

607
The

Collectors

Digest

Front page of
Boys of Eng-
land ~ 23rd
August, 1873
The most suc-
cessful of the
Victorian Jour-
nals ~ ran for
33 years. ~

Vol. 1.
No. 10.







Vol.1. No.10

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OCTOBER 1947

Next Issue : November 1947

Editor Miscellaneous Section:

Herbert Leckenby, Telephone Exchange,
C/o. Central Registry, Northern Command, York.

FROM THE EDITOR'S CHAIR:

Forty-eight hours after the first batch of order forms for the Annual had been mailed, a number were back duly filled in; since, they have flowed in in very gratifying fashion. Quite a number of adverts. too. have come along to help. It is all very encouraging. There's just one spot of bother, that is our present problem - paper. It may be that we shall have to find our own supplies - snapping up a ream in stationers here and there. Well, if the worst comes to the worst we are confident we have plenty of friends who will be willing to scout round for a supply on our behalf. However, we won't look forward to trouble and come what may we are determined the Annual will be in your hands to browse over before the dawn of Christmas Day.

It does, though, make it absolutely essential that we do not order a single copy more than necessary, so if those of you who desire one but have not yet sent along their orders, would do so at the earliest possible moment, we should be grateful.

Collectors' Meet:

When Eric Payne, popular contributor to our pages, on holiday at Rhyl, told me he proposed running over to see me, I looked forward to an enjoyable afternoon, for if there is anything gives me a thrill it is welcoming a member of the clan to this ancient city. A meeting then, was arranged for 2-30 on the 23rd August. But it had not to be on that day. Delayed on the way Eric had to give up late in the afternoon when almost in sight of the Minster towers. However, undaunted, Eric said he would try again the following Saturday. He did, with the result that prompt at 2-30 we were exchanging a hearty handshake. Eric was not alone for he had brought along four young members of the Modern School, Surbiton, who, unlike many present-day schoolboys, know quite a lot about Tom Merry and Billy Bunter.

There followed four enjoyable hours whilst we strolled about places eminently suited for conversation of a nostalgic flavour. My only regret was that Rhyl is a long way from York and that, in consequence they had to set off on the return journey soon after tea.

Then on 13th September, came Jim Shepherd of Sheffield, on what is now an annual visit. Some two years ago we started what Jim calls lease-lend arrangements. He packs up some of his beloved old-time Magnets and Gems and I find him an assortment of some kind or other. We exchange parcels with as much pleasure as a couple of lovers handing over presents at Christmas time. We had on this particular Saturday, eight-hours of talk on the hobby and we were at it right up to the time when his train drew out of York Station. We're already looking for-

ward to next year.

Saturday, 20th September, brought a third visitor (three in four weeks) excellent going - Tom Pickrin, of Middlesborough. In these days Tom does not actually collect, but like his brother Harry, of the same town, he has an extraordinary memory of the papers which flourished years ago; his particular favourite being the Aldine Robin Hoods. Once again the time passed all too quickly.

Yes, verily, if you want to have a happy day - meet another collector, you can for the nonce forget such words as rations, queues, austerity, short-supply and the rest.

We have reason to believe that Bernard Prime, who made an appeal through the letter columns in our last issue, has had the opportunity to add materially to his collection of Magnets. Here's hoping you'll enjoy 'em, Bernard.

Herbert Leckenby

SUBSCRIPTION RATES:

Single copies 1s.1d post free. Three copies 3s.3d post free. Six copies 6s.6d post free. Postal Orders to be made payable to H. Leckenby, at York, un-crossed.

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Small advertisements 1d per word (name and address inserted free of charge).

WANTED: Gramophone Records by Glenn Miller, HMV. ED.5546, 5585, 5587, 5596, 5606, 5617, 5626, 5632, 5664, 5670; also Regal Zono MR.3091,3117, 3198,3129, and Columbia PB.1150. Particulars to G.Holland-Skinner, 151, Brixton Hill, London, S.W.2.

We publish the first instalment of this two-part article by the late Mr. F.N. Wearing with mixed feelings of pleasure and regret. Pleasure because it was written by one whose knowledge of the old papers was unsurpassed and is therefore of great interest, and regret because we know that it will be the last time that we shall be able to offer you a new contribution by one of the real "old boys" and who was a much esteemed member of our collecting circle.

TIM PIPPIN AND OTHER YOUNG FOLKS' STORIES

by F.N. Wearing

"Giantland" was written by Richard M.H. Quittenton, an author who was active in the early seventies, and who wrote under the nom-de-plume of "Roland Quiz". In those days his signature was innocent of the middle "M.H." The Story appeared serially in a juvenile weekly published by James Henderson of Red Lion Court, London, "The Young Folks Weekly Budget" and the early issues were one half-penny, later being increased to one penny. Henderson was also the publisher of "The Weekly Budget", a newspaper that was popular for many years till purchased by an American millionaire newspaper proprietor, W.R. Hearst, who tried to run it on American lines and quickly helped to finish the old paper. It is stated that he sank a lot of dollars into his attempt. After a time the title of "The Young Folks Weekly Budget" was condensed into "Young Folks", and it enjoyed many years of life, publishing a number of serials affectionately recalled by all who, in the days of their youth, had the pleasure of reading them. It was in "Young Folks" that Robert Louis Stevenson's "Treasure Island" first appeared under the title of "The Ships Cook", as well as his subsequent story "The Black Arrow". George Manville Fenn was another contributor to "Young Folks". I think he wrote "Punny Lane" or "The Adventures of Young King Cole". Then there was Alfred R. Phillips, who wrote "Ralpho the Mysterious", "Don Zalya the Brave", "Zalya and Selim", and, I think,

some of the "Tor" stories inspired by the Arthurian legend. It was in this paper that the celebrated "Tom Rodman" stories were published, written by J.A.Maitland. Also appeared the fantastic story of "Silverspear" or "The Magicians of Arabia" into which the author introduced many of the celebrated characters of legend, romance and juvenile fiction. In due course "Young Folks" was shouldered out of existence by a large number of weeklies which gave more exciting fare to their readers. But those who had been brought up on "Tom Pippin", "Silverspear", and the rest, never forgot them. Most of the "Budget" serials were published again in book form. "Tim Pippin" was issued in three volumes at (I think) half-a-crown each, and an abridged version with the three volumes rolled into one at one shilling. These contained the masterly illustrations by "Puck" (John Proctor). But the younger generation had run away from "Tim Pippin" and was revealing in the more lurid adventures of "Spring Heeled Jack" and "Sweeny Todd". The first time I saw the three volumes issued was many years ago when the firm of Black & Green, Tea Dealers, opened branches in many towns and inaugurated the scheme of giving presents with tea which was sold at two shillings per pound. The purchasers were presented with coupons which, by accumulation, enabled them to add very considerably to the Household goods, the choice ranging from frying pans to dinner services. Those who bought half a pound of tea for a shilling could, if they chose, have one of those three volumes of "Tim Pippin" originally issued at half-a-crown. I worried my Mother (who voiced an old fashioned prejudice against the new custom of gifts with commodities) until she succumbed and I walked down London Road, Liverpool, triumphantly hugging to my breast my volume of "Tim Pippin".

(Continued)

WANTED: Magnets Nos. 928, 941, 944, 981, 984, 985, 996, 997. R.V.Bennett, 64 Dudley Road, Tipton, Staffs.

Since the C.D. first appeared on the scene we have given the Charles Hamilton lovers very good value for their money, but we feel that this latest article dealing with his work strikes rather a different note and we know they will all enjoy:

"MASTERS OF GREYFRIARS"

by T.W.Puckrin

A good deal has been written about the school-boys of Greyfriars, made deservedly popular by the evergreen Frank Richards. Both in the "Story Paper Collector" and latterly in "The Collectors' Digest" articles from every angle have discussed and applauded those school boys who have been before us for over thirty years. But very little has been said about those whose duty it was, and pleasure save the mark, to bring them up in the way they should go. A few comments by one who has written about those boys will perhaps be appreciated. One perhaps should begin with Dr. Locke, that silver-haired martinet whose searching eye seemed to discover any delinquency, and whose arm according to the irreverent Vernon Smith, always seemed to be packed with muscle. No doubt the unruly Remove gave him plenty of opportunities to say "bend over". A classical scholar of ripe erudition, it is fairly safe to say that he must have been modelled on one of the great headmasters of the past. A finely drawn character, and one whom it would be safe to describe as a beast but a just beast. Just the man for the Sixth Form with their interminable Greek plays given every holiday time.

Mr. Prout of the Fifth comes next on the list. Paul Pontifex Prout that mighty hunter. I can still remember him bringing down "Wun Lung's" Chinese Dragon Kite in one of the earlier numbers of the ^{1d} Magnet. No doubt there are many whose memories will take them back to those early days, and recall Mr. Prout's confusion when he found that he had not shot

down a prehistoric monster. The master of the Fifth Form will best be remembered by his connection with the egregarious Coker. Ever since Coker's Aunt Judy bullied the Head into putting Horace into the Fifth Form, that worthy has periodically driven Mr. Prout's hair grey. However, we are concerned with Master's here, not their pupils. Mr. Prout's massive self-assurance and boring anecdotes remind one all too painfully of acquaintances nearer home. It is a little difficult to choose, over the years, any story in which Mr. Prout was the outstanding figure. I can remember his encounter with a tramp in which he obtained a black eye. As if this was not enough he obtained a second black eye in another affray, this time the argument being with a punch ball! The spectacle of a master with two black eyes was naturally too much for the dignified Dr. Locke. He came in for a good deal of the Doctor's displeasure, for the Head imagined, not unnaturally, that Prout had been mixed up in something of a disreputable nature.

Next we meet Mr. Hacker. He was the Master of the "Shell" and was stiff, angular, interfering, or what is vulgarly known as "nosey". I cannot remember him featuring in a central theme. Perhaps some contributor with a longer memory than mine can contradict this statement. My only recollection of Mr. Hacker is his eternal conflict with Mr. Quelch on the conduct of his form, probably not without reason. He reminds one of the acid Mr. Ratcliffe of "St. Jims" but without that individual's bitter temper. Not a great deal can be said about our next subject, Mr. Capper. He was master of the Upper Fourth. He seems to have been a bit of a snob with a sneaking fondness for wealth and position. One notices that Temple and Co. generally managed to keep in good terms with him. Like Mr. Hacker he never, to my knowledge, hit the high spots. Another story is told when we get down to the next Master, Mr. Quelch. Next to the famous Five, Mr. Quelch figures a good second in the Frank Richards School saga. He has been featured in

the numerous barrings out by the Remove Form, always standing up for discipline, but always ready to see justice done. He has striven to drive sense into Bunter's thick head with a devotion to duty that never failed and might easily have daunted a less impregnable nature. I can remember two series of stories in which Harry Wharton fell from grace and in which Mr. Quelch figured almost as prominently as Harry himself. In the last issues of the "Magnet" before the war brought it to an end, Mr. Quelch was kidnapped, and was discovered by Vernon Smith and eventually rescued. Another story entitled "The Bunking of Bunter" again brought Mr. Quelch into the limelight. A bath full of sooty compounds meant for Coker landed on his devoted head. Bunter of course! And the sun went down on Mr. Quelch's wrath, which, like good wine, improved with keeping. Bunter bolted sooner than he "whopped" and the Famous Five were commissioned to find him. In the end Bunter returned and by that time Mr. Quelch had ceased to look like a zebra. Mr. Quelch also figured rather prominently in the earlier adventures of Vernon Smith "The Bounder of Greyfriars". In another series of "Magnets" he had to resign owing to a letter from his famous "History of Greyfriars" referring to a past tyrannical Headmaster of Greyfriars being shown to Dr. Locke. One could go on almost indefinitely, quoting different incidents. Certainly the "Magnet" owes a great deal to the tall angular Master of the Remove, and he is almost as much a part of Greyfriars as Bunter himself. When Frank Richards starts off the famous "Billy" again, it is to be hoped he will allow Henry Samuel Quelch to finish his "History of Greyfriars". Kindly, beneath a stern exterior, with a real liking for boys, he is one of Mr. Richard's best creations. Long life to him.

Less prominent, but almost as popular was Monsieur Charpentier or "Mossco" the French Master. He has appeared at fairly regular intervals and his

Gallic eccentricities have made him a good field for characterisation. Excitable and voluble, with a fund of easy going good nature, he has been a fine target for the leg-pullers, Skinner and Coin in particular. "Magnet" readers will know that "Mossoo" supports a large family or nieces and nephews out of his salary and that he has to make his clothes last a long time. Well, at any rate, he is now "up to date". This was made the theme of one of the "Magnet" stories, but alas the memory has failed again. He is deservedly popular, so may he achieve his dearest wish and see his "sunny France" again.

Let me ring down the curtain with Mr. Twigg, Master of the Third, the "babes of Greyfriars". Let us hope that Frank Richards, in his new venture, will make up for this deficiency.

WANTED: Sexton Blake Libs. Union Jacks, and Detective Weeklies. W. Colcombe, 256 South Avenue, South-end-on-Sea, Essex.

WANTED: "Tom Merry's Conquest" No. 38 Boys Friend Lib. 30/- offered for reasonable copy, front cover essential. £1 for Nos. 1 and 30, 3/- or 4/- each offered many other titles same series. F. Osborn, 24 Harpur Street, Bedford.

FOR SALE: The Captain 1919 6/-; Champion Annual 1925 5/-; Chums 1925 5/-. WANTED: About 100 Nos. of the "Magnet" between 1933 and 1940. List gladly sent. S.F. Bryan, 6 City Road, Peterborough.

SALE OR EXCHANGE: 85 Gems consecutive 1579 to 1663 Dec. 1939. Three copies ~~for~~ one of blue Gems or red Magnets. Boys Friend 3d Lib. Nos. 30 and 38 wanted. 20/- each, offered if with covers. Richard Whorwell, 29 Aspinden Road, London, S.E. 16.

WANTED: Odd Nos. of Boys Books. Please sent lists. All letters answered. Henry H.J. Bartlett, Pease Hill, Shipton Gorge, Bridport, Dorset.



Letter Box

TELL ME WHAT IS LOVE:

(Editor's Note: Granville T. Weine's letter in No. 9 has raised quite a lot of interest. We quote from some replies).

I liked Mr. Weine's letter. For his information the story which remembers so well was "Bob Cherry's Benefit", Magnet No. 127, dated July 1910. - John R. Shaw.

I find Mr. Weine's letter interesting. Curiously enough I too, had tried hard to recollect the Magnet story from which it was taken, and am of the opinion it was a red-covered issue entitled "Bob Cherry's Benefit". I believe the song also appeared in the 1929 Holiday Annual in the story "When Billy Bunter Forgot". Another instance of one of Charles Hamilton's songs being incorporated into the story occurs in the Gem story in which Joe Frayne as a new boy is invited to the Glyns for tea. On that occasion "on the Ball" was sung with great gusto and appreciation. Possibly readers may know of similar instances. - Roger M. Jenkins.

The story Mr. Weine mentions was "When Billy Bunter Forgot" in a Holiday Annual. He dives into the swimming bath without any water in it and Harry and

Marjorie sing the song to try and bring back his memory which Bunter had lost as a result of his dive. - Robert Whiter.

THE LATEST FROM FRANK RICHARDS:

7th Sept., 1947.

Dear Herbert Leckenby,

Thank you for your letter of the 14th. Now I believe that the date really is fixed - the 26th of this month. Can you guess that I shall be glad to see the book at long last? But it is not too bad, really, for the delays in publishing, in these days, are almost endless. When that rare article, paper, has been found, there are the printers: and after the printers, the book-binders: and everybody has a shortage, especially of push and go. But everything comes to him who waits - and W.G.B. is coming on the 26th.

I was very glad to see what you mentioned about the publishers letter, and that you will get all the copies you want. The bare idea of copies being "rationed" to the booksellers makes me feel what Hurree Singh might describe as terrifically infuriated. But it cannot be helped. So far, I believe, only 20,000 have been printed, and those will not go round or anything like it. There will be, of course, further printings, as and when the exigencies of paper permit. Everybody who wants W.G.B. will be able to get him in the long run. No good grousing, for books generally take even longer than this to produce - all the same, I put in a spot of grousing every now and then. Without being unduly conceited, I think Billy Bunter is more interesting reading than blue-books, white papers, and Form 12/X/3975/XYZ/894/ABC-/2,998/546/XX/II,230 - and there seems to be ample paper for this sort of thing.

The Collector's Digest goes from good to better,

and from better to best. Many thanks for the same. I hear from Mr. Corbett at Birmingham that he is doing an article for the C.D. Annual which I am very curious to see.

Bunter II, is nearly finished, but it will be a long time before it sees the light. Some time next year, I expect.

An old reader in Dublin sent me a copy of the Dublin Evening Herald on 15th August, which had a quite nice notice of the Bunter Book - a little ahead of time! Perhaps you may have seen it. Eric Hiscock has told me that he will be reviewing it in the Sunday Times.

With kind regards,
Yours sincerely,
Frank Richards.

: : :

A QUERY AND A GENEROUS OFFER:

16th Sept., 1947.

Dear Editor,

Here is a letter with a twofold mission, first to satisfy my curiosity, and secondly to bring before your notice an innovation that the Hobby has perhaps been in need of some time.

To satisfy my curiosity, the "Gem" story No. 890 "The Crossword Craze at St. Jim's". Is this a genuine Martin Clifford? Mr. Shaw in his history of the imitation stories in the "Magnet" and the "Gem", states this as being the work of the Master. To aid Mr. Shaw's quotation we have the knowledge that Mr. Hamilton is an expert crossword writer, against this we have the story itself which I do not consider to come anywhere near the Clifford touch. Perhaps those who have a copy in their collection would care to give me their opinions.

The second part of my letter deals with the restoration of damaged or part damaged copies of the papers that we all collect. For the past two years I have been studying the best methods of repairing such copies, and I would deem it a great favour if you would forward me a dozen copies that you would be glad to have renovated, and when you have received, give your valued comments on such restoration. Please register the copies to ensure safe delivery.

I am,

Yours sincerely,
Granville T. Waine.

(I am taking advantage of Mr. Waine's kind offer and will report results in No. 11. Editor).

FORTHCOMING ATTRACTIONS

Sentiment in Schoolboy Fiction	Tom Armitage
The Shylock of Greyfriars.	Roger Jenkins
Those were the Days	F.W. Webb
These We loved in the Old Days	Frank Osborn
Simple Periods	Tom Armitage
Amalgamated Press Artists.	Nemo
Old Boys Books	Geo. C. Foster
Marjorie Hazeldene & Co... ..	Gordon J. Kirby (Australia)

WANTED: Early issues of Gem, Magnet, Pluck, Dreadnought, early 1914 and 1915. Eric Fayne, 23 Grove Road, Surbiton.

FOR EXCHANGE: Gems, 32, 64, 507, 552, 553, 782, 1010. Magnets 127, 567; also wanted urgently Gems 485, 999, 1032, 1033, 1037, 1057, 1089; Magnets 451, 681, 692, 903. Will pay for unwritten copies if you care not to part with the originals. E.B. Flinders, Roseview, Gosmore Road, Near Hitchin, Herts.

Have you sent your Order for the Annual yet?

POETS CORNER:"TREASURE TROVE"
by Jack Corbett

We oft read tales of daring do,
Of ghosts and secret panels,
Where men discover untold wealth,
Through many varied channels.

With faces tense and trembling hand,
They hold the coins that glitter;
The proceeds of some ancient duel -
Of fighting hard and bitter.

And so when some collector finds
Rare books of bygone days;
To him a treasure is unearthed,
Resplendent to his gaze.

His fingers wander o'er the leaves
Made yellow by the ages.
Old characters so deeply loved
Step out from hallowed pages.

Rare books to those who cherish them
Are bound up with the soul.
Their quest is art - not earthly wealth;
How noble is this goal.

WANTED: Aldine Publications, Turpins, Duvals etc.
Landy, 4 Nuneaton Road, Dagenham, Essex.

WANTED: Nelson Lees, Old Series, particularly Nos.
102, 103, 220, 230; also about 80 issues between Nos. 1
and 271. Name your own price. Have hundreds of
duplicate copies for exchange. J. Murtagh, Selwood
Road, Hastings, New Zealand.

IF ITS MAGNETS AND GEMS you're after send your numbers
required along to William Martin, 93 Hillside, Stone-
bridge Park, London, N.W.10. 'Phone Willesden 4474.
Always a large selection in stock, both early and
late numbers. Prices upon application. If I have not

got what you want, names put on waiting list. Strict rotation. Satisfaction assured.

3000 PRICES offered for Bound Volumes of early Magnets, also loose Magnets between 1908 and 1929. Eric Rayne, 23 Grove Road, Surbiton.

HOW "THE CHAMPION" STARTED,
by F. Addington Symonds

Part II

His first job was as a manuscript reader in the Central Editorial Service. He held it for a year, during which he bombarded the Directors of the amalgamated Press with ideas and "dummies" for "a new boys" paper". His suggestions were politely but firmly turned down but he kept sending them in. Until one day in November 1921, he was summoned to the office of Mr. 'Willie' Back, one of the editorial directors, who said to him "Well, you've got your paper" and then with a great show of mystery and secrecy, he wrote the title on the margin of a newspaper and passed it across. It was "THE CHAMPION".

Publication date was to be January 28th, 1922, and young Addington Symonds (he was still in his twenties) was told to go ahead and get the material together. He was given a small, bare office at the top of the building and a somewhat callow youth as messenger and office boy.

The newly appointed editor had never before edited anything more ambitious than an amateur magazine and was totally unacquainted with the multifarious technicalities of a great publishing house, with its rigid time-table, its rules and regulations concerning preparing copy, commissioning stories and sketches, scaling drawings for block making, laying down instructions regarding sizes of type, use of colour printing, and what not. He was sur-

rounded by authors looking for work, by printers demanding copy, by engravers wanting detailed instructions for making blocks, and all the rest of it, and he just didn't know how to begin - he could hardly understand their technical "jargon" and he was completely floored when he was faced with the necessity of measuring up drawings for reproduction. Moreover, it would have been fatal to give away the secret of his ignorance: he just had to find out how to do the job and keep his lack of knowledge to himself.

Somehow it was done. Work began to pile up. He had to stay on for overtime night after night and finally to ask for more assistance. When No.1, of the "Champion" appeared, he was still so rushed, looking after No.4 (they worked at least four weeks ahead of time) that he did not even notice that his new paper was on sale. A week or so later, one of the directors sent for him and asked him if he knew the extent of the success of his new paper and he answered honestly if a little naively, "I've been so busy, I haven't had a chance to look round. What's it all mean ...?" Well, it meant a circulation that soared to hitherto unprecedented heights, and was still soaring weeks later. It meant putting on extra machines to produce additional copies in hundreds of thousands to cope with the demand. It meant rush and scurry and excitement - in other words, Success.

Less than nine months later, The Champion was joined by its first "companion journal" - a new weekly bearing the old title Pluck; soon after that, the Editor was given charge of Young Britain, with instructions to try to model it along similar successful lines as it was not then doing too well; and a little later, yet another brand-new weekly, The Rocket, and the Champion Annual.

By this time, that box of a room at the top of the building had been changed to a suite of offices on the third floor and the staff had increased to

about fourteen, including three girls. The first of those was Daisy Marshall, daughter of J. Grant Marshall, then Art Editor of "The Daily Mail". She became the Editor's personal secretary - a post which she held till the day when he said farewell to Fleetway House. A clever girl, barely twenty years old, she had that rare combination, beauty and brains, and was a tower of strength to the Editor in many ways. Others on the staff at that time were Alfred Edgar, a brilliant young journalist who later made his name as the author of the West End success "The Amazing Dr. Clitterhouse" (under the pseudonym of Barry Lyndon); John W. Wheway, a walking encyclopaedia on all matters pertaining to sport; Bernard Smith, who came to the A.P. from Pearson's; G. Eaton Fearn, who was responsible for many of the brilliant ideas that went to the making of The Rocket; Gwyn Evans, one of the most brilliant of the Sexton Blake writers, and many others.

Of the legion of writers and artists - so many of them former contributors to the old Big Budget, the story has always been told more than once. The Champion was, in many senses, a "revival" of the old B.B. though it was naturally produced in accordance with the demands of the times and had its own personality, quite distinct from that of its famous prototype. It was the fulfilment of an office boys dream in far away South Africa, the answer to those jeers and taunts of his so called friends who looked upon him as mad, or conceited, or perhaps a combination of both, and never for a moment believed a word he told them. It was the realisation of a dream which first took shape when that first letter was sent by a grateful reader to the editor of a paper which, even to this day, is still remembered and revered as being the best of its type this country has ever produced. And perhaps the proudest moment in the life of the Editor of The Champion was when he welcomed "Arthur Brooke" into his office at the Fleetway House and gave him his first com-

mission to write for the paper that had come into being as a reader's tribute to a great editor.

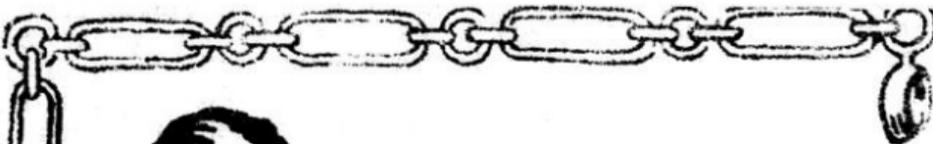
Advertise in the C.D. Annual - 2d per word.

ALDINE DICK TURPIN TITLES

(Continued)

Compiled by Eric R. Landy

No.73, A Tyrants Doom; No.74, Dick Turpin the Dauntless, or Hemmed in on all Sides; No.75, Death in the Track, or Turpin's Wild Ride on the Bath Road; No.76, Caught Red Handed, or The Dreadful Predicament of Beetles and Peters; No.77, The Terror of the Night; No.78, Steel and Fire; No.79, A Stab in the Dark, or Beetles and Jem Peters among the Dutch; No.80, The Poisoned Mask, or Outwitting a Horde of Villains; No.81, The Stopping of the Royal Mail, or Many Adventures on the King's Highway; No.82, Hunted to His Doom, or the Last of a Bad Race; No.83, The Curse of Blood Money, or Run to Earth by Turpin; No.84, The Tragedy of a Lonely Heath, or The Hour of Retribution; No.85, The Robbers of the Dead, or Dick Turpin on the Track of a Fiend; No.86, Hide and Seek or a Leap that nearly cost Turpin his Life; No.87, The Bank of the Black Hand, or routing out a Horde of Villians; No.88, Full Cry after Turpin, or Dick has the best of it again; No.89, A Trap to Catch a Thief-Taker, or Dick Turpin up to His Old Tricks again; No.90, From Cell to Saddle, or Evil Days and Evil Ways; No.91, The Trickster Tricked, or Beetles the Hero this Time; No.92, Dick Turpin Stops the King, one of Dick's Boldest Strokes; No.93, The Rival Highwaymen, or Dick Turpin makes a Startling Discovery; No.94, His Haunting Shadow, or The Mystery of Heatheroake Folly; No.95, The Masked Avengers, or Dick Turpin's Difficult Task; No.96, Dick Turpin or His Ghost, or How Dick Mystified all England; No.97, A School for Scoundrels, or A Dangerous Game with a Dangerous Man. (Continued)



BLAKIANA



ALL CORRESPONDENCE TO
H.M. Bond, 10 Erw Wen, Rhiwbina, Cardiff.

THE ROUND TABLE

This month I have pleasure in presenting you with another very interesting contribution from Mr. William Colcombe who was responsible for the recent article on "Gunga Dass in our No.6. This time Bill tells us something about an author instead of a character and I feel sure you will agree with me when I say he has made a fine job of it. As promised last month we have yet another fine Blake Crossword puzzle from Rex Dolphin, the latest in the series being, in my estimation, the best of all. Any remarks from readers will be most welcome, so please put pen to paper and let me know what YOU think.

How very complex is the history of the Sexton Blake story. Last week I came across a copy of "The Boy's Friend" published in 1911 which contained an instalment of a serial entitled "Tinker's Schholdays" It was sub-titled "A Tale of the School Life of Sex-

ton Blake's Pupil" and dealt with his adventures at a school called "Telford". This serial is in direct contrast with one which later appeared in "The Union Jack" entitled "Tinker's Boyhood" and cannot in any way be linked with yet another which informed the reader that Blake and Tinker went to School together at St. Tristans. Then there is the other well known story "Sexton Blake at Oxford" in which (in the original) Tinker also appears. Rather a mix up when one considers the other yarns of how Blake first came across the very young boy and trusted him with a most important task, i.e: "Cunning against Skill" (U.J. No.53).

Have you ordered your copy of the C.D. Annual for 1948 yet? If not, I advise you to do so without delay for not only will it contain a wealth of information on our hobby in general but will have a special Blakiana section that will definitely interest you. The review of Union Jack serials through the years will be a most interesting feature, even though the number of Blake serials featured was very small.

Then the detailed list of S.B. story characters from Ah Wo to Zenith will open your eyes to say nothing of a group of really fine articles by members of the circle. Our illustrations will also be of a most interesting nature.

I am not taking up too much space this month, for this issue contains quite a feast of Blake fare and I want to make room for as much as possible, so until November, I'll say cheerio for now.

A.M. Bond

SEXTON BLAKE CROSSWORD:

by Rex Dolphin

Across: (2) "Pink-eye". (5) Bennett the illustrator. (7) Reverse Osborne's initials. (9) Describes 35. (10) Falling water makes a star reported. (14) Reserve Parsons' initials. (16) Useless character by

E.S. Brooks. (17) No. of authors who wrote "The Next Move". (20) Blake's favourite poison. (23) Son of Reece. (24) Of the U.J? (26) Hanson was never without two. (28) Blake is. (30) League of the ---" (31) Broke, he makes a Black author. (32) Signature of 29. (33) Blake is a good one. (34) Kestrel. (35) Alias "The Spider", and found on a hat. (37 & 38) He wrote a Blake stage play.

Down: (1) This abbreviation of Mr.

Jones gives his occupation. (2) Lobangu's race. (3)

What Kestrel might call his hide-out.

(4) Springs eternal for an author. (5)

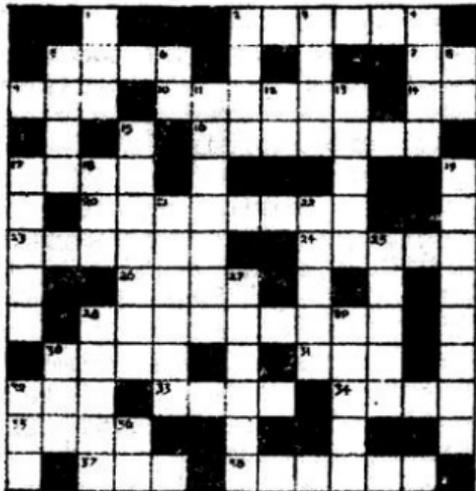
To err in this game would show you a Brisbane character.

(6) Initials of 37

& 38. (8) Reserve initials of Kew's creator. (11) He

wrote of Blake and Raffles. (12) Initials

of creator of 2 across. (13) Married Crooks, from Chester. (15) They span an author. (17) Blake is handy with his. (18) A Hindu crook without gee-gee. (19) Blake's gown of this kind is characteristic. (21) A Detective-Inspector. (22) Amounts to nothing, but he once tried to oust Zenith. (25) The "Moonlayer" was one. (27) Mrs. Bardell's version of 21. (28) MacLuire or Farrer? (29) Once-popular Blake illustrator. (30) Scramble Hadfield's initials. (32) Initials of Brandon, chaotically. (36) Right way round for 7.



NEXT MONTH!

Semi-Permanents of the Second Series, by William Colcombe.

MASTER OF MYSTERYAn Appreciation of Donald Stuart
by William Colcombe

The finest writer of the straight detective story in the Sexton Blake series was Donald Stuart. His first Blake story appeared in the S.B.L. in 1927 and was entitled "The Case of the Second Tooth". He contributed regularly to the Library and also wrote a little for the "Union Jack" in it's latter days. Amongst his best stories were "The Secret of the Sealed Room" an extraordinary fine yarn in which a man was murdered in a room of which Blake and the police are guarding the only exits. "The Cottage of Terror", "The Time of the Crime", and three very fine Xmas stories written for the Union Jack and Detective Weekly, "The Crimson Smile" (the last Yuletide yarn to appear in the old U.J.) "The Clue of the Crimson Snow" in which our old friend Detective Inspector Coutts is suspected of murder, and "The Christmas Carol Crime". "The Clue of the Crimson Snow was later reprinted in one of the S.B. Annuals. I consider that, in the case of the latter stories, Mr. Stuart more than maintained the fine tradition set by that master of the Xmas story, Gwyn Evans.

During the last few months of the second series of the S.B.L. at least two stories were published under the authorship of Donald Stuart which he certainly never wrote, though he might have modernised the originals for the A.P. The yarns in question were "The Burmese Dagger" (No. 675) a reprint of No. 102 in the First Series, and "Twenty Years of Hate" (No. 732). The former story originally appeared under the title "The Case of the Burmese Dagger" and was by Andrew Murray. No. 714 of the Second Series "The Mystery of Sherwood Towers" was also a reprint, this time of an early Stuart story.

Donald Stuart has written a large number of stor-

ies under the name of "Gerald Verner", though, sad to relate, a lot of these are merely reprints of his Blake stories with characters names altered.

Stuart was at his best with a story with a country village setting. He had the knack of portraying the characters in a manner that made one think one actually knew them as real people, not merely fictitious ones. His description of a storm raging on a West Country moor is one of the best I have ever read. His handling of the character of Coutts was only bettered by Robert Murray and Gwyn Evans, for the Yard man was shown as a shrewd and human police official. Tinker also fared well in Mr. Stuart's hands. The relationship between detective and assistant was handled in a very human manner.

Donald Stuart is STILL writing under the name of Gerald Verner and it is a thousand pities that he cannot be persuaded to return to the Blake fold and strengthen the very weak team of present day writers in the S.B.L.

NEXT MONTH!

The whole of "Blakiana" will be devoted to an article of exceptional interest and merit - "The Life and Death of Monsieur Zenith", by Rex Holphin.

THE STORY OF DR. SATIRA

by H.M. BOND.

Part Three

Some while after the disappearance of Dr. Satira, when both Sexton Blake and Scotland Yard were under the impression that the master criminal was indeed dead, a rather down at heel individual known as Harry the Nab, an old leg, informed Inspector Coutts that he knew the whereabouts of the master criminal. It appeared that a certain cat burglar companion of his had been after a certain valuable collection of jewellery known as the Orloff diamonds

and had been balked of his prize by the infamous Doctor. Eventually Satira was traced to a house in Norburn where he was posing as a crippled recluse and Harry the Nab thought that here was the chance to put himself "in the money". He asked the sum of Five Thousand Pounds for revealing the Dr's. place of hiding, which incidentally was the reward officially offered by the Yard. When Blake, Coutts and the old lag, accompanied by Tinker, reached the house in Norbury it appeared to be deserted and it was the opinion of all that the bird had flown. Harry the Nab, being a burglar by profession, had the job of breaking into the silent house in order to open up to the police, although very much against his will. After his disappearance through a down - stairs window, Blake, Coutts and Tinker awaited the opening of the front door but all was silent until a horrible cry came from the interior of the dark building. It unnerved the detectives considerably but they realised that something terrible must be happening within and it was Tinker who volunteered to follow Harry and try and discover the reason for the old lag's outburst, for it was undoubtedly he who had cried out. After a long wait it was very apparent to Sexton Blake that something had also happened to his assistant, so, without more ado Coutts and he entered the house only to discover the place entirely devoid to human life. Where were Tinker and Harry the Nab?

It eventually transpired that both the Nab & Tinker had been overcome and smuggled away from the house in rolls of carpet. They were taken to yet another of Satira's hideouts and after a period of horrible tension were visited by the master criminal himself. Now Satira, as has been said, was a qualified doctor, in fact he was probably as clever a man in his sadistic way that it was possible to be. He gloated over his two hapless victims, both

of whom had been bound hand and foot and told them that unfortunately, seeing that they had interfered with his plans, he would have to dispose of them.

Now it was to be expected that such a man would naturally think of some unique method of disposing of his victims, but neither Tinker nor Harry the Nab could, in their wildest dreams, have dreamt of the method that Satira really intended. He produced numerous phials which, he informed them contained cultures of some of the deadliest germs in existence. Mentioning leprosy, typhoid, small-pox, botulism, and others, he made their bloodrun cold. He finally decided upon injecting Harry the Nab with cerebral meningitis bacteria, and having done so considered coolly what might, in his cruel mind, be suitable for the assistant of such a man as Sexton Blake. Finally telling Tinker that the venom of a rattlesnake would be HIS injection he prepared to perform the operation when he was informed by one of his gang, a fellow known as Schumann the Slasher - (an old enemy of Sexton Blake) that their lair had once again been discovered and that immediate getaway was essential. After a nightmare journey, Tinker finally found himself in a most peculiar place - a private mental home - there, he felt sure, he would never be found and determined to face a horrible death.

Part 4, in C. D. No.12, will continue the story of Blake's struggle against the formidable Doctor.

The Gristly Terror of the Gristly Marshes - a good humoured skit on the 'bloods', by C.W.Daniel - See the C. D. Annual.

Have you sent your Order for the Annual yet?

