

Vol. 1 (New Series). No. 8.

The Mystery of the

Empty Compartment.

-040-

A Thrilling New Tale of DANTHER GRAYLE, DETECTIVE.

CHAPTER 1.

CHAPTER 1.

The 3.12 Express

T was seldoon indeed that Pauther Crayle took a holiday. Certainly he rarely prepared to take one. The coasionally ne would wake up in the coasionally ne would wake up in the coasionally ne would wake up in the coasionally ne would take one forthwith Martin, his friend, and occasionally his assistant, was used to his errait ways. Consequently, I was not greatly surprised when, one cold morning in January for the work of the control of th

our rosts and tackle, and immediately afterwards set out for Liverpool Street.

We scale train for Saftron Ashley. We scaled our destination at about half-past fen.

We had a good day with the famous Loam pike, killing seven in all, including one twelve-pounder that you had been supported by the saft of the saft of the rost of t

atoll. "Don't be so sluggisted a "Don't be so sluggist," he said, seeing me deeply embedded in an armchair. "A good brisk walk will to sleep after it." There was truth in his arguments, so I got up and slipped my arms into the heavy overcost I had been wearing ill minute later we were out in the "Continued as the return".

(Continued on the next page.)

53

A New and Interesting Story for All. YOU CAN START NOW. A TALE OF TOM MERRY'S CHUM MARTIN CLIFFORD

Ethel's Suspicions Are Confirmed. SLATTERNLY-LOOKING SE

Lidd's Suspicion Art Confirmed.

SLATTERNIA'-LONKING serA cant answerd her ring, and
to a shabby hall. Her heart
st leating fast now, she was
and realing that now, she was
and that the same and that now
and that the same and that now
and that now, she was
and the she fall an instinctive diswas her. She fall that Miss Pendol
was quite right in not wishing her
and now, how,

There was a very agreeable smile
and the short of the she was a very agreeable smile
and the she was a very agreeable smile

sirls to come into contact with Mrs.
There was very acrea also mile
Francis. The distance of the contact with the contact was a contact with the contact with

shen I had piacet use soble I had piacet use soble darried there to learn the
She had come there to learn the
She had come there was doing
strong. She had remembered how
the Craven-had gone out immedistrangely white and how touchy she
shad been. The suspicion had forced
self into Ethel's mind that Enids
and thalf-sewereign on account
she was the shear of the shear of the shear of the shear of the
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some, and had thrown the odium you another.

"The live was started at having ber lightle was started at having ber lightle was started at having ber lightle was started at having tally considered and the lightle factor of the lightle was made with the lightle was a started at his started was a started was a started at his was all send the change up to the started was a lightle was a started was a started was a lightle was a started was a started was a lightle was a started was a started was a lightle was a started was a started was a lightle was a started was a started was a started was a lightle was a started was a started was a started was a lightle was a started was a started was a started was a lightle was a started was a started was a started was a started was a lightle was a started was a started was a started was a started was a lightle was a started was a started was a started was a started was a lightle was a started was a started was a started was a started was a lightle was a started was a started

You have not yet placed the "I have not been out this afternon repersions and Mrs. Scruton, "but there closes, I is open till six in ElmGLANCE OVER THIS

Ethel Cleveland is a new girl as St. Freda's, and on a new girl as school as a strated by the personality of Dolores Pelham, a high-ported girl of Spanish desent, and the state should be supported girl of Spanish desent, and the state should be supported girl of Spanish girls. In spine of all away that night. In spine of all Ethels attempts to stop her, Dolores carries out her rain determines on the rain determines of the state of the spine state of the st

to say "hat the hote did not belong to say "hat the hote did not."
"Then she stole it."
Ethel dushed.
"Never mind that; but it would be better for you to take the note to Miss Penfold, and explain how you comely it. Elnow that Enich had no comely it. Elnow that Enich had no comely it. Elnow that you would did. It is you who have caused her to do this wicked thing."
Mrs. Scruton threw open the doer with a theatrical gesture.
"If you have come to insult me in "If you have come to insult me in, see exclaimed," the same properties of the same properties of the same properties. The same come to insult me in the same properties of the same properties. The same properties are same properties of the same properties of the same properties. The same properties are same properties are same properties. The same properties are same properties are same properties. The same properties are same properties are same properties. The same properties are same properties are same properties. The same properties are same properties are same properties. The same properties are same properties are same properties. The same properties are same properties are same properties. The same properties are same properties are same properties. The same properties are same properties are same properties. The same properties are same properties are same properties. The same properties are same properties are same properties. The same properties are same properties are same properties are same properties. The same properties are same properties are same properties. The same properties are same properties are same properties are same properties. The same properties are same properties are same properties are same properties. The same properties are same properties are same properties are same properties. The same properties are same properties are same properties are same properties are same properties. The same properties are same properties. The same properties are sam

he exclaimed.

Ethel walked to the door.

"I will go gladly," she said; "but warn you to take the note to Miss cenfold. If it is passed, the number cill be traced by the police, and—"

will be traced by the ponce, and—
"Leave my house!"

Ethel walked dewn the garden path and joined bolly. Her heart was beating hard; she felt as if she had just left the den of an ogress.

Delly looked at her flushed face.
"Had a row with Scruton?" she when

Ethel laughed.
"Not exactly, dear. Let us go "Is she going to be easy with Enid?" asked Dolly. "Surely the half-sovereign will keep the Shylock quiet for a time, anyway?" "I don't know." "I don't know."

"I don't know."
"Enid seems to think that it's all right. She told me that she had paid the half-sovereign on account, and Scruton was all serene."
Ethel did not reply. She did not wish to expose Enid's falsehoods to her companion.
That Enid had lied recklesly was

That Duid had lied recheedy was an creating but the fact set folly was in creating but the fact set folly was in the property of the fact set folly was in the fact set followed by the fact set fol

le. You will still speak to me?" she

exclaimed.
"Why not?"
"Then you do not believe that I am a thief?"
"I never believed it for a read the the quietly.

m a thiel?"
"I never believed it for a noment," said Ethel quietly.
Dolores threw her arms round the

FER THIS,
nissed a £5 note from her deck
during the night, and she naturally
usspect Delores of having taken
it. Delores passionately denies
her guilt, and Ethel determines
to prove the Spanish girls
innocence. To this end sky sist
Mrs. Seruton, a dressmaker in the
village of Eminurst, to whom one
is in delta, to Ethel's knowledge,
is in delta.

(Now go on with the story.)

"You-you must not lake the note there," said Etlet hearily. Mrs. Scritton looked astonished. "Why not?" looked astonished. "Why not?" looked astonished. "Because—Oh, did you not think it strange that Enid should hot so much money?" exclaimed the so so much money? "exclaimed The woman's face hardened. "She told me her auch had sent her the banknote," she replied. "Of course, I believed her. Do you mean to say that the note did not belong to with the property of the say that the note did not belong to "I take you." English girl and hugged her, and kissed her upon both cheeks.

"How good and kind you are!" she exclaimed. "How unlike me! If I had had you for a friend when I came here, I should have done much better than I have?"

"Nonemen" and Ethic million.

much better than I have."

"Nonemer, "said Ettlel, smiling.
"But it is true! I —I wish I were
Dolores. "I have been thinking
and this—this herrible thing that has
happened has seemed to clear my
trun away last nigle, Ettlel!"

"I wish you had not, dear!

"And you tried to stop me, and
aid I hatted you," said bolores; you

And who is it!"

"Miss Penfold will know it soon," white Penfold will know it soon," said Ethel softly. "You will be cleared. But-but I hope Miss Penfold will not be very hard on Enidt he silly girl was frightened into it by a bad woman—though it was very, wicked of her to let it fall upon

"But-but you are sure?"

"Quite sure."
"Then you have saved me, Ethel. Then you have saved me, Ethel. Ethel kissed her again. Dolores did not speak, but she sat with her arm about Ethel's neck, her head on Ethel's shoulders, and the proud, dark eyes were dim with tears. Dolores was crying.

Light at Last.

M 18S PENFOLD sat upright in the high-backed chair in her study, and the high back of the chair was not stiller than Miss Penfold. Miss Penfold is the fold of the chair was not stiller than Miss Penfold was receiving a visitor, a person of whom the dul not approve, which was the reason why Miss Penfold seemed to suddenly turned into stone.

he suldenly turned into done.

Mrs. Scruton looked very uneasy when she was shown in. Site had intended to carry matters with a high hand, but the calm, cold stillness the hand, but the calm, cold stillness was a sulfated of the stout, stagey woman. Mrs. Scruton hesitated—and was lost. Her manner was unintendered to the artificial colouring on her checks she would have looked pale.

Miss Penfold rose to her feet, but she did not ask her visitor to be Scruton's like a rapier.

"You weren't expecting me," said

Mrs. Scruton threw open the door with a theatrical gosture, and "but I don't hate you, Ethel, I love

you."
Ettlel kissed her.
"You shall stay at St. Freda's, and
we shall be great friends," she ex-

aimed. Dolores shook her head.

Dolores shook her head,
"I cannot stay. Even if Miss Penfold forgave me for running away,
she thinks I am a thief-and I cannot
prove that I am innecent."
"But I can," exclaimed Ethel
trimphantly,
"What! You!"
"Yes."

"Yes."
"But how?" exclaimed Dolores, in astonishment. "How can you? Do you know who the thief is? Have you found out?"

And she laid a five-pound note

Then Miss Penfold's calmness was disturbed a little. She could not avoid giving a slight start as she looked at the note.

looked at the note.

Her eys sought the number at once.

'Yen,' she said, "that note belongs to me. It was—was lost last night. Thank you very much for bringing it one. Did you floud it?'

Mrs. Seruton smiled unpleasantly.

bisinos," she said me in the way of busines," the did to you?"

"Yaid to you?"

Yes.

"By whom?"
"By a girl belonging to this

"What was the girl's name!"
"Craven-End Craven."
Again Miss Rund Craven.
Again Miss Rund had expected
hear—though she could not
nagine, either, that Dulger had
aid the note to Mrs. Bouler had
"Mes Crave Mrs. Bouler had
a

felt a sense of decrease monther table, and the visitor put them into her gauly, silver chained purse.

"Why did you bring the purse of the purse of

is an order on who collected and the collected of the col

that—well, I am sorry."

"And I am very glad to hear you say so," said Mis. Perfold. "Since your innecence is proved, blodores, I am inclined to deal more gently with your escapade of last night—as you seem to realite yourself how serious it was. II I should allow you to remain at St. Freda's—"

"Oh, Miss Penfold—"
"Would you try to make a fresh start—to do better?"

Dolores clasped her hands.
"I will try-oh, I will try hard!"
Miss Penfold's face softened won-

Miss Pourfold's face sottened consecutive, "You will have the influence of a dear, good girl to help you, bolores," "You will have the influence of a dear, good girl to help you, bolores," "Make a friend of Ethel Clevelant, and you will never go far wrong, a fance it."

"Yes—yes, I know it."

"Yes—yes, I know it."

"Miss Pourfold paused as there was a tap at the door. Enid traver a tap at the door, enid traver came in, with a white, frightened face, her feet dragging unwillingly, over the carpes.

(Continued on following page.)



She had seen Mrs. Scraton come and go, and she realised that she was lost. The wretched girl seemed hardly able to stand as she paused before the stern figure of the head-

before the stern figure of the head-mistres.

Miss Penfold's face was very stern.

"I have only a few words to say to you. Enid Craven," she said coldly. "Mrs. Scrulon has returned to me the banknote you paid her. I know now who took it from my desk fast night, and who tried to throw the blame of that wicked act upon Dolores!"

the blame or the Dolores!"
Dolores!"
Enid gave a choked cry.
Dolores's glance had been bitter and scornful, but it changed now to one of pity, and she threw her strong arm round Enid, who seemed to be about to sink to the floor. Enid

harding knew and her.

"You confess, Enid?" said Miss Penfold quietly.

"Yes." moaned Enid miserably.

"I-1-"

"You knew that Dolores was going to run away, and you hoped that the blame of your action would fall upon her?"

upon her?"
"I-I thought it would not hurt
her, as she was going away," said
Enid, with dry lips. "I-I was
afraid Mrs. Scruton would come to
you, and-and I should be expelled.
I-I was horribly afraid. Oh, II-I"

shall not expel you," said Miss Penfold. "You will leave St. Freda's, of course, but I will spare you the disgrace. This matter need not be spoken of. Dolores, I am sure, will say nothing. You must pack your box to-night, Enid, and leave the school to-morrow morning. Penfold. will write to your parents and

Enid fell upon her knees.
"I—I dare not go home!"
moaned. "Oh, Miss Penfold!
me stay! I will never—never—
"You cannot stay!"

"You cannot stay!"
Enid monued again. Dolores's strong arm was round her; it was strange to see Dolores playing the protectress to the girl who had insulted and injured her. But that was the better and nobler side of the wayward nature.

"Miss Penfold, you have pardoned me,' said Dolores hesitatingly." Will you not give Enid a chance? She was frightened by that woman; she did not know how wicked she was. She will never do anything like it again—will you, Enid?"

"Oh, never, never, if Miss Penfold will let me stay."

The head-mistress looked curiously at Dolores.

olores. a: Dolores.

"Do you speak for Enid,
Dolores?" she exclaimed. "You,
who were very nearly disgraced for
life by her wicked action?

"Yes," zaid Dolores.
Miss Penfold's face softened. Do you Dolores?" d

Perhaps—perhaps I may forgive," she said slowly, "If you can so, I should. And if I believed the believed the sail of the sail

her," she said slowly, "If you can do so, I should. And if I believed that Enid really repented.—"
"Oh, I do—I do!"
"I will take you at your word, Enid," said Miss Penfold. "I will give you another chance. And remember, too, that you owe it to the girl you have injured. You may you."

girl you have injured.

"Thank you. Miss Penfold," said
Dolores quietly.
And Enid tottered from the room
leaning upon the shoulder of the
Spanish girl. Ten minutes later
Dolores rejoined Ethel Cleveland in
the dornitory.

Cousin Ethel looked up quickly.

"It is all right?" she asked.
Dolores ran into her arms and

the dornitory.
Cousin Ethel looked up quickly.
"It is all right?" she asked.
Dolores rau into her arms and hugged her.
"Yes, it is all right," she said,
"and Miss Penfold has forgiven Enid, and we are to keep it a secret.
I am sorry for Enid. She is such a coward. I don't like her, but I am glad she is to stay."
"And you?"
"I shall not leave St. Freda's. I don't want to leave St. Freda's now," said Dolores, with her arm round Ethel's waist, and looking fondly at the English girl. "We are going to be good friends, Ethel."
Ethel smiled brightly.
"Yes, indeed we are," she said.
"Chuns. Dolores."
And chuns they were from that

And chums they were from that

Nothing to Say. TeLL us all about it, Ethel."
"About what?"
"It!" said Milly Pratt.
Cousin Ethel emiled.
"I have nothing to tell you," she

said.
"You should not keep secrets," said Mills, waving a fat forefinger at Ethel. "It is er secretive to keep secrets."
Ethel laughed.

"But I have nothing to tell you."
"But something has happened,"
urged Claire Pomfret. es, but-

"Yes, but—"
"But you don't want to tell us?"
said Emily North.
Ethel coloured a little.
"Not exactly that," she said.
"But there is no need to talk about
it, is there? It is not my business."
"Which is a polite way of telling
us that it is not ours, either," said
Claire, laughing. "Well, perhaps it
isn't. Don't ask questions, Milly."
"Nonsense!" said Milly.
"Let's ask Dolores," suggested
Emily.

Emily.

But there was a general pause.
The Spanish girl was not one to be questioned with case. The almost haughty reserve of her nature had broken down to Ethel, but to no one else. But the curiosity of the St. Freda's girls to know what had passed in Miss Penfold's study was too great. A group of them surrounded Dolores as she came towards Cousin Ethel.

"Dolores!"
"What has happened?"
"Are you going to leave?"

"Are you going to leave?"
"What is it about-Enid?"
"Won't you tell us, Dolores?"

Dolores's black eyes shone for a

Dolores's black eyes shone for a moment.

"No," she said.
"Oh, Dolores".
"Don't bother."
Even Milly Prati could not ask questions after that. Cousin Ethel and Dolores were left to themselves. The girls went to look for Enid Craven. She, at least, could be depended upon to tell them what the knew; at least, so they thought. Enid was well known to be a lover of tattle. tattle

of tattle.

It was not easy to find Enid. But she was discovered at last in her cubicle. She was lying on her hed, and she turned a red and tearstained face to the girls when they came in. The rims of her eyelids were very red, and her face, never beautiful, was more unprepossessing than usual.

"Good gracious" evelatimed

than usual.
"Good gracious!" e
Claire. "What is the exclaimed Claire. Enid?"

"Nothing," said Enid.
"Nothing," said Enid.
"What are you crying about?"
"Nothing!"
"What has Miss Penfold said to

you?"
"Nothing!"
And Enid turned her face to the

wall.
The girls were amazed. Even Enid was silent; and Milly Pratt ex-

claimed:

"What are we to do about it?"

"Let us mind our own business," suggested Claire Pomfret, who was somewhat given to sarcasın, especially at Milly's expense.

Milly sniffed. But that was what had to be done. That Doleres had been under an accusation, and that she had been proved to be innocent, the girls knew from Miss Penfold. More they were not to know.

Dolores unde a gesture of disdain as the girls left her with Ethel.

"They are very curious," said Ethel; "but it is natural."

"Oh, it is insufferable!" said

Ethel; "but it is natural."
"Oh, it is insufferable!" said
Dolores, with A cut of her red lip.
"But there," she added, with a
sudden change of tone, "I am not
going to be impatient any more. I
hope the wretched affair will be forgotten; but I suppose it will be a
long time before they allow me to
forget that I tried to run away from
school. I am going to try and like
Miss Penfold."
Ethel smiled. Ethel smiled.

Ethel smiled.

"You will succeed if you try," she said. "Miss Penfold is very kind. Have you seen Enid lately?"
Dolores gave a shrug of her shapely shoulders.
"No; and I do not wish to. I cannot bear the sight of her."

"She must be feeling very unhappy."

"She must be feeling very un-happy."
"Let her!"
"Dolores!"
"Well, it is not more than she de-serves," said Dolores. "What does it matter? You must not waste your thought upon her."
"I was just thinking of her." said

thought upon her."
"I was just thinking of her," said
Ethel quietly. "After all, she is
very weak and foolish, and—and—"
Dolores laughed a little bitterly.
"And you are feeling concerned
about her?" she exclaimed. "You
want to make a fuss of her—that bad
girl, and my enemy?" ****

"I want to see her, certainly,"
"Don't see her. You should not speak to her again. You would not, if you were a true friend to ne." exclaimed Dolores passionately.
"Philores"

claimed Dolores parsionately.

"Dolores!"
Ethel's tone was very quiet, but the colour had flushed into her cheeks. Delores looked at her with flashing eyes for a moment: then the big black eyes softened, and the proud lip trembled.

"I am sorry, Ethel," she said, in a low voice. "I—I won't speak like that again. Let us go and look for Enid.

"I will," said Ethel. "But you

"I will come, too."
There was no denying Dolores.
After her passionate outburst, she was all repentance. Nothing would satisfy her but finding Enid and ministering to her at once, and Cousin Ethel did not say her impulsive friend

nay.
"I think she went to lie down," said Ethel. "Let us see."
They ascended to the dormitory. The crowd of inquirers came out of Enid's cubicle as they reached it.
"She won't tell you anything,"

"She won't tell you anything," said Milly Pratt.
Cousin Ethel striled, and passed into Enid's room with Dolores. The girls dispersed, with the exception of Milly. Milly was curious; and she lad no greet scruples in gratifying her curiosity; and she slipped into the next cubicle, where it was quite easy to hear what was gaid in Enid's room unless the voices were purposely lowered. The partitions between the rooms did not reach to the ceiling. But Milly was not destined to hear anything of great interest to her.

her.
"Enid!" said Ethel softly. Enid Craven did not move. She lay with her face to the wall, her bair all loose, one arm thrown over her

Enid!"

"Enid!"
She stirred at last, and turned her rimmed eyes upon the two girls,
"What have you come for?" she exclaimed angrily, "Miss Penfold has pardoned me, and you can let me alone!" alone

Ethel coloured.
Did you think that either of us had come to reproach you, Enid?" Enid's look was resentful and un-

Enid's look was resentful and uncompromising.

"What have you come for, then?" she exclaimed.

"Because we want to help you."

"I don't want to be helped," said Enid sullenly.

"Yes, you do," said Ethel brightly.

"You have a headache, dear, and you would like your forchead bathed, for one thing. Then you would like to see that Dolores has no illwill towards you."

Enid beked at them doubtfully for

and hot. Cousin Ethel's gentle touch was like balm to her.

Dolores stood lesking on These was a disdainful look upon her deal handsome face at first, and a puzzle expression, as if she never look understand Ethel. The Spanish grid could understand pardioning side feated enemy. But this she tould not understand.

But her expression softened as the minutes wore away—oftened till the

But her expression soltened as the minutes were away—oftened till big tears stood in her eyes. The was a sound in the next cubick Milly Pratt had gone on her away disgust. There was nothing for a way in the born. oftened till the creyes. There next cubicle disgust. There w

A Letter for Ethel.

A Letter for Ethel.

ETTER for you. Ethel! said Milly Pratt.

It was a bright, fresh morating, and Cousin Ethel with Dolores before breakfast.

Milly Pratt, always knew when there was a letter for ranybody.

She always knew when anybody wrote a letter, or received one, or expected one. She was e-jeeally well informed about postcards, and knew what was written on them, as a rule, before their recipinates did. There was a rack for letters at the end of the dining-roun, where the girls' correspondence was pat, be taken down themselves. Milly always spent some time there after a win of the postman, when the letters were put up. Milly was interested in everybody's business but her own.

"Letter for you."

"Where is it, Milly!"

"In the rack," said Milly, "I would have brought it to yon, but letters have to be opened in the presence of the Form-mistres. That's one of the rules."

Ethel went to take her letter. Mist Tyrrell was in the room, and the presence of the Form-mistres. That's one of the rules."

Ethel went to take her letter. Mist Tyrrell was in the room, and the presence of the Form-mistres. That's one of the rules."

Ethel went to take her letter. Mist Tyrrell was in the room, and the presence of the Form-mistres looked at all letters received by the girks, and they beginning to like the new girl tery much, as indeed most of the occupants of St. Freda's were.

The Form-mistres looked at all letters received by the girks, and they had to be opened in her presence, which was a precaution against clandestine correspondence of any sort.

But that did not always pereent unknown communication with the outside world, even in St. Freda's and noder the careful eve of Miss Pre-

unknown communication with the outside world, even in St. Freda's and under the careful eye of Miss Pen-

fold.

Ethel's eyes brightened as she took down the letter. It was in the small and elegant calligraphy of her cousin, Arthur Augustus D'Arey, of the

and elegant calligraphy of her cousia, Arthur Augustus D'Arey, of the Fourth Form at St. Jim's.
Dolores looked at her a little sally.
'That is a letter from a relation' she asked.
'Yes; from my cousin.'
''Ah, you have a cousin!'
''More than one,'' said Echel, smiling. ''This is from Arthur, whom I have mentioned to you Arthur is a tremendous swell, but one of the kindest-hearted fellows in the world. I hope you will see him, Dolores, and I am sure you will like him.'' to see that Dolores has no illwill towards you."

Enid looked at them doubtfully for some moments, and burst into miserable tears.

"I'm the most wretched girl in the world!" she sobbed.

"Don't cry!" said Ethel softly.

"Bnid made no resistance. Her licad was indeed throbbing, and her forehead was hot and dry. Her tears were shed, leaving her eyelids aching

"I say, let us stop with you, Talbot. It's beastly lonely; and, lesides, there may be danger. We could lend a hand, you know, when the pinch comes."

Talbot shook his head in the dark-

Talbot shook his head in the darkness.

"No, my lad. I cannot allow
you to remain. Now, go away
to bed, my dear boys. You know
I don't like to refuse you, after
what you have done; but I must be
firm upon this point. It is very probable that after such an alarm the
squire will not come at all to-night,
and you would loss your sleep for
nothing."

"We shouldn't mind that. Still, if

We shouldn't mind that. Still, if you want us to scoot, scoot's the word! Good-night, Talbot! Come along, kids!"

Outside, however, Pet exclaimed: Outside, however, Fet exclaimed:
"We're not going to let Talbat
tackle that scoundrel alone. Why, he
might be in danger of his very life.
We're going to keep on the watch,
and if there's an alarm......"
"We're life his below to the watch."

A SHORT INSTALMENT FOR MY



By CHARLES HAMILTON.

-010-Talbot's Vigil.

TillE committee of investigation made their way silently to Talbot's room. Pat tapped in case the sound should reach Mr. Slaney or Brooke. There was no sound from within, and Pat silently opened the door and looked into the room.

into the room.

The blind was up and the window was wide open, for Talbot was a believer in fresh air. The pale staright streamed into the room and fell upon the bed.

Pat advanced into the room.

I say, Talbot—

Then he broke off suddenly.

What's the matter? whispered Blagden uneasily.

Blagden uncasily.
"He's not here!"
The chums of the end study left
the room. They were really anxious
about Tablot nov; the meeting with
the squire in the Close had filled Pat

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with a vague fear when he thought of it in connection with Talbot.
Only in one window of the vast pile of St. Kit's was a light glimmering—only in the room where Seth Black lay in uneasy sleep, his senses not yet returned, perhaps never to return. The chums, scarcely knowing in which direction to first turn their steps, found themselves in the passage upon which the sick-room opened, hardly aware of it till they caught the glimmer of light under the door.

Pat stopped as he caught it.
"No good going this way," he whispered.
"Talbot isn't likely

"Nugent!" : It was Arthur Talbot's voice.

It was Arthur Talbot's voice.

The chums were utterly amazed and startled by the unexpected meeting. Why Talbot should be spending the night outside the door of Seth Black's room was more than they could comprehend.

"Talbot! You here?"

"What are you doing, I say?
Bon't speak loudly—don't make a noise, or you may disturb the poor fellow yonder."

"I don't mind explaining," replied Pal. "We were looking for you."

"Looking for me!" aaid Talbot!

"Yes. You weren't in your room, and the bed hadn't been alept in, and we thought at first that you had sloped—I mean, bunked—that is

to say, gone away. Then we thought that perhaps something had hap-pened to you, especially as Squire Lacy is hanging round the school, and we saw him dodging in the Close."

Talbot gave a violent start

"You have seen Squire Lacy in the Close?"
"Yes."
"I knew it-I knew he would come!"

Talbot muttered the words uncon-sciously aloud. Pat heard them with amazement.

"What's the meaning of this very strange vigil, Talbot?" said Pat. "Greene suggests that perhaps your worries have made you go off your rocker; but, upon the whole, I don't think that's the true explanation. But I'm blessed if I know why you should be spending a night leaning against a wall in a beastly draughty passage!"
"There will be no harm in telling you. I want you to keep secret thet you have seen me here. But

you. I want you to keep secret that you have seen me here. But I may as well explain. I am keeping watch over the safety of Seth Black."

Black."

"But he's not in any danger."

"He is, I firmly believe, in terrible danger. You know that he was murderously attacked and hurled into the river, and has not yet recovered consciousness."

"Yes, I know that; but..."

"Yes, I know that; but..."

"When, he recovers he will

denounce the man who attacked

denounce the man who attacked him."

"That's Squire Lacy," said Pat.
"There's no doubt upon that point."
"So I believe. But, whomsoever it was, the scoundrel must be trembling in his shoes, and awaiting with fear the hour of Black's recovery."

"Yes, rather! I shouldn't like to be in his place."

be in his place."

"He is a desperate man, and he has much to lose by the truth becoming known," said Talbot quietly. "He has attempted Black's life once, and may do so again. The only way he can be saved from denunciation is by Black's never recovering consciousness. Do you understand? I think that he will make some attempt to prevent Black ever speaking again."

Pat Nugent shuddered.

prevent Black ever speaking again."

Pat Nugent shuddered.

"The—the scoundrel! I believe you are right!"

"He will find it easy to obtain admission to the school. At the time he desires to enter, his brother will let him in. Eldred Lacy is at the orders of the squire." him in. Eldred Lacy is a limit in. Eldred Lacy is of the squire.

Then, when we saw him he seeing you

"He was coming here. Seeing you has doubtless scared him off for a time. He may give up the idea for this night, or he may simply feave it till later. "You are going to keep on the watch?"
"Yes, until dawn."

"We shall chip in and help Talbot!" Exactly !" "Good idea! I don't mind losing my beauty sleep for the good of the

"Come on! We'll stay near the head of the stairs, and then we shall be able to hear any sound from where Talbot is."

(To be concluded

How do you like Cousin Ethel?