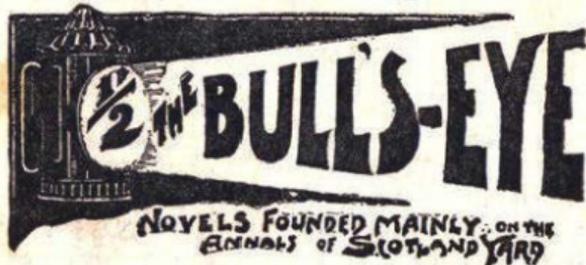


# THE STORY PAPER COLLECTOR

OCTOBER 1955  
No. 56 :: Vol. 3



No. 92.—(Vol. IV.)—PUBLISHED EVERY MONDAY.



Tom uttered a piercing scream as something lifted him high out of the water.

The Bull's-Eye No. 92, Probably Published November 27, 1899

# THE SKELETON CLUTCH; or The Goblet of Gore

A Consideration of Montague Summers' "A Gothic Bibliography"

By S. L. LARNACH

HAVING LATELY acquired a copy of this Bibliography and having given it some attention, I feel that I should now give it some comment. It is a large volume of 621 pages of text, with many plates illustrating title-pages and other points. Although it is called a bibliography in the title it is more accurately described as a checklist. The work is divided into two sections, the one alphabetical, the other an author list. The period covered is much more extensive than the few years during which the Gothic Novel was fashionable. But Michael Sadlier has pointed out in an essay on the Northanger novels: *The Gothic novel crashed and became the vulgar blood.* The "bloods" or "penny dreadfuls" are included in this book. The earliest entry Summers gives is dated 1728 and the latest is as recent as 1916. The conditions of entry appear sufficiently liberal to admit of borderline cases.

The reading of this bibliography is sheer delight. It exposes our ignorance and restores our humility even if it sometimes strains our credulity. It was a revelation to learn that "The Memoirs and Adventures of a Flea, in which are interspersed many humorous anecdotes," issued in two volumes in 1785 is really to be distinguished from the well-known erotic book "The Autobiography of a Flea" published about 1837. And although the works of the Marquis de Sade are merely legendary in Australia, it is interesting to read the seven and a half pages devoted to his books by Summers. Information is given about the various editions of John Cleland's "Memoirs of a Woman of Pleasure" which is more familiar to us as "The Memoirs of Fanny Hill." We note that "The Awful Disclosures of Maria Monk" was first published in New York in 1836 and appeared later in the same

[ Turn to page 83, please ]

# The Story Paper Collector

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No. 56—Vol. 3

Priceless

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## THE MYSTERY OF DOCTOR MALCOLM STAFFORD

By BERNARD THORNE

**A**MONG letters that I have received recently from other St. Frank's enthusiasts have been several discussing that venerable headmaster Dr. Malcolm Stafford. As there would appear to be a certain amount of mystery as to when Dr. Stafford finally left St. Frank's, I have spent some hours and much enjoyment checking the First New Series of *The Nelson Lee Library* in a successful attempt to settle the problem.

Actually, the puzzle arose during and after the St. Frank's Flood Series in the First New Series numbers 44-49. Prior to this there was no question as to who ruled the school. But after Dr. Stafford had been hurled into the flood waters during an attempt with Nelson

Lee and Barry Stokes to get through to the marooned juniors, and as a result had been hurried to hospital in a critical condition, it was a matter for conjecture whether he would ever again take his position as headmaster.

However, his recovery was rapid, and when the schoolboy bargees returned to the college after the flood had abated, they found the Head already in residence, although (as Mr. Brooks put it) *somewhat thinner, somewhat paler, and a little shrunken.*

So, after No. 50, St. Frank's resumed the normal tenor of its ways, and for two years there can be no doubt that there was little change in the upper echelon, so to speak. Although Edwy Searles Brooks was fond of the

use of the expression *The Head*, careful examination of his tales from No. 51 to No. 139 brings to light many occasions when Dr. Malcolm Stafford is mentioned by name. In No. 59, "Farmers All," when Lady Honoria Dexter had installed a number of the St. Frank's boys on the Holt farm, Mr. Brooks states that

*Dr. Stafford strongly disapproved of the whole scheme, but Lady Honoria was his sister, and she was such a forceful woman that the Head wisely let her have her own way.*

Again, in No. 68:

*He strode past, grasped the door of the headmaster's study, and walked in. Dr. Malcolm Stafford was seated at the open window . . .*

In Nos. 76-78, the "Death of Church" series, the Head is much in evidence, as he is in No. 82—the start of a series in which Handforth, wrongly accused of an attack on Mr. Pyecraft, starts his own barring-out with Church and McClure.

Unfortunately, Dr. Stafford's handling of the situation precipitates a full-scale rebellion, and the arrival of General Christopher Carfax, D.S.O., J.P., D.L., a governor of the school, does little to solve the Head's dilemma. General Carfax, an old soldier of many campaigns, decides to introduce military measures

in bringing the Junior School to heel, and Dr. Stafford, unable to tolerate having his authority over-ruled, resigns. The general's strategy, no matter how successful in war, is a dismal failure in bringing the revolt to an end, and No. 89 finds Handforth exonerated, the barring-out over, and Dr. Stafford once more in full control.

ONE MORE dip into the files of the Old Paper shows that Dr. Malcolm Stafford was still headmaster in First New Series No. 133, "The Remove Crusader." Tich Harborough, the famous schoolboy winger of the Blue Crusaders, is booked to join the Remove. Unfortunately for him, he is the victim of several practical jokes before his arrival at the school, and entering the headmaster's sanctum he meets with Dr. Stafford's wrath—Tich's face is streaked with blue dye, and the Head is not amused!

So we approach the end of the Doctor's long sojourn at St. Frank's. On January 5th, 1929, No. 140 was on sale. We opened our copies to find that a famous millionaire, in an effort to assist England's public school-boys to gain world knowledge at first hand, had chartered an ocean liner and fitted it out as an enormous floating school. St.

Frank's was the first public school chosen to have the benefit of the new scheme. Half the school, under the temporary headmastership of Nelson Lee, left within a few days for Durban. At St. Frank's the remainder of the school carried on under Dr. Malcolm Stafford.

With the next ten issues of *The Nelson Lee Library* we are not concerned here. Sufficient is to say that after many adventures, and (we presume) the gathering of much knowledge, the School Ship returned and in No. 151 the school is complete again. At the end of that issue appeared several startling paragraphs. To quote:

*"Are—are you really our new headmaster, sir?" asked Handforth.*

*"I am!" replied the stranger. "And when the new term starts at St. Frank's, you will find that many changes are to be brought into effect!"*

He walked on, leaving the boys intrigued by that vague statement. It was a certainty that this stranger was speaking the truth. He had come down to take up his residence—to be in readiness for the new term. He was the new headmaster of St. Frank's—*Dr. Malcolm Stafford being, for some reason, superseded.*

The following week came the bombshell. Without even a

farewell curtain—without a last few words to the school he had ruled over so long, Dr. Malcolm Stafford was whisked away to the South of France, and the new Head, Dr. Morrison Nicholls, took over.

*"It is not yet certain whether I shall permanently be your headmaster," Dr. Nicholls told the school in Big Hall. "With all my heart, I trust that Dr. Stafford will sufficiently recover from his illness so that he can once again get into harness. It may be a matter of two or three months, or it may be a year."*

PRESUMABLY, Dr. Stafford never fully recovered from his illness, for Dr. Nicholls became the permanent headmaster of St. Frank's and his predecessor was not heard of again. As time went on Dr. Nicholls proved to be an excellent Head, despite a somewhat rocky start. But in my opinion—and I believe in the opinion of many other readers—he never quite filled Dr. Stafford's place. School-story characters hew a permanent niche for themselves in the hearts of schoolboys, young and old. Mr. Brooks undoubtedly made a serious error in dismissing so callously one of his oldest, if not best-known, characters.

But I have a shrewd suspicion that Mr. Brooks was fast losing interest in his creations as 1930

drew near. So Dr. Malcolm Stafford faded swiftly into oblivion, even as his successor did later when Nelson Lee took over the reins. And when that time came

no-one really cared who "ran" St. Frank's or, for that matter, if St. Frank's continued to run at all!

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## ST. GERALD'S HERALD FORGES AHEAD

**S**INCE we reported in No. 55 on the progress made by *The St. Gerald's Herald*, four more numbers have been published by Joseph Meechan. All very readable school stories—plus other features—the titles of the tales are:

- No. 19—*The Cricket Sensation*—  
A cricketing story with a mystery.
- No. 20—*The Boy From the Golden West*—In which the lads of St. Gerald's camp out and meet Charlie Cash and Dr. Cash from Canada.
- No. 21—*The Schoolboy Desperado*.
- No. 22—*St. Gerald's in Disgrace*.

Copies of these numbers, and of earlier ones, may be obtained from Joseph Meechan, "The Mount," Kilsyth, nr. Glasgow, Scotland, at 7d. each post free.

What may be a new departure where boys' books are concerned is Mr. Meechan's launching of a lending library of hard-cover school-story books. Being in a position to acquire quite a number of these books, he offers to loan them at the rate of eightpence per copy, post free; or sell them at 1/6d. each post free.

Surplus funds accruing from this library will be used for improving *The St. Gerald's Herald*. Further details, with lists of titles and authors, will be included in issues of the magazine commencing with No. 22. Those interested in borrowing or purchasing school-story books—and there are many fine yarns in such books—would be well advised to contact Mr. Meechan, or subscribe to *The St. Gerald's Herald* for the necessary information.



# THE GREYFRIARS STORY COMPETITION

By ROGER M. JENKINS

THE AMALGAMATED PRESS never made any secret of the fact that the Sexton Blake stories were written by a myriad of authors, though the names of the various authors were not revealed in the early days. The Greyfriars stories were, however, credited to Charles Hamilton from the very beginning (under the appropriate pseudonym of Frank Richards) and, when tales by substitute writers began to make their appearance in *The Magnet*, these were also credited to Frank Richards.

Now there is nothing dishonest in using a pen-name, but there is a definite element of dishonesty in using someone else's pen-name, especially without his permission. This policy undoubtedly originated from The Amalgamated Press, not the substitute writers, and seems to have been confined to Charles Hamilton's pseudonyms only. It was a regrettable lapse on the part of the publishers who could quite easily have published the imitations under the names of the imitators themselves. As it

was, both Charles Hamilton and the public had just cause for complaint: Charles Hamilton because his reputation was being eroded by inferior stories published under his pen-names, and the public because they were being induced to purchase papers under the impression that they were written by the author who had originated the characters and had then written almost all the stories about them.

This peculiar attitude was not merely a matter of appending the words *By Frank Richards* to every Greyfriars story. It went farther than that, and the extent of the elaborations makes one wonder whether the editor of the time, H. A. Hinton, was not mainly responsible for the whole sorry business. For example, when a new Greyfriars story by a substitute writer was about to be published in *The Boys' Friend* 3d. Library, Mr. Hinton inserted this patently fictitious letter in the editorial column of *Magnet* No. 406:

Dear Mr. Hinton,

Doubtless my letter will cause you

great surprise, as will the big batch of manuscript I enclose. You imagined, I expect, that I had gone off to Cornwall for my long-delayed holiday, as I was so well ahead with my Magnet stories; but on due deliberation I decided to spend the fortnight at home, and to write another three-penny book story, so enthusiastic were your readers concerning "The Boy Without a Name," which appeared last January.

The task, of course, occupied me day and night; but it is now finished, entirely to my satisfaction, and I feel confident that "School and Sport" will prove an undoubted success, for I have given of my very best. Every paragraph, every line, has been carefully thought out; and I shall be glad if you will conform to your usual practice and let me see a selection of your readers' letters stating what they think of the story.

I am resting over the week-end, but hope to commence writing an extra-special Christmas Double Number story on Monday.

With kind regards, sincerely yours,  
FRANK RICHARDS.

SET AGAINST this sort of background, the Greyfriars story competition was little short of amazing, and there can be no doubt that readers rubbed their eyes when they saw this invitation in Magnet No. 399:

### Now, You Budding Authors!

Can you write a Magnet story? The proposition will doubtless take your breath away. Nevertheless, I am convinced that lots of fellows could write quite a readable story of Harry Wharton & Co. if they were afforded a sufficient incentive to do so. Dr. Johnson once said that anyone could write a book if he went about it doggedly enough, and I suppose the same remark applies to Magnet stories. Anyway, to encourage aspiring authors I am going to offer

### An Award of Fifteen Pounds

to the reader who sends in what I consider to be the best 30,000 word story dealing with school life at Greyfriars; and if the winning effort is of a sufficiently high standard it shall be published.

The story may be humorous, dramatic, solemn, or adventurous, or all the lot rolled into one. Type-written manuscripts are preferred, but ordinary handwriting is permissible, provided only one side of the paper is used.

Every single boy or girl who competes for this magnificent award, even if he or she be unsuccessful, will receive a suitable gift from the Editor, and a detailed criticism of the story submitted.

I am convinced that there are many promising authors in the ranks of Magnet readers, who are only waiting for someone to take an

interest in their work, and to give them a footing on the first rung of the ladder of fame.

The winning effort will be selected by the Editor, in consultation with Frank Richards.

We may feel quite certain that Charles Hamilton in fact took no part in judging the entries for this competition, which was nothing less than a search for substitute writers—probably inaugurated in order to ensure that, come what may, the war would not compel *The Magnet* to close down.

It would be interesting to know exactly what response this competition aroused among *Magnet* readers, but a lot of Mr. Hinton's remarks in the editorial column must be taken with a grain of salt. (For instance, in No. 399 he stated that the result of the voting on the suggested launching of *The Greyfriars Herald* was 105,726 in favour and 4 against; as the wartime edition lasted for only 18 weeks, it is strange, to say the least, that the enthusiastic readers who were supposed to have written in in such vast numbers did not all trouble themselves to buy the paper.) Be this as it may, however, it was stated in No. 416 that over 900 entries had been received for the Greyfriars story competition, and in

No. 418 the entries had reached nearly 1000. Prizewinners' names were published in Nos. 418-422, Robert Langley of No. 233 Lynton Road, Bermondsey, being the lucky winner, and approximately 100 runners-up were listed. What happened to the remaining 900 of Mr. Hinton's 1000 entries we do not know; probably they never existed outside his fertile imagination.

IT WAS LEFT to J. N. Pentelow to add a postscript to this odd affair. Apparently the competition had produced long-delayed results, for readers were still sending up contributions three years later. In *Magnet* No. 554 he declared:

#### Would-be Contributors

*The restarting of the Extracts from the Greyfriars Herald and Tom Merry's Weekly will, I know, have the effect of bringing to me quite a lot of amateur MSS. . . . I have found three or four—perhaps half a dozen—writers of some promise among my readers, and I have been able to give them something of a show; but they are the exceptions, and most of the stuff I get is no better than waste-paper, from my point of view.*

The following week Mr. Pentelow gave a candid explanation why these contributions were of no use:

### A Few More Words to Amateur Authors

I did not intend in my Chat last week to trample on the feelings of those of my readers who are ambitious of writing. And I know it is easily done; authors generally are among the most touchy of people, and the younger they are the touchier they are.

But aspiration is not accomplishment. You may think you can write a story quite in the Frank Richards or Martin Clifford style; but you cannot—not one among the whole crowd of you! There are just a few who can supply something like a plausible imitation, usually of the yarns in lighter vein; and, of course, there is an opening now and then for a quite light story. But it would be little short of a miracle if any of you youngsters should really be able to do the Frank Richards stuff. See what goes to it! Wide reading, knowledge of the world and of human nature, facile invention, long practice, and the skill that comes with it—all these Mr. Richards has and you have not. Even when you have written quite a fair story about the Greyfriars characters you have but a minor part of it to your own credit. You may have dealt with Fish, or Coker, or Skinner, or Bunter. But could you have invented any of them, or made them live as Mr.

Richards has made them live? Not likely! It is much if, in reading the story, one feels that the real Fish, or Bunter, or Coker, or Skinner is in it; but if that measure of success has fallen to you, you have done little more than write a fair copy. As a rule, too, you are content to hash up old incidents, without any attempt to think out anything new for yourselves. What, then, is there left of your own in the story? The words? But they are Mr. Richards' words, or, if they are not, then the story is hardly a success. Some of you who appear to have read little but the Magnet and the Gem have unquestionably got real benefit from them in the way of a workmanlike vocabulary and some notion of the manner in which a story should be told. But that is only part of a writer's outfit. The biggest part is character construction.

WHAT A PITY that The Amalgamated Press never recognized the truth of all this. And what a greater pity that John Nix Pentelow, that otherwise gifted man, never realized that his pertinent strictures could also have been levelled against his own substitute stories.



Novels founded mainly, it was  
claimed, on the Annals of Scotland Yard,  
appeared during the 1890's in-----

## THE BULL'S-EYE

THERE WAS an earlier paper with a similar-sounding name to that of the paper, *The Bullseye*, referred to with *Fun and Fiction* in No. 55 of *The Story Paper Collector*. It was *The Bull's-Eye*, a word, or compound word, with a different meaning. The one means the policeman's lantern, the other the centre of a target.

*The Bull's-Eye* was published (according to the start/stop list in the 1953 *Collectors' Digest Annual*) by The Aldine Publishing Company, No. 1 being published on February 28th, 1898, and the last issue, No. 94, on December 11th, 1899.

There is no publication date to be seen anywhere in the copy I have. It is No. 92, which would mean that it was published in the week of November 27, 1899. The cover is of yellow paper, not at all attractive to look upon, and the illustration is by H. M. Lewis, a frequent contributor to the Amalgamated Press weeklies for many years. The picture appears to be a rather crude piece of work, as does the

"masthead" above it. The latter includes the phrase *Novels Founded Mainly on the Annals of Scotland Yard*, which one may accept or not, according to the degree of one's credulity.

The picture, reproduced on the front page of this number, is a little remindful of Captain Nemo's struggle with an octopus in Walt Disney's film version of Jules Verne's "20,000 Leagues Under the Sea." The long complete story is "Fighting the Black Flag," "The Air-Ship 'Planet's' Thrilling Adventures with Pirates in the China Sea," by Sebastian Rigot, a pen-name if ever there was one. Not having read the story, I can't report on it, but on the first page there are seven human bodies, mutilated in a ghastly manner: the eyes of some had been gouged, while others had been disembowelled, and the throats of all had been cut. All of which, when added to pirates in the China Sea, seems to be a long, long way from Scotland Yard. The airship "Planet" appears to be not only an airship but a submersible

vessel as well. Maybe Jules Verne supplied the inspiration for it.

THE INSIDE illustrations are also the work of H. M. Lewis, and the main story runs to 10½ of the 16 pages. The balance of page 11 is occupied by the Editor's "How D'ye Do?" Then there is an instalment of a serial, "The Boys of Fengate School," by A. Elton Barron: four chapters, the last one being Chapter CLXV. This, after some figuring, I believe to be 165, a lot of chapters to be sure.

Readers are warned to look out for splendid sequels to both the complete story and the serial, but if only two more issues were published they probably had to look elsewhere for them.

On the final page some space is devoted to *The Bull's-Eye* Crypto Club, which readers were invited to join. As most, if not all, such Clubs and Leagues were run mainly for the benefit of the papers concerned, it is doubtful if the readers gained much by joining. There is a Club cryptogram, specially invented by a code expert, for use of the members in writing to each other. The code being printed right there, it would not be at all secret.

Unlike the Harmsworth half-penny papers of the 1890's, the inside cover pages of *The Bull's-*

*Eye* are not blank. Cover page ii carries an advertisement of Watchmakers Alliance Ltd., of London: the Gladstone Keyless Action English Lever Watch on credit terms for £3. So much did the advertiser prefer to sell on credit terms that, though he would accept cash with order, he would not give any discount.

Cover page iii has an advertisement for the new *Buffalo Bill Library*, listing Nos. 5, 6, 7, and 8: *Beautiful coloured covers, forty pages of closely printed type, price one penny.* On page iv is a Holloway's Pills and Ointment advertisement, with a picture of a soldier on a horse, from the wording a member of the Scots Greys.

There is no indication anywhere in this number as to the publisher's name. The addresses of both printer and publisher are given, but no names: *Printed and published for the Proprietors at 10, Allen Street, Goswell Road, London, E.C., and the offices of The Bull's-Eye are given as Crown Court, Chancery Lane, W.C.*

It is probable that *The Bull's-Eye* is a fair specimen of such boys' papers of the 1890's; rather blood-and-thunder, but likely not noticeably more so than *The Union Jack*, *Halfpenny Marvel*, and *The Pluck Library* of those days—papers that were published to drive "penny dreadfuls" off the market.

—W. H. G.

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## The Skeleton Clutch : : : Continued From Page 72

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year in London where it sold at half-a-crown. Nine and a half pages are absorbed by the various editions of Mary Braddon's novels and nearly fourteen pages by the works of G. W. M. Reynolds. Extremely popular about the middle of last century Reynolds is almost forgotten now. Among his most popular works were "The Bronze Statue; or The Virgin's Kiss," and "Mary Price; or The Memoirs of a Servant Maid."

THE WELL-KNOWN Gothic novelists are all here—Mrs. Radcliffe, "Monk" Lewis, Maturin, and so on. But information about them is easily obtainable so we pass on to a later period when we find that Gothic tales have ceased to be favoured in "Society" but have become more popular than ever before as they are now reaching the poor. Before this could happen a change had to be made in publishing methods. This took the form of publishing books in parts—on the lowest level, in "penny parts." The most successful publisher of penny parts in the early period was Edward Lloyd who attained, along with Ned Kelly, the honour of having

his biography included in "The Dictionary of National Biography." He published about 200 books in one or two issues of penny numbers. He was, however, not without rivals. It is doubtful if any of Lloyd's writers had a popularity exceeding that of Pierce Egan, Junior, whose books were published in penny parts by other caterers to the public taste. Egan's most popular books were "The London Apprentice and the Goldsmith's Daughter of East Chepe," "Quentin Matsys, the Blacksmith of Antwerp," and "Robin Hood and Little John."

The most prolific and popular scribes of the Lloyd school were Rymer (or "Errym"—an anagram of Rymer) and Thomas Peckett Prest. They turned out the blood-and-thunder penny numbers which first earned the name of "bloods" or "penny dreadfuls." Occasionally the author was named but usually the tale was by *The author of such-and-such or so-and-so*. Among the books attributed to Prest by Summers are "Varney the Vampire; or The Secret of the Grey Turret." The British Museum Catalogue gives "Varney" to Rymer and some think he wrote the other one.

Whether or not Prest did write them, others of his titles seem equally bloodthirsty: "Adeline; or The Grave of the Forsaken" (described by J. P. Quaine as issued in 52 most fearsomely illustrated numbers), "The She Tiger; or The Female Fiend," "The Maniac Father; or The Victim of Seduction," "Pedlar's Acre; or The Murderess of Seven Husbands." Something like a hundred books are attributed to him.

WHILE recognizing that Prest had an enormous output, one feels that Summers has leaned over backwards in listing titles under his authorship. For example he lists the two following: "The Skeleton Clutch; or The Goblet of Gore," a Romance by T. Prest (E. Lloyd, 1842), and "Sawney Bean, the Man-eater of Midlothian," by T. P. Prest, in penny numbers (E. Lloyd, 1851). Both are quite good titles invented years ago by Mr. J. P. Quaine as a joke. It is amusing to think that Summers accepted as genuine for over twenty years two fictitious titles of non-existent books. They must have seemed of the utmost rarity. This raises an irritating doubt. Did Summers actually see "The Memoirs of an Hermaphrodite," by

Pierre Henri de Vergy, London, 1772?

I have a practically perfect copy of "The Blue Dwarf" in 36 penny numbers with all the 18 folding plates (16 of them coloured), published by Hogarth House and written by Percy B. St. John. Summers wrongly dates it at about 1870. It is advertised as "coming out" in penny numbers in some Hogarth House "Jack Harkaway" stories. This and other points would tend to place it about 1878. Summers also lists an earlier "Blue Dwarf" (of which I have never heard) issued in 60 numbers by E. Harrison in 1861. He said this was the original Gentleman George version, whatever that may mean. Similarly I have the Hogarth House "Black-eyed Susan; or Pirates Ashore," by George Emmett which was issued in 12 numbers. Summers lists an earlier "Black-eyed Susan; or The Sailor's Bride," issued by Lloyd in 50 numbers in 1845.

In the early 'thirties Mr. J. P. Quaine, a Melbourne bookseller, who wrote an interesting number for *Biblionews* ("Brothers of the Blood," 1951), issued a catalogue of great import for collectors of "bloods." On checking it against this Bibliography I find some startling omissions. It seems a pity that Summers, or his assistants, missed the following:



- "The Wild Witch of the Heath; or The Demon of the Glen"  
(Lloyd, 1851).
- "The Secret Cave; or The Blood Stained Dagger" (1812).
- "Melina, The Murderess; or The Crime at the Old Milestone."
- "The Wife's Tragedy; or The Secret of the London Sewers" (104  
"The Cannibal Courtesan" (1866). [parts, 1850].
- "The Parricide Priest; or The Murder in the Monastery" (1842).
- "Mabel, the Marble Hearted; or The Outcast's Revenge."
- "Mabel; or The Ghouls of the Battlefield" (E. Lloyd, 55 parts, 1846).
- "The Lady in Black; or The Wanderer of the Tombs" (Prest, 1844).
- "The Dance of Death; or The Hangman's Sweetheart" (1874).
- "Jessie, the Morgue-Keeper's Daughter" (1845).
- "Mysteries of a Dissecting Room" (1846).
- "Mysteries of Bedlam; or The Annals of a Madhouse."
- "The Young Apprentice; or The Watchwords of Old London"  
(Brett).
- "The Outlaws of Epping Forest" (Hogarth House).

**A**LTHOUGH there are omissions many of the penny-dreadful school stories are included. There are Australian references, too, in "Jack Harkaway in Australia," "Ned Nimble Amongst the Bushrangers," and "Blue-Cap the Bushranger."

Omissions and mistakes are likely to occur in pioneer works,

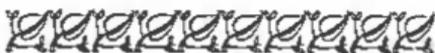
especially where the field is as large as this. It would have been almost impossible for Montague Summers to have seen every item listed in his "Gothic Bibliography." It is a worthy effort and the most useful, even if the only, checklist in this field. It should, however, be used with caution.

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§ STANLEY LARNACH, as well as being a "Brother of the Book" is a true "Brother of the Blood" and is at present busily amassing a collection of "penny dreadfuls" complete with plates. It's no use anyone going up to him and asking: "Why do your shelves sac drip wi' bluid, Stanley?" unless they are prepared

to answer truthfully whether they know where some of these books may be found. He's in the market for such items and his address is: Flat 4, 29 Meymotte Street, Randwick, Sydney, N.S.W., Australia.

(See next page for acknowledgment)



## NICK CARTER WEEKLY

**T**WO DIFFERENT papers featuring stories of the American fictional sleuth, Nick Carter, were published by George Newnes Limited, London. One was *The Nick Carter Weekly*, priced at one penny. It was of a large size and had a coloured cover. No publisher's name was given but it carried the address 18 and 19 Exeter St., Strand, London, and as other Newnes publications were advertised in its pages I conclude that Newnes were the publishers. The paper could not have been much of a success because after only seven issues it ceased. The stories seem to be American reprints, but I am not certain. The full list of titles follows:

No. 1—*The House of Whispers.*

(Dated November 22, 1911.)

No. 2—*The Silent Witness.*

No. 3—*The Gentleman Plunger.*

No. 4—*Playing the Last Hand.*

No. 5—*From Clue to Capture.*

No. 6—*The Vengeance Trail.*

No. 7—*The Crimson Flash.*

(Dated January 3rd, 1912.)

A title was given for the following week, but I am reasonably sure that this, No. 8, "The Ghost of Bare-Faced Billy," did not

appear. In the 1919-20 period Newnes published 118 issues of the more successful *Nick Carter Library*. — W. O. G. LOFTS



### The Clutching Hand: Whence It Came\*

**M**ORE THAN two years ago Stanley Larnach sent us three copies of *Biblioneus*, monthly "letter" of the Book Collectors' Society of Australia. With them came word that *should you wish to use any material from the articles you are quite free to do so*. The earth made its way around the sun a couple of times, while we alternately remembered and forgot these "letters" lying in our "copy box." Now they have been remembered with some result, as will be seen in these pages. "The Skeleton Clutch" is reprinted from *Biblioneus*, Vol. 5, No. 2, February 1952, as is also the note about the author that follows the article. Also sent us at the time were two photographic reproductions from "Varney the Vampire," one of which we had hoped to use, but considerations of space and time has prevented our doing this.

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\*Correction: This heading should read "The Skeleton Clutch: Whence It Came."