, 28.

WANTED: B.F.L. 1st 635 The Bell of Santadino; S.B.L. 1st 153 The Secret of the Glacier; Gem 550 Looking After Levison.

A. FENNER, 111, THE AVENUE, LONDON, E.4.

WANTED: Lot O Funs for 1925/26 also Boys Friend Library Reprints of Jack, Sam and Pete.

D. A. Liddell, "Gladstone," Bishopton, Renfrewshire.

MAGNETS wanted. Details and Price please. I have some for exchange.

J. YAFFE, 13, CEDRIC ROAD, MANCHESTER, 8. LANCS.

WANTED TO BUY: Union Jacks, Boys Friend 4d, Buffalo Bill 4d, Chums.

R. W. Story, 34 Aberdeen Crescent, Bramalea, via Brampton, Ontario, Canada.

Sexton Blake in The Penny Popular

By VICTOR COLBY

(EDITORIAL COMMENT: Some time ago this article appeared in the Australian "Golden Hours" Magazine. It struck us as being a remarkable achievement on the part of Mr. Colby, and it seemed to us to be a great pity that it should earn only a limited readership. Therefore, in order to bring it to the fireside of a much larger number of enthusiasts, we are reprinting it in Collectors' Digest Annual. We are grateful to Mr. Syd Smyth, the editor of Golden Hours, for his ready willingness that the article should find a place in the Annual. And Mr. Colby is very happy indeed about it. So are we - and so, I am sure, are you.

The Penny Popular started in October 1912. The contents comprised an old story of Tom Merry, an old story of Jack, Sam, and Pete - and an old story of Sexton Blake. As I have remarked before, these seemed to make strange bedfellows, for all appealed to a different type of reader. There was, of course, the likelihood that school story fans, detective story fans, and adventure story fans would all be attracted to the paper - and that was obviously the editorial intention. It does seem possible, though, that a fan, realising that his own particular enamorata occupied only one-third of the paper, might be deterred from spending his penny on so small a helping.

Be that as it may, this programme continued for a number of years, so it must have been reasonably successful.

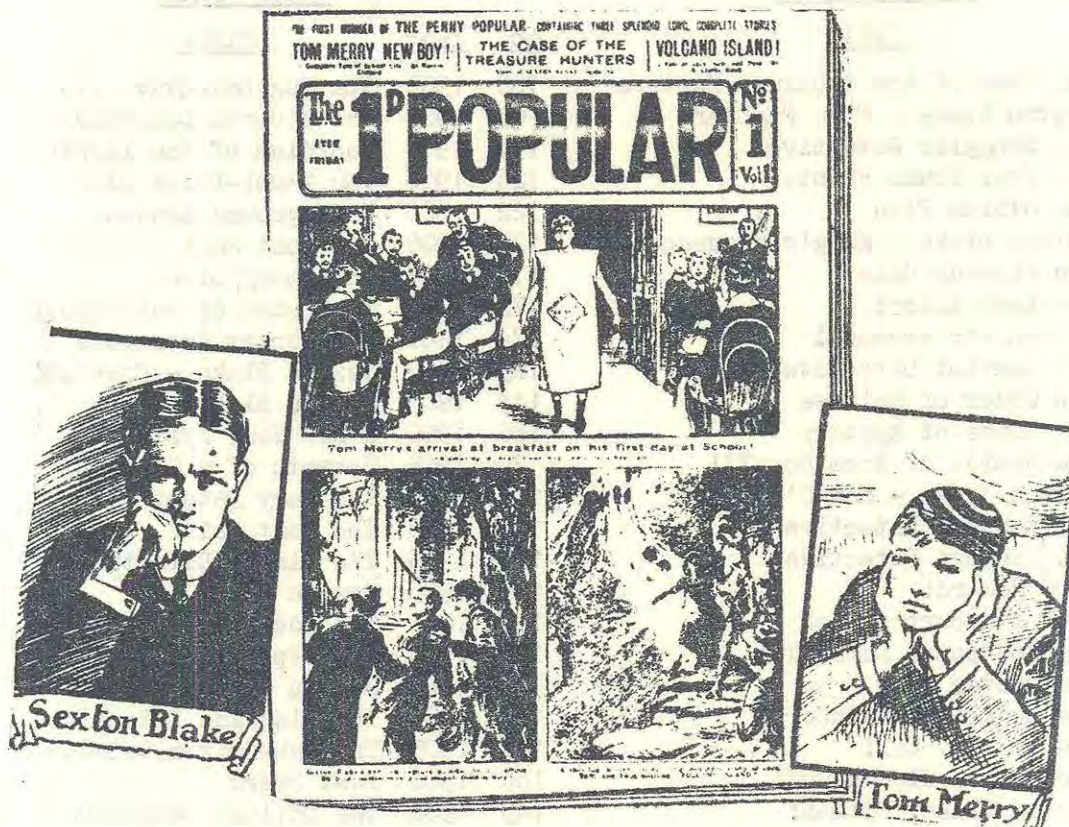
We have termed this article remarkable, and so it is. The Sexton Blake stories were taken indiscriminately from Union Jacks published between the years 1894 and 1910 - a very wide range. Readers of the day must have often wondered from whence they came, but nobody seems to have taken on the gigantic task of tracing their source - except Mr. Colby. This article is a splendid piece of research, which must have entailed the burning of much midnight oil. We are delighted to give it the wide readership which only Collectors' Digest Annual can furnish.)

- - - - -

The first series Penny Popular, numbers 1 to 221 inclusive, ran from 12/10/1912 to 30/12/1916, and featured a Sexton Blake story in every number. These were all reprints of Union Jack stories, the earliest of these being from Halfpenny Union Jack No. 2 of 1894 (first Sexton Blake story to appear in the Union Jack), the latest from penny series Union Jack No. 377 of December, 1910.

The reprinting of the Union Jack-Sexton Blake stories in the Penny Popular was carried out in a most erratic manner, hopping wildly from 1908 to 1894, then back to 1908 etc.

Identification was made difficult by such practices as dropping the prologue and sometimes the first chapters, altering the opening sentences, commencing in the middle of a chapter, and altering the titles.



Where only one Penny Popular was used to reprint a Union Jack-Sexton Blake story, the story was greatly abbreviated, various whole chapters being dropped, others cut.

However, where two Penny Populares were used, the story was reproduced virtually in two separate halves with little abridgement.

It is thus possible in many cases, to read practically the whole of an original U.J. story in the two-issue version of the Penny Popular.

One of the oddest things encountered was the discovery that the Sexton Blake story in P.P. No. 70, was originally a story by A. S. Hardy in 1d U.J. No. 26 featuring not Sexton Blake, but one Detective Herbert Trackett!

The names of the story characters remained unchanged during reprinting from U.J. to P.P. with the above exception and with the exception in P.P. No. 48 of Inspector Widgeon replacing Inspector Grange of the original U.J. story.

All U.J. numbers shown on the following list are of the "penny" series (1904 and on) except where prefixed by an asterisk (*), in which case they are of the "halfpenny" series (1894-1904).

Here follows the list of first series Penny Populares Nos. 1 to 221 inclusive published 12/10/1912 to 30/12/1916, and the corresponding Union Jack number, publication date and title, from which each Penny Popular Sexton Blake reprint was obtained:-

PENNY POPULARUNION JACK

<u>No.</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>No.</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>Title</u>
1	The Case of the Treasure Hunters	100	1905	The Dog Detective (1)
2	Sexton Blake - Fire Fighter	103	1905	The Fireman Detective
3	The Smuggler Detective	157	1906	Guardian of the Light
4	The Four Thumb Prints	126	1906	The Thumb-Print Clue
5	The Stolen Plan	122	1906	Underground London
6	Sexton Blake - King's Messenger	128	1906	The Lost Seal
7	The Missing Heir	179	1907	The Seamy Side
8	The Lost Laird!	172	1907	The Laird of Durrissdeer
9	A Dash for Freedom!	174	1907	The Doctor Detective
10	The Convict Detective	123	1906	Sexton Blake - Convict!
11	The Order of Release	114	1905	Sexton Blake's Xmas
12	The House of Mystery	168	1906	A New Year Mystery
13	The Secret of Room No. 77!	79	1905	Secrets of a Great City
14	Sexton Blake - Man O'Warsman	102	1905	The Navy Detective
15	The Redskin Detective	118	1906	The Lost Chief
16	The Showman Detective	130	1906	The Circus Detective!!
17	£500 Reward!	105	1905	Sexton Blake P.C.
18	Lord Vancourt's Luck	110	1905	The Jockey Detective
19	The Newspaper Detective	117	1906	The Reporter Detective
20	The Master Hand	108	1905	Sexton Blake's Coup!
21	The Anarchist Tracker!	129	1906	The Disguise Detective
22	The Mystery Cab!	107	1905	The Cab-Driver Detective
23	The Stolen Bloodhound!	160	1906	Lost Pedro
24	Sexton Blake, Pitman!	143	1906	The Collier Detective
25	On the Halls!	147	1906	Footlight Favourites
26	Brother Detectives!	144	1906	The American Detective
27	Sexton Blake's Wager	150	1906	The Missing 13
28	The Rajah's Bodyguard	152	1906	The Steward Detective
29	Sexton Blake's Jewel Hunt!	153	1906	Sexton Blake Among the Brigands
30	In the Kaiser's Service	154	1906	The German Detective
31	Sexton Blake's Mission	177	1907	Salvation Army Blake
32	The Prodigal's Pride	185	1907	The Remittance Man
33	The Secret of the Glacier!	167	1906	Lost on the Alps
34	The Man in Possession!	195	1907	The Broker's Man (2)
35	The Long Lane Mystery!	195	1907	The Broker's Man (2)
36	The Missing Treaty	187	1907	The Empty House
37	Sexton Blake on 'Change!	190	1907	The Stock Exchange Detective
38	The Picture Stealers	191	1907	The Stolen Gainsborough
39	Count Nevani's Coup!	211	1907	The Cattle Mystery
40	The President Detective	197	1907	The Case of the Missing President
41	Counterfeit Coin!	203	1907	Base Coin
42	Stars of the Opera	202	1907	Sexton Blake at the Opera
43	The Ghost of Ashleigh Dene!	205	1907	Sexton Blake in Amsterdam
44	Checkmated!	210	1907	The Mystery of the Lightship
45	Sexton Blake, Lumber-Jack	207	1907	Sexton Blake - Lumberman
46	The Master Cheat!	213	1907	The Cardsharp
47	By the King's Command!	218	1907	By Royal Command
48	The Wiltingham Gang!	220	1907	Sexton Blake - Chemist (3)
49	At Grips with the Law!	217	1907	The Slate Club Scandals (4)

PENNY POPULARUNION JACK

<u>No.</u>	<u>Title</u>		<u>No.</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>Title</u>
50	Hunter, and Hunted Too!		222	1908	The Man from Scotland Yard (5)
51	The Fighting Detective		224	1908	Sexton Blake's Championship
52	The Haunted Man!	*	2	1894	Sexton Blake - Detective (6)
53	The Missing Champion!		230	1908	Sexton Blake - Wrestler
54	In the Czar's Domain		228	1908	Sexton Blake in Baku
55	The Frontier Smugglers!		231	1908	Pedro's Trail
56	Tricking the Turk		232	1908	Sexton Blake in Turkey
57	The Kidnapped Heir!		233	1908	Sexton Blake in Rome
58	A Kingdom at Stake!		234	1908	Sexton Blake at Court
59	The Secret of the Dale!	*	172	1897	Dead Man's Hand (6)
60	The Prince's Ordeal!		235	1908	Sexton Blake, N.S.P.C.C.
61	By Order of Chancery		236	1908	A Ward in Chancery
62	His Last Card!		237	1908	Sexton Blake at Monte Carlo
63	Sexton Blake's Resolve		217	1907	The Slate Club Scandals (4)
64	The Slate Club Swindler!		217	1907	The Slate Club Scandals (4)
65	Gambling with Fate!		217	1907	The Slate Club Scandals (4)
66	The Haunted Priory!	*	250	1899	The Ghost of Strandgap Priory (6)
67	The Clansmen's Feud		243	1908	Drink!
68	The Cigarette Clue!	*	245	1898	The Cigarette Clue (6)
69	Sexton Blake's Strange Quest!	*	220	1898	The Dagger of Dunloe (6)
70	Proved Innocent!		26	1904	A Marked Man (7)
71	The Fenfield Conspiracy	*	228	1898	The Third Man (6)
72	The Fenfield Conspiracy	*	238	1898	The Mystery Man (6)
73	The Fortune Stone!	*	375	1901	Fortune Stone (6)
74	The Changed Eyes	*	72	1895	The Clue of the Dead Eyes (6)
75	Twice Cleared!	*	396	1901	Sexton Blake's Lost Clue (6)
76	The Forger!	*	208	1898	The Phantom Photographer (6)
77	Tracked Across the World!	*	43	1895	Tracked Round the World (6)
78	Sexton Blake's Ruse!	*	65	1895	Sexton Blake's Stratagem (6)
79	Squire Tredgar's Secret	*	75	1895	Tracked to the Death Valley (6)
80	The Doctor's Dupe!	*	82	1895	Dr. Zebra's Doom (6)
81	The Living Picture!	*	88	1895	The Living Picture (6)
82	In Deep Waters	}	200	1907	The Case of the Coroner's Court
83	An International Affair				
84	A Diplomatic Tangle!	}	208	1907	Sexton Blake Private Secretary
85	High Treason!				
86	Transported for Life!	}	214	1907	Sexton Blake on Devil's Island
87	A Struggle for Liberty!				
88	Tinker's Peril!	}	226	1908	The Mystery of the Mint
89	The Plot that Failed!				
90	A Perilous Quest!	}	240	1908	The Secret Society
91	Against Heavy Odds				
92	A Forlorn Hope!	}	241	1908	The Black Tyrant
93	The Horror of Hayti!				
94	Lucky Loring's Loss	}	247	1908	Bankrupt!
95	The Serpent Worshippers				

PENNY POPULARUNION JACK

<u>No.</u>	<u>Title</u>		<u>No.</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>Title</u>
96	Sexton Blake's Holiday Case	}	249	1908	Caravan and Canvas
97	The Circus Mystery!				
98	At Grips with the Apaches!	}	250	1908	The Apaches of Paris
99	The Hostage!				
100	The Message from the Sea!	*	62	1895	A Clue from the Deep (6)
101	The Imperial Spy!	}	253	1908	The Case of the Naval Manoeuvres
102	The Kaiser's Ransom				
103	A Friend's Disgrace!	}	252	1908	Spearing's Disgrace
104	A Fight for Honour!				
105	The Walking Cracksman!	}	259	1908	The Tramp Detective
106	Sexton Blake on Tramp!				
107	The Black Country Mystery		254	1908	The Mystery of Moorside
108	Sexton Blake's Blunder	}	260	1908	The Motor Boat
109	Turning the Tables!				
110	No Proof!	}	262	1908	The Mount Street Mystery
111	Caught Red-Handed!				
112	The Confession!	}	263	1908	The Willow Court Mystery
113	A False Friend!				
114	The Gipsy Detective	}	265	1908	Sexton Blake, Gipsy
115	Sexton Blake's Masquerade!				
116	The Three Avengers!	}	266	1908	The Stolen Bloodhound
117	Rough Justice!				
118	Thwarting the Hypnotist!	}	268	1908	The Hypnotist
119	The Last Stand!				
120	A Nation's Fate!	}	271	1908	The Kaiser's Mistake
121	An Imperial Blunder				
122	The Gambler's Ruse!	}	274	1909	The Adventuress!
123	Foul Play!				
124	Restoring a Kingdom!		276	1909	Sexton Blake in Borneo
125	The Man from Winnipeg!		275	1909	"£. s. d."
126	Foiled at the Finish!		278	1909	The Manhunt
127	Clearing His Name!		281	1909	£20,000 Bail!
128	A Fresh Start!		280	1909	The Three Brothers
129	The Signal of Distress!		285	1909	C.Q.D.
130	Run to Earth!		284	1909	East and West
131	The Wrong Man!		289	1909	The Five Towns
132	Colonel Tanford's Valour!		291	1909	The Case of the Public Trustee
133	The Wonder Gun!		291	1909	The Noiseless Gun
134	The Isle of Mystery!		293	1909	Gregory Sanderson's Will
135	Rivals for Fortune!		294	1909	The Great Peerage Romance
136	Simon Leach - Swindler!		295	1909	The Emigrants
137	The Hidden Heiress!		297	1909	Sexton Blake, Publican

PENNY POPULARUNION JACK

<u>No.</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>No.</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>Title</u>
138	An Errand of Justice! }	298	1909	Sexton Blake; - Showman
139	His Own Betrayer! }			
140	Reaping the Whirlwind!	299	1909	The Blue Room Mystery
141	Unveiling the Past!	303	1909	The Stepney Mystery
142	The Fatal Verdict! }			
143	Restored to His Own! }	300	1909	Unfrocked
144	The Penniless Playwright! }			
145	The Unfinished Drama! }	314	1909	Sexton Blake, Playwright
146	The River-House Mystery! }			
147	Police-Constable Tinker! }	305	1909	Sexton Blake, Lock-Keeper
148	Through Prison Bars! }			
149	A Fugitive from Justice! }	302	1909	In Deadly Grip
150	The Missing Scoutmaster! }			
151	The Mystery of Highdown Heath! }	319	1909	Sexton Blake, Scout-Master
152	Partners in Peril! }			
153	The Doors of Dartmoor! }	315	1909	The Swell Mobster
154	At Crossed Swords! }			
155	The Night Riders! }	318	1909	Bridge
156	The Secretary's Ruse! }			
157	Tinker's Daring! }	307	1909	The Mystery of Dusky Hollow
158	The Rescuer's Reward! }			
159	Exiled from England! }	322	1909	Sexton Blake, Sandwich-Man
160	fooling with Fate! }			
161	The Road to Ruin! }	308	1909	Sexton Blake, Bookmaker
162	Rivals for the Right! }			
163	An Amazing Masquerade! }	323	1909	The Third Degree
164	Birds of a Feather! }			
165	In Convicts Guise! }	301	1909	The Great Motor Car Mystery
166	The Chinese Rivals! }			
167	The Sacred Pardon! }	310	1909	The Yellow Cord
168	The Fate of the "Mermaid"! }			
169	The House of Intrigue! }	325	1910	Sexton Blake in Newfoundland
170	Rogues of the Turf! }			
171	Called to Account! }	326	1910	Warned Off
172	A Fight for Justice! }			
173	The Tyrant of the Poor! }	328	1910	The Slum Landlord
174	The Man of the 4-15! }			
175	The Squire's Secret! }	329	1910	Found Drowned
176	The Cards of Fate! }			
177	Hunted and Harried! }	330	1910	The Analyst Mystery

PENNY POPULAR

<u>No.</u>	<u>Title</u>	
178	A Web of Intrigue!	}
179	The Coils of Evidence!	
180	The Missing Manager!	}
181	Thwarting the Taskmaster!	
182	The Dancer's Secret!	}
183	A Vow Fulfilled!	
184	A Desperate Resolve!	}
185	The River Mystery!	
186	After 3 Years!	}
187	The Sailor's Ordeal	
188	The Village Tyrant!	}
189	Foiled at the Finish!	
190	The Silent Avenger!	}
191	The Wrath of Kama!	
192	Birds of Prey!	}
193	The City Conspiracy!	
194	To Redeem the Past!	}
195	The Swindler's Downfall!	
196	The Great Society Scandal!	}
197	An Affair of Court!	
198	For His Dad's Sake!	}
199	The Traitor's Fate!	
200	The Seaside Mystery!	}
201	The Silent Accuser!	
202	A Fortune at Stake!	}
203	The Redskin's Loyalty!	
204	The Duped Detective!	}
205	The Unwritten Law!	
206	The Mystery of the Masterpiece!	}
207	The Scheming Secretary!	
208	Wanted for Wealth!	}
209	The Avaricious Aristocrat!	
210	The Poacher's Flight!	}
211	His Cousin's Crime!	
212	Traced by Treachery!	}
213	Fleeced of a Fortune!	
214	Shielded from Shame!	}
215	The Detective's Deceit!	
216	The Financier's Failure!	}
217	Rescued from Ruin!	
218	Sexton Blake, Editor!	}
219	Convicted for Conspiracy!	

UNION JACK

<u>No.</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>Title</u>
332	1910	Sexton Blake, Jurymen
333	1910	A Manchester Mystery
335		Sexton Blake in "Vanity Fair"
336	1910	The Embankment Mystery
337	1910	The Sailor's Return
338	1910	The Case of the "Small Holding"
341	1910	Sexton Blake in Hatton Garden
342	1910	The Mystery of Room 11
349	1910	The Great Rubber Syndicate
350	1910	Sexton Blake's Country Cottage
354	1910	The Rival Mills
355	1910	Sexton Blake, Bath-Chair Man
362	1910	The Gold Mountain
367	1910	The Millionaire Baby
368	1910	Sexton Blake, Author
369	1910	Sexton Blake, Taxi-Cab Driver
366	1910	Sexton Blake's Shooting Party
371	1910	The Great Stores Mystery
374	1910	Accessory After the Fact
375	1910	The Great Bank Smash
377	1910	Contempt of Court

PENNY POPULARUNION JACK

<u>No.</u>	<u>Title</u>		<u>No.</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>Title</u>
220	The Partner's Plot!	}	376	1910	Sexton Blake - Santa Claus
221	Sexton Blake-Cashier!				

A GRAND ISSUE OF A GREAT PAPER!



A DRAMATIC SCENE IN THE GREAT SEXTON BLAKE STORY.

NOTES:

* Halfpenny Union Jack Series.

1. First appearance ever of Pedro the Bloodhound.
2. Penny Popular No. 34 was taken from chapters 1, 2, 9, 10 and 11 of 1d Union Jack No. 195, whilst Penny Popular No. 35 was taken from chapters 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8 of the same Union Jack.
3. Inspector Widgeon in Penny Popular 48 was originally Inspector Grange in 1d. U.J. 220.
4. Scattered chapters of 1d U.J. 217 were used in the Penny Popular as follows:-

Penny Popular 49:- chapters 9 to 13 of 1d U.J. 217

Penny Popular 63:- chapters 1,2,14,15, 16,23 U.J. 217

Penny Popular 64:- chapters 17 to 22 U.J. 217

Penny Popular 65:- chapters 3 to 8 U.J. 217

5. First appearance ever of George Marsden Plummer.

6. Halfpenny Union Jack Series.

7. This story in 1d U.J. 26 was by

A. S. Hardy, and featured Detective Herbert Trackett, not Sexton Blake. Sexton Blake was substituted for Herbert Trackett in the Penny Popular 70 version.

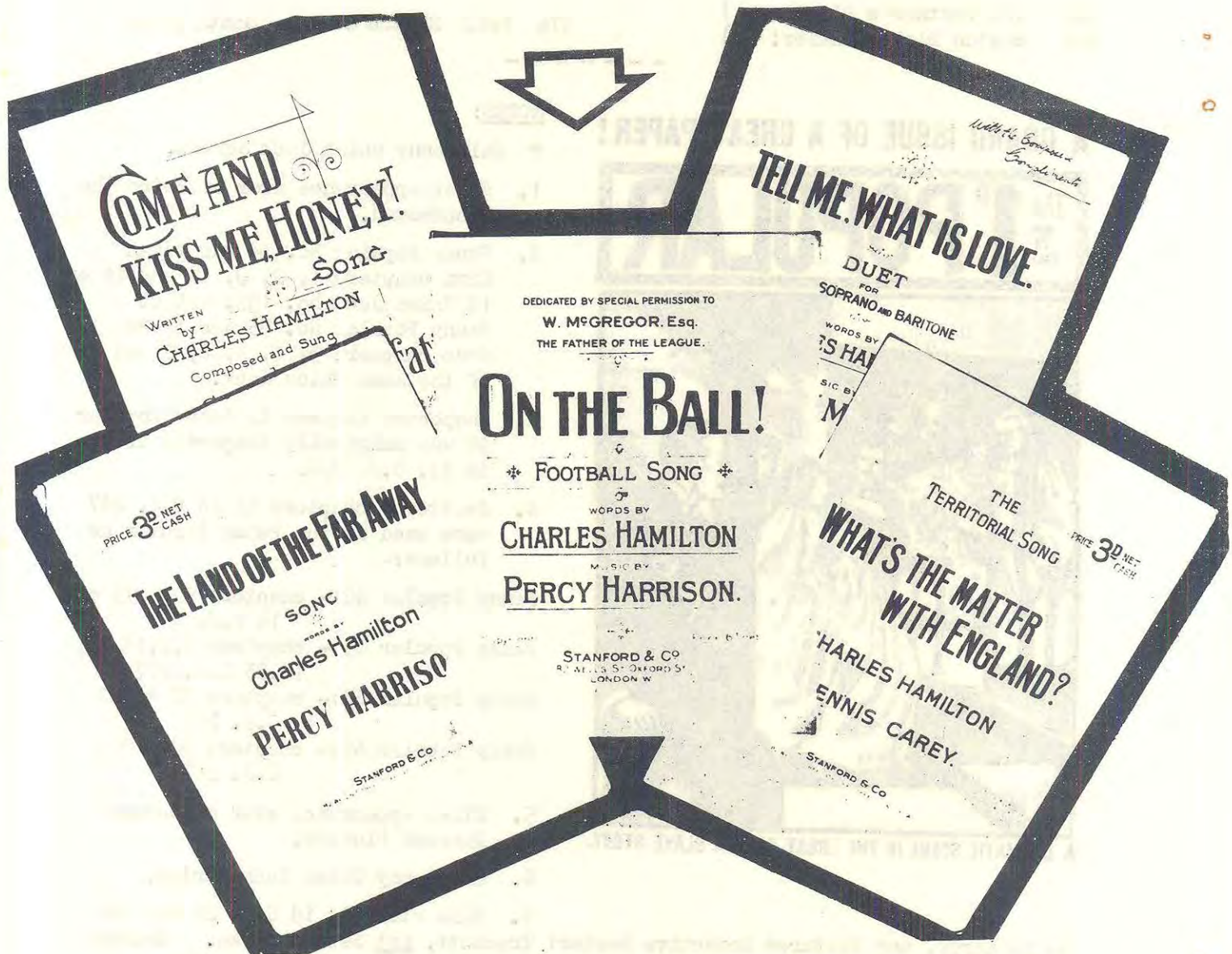
WANTED: Bound volumes or long runs of MAGNET (pre-1934); also UNION JACK, DETECTIVE WEEKLY, THRILLER, HOTSPUR, comic-papers; items on SHERLOCK HOLMES, histories of children's books, comic-strips, public school stories, etc.

Brian Doyle, 14a, Clarendon Drive, London, S.W.15.

WANTED: "Detective Weekly" No. 4 to 26. Have Boys Friend Weekly Nos. 534 to 544 for exchange. Offers please:-

S. Perry, 27, The Meadway, Cuffley, Herts.

Frank Richards • Songwright



On this page we reproduce some of the songs composed by Charles Hamilton during the first decade of the century. Charles wrote the lyrics, while the music was composed by Percy Harrison, who became Charles' brother-in-law. In a few cases, the music was composed by sister Una, but generally it was Charles and Percy who worked together. Often sister Una sang some of the songs at the concerts which she gave.

Just how popular these songs were, it is difficult to say now, but quite a large number of titles were published so it would seem that they had a ready sale. Two of those pictured here - "On The Ball" and "Tell Me, What Is Love" were referred to in the blue Gem. It should be mentioned that "Dennis Carey" was one of the pen-names of Percy Harrison.

+++++

The Unfinished Autobiography of G. H. Teed

By W. O. G. Lofts

"George Hamilton Teed! of course I knew him" said the editor. "Thickset Canadian, who never lost his accent, and spoke in a very loud voice, which could always be heard above the din and noise in a Fleet Street Tavern.

"I knew Teed, very well in the 20's, and a very good companion and friend he was, once you had got to know him. Once in a moment of confidence, and when we were discussing his early days out in the backwoods of Canada, he told me that he actually once wrote practically his own early life story in a serial for a boys' paper - but terminated it, after two instalments, as he did not want to go on with it.

"The editor, like Queen Victoria, to use a favourite expression, was far from amused, but could not do anything about it, and had to shove in other material from Teed, which must have been very baffling to the readers, who wondered why a serial should suddenly terminate, without any explanation."

The above conversation was related to me quite a few years ago, but safely recorded in my notebook for perhaps a future article - and especially when I had found the story in question - which seemed a hopeless task in the hundreds of boys' periodicals that were issued since the turn of the century. My editor friend died a few years ago, and could never enlarge on the subject, except to say it was probably an Amalgamated Press paper.

Only recently, whilst perusing through the BOYS' REALM the last paper incidentally in my research of a 5,000 boys' author's Who's Who - that may one day see the light of day in print, I came across the story in question, and for the interest of all TEED fans - who may be fortunate to obtain the copies in question here are details of the story.

BOYS REALM. No. 718 4/3/1916
719 11/3/1916

THE ADVENTURES OF CHIP MCGREGOR
PART 2.

The characters' names have probably been changed, but the ST. JOHN'S, NEW BRUNSWICK - and mention of his father's sawmills, which have been mentioned in the past as being authentic Teed real life background is pretty obvious. After the two instalments, stories featuring HUXTON RYMER appeared (TEED) and probably, with the paper closing down through paper shortage shortly after, the editor did not feel inclined or think it necessary to go into long explanations about the unfinished story.

Whilst on the subject of editors of the BOYS REALM it has been recorded in the past and in the latest Who's Who, that the last editor of that paper was THOMAS BURKE of Twinkletoes fame, who held the editorial chair for only a few weeks. I don't dispute the fact that BURKE may have been a shortlived editor, but not of that paper. Apart from the A.P. having no record of him at all - the editor in the last issue states what a sad day it is for him, when he has produced

the paper week by week for the last 15 years! A grain of salt is to be taken with most editorials - but on two lots of evidence I should be very interested to know where Thomas Burke was editor of.

More New Pen-Names of Authors

Andrew Murray: Already well known as 'Captain Malcolm Arnold' wrote also as 'Geoffrey Murray' and 'Vesey Deane.' The former name may explain the confusion why he was known to many editors as 'Geoffrey.' 'Vesey Deane' will be found mainly in the Boys Friend/Herald Realm group of papers as well as in B.F.L.

Oliver Merland: Already revealed by myself as the famous 'Singleton Pound.' Wrote also as 'DOUGLAS GRANT' (PLUCK/U.J./BOYS HERALD) and was also the well known COLIN COLLINS who appeared in the NELSON LEE LIBRARY (Reprints) PLUCK and MARVEL.

* * * * *

WANTED FOR RESEARCH: Old Record Catalogues of all makes (pre-war); Books and Articles on famous pianists, past and present.

John Upton, 70A, London Road, Southend, Essex.

MR. J. LENNARD, 24, Saxon Crossway, Winsford, Cheshire, wishes all readers of C.D. and C.D. Annual, a Merry Xmas, and a Happy, Healthy and Peaceful 1964. The same wishes to our worthy Editor and friends in Australia.

W A N T E D: Union Jacks Nos. 201, 206, 244, 565; B.F.Ls. 1st Series 58, 429, 231, 233.

Thurbon, 5, All Saints Passage, Cambridge.

THE SCHOOLGIRL Nos. 491 and 521 to complete collection, £3 each copy. Also copies of PUCK Comic dated 1931, 1932 or 1933.

Norman Linford, 115, Allport St., CANNOCK, Staffs.

WANTED: Magnets from 1928 onwards.

A. Dacre, 7, Leopard Street, Barrow-in-Furness, Lancashire.

Information welcomed about Societies British or American, devoted to works of P. G. Wodehouse.

Rhodes, British Embassy, Bonn, B.F.P.O. 19.

URGENTLY WANTED: Mapleton Rover (Dick Dare) Football Series by Randolph Ryle B.F.L. or Marvels.

Harry Broster, Primrose Cottage, Kinver, Stourbridge.

E. S. BROOKS

Story Writer "Par Excellence"

By Robert Blythe

As an author, how would you describe E. S. Brooks? Ever since the C.D. was first published this has been the subject of much controversy amongst the collecting fraternity. Some remarks have been made with acrimony, some have been frankly adulatory. Both extremes are quite wrong, of course. But the fact remains that Brooks was an extremely competent writer with a seemingly inexhaustible flow of ideas.

It is some of these ideas, or rather his treatment of them, that I propose to illustrate in this article. I hope that when I have finished, providing you stay the course, the uninitiated and the unrepentant will have cause to do a spot of re-thinking.

First then, let us look at Brooks' treatment of a dramatic theme.

O.S. 485-492 'The School with a Bad Name,' just such a theme. First, let me outline the plot.

During a champagne party held by the dubious members of the school, a senior dies of heart failure.

A London newspaper gets hold of the story and the resultant scandal nearly causes the school to close down. However, under Pitt's leadership, (Wipper being away at the time) the Remove decide to stay on, and eventually restore the good name of St. Frank's.

That then is the plot. An unusual one, surely, for a boys paper?

This is how Brooks describes the fatal party:-

"Simon Kenmore grasped Wallace by his shoulders and swung him round.

"Listen to me, you drunken idiot!" he hissed. "If you can't keep your voice down, you'll get pitched out! Understand! Pitched out! Can't you stop this insane babbling, you fool?"

Wallace waved his hands wildly. "Grayson's stolen my money!" he screamed. "I won't stand it! I'm not going to be robbed -"

"Hold him!" gasped Kenmore breathlessly.

The madly excited Fifth-former had gone into a kind of frenzy. His face went nearly purple, and it took four seniors to hold him down. Left alone he would have aroused the whole Ancient House.

"By Gad! He's gone off his head, or something," panted Grayson.

"No, he hasn't; He's had too much champagne!" snarled Kenmore. "And a few more of you will be like this if you don't ease up. It's a pity you haven't got more sense."

"Hallo! He's gone limp!" said Shaw suddenly.

"About time too."

Kenmore glared down at the Fifth-former. Wallace had relaxed, and he was flopping back in his chair in a loose, unnatural attitude. The other revellers stood staring at him rather blankly.

Wallace fell half out of his chair to the floor.

"He's fainted!" muttered Parkin shakily. "I say, this is a bit rotten! The confounded fool has fainted! What the deuce are we to do?"

"Bring him round, of course!" snapped Kenmore, who was about the only fellow who kept his head. "I've never seen such a crowd of frightened babies in my life! There's nothing to be afraid of - he's only fainted. I don't wonder at it, after that frenzy!"

"I say, it was awful!" muttered Gulliver. "Did you see his face? It went nearly black! And his eyes -."

"Shut up, confound you!" snarled Fullwood.

He didn't like to be reminded of that vision. Wallace's face had indeed, been awful a moment prior to his collapse. And now there was something rather terrifying in his utter limpness.

"Come on - don't stand looking on!" said Kenmore sharply. "Lend a hand here. We'll lift him up and revive him. Get some water, somebody!"

"We haven't got any water!" bleated Bell.

"There's a tap, isn't there," snarled Kenmore.

Bell hurried out in a shaky condition, but he was in hardly a worse condition than the others, for they were all alarmed. Even Kenmore, the coolest of the lot only kept himself sober with an effort.

"We'll put him up in the chair - that's the way!" he exclaimed.

"Gently now!" Yes he's gone right off - as clean as a whistle! Why doesn't that young idiot hurry up with the water?"

"Couldn't we try some whisky?" ventured Parkin.

"The fools had too much already!" replied Kenmore curtly. "It's water he wants. This room's like a curing factory! You can't see a yard for fumes."

But nobody opened the window - all were too anxious. The party was forgotten. The card table was deserted. The sudden collapse of Wallace had brought the boisterous celebration to an end. And even those fellows who were badly under the influence of drink had become sober.

"I say, look at his face!" muttered Shaw. "It's white now - horribly white! I - I believe - And look at his eyes too -"

"Can't you be quiet?" panted Kenmore.

"They're glassy!" said Shaw with a shudder. "And his face has gone as white as wax! He hasn't fainted at all - he's dead!"

Crash!

"Take that, you mad blockhead!" hissed Kenmore, catching Shaw a violent blow across the cheek. "Haven't you got more sense than to say fool things like that? The chap's only fainted -"

"Here's the water!" put in Fullwood quickly.

"And about time, too! Bring it here - hurry up!" ordered Kenmore, his voice shaking and trembling with anxiety. "Splash some over his face - no you dolt! Not like that! Half a pint of it!"

Bell was so nervous that he nearly spilt all the water on the floor. But a good deal of it went on Wallace's face. The unfortunate senior was pulled up, but his head lolled over to one side in a horrifying manner.

"I tell you he's dead!" screamed Shaw wildly.

And this time Kenmore took notice. He seized Wallace in his arms and laid him full length on the table, sending glasses and money and crockery sweeping to

the floor. Kenmore's face had gone as pale as chalk, and he was shaking from head to foot.

"Now then - some of that water!" he muttered. "We'll pour some down his throat. And some of you others rub his wrists. Go on, don't be scared! He'll soon come round."

Grayson took hold of one of Wallace's wrists, and then let it go abruptly.

"He's dead! I can feel it." he shrieked. "Oh, this is awful! Fetch the doctor somebody -"

"Hold on!" gasped Fullwood. "Don't go out yelling like that - you'll rouse the house! And that'll mean the sack for the lot of us!"

"Good heavens!" muttered Simon Kenmore faintly.

His hand was over Wallace's heart, and there was not the faintest sign of a beat. And small wonder. For in all truth the unfortunate Fifth-former was actually a corpse!

"He's dead - no question of it!" breathed Kenmore. "Look at his eyes! They're all glassy and staring -"

"Didn't I tell you so?" shouted Shaw, his voice rising shrilly. "I knew it five minutes ago. Help! Help!"

He ran madly to the door and wrenched it open.

"Stop that lunatic, some of you," yelled Kenmore.

But Shaw was already flying across the landing and Grayson was close at his heels. Gulliver and Bell fled too - every bit as panic-stricken as the two Fifth-formers.

Shaw, in advance, literally fell down the stairs from top to bottom. He picked himself up bruised and battered, but even more terrified than before.

"Help!" he screamed. "Help! help!"

Well, that's pretty strong meat for a paper aimed at the schoolboy market, but Brooks was not the man to write down to his schoolboy public. He credited his readers with sufficient intelligence to appreciate an adult theme.

Of course, it must be realised that such a party with whisky and champagne etc. on the menu was very rare indeed, and was only used in this instance to give a dramatic emphasis to the senior's death. Also, to provide the seed from which the whole plot develops.

Another instance which springs readily to mind was the occasion of Church's supposed death. This time the 'death' is used to show the effect it has upon Handforth and his chum, McClure. It may come as a surprise to those who have only considered Handy as a bully and a despot to his two friends.

This extract is taken from 1st New Series No. 77. "The Doomed Schoolboy."

"Poor old chap!" muttered Handforth, tenderly.

Church was lying back on his pillow, his eyes closed, his breathing even and regular. He had apparently dropped off into a peaceful sleep. And Handforth sat there, by the bedside, with one of Church's hands in his. Not for the world would Handforth have spoken loudly now.

There came a sudden little noise at the window, and Handforth turned his head sharply. Outlined in the window was a face - pale and ghostly in the gloom of the night. For a fraction of a second he felt his heart beating like mad. Then a wave of relief swept over him.

For he recognised the features of McClure.

The next moment Mac was entering the room; he caught his foot against the

.....
window-sill and made a little noise.

"Can't you come in quietly?" asked Handforth fiercely. "He's asleep! Do you want to wake him up. Why couldn't you stay out there?"

"Because I'm just as anxious about poor old Church as you are," he replied. "Do you think I don't care a straw about him, or what? Oh, my goodness! Doesn't he look rocky?"

They were only speaking in whispers. Everything was very still. Not the slightest movement or sound came from the figure on the bed. In fact, McClure began to look at it in a rather scared sort of way. He could not help noticing that all the colour had drained out of Church's cheeks. A minute or two earlier there had been a little spot of pink in each cheek, but these spots had now gone. There was something almost wax-like in his appearance.

"I say!" muttered Mac suddenly, "Is he alright?"

"What do you mean - all right?" repeated Handforth. "He's ill. Goodness knows what the trouble is -"

"No, I mean - is he only asleep?" asked McClure frightened.

His tone caused Handforth to give a little gulp.

"Don't be an ass!" he said roughly. "Of course he's only asleep."

"But are you sure?" asked McClure, his voice unsteady. "He-he looks so - so still! And he's gone so pale, Handy! Look how squiffy his skin has gone -"

"It must be the light!" interrupted Handforth, bending closer and looking at Church intently. "He's different - yes! But I can't understand - Oh, my goodness!"

While speaking he had tried to release his hand from Church's gentle grip. And then he made a staggering discovery. Church's fingers were stiff - they gripped him in a mechanical grasp. In that second, every ounce of Handforth's reserve left him. He shook that cold grip away and flung himself on his knees by the bedside, seizing Church by the shoulders and shaking him.

"Church!" he panted hoarsely. "Church, old man!"

But there was no reply from the still figure.

"He's not breathing!" said McClure shrill with fear. "Handy - I tell you he's not breathing! Feel his heart! Quick! Feel -"

"Be quiet!" panted Handforth huskily. "He must be breathing, Mac! Oh, it's too awful to believe - No, there's no sign - not a single sign! His heart's stopped!"

"Stopped!" shouted McClure, staring with wide, terrified eyes.

Just for a moment they gazed at one another, and then they looked at that pale, wax-like figure again.

"He's dead!" shouted Handforth madly. "Dr. Brett - Dr. Brett! Come here - come here! He's dead!" //

Church was not dead, of course, but in a deep trance. Handforth, for no obvious reason, refuses to believe in Church's 'death,' even after a hearse had supposedly taken Church's 'body' away. As was stated later, "He had no absolute evidence of the fact. He simply knew that Church was alive, and that was all that mattered."

How right he was, is proved later in the story when owing to his persistent butting in where Nelson Lee had not wanted him, he was responsible for the capture of the man who was intent on killing Church.

Although the story is basically a detective yarn, it does show convincingly Handforth's true relationship with his two chums and goes a long way to explain

.....

why he, and his two chums, were inseparable, in spite of Handy's high-handed treatment of them.

Incidentally, it may be appropriate at this juncture to point out that there was more than one occasion in which it was Handy himself who was left a battered wreck, not Church and McClure. They understood him and his idiosyncrasies perfectly, and when Handforth went just that much too far, they put him in his place - forcibly!

Whilst on the subject of dramatic themes, I cannot leave it without reference to a story that appeared in 1924. Namely O.S. 471-476. The plot is surely unique in the annals of boys' papers.

It is a story of drug addiction on the part of Housemaster Barry Stokes' wife. Although it's not another "Man with the Golden Arm," it is certainly way beyond the normal run of school yarns.

From drama, we turn to humour. Now I fully realise that this is a difficult theme to discuss. What I regard as extremely funny may not even raise a smile on the next man. Therefore, the example which follows is one such incident that I personally regard as having stood the test of time and remains as funny today as it did in 1926, when it first had me rolling in the aisles.

Briefly, the story (i.e. 1st N.S. 20-25 "Handforth as Captain") concerns itself with a joke that recoiled upon its instigators. Handforth is elected Captain. He proceeds to make a thorough nuisance of himself, until the whole Remove is fed up to the back teeth with his weird and wonderful ideas of how a form should be run.

The series gets off to a good start with a description of a car ride, worthy of an episode from the Keystone Cops.

Handforth had been told by a Helmford garage proprietor that his Austin Seven was beyond repair, and had persuaded him to take a model T Ford in exchange. Before they reached the school there had been a series of hair-raising experiences. Both mudguards and running boards had fallen off and one headlamp and the hood had been reduced to scrap. In this state they had arrived at St. Frank's. Browne and half the Remove decide to take the Ford back to Helmford and force the garage owner to return the Austin. There was nothing wrong with the Austin, of course. Browne, who had met Handforth and Co. before entering Helmford, had merely pulled a wire loose!

"Browne made no more comment, but climbed into the seat in front. Handforth took the wheel. The Ford was sagging worse than ever - and small wonder! The rear part was simply packed with grinning juniors, all eager for a bit of sport.

Somebody cranked the engine and after the second pull it fired. There were one or two preliminary explosions in the exhaust pipe, and then the engine settled down to a steady rattling roar.

Handforth put in the low gear; the Ford gave a lurch and started off. Crowds of juniors scooted out of the way, shouting encouragement.

"Look out, there!"

"Make way for the animated salmon-tin!"

"Hurrah!"

"We're outside! Now for some speed!"

"Whoa! Steady! Take it easy Handy!"

Handforth had just got the Ford into top gear, and she went thundering down

the lane with ever increasing speed. There was not so much rattle now, but a thudding solid sort of noise. She was carrying a heavy load. Now and again the rims could be felt as they went over an inequality in the road.

"We're sinking a bit on this side," sang out Fullwood. "By the feel of it there aren't any springs left, but I expect we shall have to chance it. My hat! That was a nasty one!"

There was a sharp hill to be climbed, soon after passing through Bellton, and half-way up it the old Ford staggered and wheezed in agonies of grief. Even the low gear failed to relieve it much. Gradually her pace became slower and slower, until she was lurching along in a series of grunting jerks.

"Come on - let's get out and push," shouted Pitt.

"Ha! Ha! Ha!"

"All hands to the pump!"

"Heave-ho!"

"Mind you don't push the body off the chassis!"

Most of the juniors tumbled out of the car and ran behind, and at the sides, pushing. Not that she needed much assistance now that the majority of the weight was removed. She succeeded in getting to the top in triumph.

"There's a puncture!" ejaculated De Valerie. "I say, whoa! This off-side tyre is as flat as the dickens!"

"Let it be flat!" snapped Handforth. "We can't stop for flat tyres!"

"But the whole wheel's all wonky, too" yelled Fullwood. "It's wobbling sideways, and it'll come off in another minute."

Handforth glanced round.

"If you're coming, hop in!" he roared. "I'm not stopping for anything!" She is going now, and I'm taking no chances.

"Ha! ha! ha!"

They all managed to scramble on board again, jammed like sardines. And the Ford, with a long gradual descent in front of her, surged forward, accompanied by a rattling, devastating commotion. With a painful sound of grinding metal, the top gear went in.

"We are now," said Browne, "in the lap of the gods!"

"If we hold tight, we shall be alright," said Handforth desperately. "We've got to get to Helmford - and we can't waste any time. I believe that crook is monkeying with my Austin."

This thought was such an obsession with Handforth that he cared nothing for flat tyres or oscillating wheels. The only thing was to get to Helmford. Too much time had been wasted already.

With ever gathering speed the old car sped down the long hill. There came a lurch, a terrific report, and the vibration at the back was like nothing on earth.

"Another tyre gone!" gasped Fullwood. "Steady on, Handy!"

"My hat! We've dropped the back number-plate!" shouted somebody. "We can't go on without a number-plate, Handy. We'll be pinched!"

"Look out! One of these doors has fallen off!"

"Ha! ha! ha!"

The Ford, in fact, was falling to pieces, and leaving scattered fragments of metal all the way down the hill. But Handforth couldn't stop the car now, even if he wanted to. The speed was increasing and the engine was thundering with such force that the vibration became terrific.

"Caution, brother, caution!" advised Browne mildly.

"Caution be blowed!" gasped Handforth, "I can't hold the thing!"



As the car hit the bank there came a series of cracks. The wheels flew off in all directions, the body hit the road and splattered forward in a cloud of dust, pitching the juniors in a heap. There wasn't going to be much left of the car by the time Handforth had done with it!

An illustration from N.L.L. No. 20 (new series)
- "Handforth's Bad Bargain."

"Let me suggest the brake - "

"It's no good - it won't work!"

"Then we are indeed lost!" murmured William Napoleon. "It might be a good idea to steer into this ditch - "

He was interrupted by a noise that sounded like half a dozen explosions in one. The Ford simply shivered from stem to stern, the bonnet burst open, bent and twisted, and the radiator caved back. There was a terrific and unearthly jolt. But still the Ford roared onward.

"Stop!" shouted Fullwood. "We've dropped the engine!"

"Ha! ha! ha!"

"It's a fact!" gasped Fullwood.

"Look there!"

And his statement, although so far-fetched, was the actual truth! Rolling down the road, amid the dust in the rear of the car, was the Ford's engine - smoking and knocking itself to atoms. The terrific vibration had forced it completely out of its seating and the smashing of some vital part had freed it completely.

So the engine had dropped out on the road, had fouled the back axle - the cause of that tremendous bump - and now it was left behind.

The radiator followed. It gave one or two sagging jolts, boiling water spurting out amid clouds of steam, and then it rolled sideways and disappeared.

But yet the car still shot down the hill, and the speed was increasing with every yard.

"Trust me!" panted Handforth. "I'll see you through safely."

"We are now upon the rocks!" said Browne tensely.

He was staring at a steep hump in the road just ahead - another of those little bridges. But this one was a particularly sharp hump, and the Ford was tearing down upon it like some noisy juggernaut.

The next few seconds were startling.

The car hit the hump, and simply rose in the air. For a brief fraction there was a sensation of flying, and then the Ford hit the ground, slewing round at the same moment. To remain whole any longer was simply out of the question. The strain on the wheels was tremendous.

There was a series of cracks like gunshots, the wheels flew off in all directions and the body struck the road with a thudding crash and slithered along amid the dust.

But nobody was thrown out. They all clung there, jumbled together, but perfectly safe. Legs and arms appeared, and gradually the juniors climbed out of the wreckage.

"All safe?" asked Handforth, wiping his brow. "My hat! And old Miggs told me this car was a corker!"

This last extract is, if I may use the term, fairly concentrated fun. On average, Brook's humour is more diffuse. For example, the whole of the "Handforth as Captain" series is humorous in situation and plot, but some parts are uproarious as, for example when Pitt masquerades as Irene's cousin Dora (Handforth had never met her) to persuade Handy to give up the captaincy, and later when he mistakes Dora for Pitt. Also when his insistence that everyone should call him captain and salute him gets out of hand and recoils upon his own head. These and other incidences are Brooks at his best.

Willy Handforth's cheek and outrageous practical jokes have provided many a laugh. Remember the chaos he caused when he put all the clocks in the school on one hour? Again, when he convinced his brother's friends, at a Christmas visit to Handforth Towers, that the place was haunted! And later, at a fancy dress ball, when he got Handforth to kiss him under the mistletoe - Handy being under the mistaken impression that he was kissing Irene - a quick switch of costumes and Willy had him repeat the performance. This latter I regard as one of the gems in the whole history of the Lee.

Archie Glenthorne, too, is always good for a laugh, although in his case, it is his manner of speech rather than his actions, which provide the laughs. There are exceptions, of course, as, for example in "Archie's Awful Ancestor" (O.S. No. 493) and "Stage Struck Archie" (O.S. 562).

However, in my opinion, Brooks' most humorous character was, without a doubt William Napoleon Browne. Cool and calm at all times and possessor of the most colossal nerve, Browne was easily the most sophisticated of the many characters created by Brooks. Who could ever forget Browne's arrival at the school, as told in "Fooling the School" (O.S. 513)? He poses as a visiting prince and proceeds to persuade the masters to give their pupils the day off in his honour, and then talks the Head into forgiving the escapade. To me, however, Browne is at his best when making observations on events or even in casual conversation. He had, what is described in modern theatrical jargon as a "Throwaway" technique. A wonderful

character!

Turning from humour, I might discuss Brooks as a writer of fantasy. Here is a field in which he excelled.

These "fantasy" tales have come in for much criticism, unfairly in my opinion. Admitted, it is rather farcical for the one set of characters to discover lost worlds. One such, would have created a world sensation, but to have discovered El Dorado, New Anglia, Isirium and Northestria to name four is a bit much - on the face of it. But this is the wrong attitude. Accept the basic idea, and you can't resist the adventure. After all, what better yarn could one possibly wish for than the first Northestrian series? (1st N.S. 34-43). Once you've accepted the idea of a lost world, then the story's the thing. Fantasy, or straight-forward adventure, Brooks really knew how to hold your interest without flagging from the first chapter to the last.

Of course, these lost world yarns form but a very small part of Brooks' output, but we can associate with these his straight-forward adventure stories. Here again we can see that Brooks was master of his craft. Whenever Lord Dorriemore's name was mentioned in connection with a forthcoming adventure series then the readers knew that they were in for a real treat. Action was the keynote in all his holiday adventure yarns and the reader is carried along at a breathless speed from incident to incident. Nowadays, we can read the series from beginning to end at one sitting, if one wishes. In the days when we had to wait a whole week for the next instalment, it was very different. Then, it seemed impossible that a week only had seven days, so eagerly did we wait for the next issue.

So much for Brooks as a fantasy and adventure story writer.

I'd now like to deal with Brooks as a master of description. Here, once again, he shows his mettle. And so, for my last extracts I'd like to show how he handles certain situations.

The first is a small incident taken from a much larger action, that of drunken and rioting mobs attacking St. Frank's as told in the last story of the "William K. Smith" Barring-out series (O.S. 463) :-

" The brutes were delayed step by step. They were finding that St. Frank's was being defended to the limit. The fellows were in no mood to allow these destructive beasts full liberties.

Outside the men were wild with excitement and triumph. The success of that dynamite charge had fired them for further devilry. They were getting abandoned now. They gave no thought to the consequences. Their one and only aim was to destroy - destroy - destroy!

Fully a couple of hundred men got ready; and then, with fiendish yells, they tore forward, with heads down and arms held up to protect themselves against the continuous cascades of water from the hosepipes above.

It was like a desperate charge to gain a strongly held position on the battlefield. But here the attackers knew they could come to no real harm. It was a soaking at the most. And, as most of these savages were soaked already they didn't care.

They came splashing through the flooded Triangle and charged in at the Ancient House doorway in a vast, surging mob. They roared with exultant triumph as they crowded like sardines into the lobby.

The rush was so great that it was like a riot at a football match, after a

fence has given way. The foremost men were hurled forward against their own strength, pushed on by those who came behind, until, indeed, the lobby was a jammed, packed mass of cursing humanity.

But it was difficult to recognise this mob as humanity. It was more like a collection of wild beasts. They pushed forward until they were almost upon the barricade, and the foremost men screamed with alarm as they were hurled forward and jammed.

In their wild, insane excitement, the invaders were likely to do grave injury to themselves. But they had no thought for resistance when they dashed in. They believed that the school was open to them.

"Hold back - hold back!" shrieked one of the men, with a string of curses. "These young whelps have barred the way!"

"Now!" shouted Morrow loudly. "The tap! Turn it!"

Handforth, at the hydrant, heard the command and in a moment he was twirling the little red wheel. There was a splutter, a roaring hiss and then the hose in Morrow's hand became alive.

A fierce jet of water shot out, and played with devastating effect upon the packed men in the lobby. The nozzle of the hose was pushed through the legs of a table that formed a part of the barricade, and it was only a few feet away from the foremost invaders.

Shrieks, curses, and wild yells filled the air as the hose played full into the faces of the maddened brutes. They had got more than they bargained for. And at the same moment another hose started playing from the stairs.

A stampede started - a wild infuriated stampede.

Blinded, dazed, half stunned by that fearful force of water, the men staggered drunkenly out of the lobby, until the bulk of the force had reached the open air again. They left several men lying on the floor - crushed almost senseless by the fearful jam. For in the panic these men had trampled one another under foot without the slightest compunction. "

Brooks shows here, of course, his ability to describe action scenes involving hundreds of people. There are in fact, nearly a thousand rioters engaged in this attack upon the school and Brooks handles them all with confidence in this exciting story.

From crowd scenes involving action and excitement, here is an extract from the first story in the Ezra Quirke series using only one character. (A series incidentally, which is generally considered one of the finest he ever wrote.)

Brooks as we all know was exceedingly adept at creating an eerie atmosphere, and here, I think, he does it brilliantly without the usual background of haunted houses and ghosts.

Quirke had foretold disaster for Kenmore and at this point of the story, Kenmore is leaving the Ancient House and is about to cross the Triangle:-

" It was raining slightly - a nasty, unpleasant drizzle. There was no moon now, and the darkness was intense, the lights of the Modern House and the East House gleamed warmly on the other side of the triangle. Kenmore turned up his coat collar and strode out.

"Kenmore!"

It seemed to the prefect that a voice had called him, but it was probably a trick of his imagination. The voice had sounded almost in his ear, and it wasn't

an ordinary voice. A mere whisper - a faint sound, which could scarcely be regarded as a real voice.

"Funny!" muttered Kenmore, frowning.

He walked on, glancing about him quickly. He was certainly alone. There wasn't another soul out - and not likely to be at such an hour, and in such unpleasant weather.

"Kenmore!"

The voice came again - and this time louder and more distinct. It was right in his ear - a mysterious, unnatural voice. It was so strange that Kenmore halted in his tracks, his heart beating with increased rapidity.

"Kenmore! Simon Kenmore!"

"Who's that?" muttered the prefect a catch in his voice. "What's the idea of this foolery? Who's that, I say? Show yourself, confound you!"

With trembling hands, he pulled out a box of matches and struck a light. In the still air, the flame flared up, and revealed to Kenmore that he was standing in the middle of the Triangle, absolutely alone. A raindrop struck the match, and the light spluttered out.

"Kenmore! Simon Kenmore! Kenmore!"

The voice just repeated his name. There was a mocking note in it - a hollow unearthly note. It was a human voice and yet it wasn't. It was unlike anything Kenmore had heard in all his experience. A sudden chill came over the prefect. He shivered violently.

"Can't make it out!" he muttered. "I'm crazy, or something!"

"Kenmore! the fountain. Kenmore! Come to the fountain, Kenmore!"

This time there was something definite - something with command.

Automatically, Kenmore looked towards the fountain. It was quite near him - within a few feet. And the voice had come from that side.

He strode towards the fountain and halted near it. But he was on his guard. He looked round carefully.

"Prepare yourself, Kenmore!" came the mysterious voice. "Look in this direction - I am here. I have been called to punish you - "

"Come out of that!" snarled Kenmore.

He struck another match - suddenly, dramatically the light flared, and he held himself tense. But the cold marble fountain was utterly deserted. The water of the pool was marked with tiny rings where the raindrops fell. And one glance was enough to convince Kenmore that he was still utterly alone.

"Kenmore! Can't you hear me, Kenmore?"

The voice came from the very fountain-head - the marble face immediately in front of him - a carved face which was familiar to all the St. Frank's fellows. There were three of them on the fountain - equivalent to the three sides of the triangle. And one of them had spoken! One of those carved marble images!

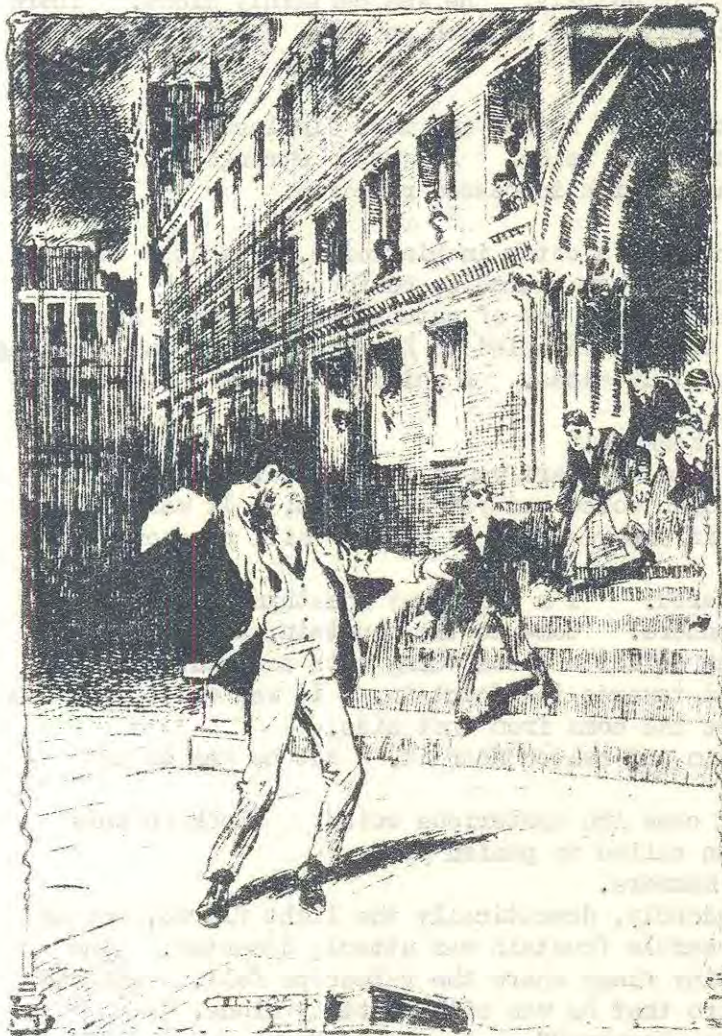
All Kenmore's fear returned - but this time intensified to a tremendous degree.

"Look, Kenmore - look closely!"

The prefect felt faint and giddy. Yet he steeled himself to investigate further. His one desire was to run - to flee madly. But he was deterred by the one rational thought which clung to him. What if it were actually a jape? How the juniors would howl with merriment if he turned and ran!

He peered forward closely - trying to pierce the blackness. And then, just as he was near that grotesque face, something happened.

His eyes hurt him - they pained strangely. And although he tried to see the fountain, he could not do so. All was blackness.



Kenmore felt everything was dark, horribly, mysteriously dark. He clapped his hands to his painful eyes. And then, with a terrible cry, he knew "I'm blind!" he screamed. "I'm blind!"

An illustration from N.L.L. No. 542 -
"The Schoolboy Magician."

wide open, and two or three juniors were nearly swept off their feet. The gale roared in with terrific velocity, bringing a perfect deluge of snow. It made us gasp.

Bending our heads to the wind, we forced our way out into the night. The Ancient House steps had vanished. We could see nothing but a piled up mass of snow. It was soft, crisp and feathery. With every step we kicked up masses of powdery whiteness - which the wind caught up, and whirled about us in thick clouds. And the air itself was so thick with driving flakes that it was nearly a matter of

"Kenmore! do you believe now, Kenmore?"

The voice was mocking and faint - fading away into the air as the words sounded. They came from Kenmore's rear, too. He turned, his breath hissing between his teeth. Then he staggered back.

The darkness was general.

All the lights had gone out in the school! He couldn't even see the buildings outlined against the dark sky. Everything was dark - horribly, mysteriously dark. Kenmore clapped his hands to his painful eyes. And then, with a terrible cry, he knew.

"I'm blind!" he screamed,
"I'm blind!"

Just one more example - and what more fitting than a Christmas scene, complete with snow.

Now, if you're a Hamiltonian fan, then you're probably reading this some time after Christmas, but if you are a Lee-ite let this be my Christmas greeting to you. With this description of a snowstorm, described in O.S. 446, let me wish you a very happy Christmas and a prosperous New Year.

The juniors are about to leave St. Frank's for Bellton station:-

"The big door was flung

impossibility to open our eyes.

"Oh, boy! Some storm. I'm telling you!" said Ulysses Spenser Adams. "It sure reminds me of my home town. Gee! This is the kind of dope we get around N'York City! Let's go boys!"

We literally pushed our way across the triangle to the gates, and emerged into the lane. Here the full force of the blizzard passed over the tops of the high hedges, and we were able to breathe more freely. But the snow-flakes were still whirling round us in countless millions.

"Come on," said Handforth breathlessly, "Who cares for snow?"

"Attaboy!" remarked Ulysses.

"Absolutely!" gasped Archie. "I mean, here we all are, and with several slabs of luck we shall reach the station. The chappies on the outskirts had better look after themselves, though. It's bally easy to get lost in this sort of stuff."

The lane contained more snow than we had ever seen on that road before. On one side it was fairly clear, but on the other the drifts were piled up until they formed great sloping banks, half as high as the hedges. In many places the drifts were four and five feet deep.

In Bellton High Street, trade was practically at a standstill. Although it was not yet six o'clock, and the shops were all open, they could hardly be seen. The fine snow-flakes, driven along by the high wind, filled the atmosphere so much that it was almost like a fog.

We didn't see a soul all the way down the High Street, and by the time we got to the station, practically all the breath had been knocked out of our bodies. But we arrived - fourteen white and ghostly figures - at five minutes to six. And in the little booking office, we stamped about and shook ourselves, and collected round the blazing fire. "

Extracts have been taken from the following titles:-

O.S. 485	The Scandal at St. Frank's	O.S. 463	Fighting for St. Frank's
1st N.S.77	The Doomed Schoolboy	O.S. 542	The Schoolboy Magician
1st N.S.20	Handforth's Bad Bargain	O.S. 446	The Schoolboy Santa Claus

* * * * *

AVAILABLE FOR SALE OR EXCHANGE: Magnets, S.O.L's, Nelson Lees, B.F.L's, etc.

F. Vernon Lay, 52, Oakleigh Gardens, Whetstone, London N.20

WANTED: Hilda Manners (by Ida Melbourne) and "Sunny" (by Renee Frazer) Stories in 2d. School Friend; "The Twins" (by Joan Vincent) and any Hilary Marlow Stories in Schoolgirls Own 4d. Library.

Ray Hopkins, 129 Shardeloes Road, London, S. E. 14.

DISPOSAL: B.O.Ps. 'Scouts' (loose) pre-1940. WANTED: Bullseyes, A.P. Pub. 1931-'34; 'Wizards' 1922-'36.

J. R. Swan, 3 Fifth Avenue, Paddington, London, W.10



ADVENT OF A MAGNIFICENT NEW PUBLICATION BY YOUR SKIPPER!

In response to repeated requests, I have decided to issue a new Sexton Blake publication, which will make its appearance monthly. It will be

called

"THE SEXTON
BLAKE LIBRARY,"
and it will cost 3d.

This wonderful new book of Sexton Blake will appear in September, so there is no time to be lost. Order your copy now, so

that there will be no uncertainty about obtaining one. Remember, only 3d. is asked for this Great Bumper Number.



**HERE IS
A
FACSIMILE
OF
THE
COVER
OF
NUMBER 1.**



**THE FIRST
STORY
WILL BE
BY
THE AUTHOR
OF
THE YVONNE
SERIES, etc.**

**SEXTON BLAKE, TINKER, YVONNE, WU LING &
BARON BEAUREMON ALL IN ONE STORY!!!**

The Birth of The Sexton Blake Library

The magnificent advertisement on the opposite page originally appeared in UNION JACK No. 618 (Sexton Blake - Pirate), dated 14 August 1915. It seems incredible that the longest running detective-story book of our time should have been launched on its great career during one of the worst periods of - at that date - the most terrible war ever known to mankind. Nevertheless it not only was launched, it achieved a popularity which, today, almost half a century later, still exists. Furthermore, it was not (as happened to so many other periodicals of the period) the Second World War that caused the demise of the Sexton Blake Library; it was left to the wind of change during the "modern" years of the 1950's and 1960's to do that. Incidentally, I have my own copy of S.B.L. No. 1 (I have all three No. 1's), and I can say without hesitation that the description in the advertisement as to it being a "wonderful new book" is perfectly correct. It would seem, however, that once again the tide is turning, and that in the new year we shall be able to welcome back "our" detective - a real British one, and not a copy of an American Private Eye.

On the reverse of the page upon which No. 1 of the S.B.L. was advertised there was another advertisement concerning the Forcing of the Dardanelles. Every reader was exhorted to help by buying copies of the UNION JACK and PENNY PICTORIAL for their fighting friends. A coupon was printed in each paper, and on receipt of one, together with a postal order for sixpence, a khaki Dardanelles Handkerchief, size 24 inches by 19½ inches, was sent. Upon this handkerchief was printed in bright colours a map showing the important positions that had to be captured. I wonder if any of our older readers remember these handkerchiefs - and perhaps obtained one for Father, or Uncle, or maybe an elder brother? It would be interesting to hear from anyone who did, and it would be even more interesting to know if one of these handkerchiefs is still in existence.

JOSIE PACKMAN

* * * * *

The Schools' Olympiad

By Donald B. Webster

Many thoughts have turned to Tokyo this Indian Summer where the XVIII Olympiad (Olympic Games) was held, and there is no doubt that Great Britain and The Commonwealth emerged with great credit. This prompted me at the time to devise a Quiz at a meeting of the London Branch of the O.B.B.C. on this subject dealing with the great Schools' Olympiad, after which it was suggested that I write an article describing these events for the Annual ... so here goes:

It was Gussy's idea in the first place. He persuaded his pater, Lord Eastwood to present a Silver Cup for the winners of a Sports Week for the Junior Forms at 8 of our leading Schools. Smithy, not to be outdone, asked his father to present a medal to the best all-rounder at these Sports, and after discussion it was decided to hold these in London (Wembley Stadium and Baths) at the end of the Summer Vacation.

A large camping site was acquired for accommodation for the various competitors, and a schedule of events was drawn up after careful consideration so that no boy should be unduly fatigued, and the following is a summary of the main features.

FIRST DAY (Monday): This was devoted to Athletics, and the big surprise here was that Rookwood won the Relay from Greyfriars. For Greyfriars, Frank Nugent, as usual, won the High Jump and beat the previous record. Figgins failed to win the Long Jump, but he atoned by winning the 100 yds. Flat. Of course Cousin Ethel clapped loudest of all on this occasion.

SECOND DAY (Tuesday): The morning saw the Swimming Events being held at Wembley Baths (Empire Games Pool) and a packed crowd saw many thrilling finishes. St. Frank's won the Team Relay in which they just beat Rookwood. Also it was a treat to see Gussy win the Neat Diving. Of course Burton and Penfold won events. The Boat Race took part in the afternoon and a really thrilling Final ended in a tie between St. Jim's and Greyfriars.

THIRD DAY (Wednesday): Football was the order of the day and the two most fancied teams (St. Jim's and Greyfriars) met in the Semi-Final. A great surprise was in store, for St. Frank's, with Reggie Pitt in devastating form in scoring 2 goals, beat Greyfriars in the Final by 2 goals to nil. In the afternoon, after the Final, the Gymnastics were held, and it was pleasing to see Courtfield Council chalk up a win here.

FOURTH DAY (Thursday): Quite a good crowd turned up to watch the boxing. Bob Cherry was fancied to win this, but he had never met Edgar Lawrence before, and was beaten by experience, only his doggedness saving him from a knock-out in the Final. In the afternoon the Shooting took place at the Rifle Range, and Kit Wildrake won as was expected, but the quality of the opposing marksmen was really excellent, three scoring 90 out of 100 marks.

FIFTH DAY (Friday): In the morning the long distance Cycle Race took place. This was a very open affair; any one of half a dozen could have won this, but Tom Merry eventually just pipped Gordon Gay, his rival. The Tug-of-War in the

afternoon proved quite exciting as the various spectators urged their respective champions on. Billy Bunter, much to his annoyance did not figure in the Greyfriars team, but Fatty Wynn added weight and success to the St. Jim's team.

SIXTH and LAST DAY (Saturday): The greatest event of all - The Marathon. Crowds lined the course and Headmasters, Old Boys, and even School Governors were at the finishing post to see Mark Linley - his breath coming in gasps - score a triumph for Greyfriars. All that remained in the evening was the presentation of the Cup, which went to St. Jim's, and the medal for the best all-rounder to Tom Merry. There were no gold, silver and bronze medals for each event - just the honour of the school for success! The complete list of results follows:

SCHOOLS' OLYMPIAD RESULTS

(JUNIORS - Under 16)

ABBREVIATIONS:

St. JIM'S.....	(J)	GREYFRIARS.....	(G)
St. FRANK'S.....	(F)	CARCROFT.....	(C)
ROOKWOOD.....	(R)	RYLCOMBE GRAMMAR.....	(R.G.)
HIGHCLIFFE.....	(H)	COURTFIELD COUNCIL.....	(C.C.)

JUDGES: Messrs. Railton, Lascelles, Ducas and Dalton.

STARTERS etc: Messrs. Fenton, Wingate, Kildare and Bulkeley.

ATHLETICS

<u>100 yds. Flat</u>	1. G. Figgins	(J)	3 points
	2. H. Compton	(C)	2 "
	3. F. Monk	(R.G.)	1 "
<u>220 yds.</u>	1. A. Newcome	(R)	3 "
	2. R. R. Cardew	(J)	2 "
	3. G. Smithson	(H)	1 "
<u>440 yds.</u>	1. S. Q. I. Field	(G)	3 "
	2. G. Gay	(R.G.)	2 "
	3. T. Watson	(F)	1 "
<u>$\frac{1}{2}$ mile</u>	1. R. Hamilton	(F)	3 "
	2. T. Merry	(J)	2 "
	3. S. Lazarus	(C.C.)	1 "
<u>1 mile</u>	1. J. Silver	(R)	3 "
	2. H. Vernon-Smith	(G)	2 "
	3. R. Talbot	(J)	1 "
<u>Relay Race</u> (4 x 220 yds.)	1. ROOKWOOD		15 points (Silver, Mornington, Newcome, Rawson)
	2. GREYFRIARS		10 points (Wharton, Vernon-Smith, Hurree Singh, Todd)
	3. ST. FRANK'S		5 points (Hamilton, Church, Russell, Pitt)
<u>220 yds. Hurdles</u>	1. R. Redfern	(J)	3 points
	2. Sir M. Tregellis-West	(F)	2 "
	3. R. Lee	(C)	1 "

ATHLETICS (cont'd)

<u>High Jump</u>	1. F. Nugent (G)	3 points
	2. R. Trumper (C.C.)	2 "
	3. A. E. Lovell (R)	1 "

<u>Long Jump</u>	1. D. Vane-Carter (C)	3 "
	2. G. Figgins (J)	2 "
	3. F. Courtenay (H)	1 "

<u>Putting the Weight</u>	1. E.O. Handforth (F)	3 "
	2. J. Bull (G)	2 "
	3. J. Blake (J)	1 "

<u>Throwing the Javelin</u>	1. R. De Courcy (H)	3 "
	2. Lord Talboys (C)	2 "
	3. A. Glenthorne (F)	1 "

<u>MARATHON</u> (15 miles)	1. M. Linley (G)	20 points
	2. R. Talbot (J)	10 "
	3. R. Hamilton (F)	5 "
	4. J. Silver (R)	3 "

SWIMMING EVENTS

<u>110 yds. Free Style</u>	1. R. Penfold (G)	3 points
	2. F. Wootton (R.G.)	2 "
	3. F. Wickers (C.C.)	1 "

<u>440 yds.</u>	1. T. Burton (F)	5 "
	2. T. Redwing (G)	3 "
	3. R. Trumper (C.C.)	1 "

<u>Diving</u>	1. Hon. A.A. D'Arcy (J)	3 points
	2. C. de Valerie (F)	2 "
	3. F. Nugent (G)	1 "

<u>220 yds. Back Stroke</u>	1. G. Raby (R)	3 points
	2. G. Carboy (R.G.)	2 "
	3. J. Trelawney (C.C.)	1 "

<u>RELAY RACE</u> (4 x 110 yds.)	1. ST. FRANKS	15 points
	(Hamilton, Burton, Pitt, Christine)	
	2. ROOKWOOD	10 points
	(Silver, Raby, Mornington, Erroll)	
	3. GREYFRIARS	5 points
	(Wharton, Linley, Redwing, Cherry)	

<u>FOOTBALL: 1st Round</u>	St. Jim's, 1. (Merry) v. Rookwood, O.	
	Courtfield, C. 2. (Trumper 2) v. Carcroft, O.	
	Greyfriars, 3. (Wharton 2, V. Smith) c. Highcliffe, O.	
	St. Frank's 2. (Pitt, Grey) v. Rylcombe 1. (Gay)	

<u>Semi-Finals</u>	St. Franks, 1. (Hamilton) v. Courtfield, C. O.	
	Greyfriars, 2. (Singh, Bull) (pen) v. St. Jim's, 1. (D'Arcy)	

<u>FINAL</u>	ST. FRANKS, 2. (Pitt, 2) v. GREYFRIARS, O.	
	(10 points)	(5 points)

BOXING Heat 1. R. Cherry (G) beat J. Silver (R)
 E. Lawrence (F) " G. Gay (R.G.)
 F. Courtenay (H) " H. Compton (C)
 T. Merry (J) " R. Trumper (C.C.)

Semi-Finals E. Lawrence (F) beat F. Courtenay (H)
 R. Cherry (G) " T. Merry (J)

FINAL E. Lawrence (F) beat R. Cherry on points
 (10 points) (5 points)

BOAT RACE Heat 1. Rylcombe G.S. beat St. Frank's
 Courtfield C. " Rookwood
 St. Jim's " Highcliffe
 Greyfriars " Carcroft

Semi-Finals St. Jim's beat Courtfield C.
 Greyfriars " Rylcombe G.S.

FINAL ST. JIM'S and GREYFRIARS - A tie
 (10 points each)

SHOOTING

(100 possible) 1. K. Wildrake (J) 97 15 points
 2. J. Silver (R) 94 10 "
 3. R. Drake (C) 90 5 "

CYCLE RACE (10 miles)

1. T. Merry (J) 15 points
 2. G. Gay (R.C.) 10 "
 3. F. Courtenay (H) 5 "
 4. V. Mornington (R) 3 "

TUG-of-WAR

(Best of 3 pulls)

Heat 1. St. Jims beat S. Frank's 2-1
 Greyfriars " Carcroft 2-0
 Highcliffe " Rylcombs G.S. 2-0
 Rookwood " Courtfield C.C. 2-1

Semi-Finals St. Jim's beat Greyfriars 2-1
 Highcliffe " Rookwood 2-1

FINAL ST. JIM'S beat HIGHCLIFFE 2-1

GYMNASTICS

1. S. Lazarus (C.C.) 10 points
 2. T. Rawson (R) 5 "
 3. J. Boots (F) 3 "
 4. R. De Courcy (H) 2 "

ALL-ROUNDER MEDAL

Tom Merry (St. Jim's) 5 points
 Runners-up J. Silver (R) R. Hamilton (F)

FINAL PLACINGS

1. ST. JIM'S.....	82 points	5. HIGHCLIFFE.....	17 points
2. GREYFRIARS.....	77 "	6. COURTFIELD COUNCIL.....	16 "
3. ST. FRANK'S.....	65 "	7. RYLCOMBE GRAMMAR.....	15 "
4. ROOKWOOD.....	56 "	8. CARCROFT.....	13 "

NOTES:

The Olympiad was practically decided at the last moment when Tom Merry won 5 points as best all-rounder. It is significant to note that there is a general levelling up at the top and bottom of the final table. The last four Schools just didn't win a major event. I have tried as far as possible to give the appropriate winners of the various events as I see them, e.g. St. Jim's winning the Tug-of-War with the assistance of Fatty Wynn, Wildrake as a good shot, Edgar Lawrence as the best boxer, Figgins' long legs coming in useful in the sprint and long jump, Penfold and Burton as the best swimmers, and strength being the decisive factor in Putting the Weight. If I have erred in the estimation of any reader, may I crave your indulgence, and use the old excuse of "author's licence."

Finally, ----- to quote Rudyard Kipling:

"The tumult and the shouting dies
The Captains and the Kings depart."

* * * * *

WANTED: Last Series "Modern Boy". Price and details please:-

HODGSON, 47 GORDONDALE ROAD, MANSFIELD, NOTTS.

TOP PRICES FOR Binding copies GEMS in 800's and pre-500's.

CHARLES VAN RENEN, BOX 50 UITENHAGE, SOUTH AFRICA.

SALE/EXCHANGE: 2,000 - MAGNETS; 800-GEMS; 800-LEES; 400-S.O.L's; 2,500-others. Including - Holiday Annuals, Monster Libraries.

WANTED: PLUCKS; ROCKETS: U.Js; B.F.Ls; MAGNETS: BOYS' REALMS; FAVOURITES MAGAZINES FRIENDS; and others - All 1915-1931 period.

KINGSLEY, "ATLANTIS", LYDBROOK, GLOS.

WANTED: MAGNETS RED 1 to 300, 301, 304, 336, 342, 346, 353, 383, 385, 390. BLUE & WHITE 441, 442, 513, 617, 633, 685, 692, 698, 702, 708, 709, 745, 761, 762, 767, 768. YELLOW 771, 773, 774, 781, 782, 784, 787, 789, 800, 806, 808, 813, 818, 832, 835, 836, 838, 841, 842, 844, 846, 847, 852, 853, 854, 856, 859, 863, 871, 1238. Also want certain Nos. S.O.Ls., GEMS, U.Js., NELSON LEES. Hundreds of all these and others for exchange.

J. R. MURTAGH, 509 WINDSOR AVENUE, HASTINGS, NEW ZEALAND
(Only four days away by Air Mail!)

WANTED: Irish Emerald 1909; Sons of Britannia, Vols. V, VI; American Scrap Book and Magazine of U.S. Literature, Vol. I, 1861.

STANLEY A. PACHON, 520 E. 5th ST., BETHLEHEM, PA., U.S.A.

Christmas and New Year Greetings to my Old Boys' Book Collectors, especially James R. Swan, James Belton, Eric Fayne, Vernon Lay, Geoffrey Harrison, Austin Paynter etc. I still require Nelson Lees, Union Jacks, Thrillers, Detective Weeklies, Boys' Friend Lib., Chums Annuals, Boys' Own Annuals. Must be near mint condition. Any Aldine publications, Buffalo Bill, Boxing Novels, Racing Novels, Football Novels, etc.

A.G. DAVIDSON, 193 RAE ST., FITZROY NORTH, MELBOURNE, VICTORIA, AUSTRALIA.

On Wednesday, December 23rd, we went off to Layer Marney in Essex, to stay with my Gran over Christmas. We always go by the same train from Liverpool Street Station, and when we got to Kelvedon we changed on to the Light Railway where the conductor comes down the train to issue the tickets.

My Gran is not using her carriage while the war is on, and her coachman has joined the army, but she had engaged the local carrier to meet us at our station with his little cab, and it did not take us long to clip-clop over to Layer Marney through the darkness.

Gran's house, with its lovely brass lamps and the big fires in the grates, was warm and bright, and Gran gave me a big hug which squashed all the breath out of me, and then kissed me all over my face. My august Aunt Gwen, who is a bit Decembery, shook hands with me as she said I was now too old for kissing. I didn't mind really, for Auntie Gwen always has a very cold nose. I suppose it shows she is healthy. Of course, it's a bit silly to say I am getting too old for kissing. Doug is older than me, and the older he gets the more kissing he

DANNY

for

Merrie Christmas

(Being excerpts from DANNY'S DIARY for Christmas 1914)

seems to like to do.

On Thursday, which was Christmas Eve, we were all going over to Colchester to do some shopping. At first we thought we would hire a horse and trap, and Dad would drive us. He has a way with horses. But Dad said he wouldn't want to be driving after dark, so we would have to leave Colchester not later than three in the afternoon, which would not have given us long there.

Gran said that a man ran a motor-bus once a week to Colchester, leaving Layer Marney about ten in the morning, and leaving Colchester for the return journey at six in the evening. So we decided to go by the motor bus.

It was a dreadful old bus, though I was too polite to say so. It was painted yellow, and it was very slow, made an awful noise, smelt terribly of petrol fumes, and bounced you all over the place. At one hill, all the passengers had to get out at the bottom and walk up, as the driver said it wasn't safe to try to

climb the hill with a load of passengers on board. I think the bus had quite a job to get up the hill even without the passengers.

I couldn't help thinking of our fast, comfortable trams at home, and I asked Gran why they didn't have trams out to Layer Marney. Gran said she expects they will one day, but there aren't enough passengers at present to make a service pay.

It was about half-past eleven when we got to Colchester, and the bus stopped in the space outside the Hippodrome. That is Colchester's Music Hall, and the show "Aladdin" was on there.

Gran and Auntie Gwen were going to spend an hour with some friends, and Mum and Dad and Doug were going shopping, and they asked me what I would like to do. I said I would like to have a ride on the Colchester trams, so Dad gave me a shilling, and we arranged that I should meet them outside the Hippodrome in time for lunch.

Then they went off to Wyre Street where there are some nice shops, while I caught a tram to ride out to Lexden. The Colchester trams are painted green, and run on a much narrower gauge than ours at home. I rode on the open top of the car, for, though it was cold, it was dry and quite pleasant. I enjoyed my ride, and at Lexden I got down, and waited for the next car to come to take me back.

It wasn't long before another car came in at the terminus, and on that I rode to North Station, which meant going down a very steep hill called, I think, North Hill. At North Station I caught another car which was marked "Eastgate," and on that I rode back to the Hippodrome. I found that I had only spent 6d out of my shilling.

I walked down the High Street which has a wonderful open-air market all the way down the side of the road. I walked down past the long line of stalls where they were selling everything under the sun. The pavement was crowded with people, but nobody seems quite so happy this Christmas. It's the war.

I met the others outside the Hippodrome at about quarter to one, and we all went in the "Cups Hotel" for lunch. It was a nice dining room, and we had a very satisfying meal.

After lunch we had another look round the shops, and then Gran said she thought we would go to the pictures as we had plenty of time before we had to catch our bus for Layer Marney.

There are two picture palaces in Colchester. One is called the Headgate Cinema, and the other is called the Vaudeville and is near the second Colchester station which my gran calls Bottles Station - I don't know why. They asked me which one I would prefer to go to.

At the Headgate they were showing Sir Herbert Tree in "Trilby." Well, I didn't think a picture about a hat would be very interesting, so I turned that down, and we went to the Vaudeville. It is a very long cinema - the longest I have ever been in - but it had a nice orchestra which played very suitable music. The chief picture was Florence Turner in "The Shepherd Lassie of Argyle." Florence Turner is my mother's favourite in the cinema, though I like Mary Pickford better. It was very sad, and my mother cried quite a bit, and Aunt Gwen kept saying: "Don't be stupid, Mildred! Remember it's only a picture."

We also saw "Babes in the Wood" in Pathecolour which I quite liked, and a very funny Keystone comic. As we came out of the cinema, the orchestra played

"It's a Long Way to Tipperary," which is a very nice tune.

It was cold on the journey home in the bus, and there was quite a bit of mist about in the dark lanes, so we were not sorry to get back to Layer Marney.

That night, being Christmas Eve, I hung up my pillow-case as usual at the end of my bed, and when I woke up in the morning I found it full of presents. Gran had given me a magnificent pair of football boots and a splendid football. I was very pleased indeed, though I like cricket better as a game. Mum and Dad had bought me a new overcoat with a belt which pleased me very much, Auntie Gwen gave me a pair of stockings in dark blue with light blue turnover tops. Doug gave me a pair of slippers and the Christmas Double Numbers of four comics - Lot-O-Fun, Comic Life, Sparks, and the Big Comic. I felt very touched, for those double numbers cost Doug fourpence, and I haven't always been as nice to Doug about all his lady friends as I might have been. I have made a Christmas



resolution to be kind to Doug in future.

Christmas morning there was a dense fog. It was so bad that none of us was able to go to church like we usually do on Christmas morning.

An amazing thing happened while we were having our Christmas dinner. There was a terrific roaring from outside, and it grew louder and louder. We all left our turkey and dashed out into the garden and looked up. We knew it was an aeroplane, but we couldn't see a thing in the fog. It must have passed right overhead, and the sound gradually died away.

We went back to our turkey, and it wasn't till the next day that we learned it had been a German aeroplane. It lost its way and crashed into the sea somewhere off the coast of Kent.

During the afternoon of Christmas Day I read my four Double Numbers. They all had 16 pages, and the pictures were in the most wonderful colours. Dreamy Daniel and Patriotic Paul are still going strong, and I particularly liked "The Doings of Old King Cole and his page, Merrybell." This was the wording under the last mentioned:

"Marry! but it will take me a week to get to ye palace," groaned poor old Merrybell, trying to carve ye way through ye vast snowfall with ye Christmas goose. But ye artful knave, not being of ye downhearted sort, did soon see ye way out of ye difficulty. Seeing ye strange and quaint cut of ye boughs, our pal did indeed break them off ye tree and affix them to his feet, whereby he was able to proceed to ye palace in much comfort. And on ye bright Christmas Day, Old King Cole and ye relatives made much feast and song. So ye Merry party, being full of ye fat goose and ye boar's head and ye other dainties, did have ye right good time withal.

There were also plenty of good stories in Lot-O-Fun.

Comic Life had "Our Tramps" on the front in a Christmas adventure, and among a lot of good stories there was a most gripping one by S. H. Agnew entitled "The Singer in the Scarlet Box."

The Big Comic really had the best stories, I think, though I actually did not read these till Boxing Day. There was an exciting story about the Thames police called "As Christmas Bells Were Chiming," and also one about Rupert Bland, the War-Detective. Sparks is a very nice comic, and I was very interested because I don't often have this one. I especially enjoyed a tale called "League of the Living Dead" which was about Gripton Court, the detective.

What a fearful lot of detectives there are, and they all have names which sound like Ding-ding Dong. I can see that if ever I become a detective I shall have to change my name.

We had some nice games on Christmas evening. It was a quiet party, of course, but I really enjoyed myself.

On Boxing Day morning Doug brought in a young lady. I think she is the daughter of the village newsagent, and my Gran has seen her about Layer Marney. Everybody knows everybody else in Layer Marney. Doug introduced the young lady as Miss Cowe, to rhyme with "doe." She had rosy cheeks and spoke with rather a broad speech, and Doug said it was the most musical sound he had ever heard. Doug said that Miss Cowe had asked him to tea at her home, and wanted to know if we minded if he went. We didn't mind at all, but Gran reminded him that we were all going to the concert at the Village Institute that evening, and Doug said that was all right as Miss Cowe was actually taking part in the concert.

At dinner I mentioned to Doug that it seemed funny that her name of Miss Cowe should be pronounced to rhyme with "doe." He asked me how I would have pronounced it, and when I told him he was quite cross.

During the afternoon my Aunt Harriet came over from a place called Tolleshunt D'Arcy. Because of this, I always think of Aunt Harriet as Cousin Ethel. Aunt Harriet is not really my aunt by blood. She was an old school friend of my mum's, and they have always been very fond of one another. I believe that she was Doug's godmother when he was christened, but I wasn't there so I am a bit vague. She has a nice face though she had smallpox as a little girl, and she is very kind to everyone.

She brought me a big pile of a magazine called The Children's Magazine which is edited by a man named Arthur Mee. I sat in front of the fire and read the magazines - at least, I looked at the pictures and glanced at the articles which were instructive. I particularly liked the pictures of Mrs. Hippo's school. It is a school composed entirely of animals who wear clothes.

These pictures reminded me very much of the Rainbow which is a very nice coloured comic paper, though I am much too old for it except when nobody's looking.

Aunt Harriet stayed for tea, and we pulled some wonderful crackers which contained some most striking hats which we put on. I was glad there weren't fireworks in the crackers, for I once burned my Gran's tablecloth with a table firework from a cracker, and I have never forgotten how grieved Auntie Gwen was.

After tea, Aunt Harriet drove off with a gentleman in a trap, and we soon set off for the Village Institute in the carrier's cab. It really wasn't very cold for Christmas time, and there was a bright moon.

I suppose I was a bit bored with the concert, but I liked parts of it. Four young ladies did a straw dance. That is to say, they wore straw skirts, but there really wasn't enough straw. Auntie Gwen was disgusted and said they should either have had more straw or else worn a lot of frilly things underneath. It was one of those kinds of dances where you don't really know where to look. Still, we all clapped.

Miss Cowe was a singer in the concert and she sang a very nice new song called "Let the Rest of the World Go By." As an encore she sang "Oh, by jingo," but I think she had a race with the piano player and the piano player won.

A man played "Light Cavalry" on the trumpet and it was good. They often play that tune at the cinemas.

A comedian sang some songs and Auntie Gwen said he went much too far. He announced that he was going to sing a sad fishing song called "The smack that went to the bottom," and I laughed till I saw Auntie Gwen's face. Afterward, Aunt Gwen said she was very surprised at the Village Institute putting on such an entertainment at Christmas time, and she thought she would protest. But even Auntie Gwen clapped when some village men who had joined the Navy came on and sang some sailor songs.

When we got home we had a lovely supper of cold turkey and ham followed by hot mince pies. We put on the hats which we had got from the crackers, and it all looked very nice, with a lot of red candles burning on the table and round the room.

Doug came in after supper - he had seen Miss Cowe home and had supper with her. Then we had a sing-song round the piano, and played a couple of games which were good fun.

That night, I read some more of my comics in bed, and eventually went to sleep, tired but content.

.....
All good things come to an end, and so did Christmas 1914. I hope the war will be over by next Christmas.

We left Layer Marney on the Monday, and went home. I found the Christmas Number of the Gem waiting for me in the letter box. It was really only an apology for a Christmas Number - nothing like the old days - though I enjoyed the Christmas story which was entitled "Talbot's Christmas." It made me a bit sad to think that my own Christmas was over.

On Tuesday I had a very pleasant surprise. Doug had booked seats for him and his lady friend, Lavinia, to go to Wyndham's Theatre to see a new play called "Raffles" by E. W. Hornung. But Lavinia had a bad bilious attack, through eating too much over Christmas, so Doug told me I could go with him instead. I think it's rather disgusting to eat so much that you get a bilious attack in wartime, but it's an ill-wind that blows nobody any good. Fortunately I seldom get a bilious attack, as I have a substantial stomach which I put down to eating liquorice cuttings which cost a penny for four ounces.

Doug and I had a very nice late tea in a Lyons shop right opposite to Charing Cross Railway station, and then we walked to Wyndham's Theatre which is not far away.

"Raffles" is a most ripping play, and I liked every minute of it. It had only started just before Christmas, and this is what one of the evening papers wrote about it:

"A. J. Raffles was played by Gerald du Maurier. Probably not a single adult member of the audience believes in A. J. Raffles, amateur cracksman and great all-England bowler, but everyone cheerfully accepts this fantastic personage just for the fun of seeing Du Maurier play him, baffle the detective, hide diamond necklaces in tobacco pouches, hit professional burglars in the eye, crawl through cloak-cases, help himself to whisky and soda, and trifle with his cigarette in his own inimitable way. An evening that can be safely recommended to all and sundry, young and old, civilian and khaki, who are seeking an evening off from the universal strain."

And so say all of us. Doug and I clapped till our hands were sore. I think I must try to send Lavinia a note to thank her for having a bilious attack, and to wish her a healthy appetite in the future.

On New Year's Eve we all went to the Lyceum to see "Jack and the Beanstalk." It had the most wonderful scenery and dresses, and there were plenty of patriotic songs which were a bit out of place but we didn't bother. It was a grand show.

We got home just before midnight, and, as always on New Year's Eve, we sat up to see the old year out and the New Year in. Dad and Mum had a glass of port, Doug had ginger wine, and I had a glass of lemonade and a mince pie, and we all toasted "Peace in 1915," It will be lovely if the war is over soon.

On New Year's Day Doug bought me "The Boy Without a Name." It looks good. I think I'm going to enjoy it.

Happy New Year, Dad, Mum, Doug, and everyone. A Happy New Year, Lavinia, and plenty of good food.

* * * * *

* * * * *

Pensive Ramblings

By VICTOR COLBY

Sexton Blake is to re-appear. This most gratifying news was made public in a recent issue of Collectors' Digest, and how thrilled Blake lovers must have been to learn that the Man from Baker Street and his irreplaceable assistant, would take the trail again; and not only this, but Pedro would be back, and so would the redoubtable Mrs. Bardell, and they would all live together once again in good old Baker Street. It seems too good to be true, but it is apparently definite, so our grateful thanks are tendered to whosoever is responsible.

Thinking of Blake and his comeback, my mind went back over the years, thinking of the Blake Saga, its early days, and of the readers and collectors who belonged to those days, and had rubbed shoulders with the great detective.

I spent some interesting hours delving into old issues of Vanity Fair and The Collectors' Miscellany, finding out what the Old Boys in the 1920's and later thought of our detective, and what impact he had made on their lives.

One very interesting article of 1925 commenced:-

"The old penny dreadful is as dead as the dodo. Some weeks ago, I dropped into a news agency, and for the fun of the thing, enquired for 'Boys of England.' The head salesman was an elderly man who knew the newsvending business inside out, and liked to talk about it. 'Sorry, sir,' said he, 'there are no Boys of England now.' 'And what class of literature for boys' reading has taken its place?' I asked. 'Oh, the Nelson Lee and Sexton Blake sort of stuff. Their sale is enormous. The literary taste of the modern boy is very much the same as when I was a lad. Boys love adventure, but the modern boy wants it up-to-date, and expects more scientific ingenuity. Highwaymen, Pirates and Red Indians don't excite his imagination, he wants fights with submarines, and daring stunts with aeroplanes. Tales of Dick Turpin, Claude Duval and Jack Sheppard interest him not. School tales sell readily, but not the Tom Wildrake or Jack Harkaway type."

Bewailing the loss of the old journals, the article writer then made nostalgic references to the man who had recently been shown to have written a Sexton Blake story! He commented, "I should say that Mr. E. Harcourt Burrage, the author of Ching Ching and Wildrake stories, and most of those that appeared over the name of George Emmett, was the best, and most prolific writer of boys' stories."

Concluding, the article writer (a Mr. John James Wilson) had this to say:-

"The present-day youth is less fortunate than the boys of the seventies and eighties. The old journals only charm elderly men now, because they bring back the days of their youth."

Isn't it wonderful how history repeats itself? As one of the "less fortunate boys" with his then modern Sexton Blakes, I confess to not feeling particularly sorry for myself, for I enjoyed then, and now, in these later days, they in turn have brought back to me, quite vividly, the glories of my younger days.

Back in 1937, Barry Ono, famous for his collection of Bloods (which eventually found their way into the British Museum), wrote an article from which the following excerpts are quoted:-

"Dreadfuls had one merit, they did finish. Even the long, drawn-out 'Black Bess' did come to an end at the 1136th chapter and 254th penny number. Tom Wildrake was a boy at school, a soldier in the Indian Mutiny, grew decently old, and married, and the author wrote finale. One had him nicely bound in half-calf, stuck him among our collection, and there he was. You either had a copy of 'Tom Wildrake' or you hadn't. Has anyone a copy of Sexton Blake? One may have thousands of 'copies' of this ever youthful adventurer, who goes on, and on, and on, and have bound a few hundreds up into ponderous tomes, but as Tinker was a boy 30 years ago, still remains a boy, and looks like being a boy 30 years hence, what about it from a collecting point of view? Generations of boys come and go, they grow into bearded men, their children have children, but 'Sexton' still continues to go through the most perilous and exhausting adventures, and doesn't age a day. Sweeney Todd and Turnpike Dick did have the decency to finish and allow themselves to be put in nice leather overcoats, stuck on the shelf, and valued as entities, rather than be carried on, non-stop, as characters for all perpetuity like unto Sexton Blake."

Isn't that strange? It has always been my own personal opinion that the very feature complained of above, has, by enabling its readers to associate with the central character, time and time and time again, won for that character a loyal following, for he became a good friend to whom we were not obliged to say "goodbye," but merely "au revoir" until the publication of his next stirring adventure. In other words, there was the essence of continuity. We, the readers, must grow old, but our favourites need not. They are eternal, and we achieve some degree of immortality through associating ourselves with them. As for the collection, we receive thankfully whatever comes along, but ever mindful that the zest of the hunt, and the exhilaration of the hope, are in themselves as important as the final acquisition. To the true collector, we live in happy expectation of landing, sometime, somewhere, those elusive missing issues. We have the pleasure of possession of those secured, and the pleasure of anticipation of those yet to come.

In the year 1947 an article appeared in the Collectors' Miscellany by F. N. Wearing, entitled "Sexton Blake - How did the name originate?" The writer suggests that Harry Blyth probably had in mind a popular American detective creation who appeared in BEADLE'S DIME LIBRARY, one Jackson Blake. He points out that at about that time the Aldine Publishing Co. started reprinting the Beadle publications, and in the issues of the Half-Holiday Library appeared the well-written stories of Albert W. Aiken, one of America's star dime novelists. These tales dealt with Jackson Blake, and had titles such as "Jackson Blake, the Bouncer," "Jackson Blake the Fresh of Frisco" etc. These stories were reprinted many times during the run of the Aldine Half-Holiday Library under new titles. The writer suggests that Harmsworth thought it was a good opportunity to grab some of the Aldine thunder with a similarly named character, hence Sexton Blake. Pure supposition, no doubt, but makes for interesting speculation.

When one considers the extent of the Sexton Blake saga, and takes into account the works of the Sexton Blake authors in other fields, which reach back into the mid 1800's in the case of the earlier writers, and reaches sideways

through the years, into all sorts of subjects, technical, informative and intellectual, as well as fiction of great variety, one realises the vastness of the association of human endeavour that has Sexton Blake as an integrating common factor.

* * * * *

TWO TENACIOUS PRINTS

By O. W. WADHAM

Full fifty years ago two twopenny story papers used to mingle with Magnets, Gems, Union Jacks and Nelson Lees on booksellers' counters in England, Canada, Australia and New Zealand.

Those two journals are alive and apparently thriving today, but I have never seen any mention of them in Collectors' Digest.

The two I have in mind are Smart Novels and Christian Novels, priced these days at 3d (they sell for 4d in New Zealand), and certainly the cheapest story papers produced in England today. Smart Novels is the oldest of the two by about ten years.

Each chapter in the novels that fill 25 pages of this weekly is headed with a four line verse from Robert Browning, Tennyson and others long dead, and almost forgotten, verse writers.

Two pages are devoted to knitting, and the only illustration is on the cover - usually a picture of the garment to be knitted.

Christian Novels is rather more modern. The cover illustration is from an incident in the 23 page novel inside, and three pages are for children including a strip serial. In the issues I have it is "Lorna Doone" by R. D. Blackmore. It is presented in the old style of early century comics - reading under the drawings, and no letterpress in the picture panels.

Both Smart Novels and Christian Novels must have a loyal core of readers somewhere. It would be most interesting to learn if there are any among the Collectors' Digest clan.

The two little weeklies are about half as thick as they were in the golden years of Magnets, Gems and the rest, but they have long outlived them, which is certainly something to boast about in this picture-strip age.

* * * * *

give - aways

By C. Wright

Shopping for the wife the other week, I noticed, in the grocer's shop, shelf after shelf packed with various makes of cereal and that every firm was giving something away; model animals, soldiers, rockets and what have you - the idea being for the children to worry the parents to buy a particular brand so that they can get the toys. The proprietors of boys' books have followed this dictum for nearly a century.

I cannot, of course, describe every giveaway with every book and comic for it would fill a whole volume. I can only mention those that I remember, and those I have information about through the medium of my own collection.

Way back in the 1880's and 1890's it was the custom to give away numbers 2 and 3 gratis with No. 1. Lloyd's went one better with "Gentleman Jack, or Life on the Road," they gave away numbers 2, 3 and 4 with No. 1. A few gave away from time to time highly coloured plates illustrating some incident in the story. I have in my possession, through the good offices of the late Herbert Leckenby, some of the plates given away with "The Blue Dwarf," and very good they are for the period.

"Our Boys' Journal" which flourished between 1876 and 1883 gave free gifts every fortnight up to about No. 82, such as sheets of scenes, or characters for a toy theatre, or models and pictures. Early in the present century The Boys' Comic Library issued a cigarette card type of picture to attract its readers. In 1916 occurred the 21st Birthday of the Boys' Friend and this the publishers celebrated by giving every reader a picture plate. Also, during the first world war, they gave away a free certificate to all readers joining the Anti-German League - somewhat similar to the certificate given to readers of the Nelson Lee who joined the St. Frank's League. When No. 1 of the Nelson Lee Library appeared, we were given a handsome photo-button of General French, who was, of course, in 1915, one of the first world war generals. In 1921 photo plates of footballers, and No. 1 of Nipper's Magazine insert, were given away, the footballer given first being Charlie Buchan. At a later period, I think in the thirties, the Nelson Lee Library also gave away foreign stamps. In late 1922 and early 1923 they gave away photocards of Modern British Locomotives.

In 1917 The Penny Popular had a novel idea; all boys writing to the office with the requisite coupon, published each week, could obtain an original sketch by the following artists:- C. H. Chapman, A. J. Macdonald, P. Hayward, E. E. Briscoe, J. A. Cummings, A. Jones and Harry Lane. (What an offer!!) Also in 1917, they issued some good art plates: one of W. G. Bunter in various moods and one of Gussy. But in my opinion the best one was of members of the Remove Form at Greyfriars with the Famous Five forming the centrepiece. In September 1930 they also presented a series of coloured pictures of famous footballers, starting with David Jack.

About 1919 the Boys' Cinema opened with a free art plate of Tom Mix, the

famous film star of the silent screen. The Kinema Comic came out soon after, giving away long, narrow, bluish plates of film comedians such as Larry Lemon and Harold Lloyd. Also in 1919, the new 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ d. series of the Popular opened with an art plate of Bunter.

The Modern Boy No. 1 in 1928 included a coloured metal model of the G. W. locomotive 'King George V,' and in 1931 they gave away coloured plates of famous railway engines such as the 'Golden Arrow.' In 1936 they were very prolific with their presents. First they gave away a postcard of J. Guthrie who was motor cycle champion for 1936. This was followed with free gifts ranging over a period of six weeks and comprising 16 cards in full colour of fighter planes of the world, one album to contain them and a 32-page atlas in full colours!

In August 1937 was presented an autographed photo card of F. S. Frith winning the Senior T.T. race in the Isle of Man; in September they came up again with a 52-page album and guide to stamps and a packet of 12 foreign stamps, some of them rare, and after a few weeks the Gem took over with packets of stamps and also stamp hinges.

The Magnet and Gem of course had their full share of giveaways. In 1929 the Magnet gave away for a period two coloured metal car badges and in the same period Nelson Lee weighed in with 3 coloured metal portrait badges of famous cricketers, such as Hendren, Tate, Duckworth etc.

In 1931 Magnet had something new - a boomerang with an elastic shooter. In 1920 they presented a 32-page booklet "Who's Who in FilmLand;" in 1933 a photogravure plate of "Flying Hamburger" was given. Free pictures were also issued in 1936 called "Magic Pictures."

In 1932 a combined effort was concerted with Magnet, Gem, Bullseye, Sports Budget, Triumph, Modern Boy, Surprise and Boys' Cinema, all starting coupon collecting, prizes to those who collected the most. The prizes were announced as 'Ten Thousand Gift Books.' I never got a prize because I never entered, but in the years that followed I managed to get plenty of second hand copies of these books, mutilated where the coupons had been cut out.

In 1920 the Gem gave away a Football Annual Pictorial Supplement which was to be completed in 3 or 4 weeks.

In 1929 the Gem started a series of 16 cards entitled Marvels of Future and in 1933 nine weeks of gifts starting with a 16-page album and 100 coloured pictures to go in same. This scheme applied also to Magnet, Modern Boy and Ranger of that period.

The Rocket in 1923 gave a photo of Siki v Carpentier. In 1921 the Boys' Friend issued a 20-page booklet on wireless to be followed by another on football.

No. 1 Triumph announced 'ripping series of cards illustrating cars and their badges' and No. 1 Bullseye in 1931 gave away a penny bar of Sharp's Kreemy Toffee. In 1927 Little Folks gave away a toy cinema complete with six moving pictures and in the same year the Boys' Magazine also gave coloured transfer photos of famous footballers.

In 1930 No. 3 of the Startler presented readers with special goggles with protruding eyes (supposed to startle). The picture on the cover showed a man falling off a ladder on seeing a boy and a dog wearing these goggles. 1935 a series of cards by the Gem was issued depicting motoring and flying subjects in colour. 3 cards each week for 4 weeks. In 1937 the Pilot gave away 8 coloured cards of Aeroplanes of the King's Air Force.

In February 1938 No. 1 of the New Modern Boy appeared, which was, of course, the Modern Boy in a new format and they started it off with a 48-page photogravure film book with a picture of Will Hay on the cover.

The Football Favourite at one period gave away coloured caricatures of famous footballers. No. 1 Champion in the twenties started off with real photos of famous champions and an 8-page story supplement. No. 1 of the Silver Jacket in 1953 gave a card in colour of a jetliner. No. 1 Beezer in 1956 presented a Whizz Bang, an ear-splitting cracker.

The greatest giveaway of all, was of course the Union Jack Detective Supplement which was made to pull out without interfering with the story, and it ran for several years and when bound made some very handsome volumes. They gave a very nice coloured plate of Sexton Blake in front of the fire with Pedro. I think it was by A. Jones, and at one time they gave a very good set of cards on Police of all Nations.

The comics, of course, had their share of give aways. I wonder how many remember the incredibly thin disc of rainbow coloured toffee given away with No. 1 of "Chuckles". Many gave away balloons and the Jester in 1933 gave a balloon nose. When Puck amalgamated with Sunbeam they gave away a glider. T.V. Fun started off with a gift of a magnifier.

Many comics gave cut out models, especially Lot-O-Fun, Comic Life, and Merry Moments and in fact "Chuckles" once gave away a model of St. Jim's. The "give away" still persists up to this day. Some of the ladies' books give bracelets, rings and packs of fortune telling cards, and the comics still give models and balloons.

 WANTED: GEMS 1331 to 1448, all issues of NEW STRAND MAG., Early CREASEY Books, MONSTERS, BOYS REALM with ST. FRANK'S. Early KNOCKOUT COMICS, Early CHUMS, SCOUT ANNUALS, NELSON LEE LIB. O.S. Early, N.L.L. 1st N.S. 188, 189. THRILLERS, 1/2d. U.Js., 1/2d. MARVELS. Marvels featuring Calcroft. Boys' Friend Nos. 616, 617, 618, 644, 646 and after 672. ALDINE BUFFALO BILL and ROBIN HOOD LIBS. BOYS' FRIENDS, BOYS' REALMS, BOYS' HERALDS, B.F.Ls. HIGH PRICE.

V. E. COLBY, 8 Beresford Avenue, Beverly Hills, N.S.W. Australia.

WANTED TO BUY:

BULLSEYES, ROCKETS, CHIPS, COMIC CUTS.

R. W. STORY, 34 Aberdeen Crescent, Bramalea, via Brampton, Ontario, Canada.

A FORGOTTEN AUTHOR

By S. Gordon Swan

AS A BOY, I was fascinated by the stories of an author whose name is rarely mentioned nowadays - Stephen H. Agnew. I first made his acquaintance in a Nugget Library entitled "John Lyon and the Snide." John Lyon was a detective who encountered many crooks with romantic names and nicknames - Malcolm Drage, the renegade Scotland Yard Commissioner, Kitty Witch, the adventuress, Hugo Stark, the Perfume Poisoner, Vane Fetterless, the Indiarubber Rogue. The names come easily to memory although I have not seen a story by Agnew for over forty years, for they made a deep impression at the time.

John Lyon was superseded by Peter Flint and his assistant, Jacket Nugget. The original-minded Agnew also invented another detective, Max Hushwing, and one of the most fascinating stories about him was "The Vampire Moon," which was about a locked room and a precious stone that shrieked. Interwoven with this story were a couple of lines from Omar Khayyam: "There was a door to which I had no Key, There was a Veil past which I could not see."

I think Max Hushwing also featured in a story in the Big Comic, called, if memory serves correctly, "The Golden Gang." In this tale a crook scientist used the device of creating artificial fogs as a cover to crime.

But Agnew's tour-de-force was a serial in Chums about 1915, called "Skeleton's Gold." This was an enthralling yarn from the first words to the last, beginning as it did with a boy who was blown up in an explosion and lost his memory and his identity. Later in the story this boy, known as Nimrod, encountered another lad almost the double of himself, and they embarked on a treasure trail which led out to South America and the Cordilleras. The galaxy of characters had the usual romantic Agnew touch - Bamboo Markino, Captain Cain, Manatee, Oakum McGlory and the rest. They added colour and glamour to a yarn that had everything.

That others besides myself were strongly influenced by this writer is evidenced by the case of Eric W. Townsend, over whose "Black-bird's Treasure" (and other stories) hangs the shadow of Stephen Agnew. There is the same theme of the man who is believed dead and afterwards turns out to be still alive, the same gallery of bizarre characters with fancy names - Rattlesnake Quinn, Kung of the Hoang-Ho, Shark-Tooth Sorrell. But although Townsend's yarn was good, he lacked Agnew's facile and convincing style, and at times his characters appeared grotesque puppets.

Donald Stuart employed the device of the two veils (which was used in "The Vampire Moon" to convey a hidden message) in a Sexton Blake Library which he wrote in the 'thirties. Gilbert Chester, in "The Fog Fiends," a Union Jack story, brought in the creation of artificial fog as a cloak to criminal activities which Agnew introduced years before in "The Golden Gang." I do not doubt but that these writers derived their inspiration from the same source.

This is all I know of Stephen Agnew the writer. Of the man himself I know nothing at all, except that he was, unfortunately, killed in World War I. His final short story appeared in Chums under the caption: "The last story by a hero who died."

I hope this short article will bring to light some details of the man himself, culled by another admirer with more knowledge of the subject.



THERE'S A NUMBER FIFTY-EIGHT COMING!

We think that most of you will be delighted with the picture opposite. It shows what is often referred to as "London's Last Tram." This car, in recent years, has stood in an enclosure outside Chessington Zoo in Surrey. Now the car has found a new home in Lowestoft.

The picture shows the car during its working life. The boy on the bike undoubtedly has a copy of the Sexton Blake Library, the Magnet, and the Nelson Lee Library in his pocket. The heyday of the tramcar was also the heyday of our favourite weeklies.

Route No. 58 operated between Blackwall Tunnel and Victoria Station, via Blackwall Lane, Greenwich, South Street, Lewisham, Rushey Green, Catford, Forest Hill, Dulwich, Dog Kennel Hill, Camberwell Green, Kennington, and Vauxhall Bridge.

Quite a trip! Large numbers of Collectors' Digest enthusiasts live near the route of the old service 58. Probably plenty of them rode on car No. 1858 in days of yore.

The picture is drawn by Mr. N. W. Price. He is also telling the life story of No. 1858. The first long instalment appears in the current issue of the "Bulletin" issued by the Tramway and Light Railway Society. It is an entrancing story for those who remember.

Anyone who gets a kick out of "looking back a bit" should belong to the Society. The subscription is only 12/6d. a year for folk living in or near London - less still for those outside the London area. The quarterly "Bulletin" goes free of charge to subscribers, and it is packed with information for tramway enthusiasts, not, of course, restricted to London. Anyone interested should communicate with the Hon. Secretary, Mr. D. J. Barnard, 102 Marlborough Lane, London, S.E.7.

* * * * *

WANTED: Books by Anna Katherine Green, Melville Davisson Post, Thomas W. Hanshew, Clifford Ashdown.

SMITH, 14 Crescent Lane, Clapham, London, S. W. 4.

WANTED TO COMPLETE RUN OF LEES: O/S 105 - 130 - 137 - 144 - 237 - 520.
Various LEES, S.O.L. MAGNETS, OLD BOYS ANNUALS, etc. for exchange.

McPHERSON, 1, St. John St., Wells, Somerset.

EARLY MAGNETS, GEMS, BOYS' FRIENDS (Rookwood) W A N T E D.

S. B. WHITEHEAD, 12 Wells Rd., Fakenham, Norfolk.

COMIC CUTS 1½D

THE KING OF COMIC PAPERS

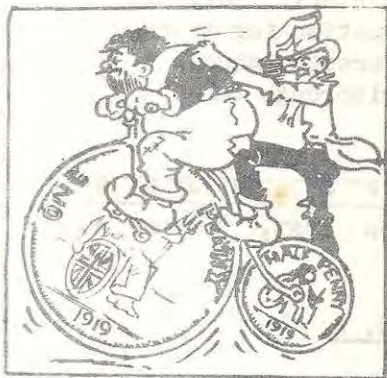


LOTS OF GOOD THINGS INSIDE

New Zealand Reveries

CHIPS 1½D

THE CHAMPION COMIC.



A GOOD RUN FOR YOUR MONEY



THE FUNNY WONDER 1½D



COMIC CUTS 1½D

THE KING OF COMIC PAPERS.



"COMIC CUTS" GOES WITH A BANG!

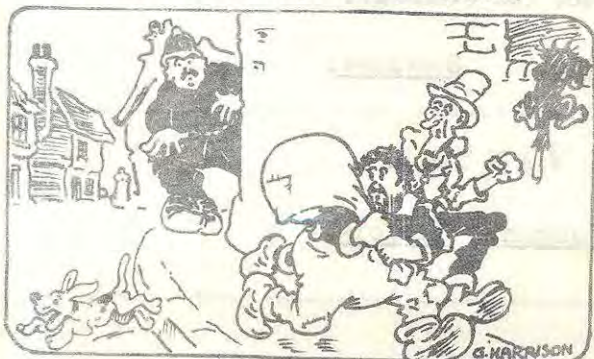


SMILER says "if that chimney 'soots' you, Smudgie, this 'Butterfly' suits me!"

BUTTERFLY 2D



WE'RE SUSPECTED SAYS WEARIE WILLIE.



WEARIE WILLIE & TIRED TIM WITH NEPHEWS