

Wonderful FREE GIFT Aeroplane-Inside!

No. 1,122. Vol. XXXVI. Week Ending August 17th, 1929.

The MAGNET

EVERY SATURDAY.

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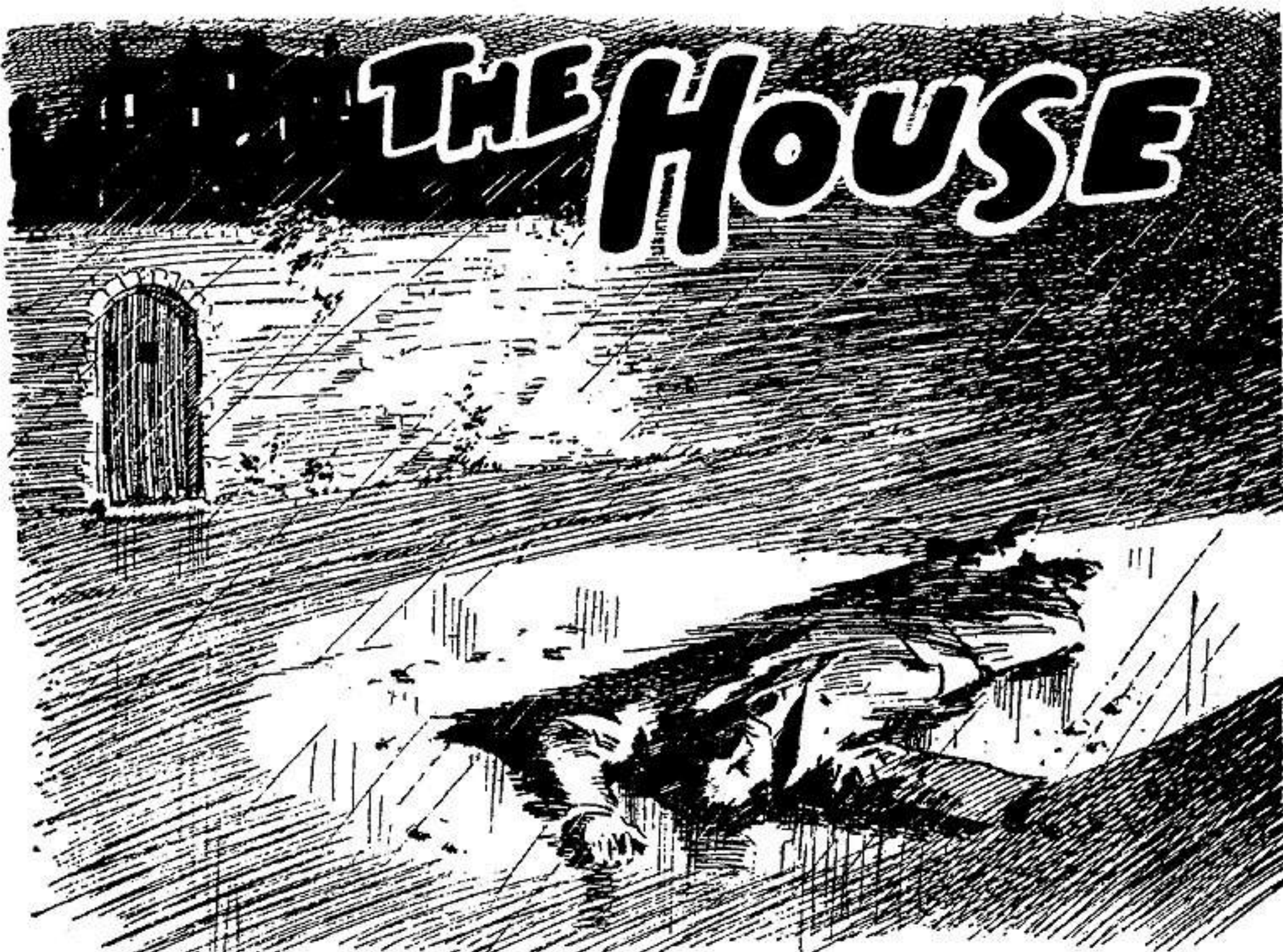
This Real
FLYING MODEL AEROPLANE

THIS WEEK: THE PLANE

NEXT WEEK: THE DRIVING MECHANISM

Presented **FREE** *to all Readers!*

THRILLING HOLIDAY STORY of the CHUMS of GREYFRIARS in this issue



A storm-swept night—five drenched school-boys seeking shelter from the storm. A stab of light—a shriek—and out in the rain-lashed roadway lies the still figure of a man the Greyfriars chums had seen alive and well but a few moments ago!

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

The Man with the Scar!

WHERE are we?" "Goodness knows!" "The wherefulness is terrific!"

Harry Wharton came to a halt.

"Look here, it's no good going on!" he exclaimed. "We're lost—and there's an end of it."

"Blow this rain——"

"Bother this darkness——"

"Nugent, you ass, you fancied you knew where your blessed uncle lived!" grunted Johnny Bull.

"Fathead!" answered Nugent. "My uncle lives at Ravenspur Grange——"

"Nice—if we could find Ravenspur Grange!" groaned Bob Cherry, bowing his drenched head to a gust of wind and rain.

"Three miles from the village of Ley——" went on Nugent.

"If we knew where the village of Ley was——" said Harry Wharton.

"In Oxfordshire——"

"Well, we know where Oxfordshire is," said Bob Cherry. "We're actually in Oxfordshire—if that's any good. Trouble is that Oxfordshire seems rather large on a dark, rainy night."

"What a night!" said Johnny Bull.

"Terrific!" groaned Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

"If one could meet a native!" sighed Bob Cherry. "I thought there were quite a lot of people in Oxfordshire. But there doesn't seem to be anybody in this part of it—except ourselves. And I wish we weren't."

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"Not likely to meet anybody a night like this," said Wharton.

The Famous Five of Greyfriars had come to a halt.

Really, it seemed useless to proceed.

It was a wild night.

Trees groaned and creaked under a fierce wind. The rain came down in torrents.

The lane they were following was a sea of mud. The ditch at the side was like a rushing river.

Darkness lay over all.

Possibly there were signposts about. If so they were not to be seen. The chums of the Greyfriars Remove had to admit that they were lost.

The Greyfriars walking-party had struck a bad patch. Bright summer weather had smiled on the early part of their holiday tour, when they had travelled with the motor-tricycle. The motor-tricycle had "gone West," and Bob Cherry declared that their luck had gone with it.

Really, Bob seemed to be right. The weather, anyhow, had changed for the worse. That day there had been wind and rain, with intervals of sunshine. Now there was a storm.

For several nights the walking-party had been putting up at rural inns. This especial night they had intended to put up with an uncle of Frank Nugent's, who lived in that part of Oxfordshire, and who had specially asked Frank to come in with his friends, if they passed that way.

So, though the weather looked very doubtful at sunset, the juniors had pushed on, hoping to arrive at Ravenspur Grange early in the evening.

They had not arrived.

In the rain and darkness they had somehow missed the village of Ley, as they realised now. In the country lanes there were many turnings, and no doubt they had taken a few wrong ones.

Anyhow, here they were, in wet and darkness; possibly, for all they knew, only a hundred yards from the Grange, possibly three or four miles; there was no telling.

The juniors tramped through the mud to the side of the lane, where the spreading branches of an oak gave a little shelter from the downpour.

Looking round in the darkness, they could see nothing but weeping trees and hedges, dim and shadowy in the night.

"Sorry, you fellows!" said Frank Nugent. "It's years since I visited my uncle at the Grange; but I thought I'd find it easily enough. If this blessed storm hadn't come on——"

"It looked like a storm when we passed that inn, miles back," said Johnny Bull. "We ought to have stopped there; but that ass Nugent fancied he knew the way——"

"So I do know it," said Frank.

"Where is it, then?"

"I'm not a cat to see in the dark, ass!"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" exclaimed Bob Cherry suddenly.

"What——"

"Somebody's coming."

"Rubbish!" grunted Johnny Bull. "I tell you nobody's ass enough to be out in this, except us."

"Shut up and listen, old bean!"

The juniors listened, peering into the gloom. It was not easy to distinguish sounds in the howl of the wind and the lashing of the rain. But they made out the sound of heavy, tramping footsteps, coming up the dark lane towards the oak-tree under which they stood.

OF TERROR!

BY
FRANK
RICHARDS

The First of a Brilliant New Series of Holiday Adventure Yarns, with as thrilling and as eerie a plot as you have ever encountered.

Someone, evidently, was abroad that stormy night. And the Famous Five brightened up as the tramping footsteps came nearer and nearer. If the newcomer belonged to the vicinity, as seemed most probable, they had only to ask their way, and a short walk might bring them to the shelter of Sir Richard Ravenspur's hospitable roof.

Nearer and nearer came the footsteps, unmistakable now.

A shadowy figure loomed up in the gloom.

It was that of a man, muffled in a dark raincoat, with a slouched hat pulled down low over his face. In the blackness under the oak the juniors were invisible, and the muffled-up man came on, evidently without suspecting that anyone was near.

As he drew near Harry Wharton stepped out to intercept him.

He was about to speak, but before a word could leave his lips the man in the slouched hat, seeing him, leaped back, with a sudden startled cry.

"Stand back!"

His hand groped under the raincoat and reappeared in an instant, with something in it that glimmered in the gloom.

Wharton caught his breath.

It was a revolver that was aimed at him, with a finger on the trigger, and two startled, fierce eyes glaring over it from the shadowy brim of the slouched hat. And a husky voice snarled:

"Stand back! I know your game, Black Edgar! Stand back, or I'll shoot you dead in your tracks!"

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

The Shot in the Night!

HARRY WHARTON stood transfixed.

Taken utterly by surprise, he stood silent, staring at the revolver and the dark, muffled figure behind it.

In the husky voice that snarled at him there was anger, hatred, but there was also fear. Whoever it was that the man had taken Wharton to be, it was obviously someone of whom he was in dread.

For a second it seemed that the man would shoot. From the shadow of the oak Wharton's chums ran forward.

But the next moment the man lowered the revolver. He peered at the juniors through the rain.

"Who are you?" he snapped.

Evidently he had realised that Wharton was not the man he had feared to see.

"Who are you? What are you doing here?" he exclaimed. "I thought—I fancied—" He broke off. "I mean, you startled me! I did not see for a moment that you were a boy! I thought—" He broke off again. "Who are you?"

"Nothing to be afraid of," said Wharton, with a curl of the lip. "We're not tramps."

"I can see that. But—"

The man came a little nearer and pushed back the slouched hat from his face to look more closely at the schoolboys. He scanned them intently, and at the same time they looked at him.

The face they saw was not a pleasant one. It was hard and rugged, tanned dark by tropical suns, and across the right cheek ran a long scar, as if a bullet had grazed there at some time, and grazed deep. The eyes, deep under shaggy brows, were fierce and keen. There was the alertness of a wild animal in them. All the juniors could see that the man they were looking at was in a state of uneasiness, if not of fear—as if the darkness about him was peopled with hidden foes. Indeed, his action when Wharton had stepped out to speak to him showed that he was under a strong nervous strain.

"Who are you?" he repeated, scanning the juniors suspiciously. "If you are watching for me—"

"Watching for you?" repeated Wharton blankly.

"After all, it's not likely." The man seemed to be speaking half to himself. "You look like schoolboys, and Black Edgar would not—"

He broke off, still scanning the faces of the Greyfriars juniors.

"We are schoolboys," answered Harry quietly. "We've lost our way, and thought you might be able to put us right."

"Is that all?"

"That's all."

"You startled me." The revolver had disappeared, and the scarred man was making an effort to speak naturally. "Perhaps I can set you right. I was a native of this country years ago, and I've not forgotten, though, I've been years down under."

"You're from Australia?" asked Harry.

The man did not answer the question, though, as a matter of fact, his words had already answered it.

He had ceased to scan the faces of the juniors and was looking about him, peering into the dark shadows in a way that reminded them of a hunted animal.

"Have you seen anyone on this road?" he asked suddenly, his gaze returning to the schoolboys.

"Only yourself," answered Harry.

"You're sure?"

"Quite."

The scarred man seemed relieved. "There's no telling," he muttered. His fingers went to the deep scar on his cheek. "When a man's had one narrow escape, he's on the look-out—though I reckon Black Edgar won't try that game on in England. You're sure you've seen nobody on the road?"

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"Quite sure."

Again the scarred man's furtive glance went up and down the road in the shadows.

"If you know this country, you can tell us our way," said Harry. "The village of Ley—"

"Yes, yes!" The man made a gesture in the direction from which he had come. "That's your way—two or three miles. I passed through the village coming here."

"That sets us right, then," said Frank Nugent, in relief. "We can't be far from Ravenspur Grange now."

The scarred man gave a violent start. "Ravenspur Grange?" he exclaimed.

"Yes. That's where we're going."

"You're going to Ravenspur Grange?"

said the scarred man, staring at the juniors with swift suspicion in his look.

"Why shouldn't we be?" exclaimed Wharton.

"It's my uncle's house," said Nugent, staring at the strange man in wonder.

"We're going there, only we've lost our way."

"If you know the place, you can set us right," said Bob Cherry.

"Find it for yourselves!" snapped the scarred man.

And he turned abruptly away and tramped on in the gloom.

The juniors stared after him.

In a few moments the gloomy night swallowed the muffled figure and the slouched hat, though they still heard for some moments more the heavy footsteps tramping in the mud.

"My hat!" said Johnny Bull, with a deep breath.

"What the thump—"

The juniors looked at one another, with serious faces. The footsteps of the man from "down under" died away.

"Looks to me as if that fellow himself is going to Ravenspur Grange and doesn't want company on the road," said Bob.

Harry Wharton nodded.

"That's what I was thinking," he said. "But if that's so, he's a rather queer visitor for your uncle, Franky."

"I don't imagine he's going to see my uncle if he's going to the Grange," said Nugent. "But it looks as if he's going there, and we'd better follow on. Anyhow, if Ley is two or three miles behind us we're on the right road, and we've only got to keep on the way that fellow's gone."

"Better not hurry," grinned Bob. "We don't want to get too close to a man who whisks out a revolver at every footstep."

"Who the dickens can Black Edgar be?" said Johnny Bull. "Somebody that fellow is awfully afraid of, I fancy. I suppose you've never heard of a Black Edgar in your uncle's household, Franky?"

Nugent laughed.

"No, fathead! Let's get on!"

The juniors left the shelter of the oak and pushed on their way, taking the direction in which the scarred man had disappeared.

Five minutes later they found themselves passing by a high park wall that bordered the road on one side.

"I know where we are now," said Nugent.

"Thank goodness for that!" said Bob. "But where?"

"That's the wall of the Grange. A bit farther on there's a gate—a little wicket gate."

"Oh, good!"

"We can't get in that way, though; it's kept locked," said Nugent. "We shall have to keep on to the big gates."

"Oh, rotten!"

"Anyhow, we know where we are

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now," said Nugent. "As soon as we see that wicket I shall be quite sure of it. Keep your eyes open for a little iron-banded door deep in the wall."

The juniors moved on, the high park wall keeping off the worst of the wind and rain. The man from down under was invisible, but they knew that he could not be far ahead of them.

Suddenly from the darkness ahead came a brilliant flash, followed by a report.

The juniors stopped.

"What—what was that?" panted Bob.

"Hark!"

From the gloomy night came a cry—a sharp, piercing cry, and through the howl of the wind it seemed to the juniors that they heard a heavy fall.

For an instant they stared into the night, almost frozen with horror. Then, with one accord, they rushed forward.

Something that was like a black shadow was stooping in the road close by the park wall. But as the hurrying footsteps drew near it moved, leaped up, and vanished. So swiftly was it gone amid the surrounding shadows that the juniors could not be sure that they had really seen it, and that it was not a trick of the imagination.

The next moment Harry Wharton, ahead of the others, stumbled over something that lay in the wet road.

"Stop, you fellows!" he panted.

Something—with a thrill of horror at his heart, he guessed what it was, what it must be—lay at his feet, silent, motionless.

His heart beat thickly.

"What—what is it?" breathed Bob

Cherry.

But he knew only too well. The flash,

the report, the fall had told their own tale.

"A match—quick!" muttered Nugent.

Wharton struck a match, but the wind instantly blew it out.

"Hold on—I've got an electric torch!" muttered Johnny Bull.

He groped in his pocket.

"Quick!"

A beam of light flashed from the torch. It gleamed on the dark figure that lay in the mud and the rain—on a face upturned, with staring eyes—eyes from which the light of life had fled.

At the feet of the horrified schoolboys lay the scarred man with whom they had spoken only a few minutes since, but who would never speak again. He lay at their feet, shot through the heart!

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

The Crimson Stain!

"MURDER!" breathed Harry Wharton.

For some moments horror had held the juniors spell-bound, silent. Wharton's husky voice broke the silence.

"Dead!" whispered Bob. "Murdered! Good heavens!"

Johnny Bull shut off the torch. The darkness swallowed again the staring, upturned face of the scarred man.

"Dead!" breathed Nugent.

It was hard to believe in the terrible tragedy that had happened so suddenly.

"He—he can't be," said Bob.

"He's dead," said Harry quietly.

"He was shot—we heard the shot and

saw the flash! And—and we saw the man who did it!"

The juniors knew now that they had not been mistaken in that hurried glimpse of a black, stooping figure leaping up and vanishing into the night.

It was the murderer of whom they had had that fleeting glimpse. They had been almost at his heels when he fled.

With startled eyes they stared round in the shadows. The thought that the desperate man, weapon in hand, might be lurking near sent a thrill to every heart.

"He's gone!" said Harry, in a low voice. "He heard us coming up—and ran. He's gone!"

There was nothing to be seen save the high park wall overhung by weeping branches; nothing to be heard but the wail of the wind in the trees. There could be little doubt that the murderer was gone.

"Whoever it was waited for him here," said Harry. "He was on his guard when he met us, but he was taken off his guard at the last moment. The villain was waiting—hiding in that porch perhaps—"

"That's the door I was telling you of," said Frank.

The body lay almost opposite a little porch in the high brick wall of the Grange, which was closed by a small door, barred and studded with iron. It was likely enough that the assassin had been crouched there when the scarred man came up.

Bob Cherry uttered a sudden exclamation.

"The door's open!"

"What?"

Bob stepped to the door and pushed it. It swung back—it had been a few inches ajar.

Nugent caught his breath.

"Then that's the way the murderer went—into my uncle's park!"

"That's how he got away so quickly," said Harry. "And—and— Good heavens, Franky, it looks—it looks as if he was somebody belonging to the place. That poor fellow was going to the Grange, and whoever shot him must have a key to this gate—"

"It looks like it," said Frank in a hushed voice.

"What had we better do?" asked Bob. "We—we can't stop here, and—and we can't leave him—can we?"

"It's about a couple of hundred yards on to the big gates," said Nugent. "We'd better hurry on and fetch help—"

"And—and leave that—alone?"

Slam!

The juniors started, with throbbing hearts, at the sudden crash of the iron-studded door in the wall as it closed.

"Was that the wind?" gasped Bob.

"It was not the wind! Hark!"

Plainly to the tense ears of the juniors came the grating sound of a key turning in a lock.

They stood with thrilling hearts, staring at the door in the wall. It was being locked on the inner side. By whose hand? It could only be by the hand of the murderer who had been lurking within in hearing of their voices.

Silence followed.

"Good heavens!" breathed Bob Cherry. "He's in the park—he was there all the time. He has a key to that door—"

Wharton glanced up at the high wall. The thought was in his mind for a moment of clambering over it and taking up the pursuit of the wretch within.

But he shook his head.



As the muffled-up man drew near, Harry Wharton stepped out of the blackness to intercept him. But before the junior could speak, the man, seeing him, leaped back, with a sudden startled cry. "Stand back!" he cried, levelling a revolver. "I know your game, Black Edgar—stand back, or I'll shoot you in your tracks!" (See Chapter 1.)

Even if the wall could be crossed it was useless to think of pursuit of a fleeing man in the darkness of the park—a man who evidently knew his way about the grounds of Ravenspur Grange.

"Let's go on to the house," said Nugent, in a strained voice. "The sooner we give the alarm the better."

"I suppose we can't do anything else," said Wharton.

"Come on!" said Bob.

Harry Wharton stooped beside the still form that lay in the rain, and quietly laid his handkerchief over the lifeless face.

"Come on," he said as he rose. "As soon as we give the alarm, that villain in the park can be hunted for—and caught! We must get to your uncle as quickly as we can, Franky."

"Hurry!" breathed Nugent.

Leaving the still form where it lay, in the darkness and the rain, the juniors hurried along the road.

Five minutes later they reached the gateway of the Grange.

The big bronze gates stood open, and they turned into the drive, lined by tall oaks, that led up to the house.

Ahead of them, through the rain and the gloom, gleamed the lights of many windows. Wet and weary, and still shivering from the horror of what they had seen, the juniors tramped up the drive under the dripping branches of the oaks.

"Hold on!" muttered Bob Cherry suddenly.

He pointed to a dim figure ahead on the drive, which appeared for a moment against the light of a distant window.

The juniors stopped, their hearts beating. As their own footsteps ceased, they heard the sound of the tread of the man in advance.

But their uneasiness passed the next moment. The man ahead of them was walking up the drive to the house. It could scarcely be the red-handed villain who had escaped into the park from

the road. Only for the moment they had been startled.

They moved on again, and this time it seemed the man on the drive heard them, for he stopped and glanced back, peering through the gloom and the falling rain.

"Hallo!" came a voice.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" answered Bob Cherry.

The man turned back.

Though it seemed scarcely possible that he could have any connection with the unknown man of the park the juniors felt a tremor as he approached, and instinctively drew closer together.

Within a few feet of them the man stopped, peering at them through the dimness under the oaks.

"Oh—you!" he said.

It seemed as if he knew them. His tone was not gracious. He came a little nearer, still peering. The juniors saw a young man, in the thirties, well built, in a light fawn raincoat and bowler hat. His face was not clearly seen, but it struck them as hard in outline, with strongly-marked features.

"Young Nugent there?" he asked.

"Yes," said Frank, in wonder. "You seem to know me."

"I guessed when I saw you who you were," said the young man, in the same ungracious tone. "I've been out to look for you on the roads."

"You have?" exclaimed Wharton.

"Yes; Sir Richard asked me to," grumbled the young man. "He fancied you had lost your way, or somethin'."

"We had," said Frank.

"Young ass!" said the other. "You seem to have found it again, anyhow."

"Yes, we found it—"

"How many are there of you?" The young man peered again at the juniors.

"Five—I fancy you're rather well-what?"

"Yes, rather," said Bob.

"The ratherfulness is terrific," remarked Hurrée Jamset Ram Singh.

The young man started.

"What—what did you say?" he ejaculated.

"I remarkably observed that the ratherfulness was terrific."

"Oh, gad!" said the young man. "Well, here you are. I'm glad you've turned up. Sir Richard might have asked me to go out hunting again, and I'm dashed if I like the weather."

He turned and strode away up the drive. The juniors followed.

"Who's that, Franky?" asked Johnny Bull.

"Blessed if I know," answered Nugent.

"Not a relation of yours?"

"Might be. My uncle has relations on the other side of that family that I've never seen—and don't want to, if they're like that Johnny."

"He belongs to the house, anyhow," said Bob.

"Yes, I suppose so."

The juniors arrived at the house on the heels of the young man in the fawn coat. The door had already been opened by a footman, when they reached it, and they followed the young man in.

The footman, who was taking the wet hat and coat from the first comer, glanced at the juniors, who certainly looked a wet and draggled crowd.

"They're the lads Sir Richard is expecting, James," said the young man, as he slipped out of his coat. "Master Frank and his friends."

"Yes, sir."

"Where's Packington, James?"

"Mr. Packington is in his room, sir. He has one of his headaches, sir?" said James. "Oh, sir! Have you had an accident, sir?"

James was holding the raincoat he had taken, and he held it up to the electric light, with amazement and horror in his face.

On the light fawn was a dark splash, and the eyes of Harry Wharton & Co., as well as the footman's, fastened on it.

It was the stain of blood!

(Continued on page 8.)

The "Magnet" FREE GIFT AEROPLANE

By F. J. CAMM.

EVERY copy of this week's issue of the MAGNET contains three sheets of coloured designs which, when correctly cut out and glued together make the splendid aeroplane featured on the cover and shown on these pages, drawn to scale, by Figs. 1, 2, and 3. Next week an envelope of fittings will be given, and the only additional material which you will require to complete the model is a twopenny tube of Croid or seccotine (Don't try a substitute!) and a twopenny reel of red three-cord carpet thread, which is obtainable from the drapers.

The first thing to do is carefully to examine the designs so that a clear idea is obtained of the method of fitting the parts together. Those designs should be carefully compared with Figs. 1, 2, and 3. After a little study it will be observed that no skill is required to make the model, a pair of scissors and a ruler being the only tools required.

The entire construction consists of glued joints, and it is because the successful assembling of the model depends so much upon the manner in which these glued joints are made that I wish to dwell upon this point.

It will be noticed that the cardboard has to be folded to give the fuselage, chassis, etc., their correct shape. The best way, in fact the correct way of making the folds is to score lines on the opposite side of the sheet to that on which the design appears with the back edge of a pocket-knife held against the edge of a ruler. The correct position of the lines should first be marked with a pencil, taking the lines on the design itself as a guide. Score the lines; do not cut them.

Now a word about the correct use of the glue. It is common knowledge to most fellows that the successful repair of a puncture in the tyre of a bicycle depends upon allowing the solution to become tacky, in fact almost dry, before the patch is applied; and so with glued joints. Smear the smallest possible amount of glue along each overlap and the face to which it is to be attached.

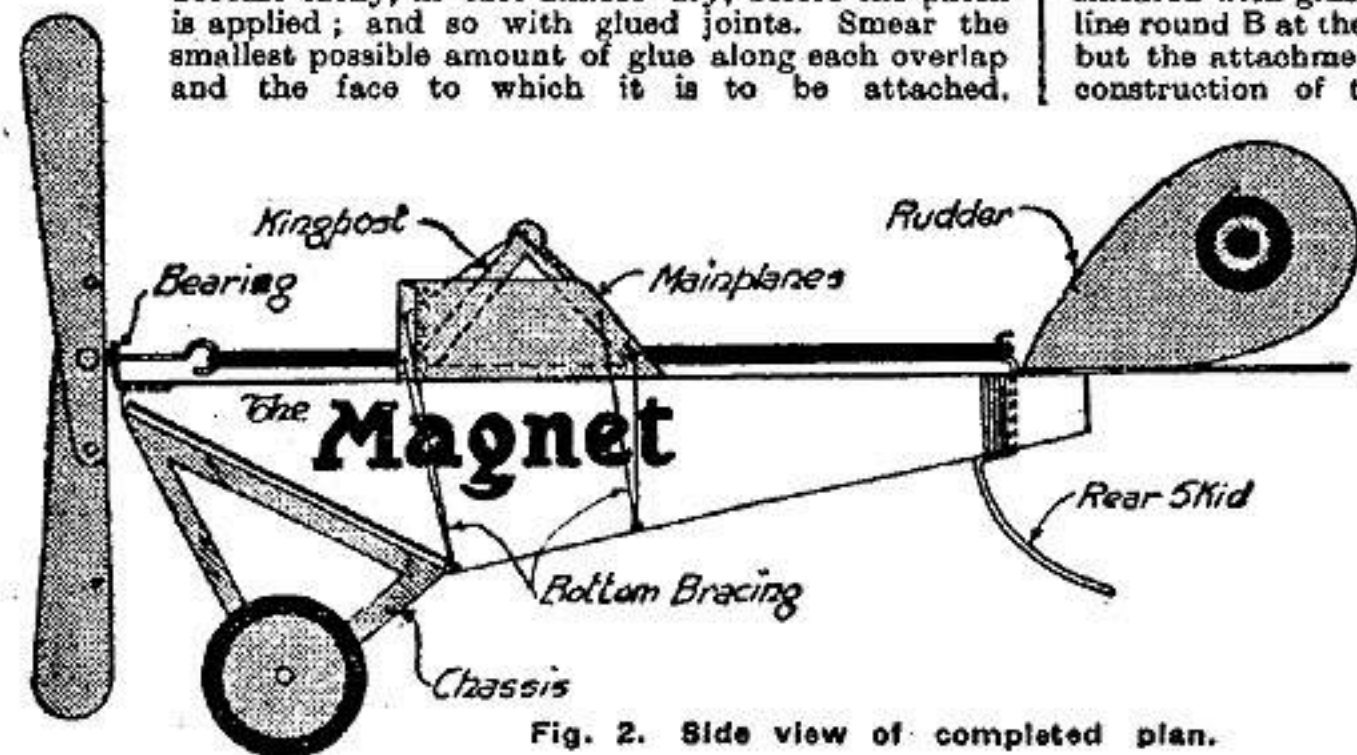


Fig. 2. Side view of completed plan.

spread it evenly with the fingers and allow it to become almost dry before attaching it to its appropriate part. Have a damp cloth or sponge handy so that the fingers can be wiped clean from time to time. These instructions relating to folding and gluing are important.

Now take Sheet 1, which comprises the fuselage and wheels, and cut out the fuselage design. When folded, this makes up into a fuselage or body of an enclosed triangular section, held together by the two overlaps D.

In order to support and to make a firm job of the nose of the model before actually gluing the fuselage together, obtain a piece of cork and cut it to the shape shown in Fig. 4. Fold the nose of the fuselage round the piece of cork to make sure that the latter is a good fit, and then smear it all over with glue and place it aside to get tacky.

Now glue the two overlaps D, after having scored the joints on the underside of the design, fold down the triangular flap of the nose of the model with its two tongues and glue these, and insert the cork nose in its proper position as soon as the glue on the overlaps has become tacky.

Bring the glued faces of the overlap together, and roughly bind the fuselage round as shown in Fig. 5, so that it is held

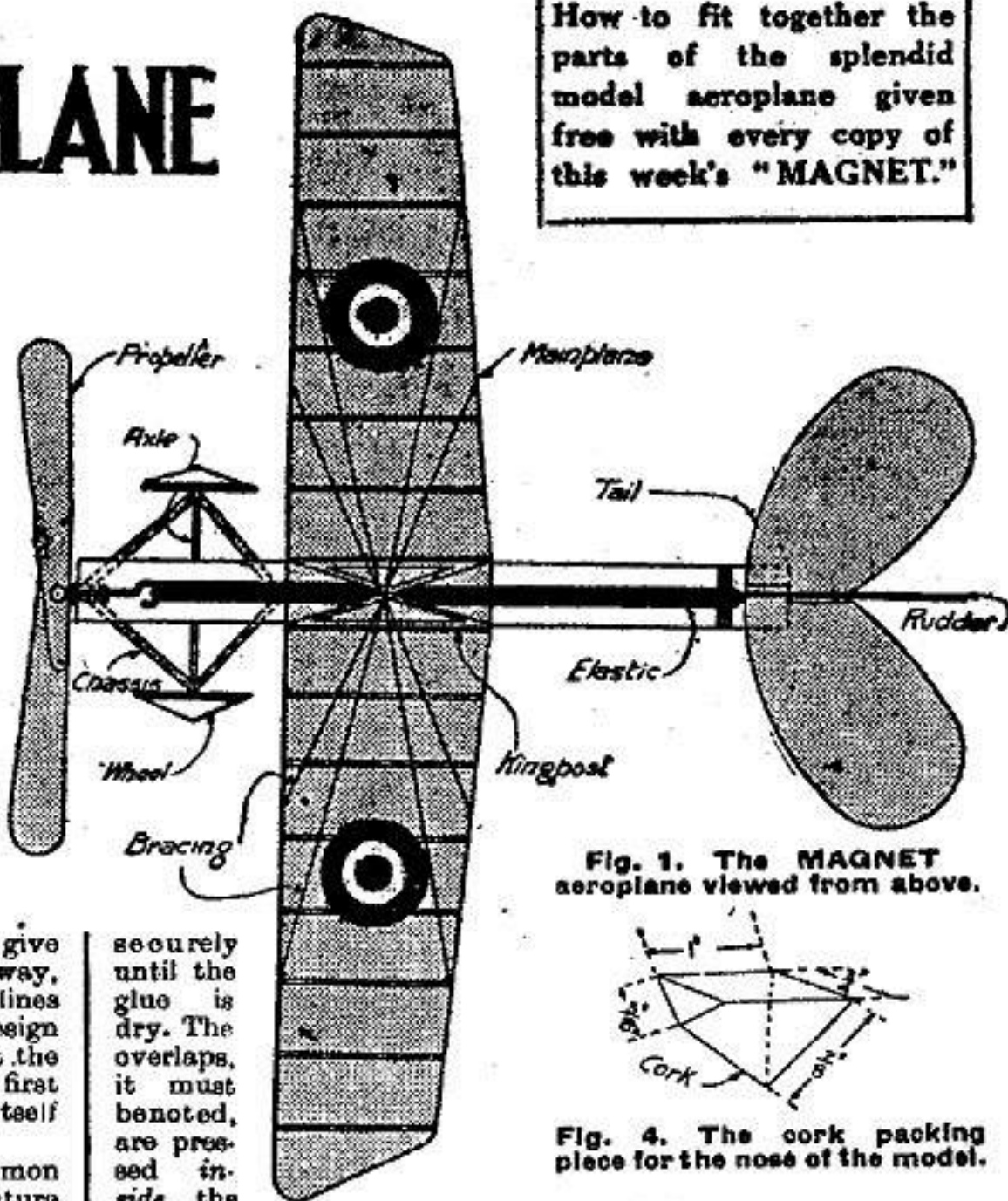


Fig. 1. The MAGNET aeroplane viewed from above.

securely until the glue is dry. The overlaps, it must be noted, are pressed inside the

opposite edge of the fuselage, which should also be lightly smeared with glue so that a perfect joint results. The dotted line round B at the nose of the fuselage is to take the bearing, but the attachment of this will be dealt with next week. The construction of the wheels shown on Sheet 1 will be dealt with later on. It will be seen that holes G are pierced (with an awl) through the bottom edge of the fuselage; these holes later receive the wing bracing.

Sheet 2 shows the two wings. These should be separated by a cut down the line K. The flap on the front edge of each wing should be scored, folded back, and glued. Then press them down, and place under some weights, such as a pile of heavy books, until the glue is dry. This flap is merely included to stiffen the front edge of the wing. It will be noticed that a cut is made half-way along the overlap where the wings join the fuselage; this is to enable the wing to be bent or cambered to the form shown in Fig. 5. The wings are glued to the fuselage in the position marked CC on the top surface of it. Here again it is necessary to point out that they must be securely attached, and to ensure this they should not be glued to the fuselage until the glue is almost dry.

Next prick the eight holes marked H to which the bracing threads are tied, making sure not to make the holes too near the edges. The pricking is best done with a large sharp needle.

We can now turn our attention to Sheet 3. This consists, it will

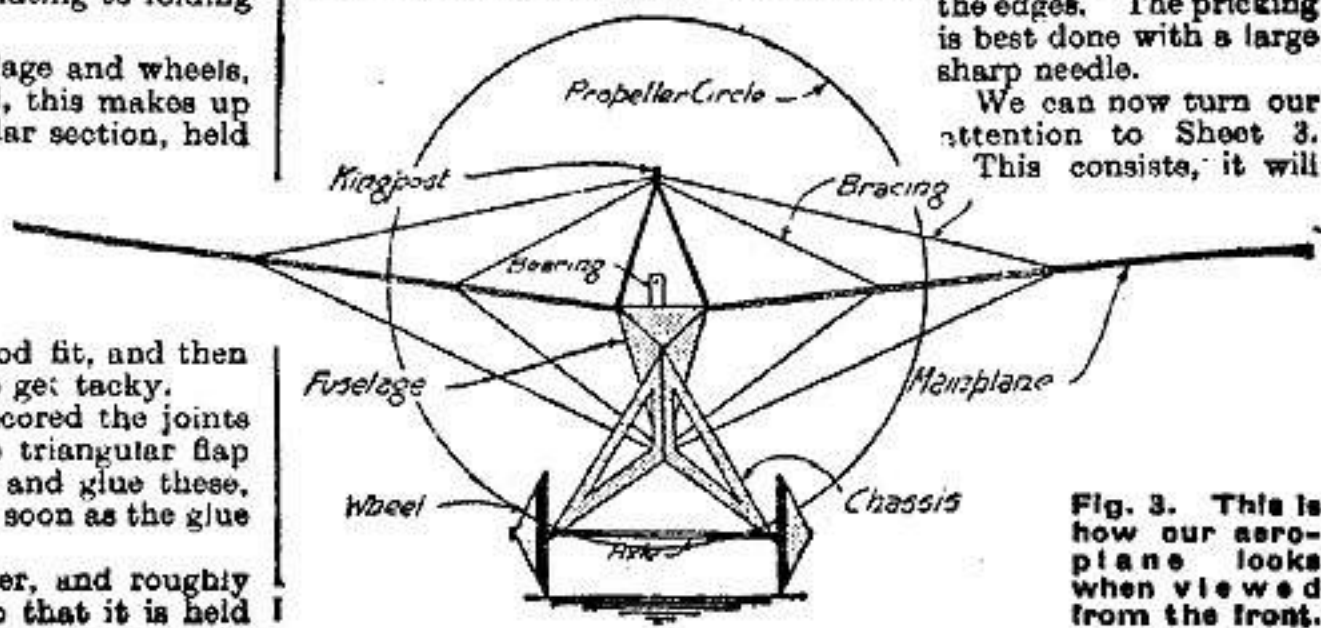


Fig. 3. This is how our aeroplane looks when viewed from the front.

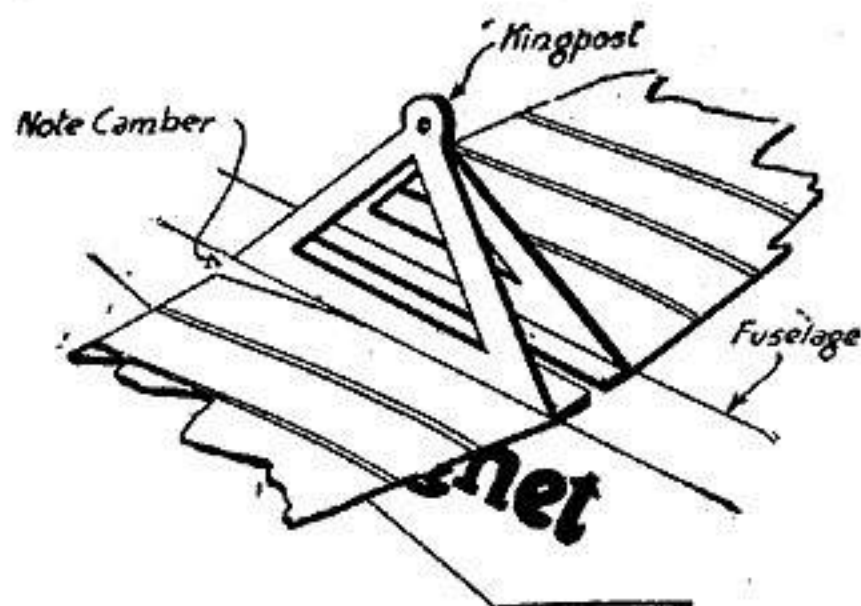


Fig. 6. The kingposts are fixed in the manner shown here. The camber given to the wing is also shown in this diagram.

be seen, of the kingposts, tail, rudder, and chassis. Carefully cut out the tail J and rudder, and bend the flaps O on the latter so that they lie in opposite directions, and occupy the positions shown by the dotted lines on the tail (see Fig. 7). To the opposite side of the rudder is secured the blue and orange circle T. Hold the rudder up to the light so that this circle can be glued exactly opposite the one printed on the rudder itself. Now glue the combined tail and rudder unit on to the fuselage so that the centre line of the rudder is in line with the point A marked on the rear end of the fuselage.

The two kingposts M and N are cut out and assembled as shown in Fig. 6. It will be seen that they are glued together at their upper extremity R, and it should be remembered that the hole for the bracing is pierced through after the glue is dry. The kingposts are glued to the wings by means of the flaps Q.

The two limbs of the chassis L and P, it will be seen, are made of double thickness by folding back the flaps along the white lines, and then gluing them in position. The two sections of the chassis should be left to dry under a weight. Particular note should be made of the fact that the points S are the front portions of the chassis; P therefore is the right-hand member, and L the left-hand member looking along the model from the nose end. The two flanges marked S are glued to the fuselage, level with the white lines marked on the bottom front edges of the nose. (See Fig. 8.)

The two wheels are conical in shape. The four discs of card should be cut out, the holes pricked in the centre of each for

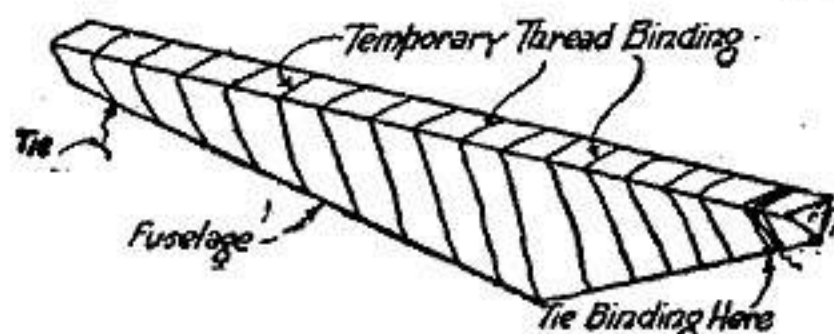


Fig. 5. How to assemble the fuselage with temporary thread binding to hold the joints together until the glue sets.

the axle, the gaps E carefully scissored out, the edges glued and one edge brought to the level of the dotted line. As soon as these conical portions are finished, glue the plain sides of the two discs F, allow them to become tacky, and carefully press the conical portions centrally over them. When dry, trim the circles F off level to the thick blue circle.

A stronger job can be made of these wheels if a piece of cork about $\frac{1}{4}$ in. square is glued on the inside of the card over the centre hole so that a good bearing is provided for the axle.

The only remaining operation now is to brace the wings, and this is done in the following manner. Take a length of thread about 3 ft. long and tie it in the extreme hole along the front edge of the wing (see Fig. 9); leaving an end about 8 in. long. Now pass it through the hole in the top of kingpost and tie the thread to the corresponding hole on the other side of the wing, taking care to bow the wing up to exactly the same extent as in Figs. 2 and 3. Now pass the two loose ends through the front bottom hole G in the fuselage, pull them taut without

buckling the wings, tie a knot, and cut off the superfluous ends. Now brace the rear edge in a similar way, taking extreme care to get the front and rear edges of the wings quite parallel. The inner bracing is secured next, adopting the same procedure. It is very necessary to take extreme care with this bracing job, and to get the wings at exactly the same angle as shown in the sketches, for the true flight of the model is absolutely dependent on these points; in fact, if badly done the model may be prevented from flying altogether. See that the wing is true in every way. Carefully go over every joint, make sure that everything is accurately in place, and do not be satisfied until the model looks true.

And now your model only awaits the fittings, including the propeller, axle, rubber, skids, and bearings, when it will be ready to take the air.

Here are SOME INTERESTING FACTS AND FIGURES CONCERNING THE "MAGNET" FREE GIFT AEROPLANE.

(Supplied by F. J. CAMM, the designer and manufacturer.)

Try to imagine a pathway of envelopes extending from London to Liverpool, one hundred and forty miles of elastic, eight tons of special stiff but light manila board, sixty miles of axles, seventy miles of propellers, eight miles of black eyelets, thirty-eight miles of a somewhat smaller eyelet, and twenty miles of propeller shafts. Having done this, try to vis-

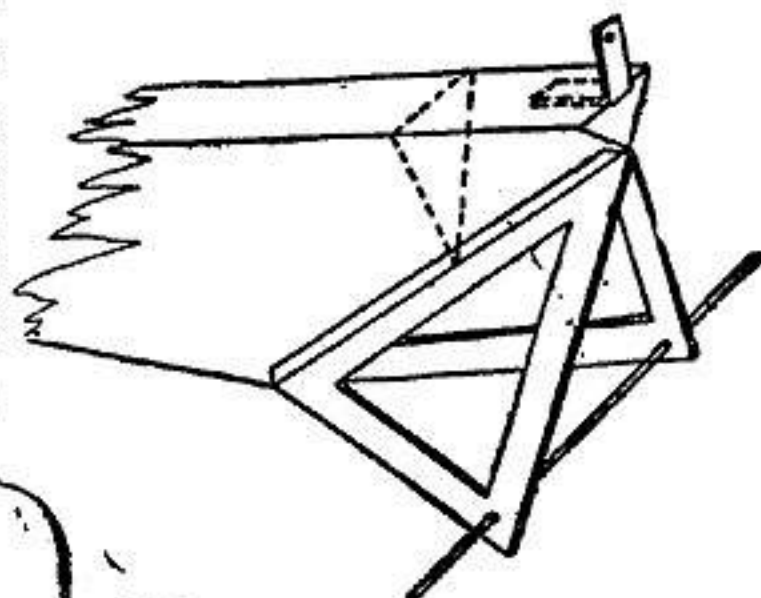


Fig. 8. The nose assembly. The cork packing piece is shown dotted. The bearing and other fittings will be given next week.

ualise the assembled planes placed end to end! Wouldn't it surprise you some to learn that they would extend

FROM LAND'S END TO JOHN O' GROATS?

The total weight of the cards and envelopes used in the manufacture of this wonderful FREE GIFT AEROPLANE has been just over twenty tons, and wire-working machinery, presses,

lathes, cardboard mills and an enormous staff have been working at high pressure for many months past to complete the task to time.

Get busy on your model now, and I hope that you'll extract as much pleasure out of the flying of it as I, the designer, has had in being able to present this aeroplane to readers of the MAGNET.

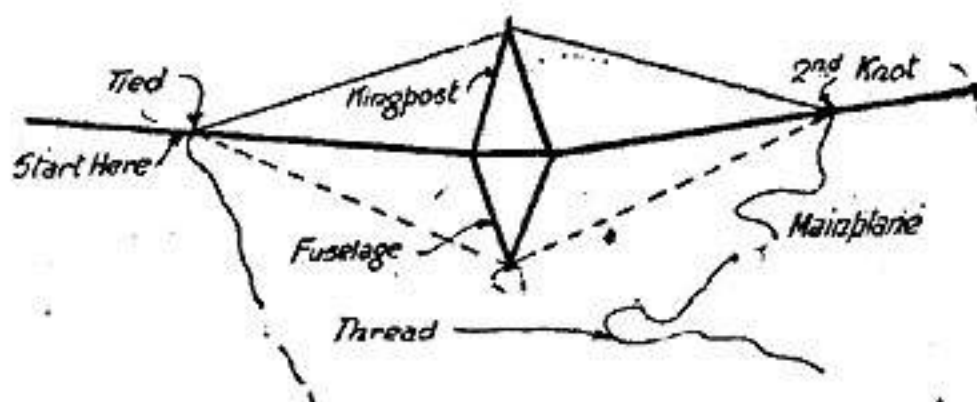


Fig. 9. This diagram will help you to brace the wings correctly.

The driving mechanism, including propeller, bearing, propeller shaft, elastic, etc., will be presented free with next week's "MAGNET." (See page 8.)

THE HOUSE OF TERROR!

(Continued from page 5.)

THE FOURTH CHAPTER. A Strange Disappearance!

"BLOOD!" Bob Cherry breathed the word.

The others were silent, their eyes glued on the tell-tale stain that showed up clearly on the light fawn coat in the brilliant light of the hall.

The young man stared at James.

"What do you mean?" he snapped.

"What are you driving at? What's the matter with my coat?"

"It—it—it's stained with blood, sir!" gasped James.

"Rubbish!"

"Captain Ravenspur—look, sir!"

"Nonsense!"

The young man took the coat, with a rough hand, from the footman; then, as his eyes fell on the thick stain of crimson, he started violently.

"Good gad!" he ejaculated. "What's that?"

"It's a blood, sir!"

"I've had no accident. I can't understand—" Captain Ravenspur stared at the stain. "The deuce knows where I picked up that stain. You must get it cleaned for me, James."

"Certainly, sir."

The young man turned to the juniors.

"You'll find Sir Richard in the library when you want him," he said. "James will take you to your rooms. You look a pretty untidy crowd."

With that, Captain Ravenspur went up the great staircase, and disappeared from the juniors' sight.

The fawn coat, with its crimson stain, was left in the hands of the footman. James laid it down, his eyes lingering on the stain, and turned respectfully to the juniors.

"If you would like me to show you to your rooms?" he said. "Mr. Packington is lying down with a headache at present."

"Who's Mr. Packington?" asked Nugent.

"Sir Richard's butler, sir."

"Oh! Well, show us in to Sir Richard at once," said Nugent.

"Perhaps you would like to remove your coats, sir," hinted James.

He seemed to consider it impracticable to show the juniors in to the baronet's presence in their wet and muddy state.

"I must see my uncle at once," answered Nugent.

"Very good, sir. This way, sir."

Harry Wharton & Co. followed the footman, wet and muddy as they were. They had no time to lose in reporting the tragedy that had happened by the park wall.

They exchanged glances as they went. The stain of blood on Captain Ravenspur's raincoat had struck them with a thrill. He had come in from the night, with that tell-tale stain on his coat, and within a few hundred yards of the house lay the man who had been done to death. It was hardly possible to avoid connecting him, in their minds, with that terrible tragedy. Yet his manner could scarcely be supposed to be that of a guilty man. He had seemed surprised, but not greatly concerned, by the discovery of the bloodstain, and he had carelessly left the bloodstained coat in the footman's hands.

The juniors hardly knew what to think.

But in a minute more they were shown into the library, where they found Sir Richard Ravenspur.

Frank Nugent's uncle was an elderly gentleman, with a ruddy, healthy face.

He rose as the footman announced the juniors, and turned towards them, a kindly smile on his face.

"You're late, Frank," he said. "By gad, you look wet—and your friends, too! But better late than never. My brother has been out to see if he could see anything of you. Did you meet him?"

"He has just come in, uncle," said Frank. "We lost our way in the dark."

"I was afraid you had," said the colonel. "I am glad to see you safe and sound. Introduce your friends, my boy; and then you had better go and change your clothes; and a hot supper—"

"I've got something to tell you, uncle, at once," said Nugent. "A terrible thing has happened!"

"What is it?"

"A man has been shot—"

"What?"

In hurried words Nugent told of the tragic happening by the park wall. Sir Richard Ravenspur listened in amazement.

"Good gad!" he exclaimed, when the tale was told. "This must be looked into at once. You left the body by the park door?"

"Yes."

"And the man who got away—you say he had a key to the door?"

"We heard him turn it in the lock."

"I can't understand it!" exclaimed the baronet. "The key must have been stolen, I imagine. However, we can see about that later. I must inform the police at once, and the body must be brought in. This is a terrible happening! But it is fortunate that you boys were on the spot; it may lead to the murderer being brought to justice. You are quite sure that he went into the park and locked the gate behind him?"

"Quite sure."

"And you saw nothing of him to identify?"

"Nothing but a black shadow."

"If he is still in the park he shall be found without delay. Wait!" said Sir Richard.

He crossed the library, opened a door into a smaller room, furnished as a study, and picked up the telephone receiver.

For some minutes he was speaking rapidly into the transmitter, and the juniors caught the name of Inspector Cook.

The baronet replaced the receiver at last, and came back into the library. He rang the bell, and James reappeared.

Sir Richard gave him rapid instructions, and the footman hurried away, and the baronet turned to the juniors.

"I think you had better come, my boys, and guide us to the exact spot," he said. "You are tired and wet, but—"

"That is nothing, sir," said Wharton.

"After all, it is not far," said Sir Richard. "From what you tell me, it will not take long to reach the place."

"And the police?" asked Nugent.

"They will be here as soon as they can, but it will be some little time before Inspector Cook can get here. He has warned me not to disturb the body before he arrives, so it cannot be removed. Someone must remain and see that it is not touched. Ah, Cecil!" Sir Richard turned as the young man the juniors had met on the drive entered the library. "You will come with us?"

Captain Ravenspur looked at his brother and then at the juniors.

"Has anythin' happened, Dick?" he drawled. "The house seems to be in a state of excitement—"

"A murder has happened!"

"Good gad! What—"

"A murder!" said the baronet, gravely, and he rapidly related what the juniors had told him.

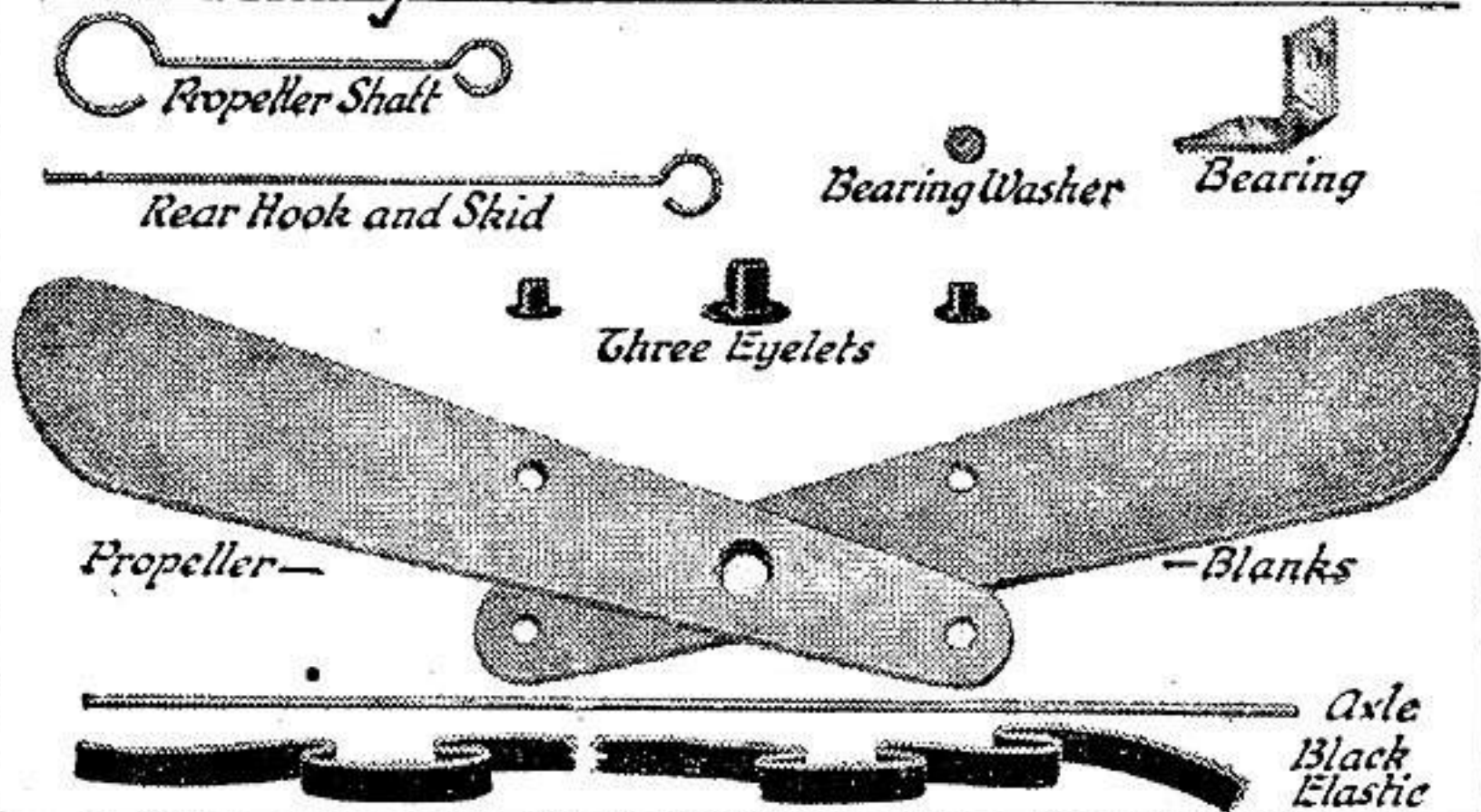
(Continued on next page.)

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FITTINGS for The MAGNET AEROPLANE



Cecil Ravenspur did not seem impressed.

He glanced at the Greyfriars fellows again, and there was a slightly sardonic smile on his well-cut lips.

"Is this certain?" he asked.

"The boys saw it—"

"Boys sometimes have fertile imaginations," said the captain, with a faint sneer.

"Cecil! What do you mean?"

"I mean what I say," answered the captain. "The boys tell you that a dead man lies by the wicket door in the park wall?"

"Yes."

"Well, that is extraordinary, if true," said the captain, shrugging his shoulders. "I came back, after looking for them, by the park wall, and passed the very spot. Nothing was there at that time."

The juniors looked rather grimly at the captain. The blood-stain on his coat was in their minds, and they were not wholly surprised at the line he was taking.

"We could hardly be mistaken, Captain Ravenspur," said Harry Wharton quietly. "The man was shot, and he was dead—"

"Imagination will work wonders on a dark and stormy night," smiled the captain.

"That is sheer nonsense, Cecil," said Sir Richard gruffly. "The boys could not possibly have imagined such an occurrence. You may have passed the park door before it happened—"

"You were ahead of us coming in, you know," said Nugent. "If you came in by the main gateway, as we did, you must have been ahead of us all the time."

"But I did not come in by the main gateway," said the captain coolly. "I came in by the wicket door in the park wall, to which I have a key."

"Oh!" exclaimed Nugent.

"So, although I was ahead of you on the drive, I must have been behind you when you went along to the main gates, as I had only half the distance to cover," said Captain Ravenspur.

The juniors were silent.

"You may have passed the body, unseen, in the darkness, Cecil," said Sir Richard.

"Very unlikely," said Cecil. "For as it happens, my foot slipped in the mud, just before I entered the wicket door, and I fell. If there had been a body lying close at hand, I could scarcely have missed it."

Harry Wharton uttered an exclamation.

"That is a proof," he exclaimed.

"What do you mean?"

"You came in with a blood-stain on your coat. If you fell outside that door in the park wall, you must have picked it up there."

The captain started slightly.

"It is possible, I suppose," he said unwillingly. "But I do not believe that a body was there—and I shall be very much surprised if we find one. I fancy you young fellows have been going to the films in your school holidays."

"Nonsense!" interrupted Sir Richard. "Let us go at once—the matter will be settled by going to the spot."

"No doubt," assented the captain. "We shall see."

The juniors were silent. The mocking manner of the captain irritated them deeply, but it was useless to dispute. The matter would be settled, as the baronet declared, by the discovery of the body.

Sir Richard hurriedly donned coat and hat, and the captain followed his example. Two or three men-servants

followed their master as he left the house, one of them carrying a stable lantern.

The party hurried down the wet, rainy drive, and turned out at the gateway into the road.

The rain was still falling, pelting down on the road in the darkness. The party hurried along the park wall, till the little wicket-door was reached.

"Show the light here!" called out Sir Richard.

The man with the lantern came forward.

"Here!" said Harry Wharton. "This is the place! Why—what—" In the gleam of the lantern-light, Wharton stared about him blankly.

He knew the spot where the body had lain. There was no doubt about it in his mind, or in the mind of his comrades.

But the spot was bare.

The rain lashed down heavily on bare earth. There was no sign of the man with the scar, whose body had lain there, and over whose face Wharton had laid his handkerchief.

The juniors gazed round them, in dazed astonishment.

There was a long silence.

"Well?" said Sir Richard Ravenspur quietly.

"It—it was here—" stammered Wharton.

He stared round him again. But only wet rain and mud, bare sodden earth, met his gaze in the gleam of the lantern.

The body had disappeared.

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

A Name from the Past!

SIR RICHARD RAVENSPUR sat in his armchair by the glowing log fire, in the wide old hearth of the library. The kind face was clouded and troubled. At a little distance sat the chums of Greyfriars, silent as was the baronet, and feeling very uncomfortable. Harry Wharton & Co. had returned to the house after the vain search for the body, they had changed their clothes, and eaten their supper—with what heart they could. Now they were waiting for the arrival of Inspector Cook. Sir Richard had telephoned the police station at Lyford, half a mile from the Grange, after returning to the house, but learned that Inspector Cook had already started. There was nothing for it but to await the arrival of the police-inspector, with strange news for him when he came.

It was a most discomfiting position for the juniors. They knew what they had seen, and were prepared to give an exact account. But the disappearance of the scarred man completely disconcerted them. Captain Ravenspur had been openly derisive. It seemed to the juniors that the young man had taken a dislike to them, or at least to their presence in the house, and he took no pains to hide his derision of their story of a dead man under the park wall. Sir Richard, they could see, was now dubious. Certainly he did not suspect for a moment that the juniors had invented a sensational tale, as his brother more than hinted. But he was driven to doubt whether they had really seen what they fancied they had seen. Ferocious imagination, in the darkness, and the storm, might account for much. For if the scarred man had been left where they stated they had left him, where was the body now?

The juniors were puzzled and perplexed. They could only conclude that

the murderer had returned and removed the body, after they had left the spot. In that case, he must have narrowly escaped falling in with Captain Ravenspur, who must have passed the very spot only a few minutes behind them. But that circumstance brought into their minds the suspicion that the captain knew more of the tragedy than he cared to avow. The blood-stain on his coat told its own story. It was possible that the assassin had returned and removed the body, after the juniors had gone, and before the captain reached the spot—a matter of minutes. The captain's stumble had landed him in the pool of blood where the body had lain—since washed away by the heavy rain. It was possible—it was the only possibility, if Captain Ravenspur was innocent.

But was he innocent?

The juniors tried to put out of their minds Cecil Ravenspur's unpleasant manner, his obvious dislike and derision of themselves. Such things did not affect the issue. But it was certain that the murderer had a key to the gate, that he knew his way about the place, and that if he had hidden the body, he would be likely to deride the story of a murder having been committed at all, since no tangible proof remained of it.

Yet to suspect Sir Richard Ravenspur's brother of so terrible a crime, apparently motiveless, was almost impossible. The juniors had learned that Cecil Ravenspur had until recently been with his regiment in India, which accounted for Frank never having met him before. He had now, it seemed, taken up his residence with his brother at the Grange, doubtless a useful refuge to a younger son with little more than his army pay to live on. What could he know of a rough man from "down under"—in India he could scarcely have had any contact with an Australian—what possible motive could he have for shooting down the man from the Antipodes. The scarred man, too, had spoken in tones of dread of someone whom he called "Black Edgar"—a name that could scarcely apply to Cecil Ravenspur. But the captain had been out of doors, certainly not far from the scene of the crime, and he had come in with blood on his coat, unnoticed till the footman drew his attention to it.

It was impossible to form any definite opinion, but the juniors felt a strong suspicion—all the more because of the captain's evident desire to ridicule their story. Yet that might be simply because he disliked their presence in the house. But again the question came: Why should he dislike it? Their presence could hardly affect him. Unless, perhaps, as his brother's heir, he fancied he saw something like a rival in his brother's nephew, for it was clear that Sir Richard had an affectionate regard for Frank. The captain had given the juniors the impression of being a worldly-minded man, with a keen eye to his own interests, and it was possible that some feeling might have influenced him.

Now the juniors were waiting for Inspector Cook, looking forward to the interview with anything but satisfaction. In the absence of the body, or any trace of it, what view was the police inspector likely to take of the schoolboys' strange story? They could not help feeling that they would see Cecil Ravenspur's disbelief reflected in the inspector's face.

They hoped, at least, that Captain Ravenspur would not be present at the interview. But that hope proved delusive. When Inspector Cook arrived

he was shown at once into the library, and Captain Ravenspur came into the room. They were evidently acquainted, and the inspector treated the young Army man with great respect.

Packington, the butler, showed the inspector in.

It was the first time the juniors had seen Sir Richard's butler, and they gave him only a casual glance. He was a quiet, grave-looking man, with unusually thick and heavy dark brows, meticulously dressed, and they noticed that he walked with a slight limp. His cheeks were dark, as if bronzed by hot suns, and this, with his heavy, black brows, gave him a somewhat foreign appearance. It was easy to see that he had not always led an indoor life. It was in a quiet, well-modulated voice that the butler announced Inspector Cook.

It was the inspector, however, not the butler, who drew the attention of the juniors—and the captain who followed him in. Packington retired, closing the door quietly behind him.

Sir Richard Ravenspur rose to receive the inspector.

Mr. Cook did not seem in a good humour; indeed, it was pretty clear that it was only the presence in which he stood that checked the expression of very considerable ill-humour. The juniors had no doubt that Cecil Ravenspur had already found time to speak a few words to the official from Leyford.

"What is this, Sir Richard?" exclaimed Mr. Cook, before the baronet could speak. "This is most extraordinary, sir! Am I to understand that I have been sent for on a fool's errand—a schoolboy jest, sir?"

"So far as I am aware, no," said the baronet quietly. "You have been to the spot I described to you, I presume?"

"I have! I reached the spot with two constables, and found nothing there," said the inspector irritably. "I met a servant of yours, sir, who was waiting for me, and who requested me to come up to the house. I learned from him that no body had been found."

"That is correct."

"But you described to me, on the telephone—"

"I described to you what my nephew and his friends described to me," said Sir Richard.

The inspector barely suppressed a grunt.

"There was absolutely no trace of a body having ever been on the spot," he said.

"No doubt the heavy rain may have washed away all traces."

"Quite possibly, sir, if there ever was a body there," said Mr. Cook. "The rain is coming down in torrents now. Not a pleasant night, sir, to be called out on a fool's errand."

"It has yet to be established that it is a fool's errand, sir," said the baronet. "My brother holds that opinion, I think—"

"Undoubtedly," said the captain.

"But I do not," said Sir Richard. "I believe every word these schoolboys have told me, and I do not think that they could have been mistaken."

"Then where is the body, sir?" jerked out the inspector.

"Evidently removed, since it is no longer on the spot where these boys saw it. Probably a search by daylight may reveal what has become of it."

"Possibly," said Mr. Cook. "I will, at all events, question the boys."

He turned his little keen eyes on the Greyfriars juniors. The captain moved across to the fire, and stood leaning on the chimney-piece, with a faint, sarcastic smile on his lips.

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Harry Wharton answered the inspector's questions. He answered them quietly, concisely, and collectively, and evidently made some impression on the man from Leyford. Mr. Cook's manner grew a little less gruff as he proceeded with his questioning, and he began to make notes in a bulky notebook.

"You can describe the man you met, and whom you state was afterwards shot?" he asked.

"Easily," said Harry. "He was a man nobody would be likely to forget who had once seen him. His face was dark, sunburnt, and he had a great scar on the right cheek."

"Caused by what—can you tell me that?"

"I should say a bullet. It looked as if the skin had been ploughed," said Harry.

"A healed bullet-wound?"

"Yes."

"He mentioned no name?"

"Only that of someone he called Black Edgar."

"I mean of his own?"

"None. But he said that he had belonged to this part of the country, and remembered his way about, though he had been years in Australia."

"There may be something in that," said Mr. Cook. "There may be some who remember him. We shall see. Your belief is that he was coming to this house?"

"I feel sure of it."

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"He did not tell you so?"

"No; but after leaving us he came on in this direction."

"The road passes the park gates; he might have been going on to Leyford."

"That is possible, of course, but I certainly gathered from his words that he intended to come to Ravenspur Grange."

"He was startled when we mentioned that we were coming here," said Frank, "and he told us rather uncivilly to find our own way."

"After that?"

"He went on, and we followed, guessing that it was the way here. And then we saw a flash and heard a shot."

"Gun or pistol?"

Wharton reflected.

"I could not be sure," he said at last, "but I think a pistol. So far as I can recall the distance, a gun would have sounded louder."

"You ran up?"

"As fast as we could."

"Very plucky," said the inspector, though whether he was speaking sarcastically or not the juniors could not determine. "Some boys would have run in the opposite direction."

"Well, we did not," said Wharton a little tartly. "We thought we might be able to help—"

"And you saw the murderer?"

"Just a shadow that vanished immediately. It's very dark under the park wall, and it was raining hard."

"You found the body?"

"Yes; the man was lying on his back, quite dead. He had been shot through the body."

"He spoke no word?"

"He was dead before we reached him. He made no sound excepting the one cry that followed the shot."

"And then—"

"We found that the little door in the park wall was unlatched. Bob Cherry here threw it open, and a minute or less later it slammed, and a key was turned in the lock."

"Which implies that the murderer had dashed into the park when you came running up, and that he had a key to a gate on Sir Richard Ravenspur's private property."

"That is certain," said Harry.

"And after that?"

"We came on to the house to give the alarm, and met Captain Ravenspur on the drive," said Harry.

For several minutes Inspector Cook questioned each of the juniors in turn. But they could tell him no more, only adding a few unimportant details. But it was clear that Mr. Cook was at last somewhat impressed. He remained in thought for a few moments, and then turned to Sir Richard, who was waiting in silence.

"May I trouble you with a few questions, Sir Richard?"

"Certainly."

"In whose possession is the key of the door in the park wall?"

"There are three keys," answered Sir Richard. "That door gives upon a path which is a short cut to the drive, and is often used by one coming from the direction of Ley. I have one key, my brother has another, and my keeper, Joyce, has a third. I know of no others."

"No other member of your household has a key?"

"Not that I am aware of."

"I am acquainted with your keeper, Joyce," said the inspector. "An elderly married man, and a trustworthy one."

"Absolutely," said Sir Richard. "I will send for Joyce if you desire, but—"

"Not necessary," said Mr. Cook—"not necessary at all! I will see Joyce later. But I know the man. I shall need his help in searching the park to-morrow. Your key to that gate has not been out of your possession?"

"I have it here."

"And yours, sir?" said the inspector, glancing at Captain Ravenspur.

"I have it here," said the captain; "and, in fact, used it only this evening!"

"One more question, sir." The inspector's eyes returned to the baronet's face. "According to the statement of these schoolboys, the man alleged to be murdered expected to meet, and apparently feared, a person whom he spoke of as 'Black Edgar'—a very curious name! Is there any person with such a name, or nickname, in your household?"

"Assuredly not."

"Is the name Edgar known here at all?"

Sir Richard hesitated.

The juniors noticed that the inspector's manner became suddenly alert. A moment's hesitation was enough to make him watchful.

"There is someone in this household bearing the name of Edgar?"

"So far as I am aware—no!" said Sir Richard. "But the name, certainly, is known here—or was known here at one time."

"I must ask you to be a little more particular, sir!" said Inspector Cook. "Granting that these schoolboys have stated the facts, the name is a most important clue. They believe that the dead man was coming to this very house to meet someone of the name of 'Edgar.' You can see for yourself how very important it is for me to question anyone of that name in the household."

"Perfectly so," answered Sir Richard.

(Continued on next page.)

"But the Edgar whom you have called to my mind is not at present in this house, and has not been in this house for years!"

"Oh!" exclaimed the inspector, disappointed.

"You asked me whether the name was known here," said Sir Richard. "It certainly is known, and well known, as it is the name of a near relation of my own—my elder nephew, Edgar Ravenspur. The name recalls somewhat painful memories, which are not agreeable to me!"

"I am sorry for that, sir," said Inspector Cook. "But I have my duty to do. You have a nephew of the name of Edgar?"

"I have—or had! He is believed to be dead."

"His father—"

"His father was killed in the War. Edgar Ravenspur left England, and no word has ever been received from him. After years of silence it is supposed that he is dead—more especially as he was, I am sorry to say, a young man likely to

fall into trouble wherever he found himself."

The inspector mused for a few moments.

"Is it known where this young man went when he left England?" he asked.

"It is not known."

"Australia, for instance?"

"It is possible; but no word was ever received from him, and nothing is known or even surmised."

The inspector smiled faintly.

"He can scarcely be the person whom the stranger was coming to see, then, sir, at the Grange?"

"Obviously impossible!"

"There may be on your household staff a servant with the Christian name of Edgar?"

"I think I should know; but, at all events, my butler could tell you for certain," said Sir Richard. "I will, if you wish, ring for him."

"If you please!" said Mr. Cook.

Sir Richard rang; the door opened, and the butler of Ravenspur Grange entered the library.

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

A Lost Clue!

PACKINGTON stood within the doorway.

He seemed unconscious of the numerous company gathered in the room. He stood with his eyes fixed respectfully and inquiringly upon Sir Richard.

"You rang, sir?"

"Yes, Packington," said Sir Richard. "Inspector Cook wishes you to answer a question, and I shall be obliged if you will do so."

"Very good, sir!"

Packington's glance turned to the inspector.

"I wish to know whether there is any member of this household whose Christian name is Edgar?" said Mr. Cook.

The calm, impassive butler of Ravenspur Grange started a little. The question was an unexpected and surprising one.

(Continued on next page.)

GIANTS OF CRICKET!

By "SPORTSMAN."

"PATSY" HENDREN, the famous England and Middlesex cricketer, known throughout the world as the one player who never grumbles.

SOME twenty-two years ago a famous amateur batsman who played for Middlesex said to me: "You must come up to Lord's and meet our new 'pro.' He's an Irishman, who looks as if he ought to be carrying a shillelagh, but his appearance belies him, for he is the quietest and nicest chap imaginable. Further, he's going to be an England player."

TWO days later I was up at headquarters and went round to the players' room, where J. T. Hearne introduced me to the Irishman. He was Patsy Hendren, and certainly his appearance suggested knee-breeches, a cutty pipe smoked upside-down, and a shillelagh. But he smiled as only Patsy knows how to smile, he took part in an intelligent discussion, he spoke in cultured tones, and I came away with the impression that he was a gentleman. I have known Hendren twenty-two years and have never had cause to alter that impression.

PATSY rarely loses his temper, although he tells me it got the better of him on one occasion when playing for England in Australia. He was fielding on the boundary line. The batting was deadly slow, and the sun was disgustingly hot—a fact which probably got on the nerves of the spectators, for, as they had nothing to enthuse over, some of them commenced to chaff Patsy. One became so aggressive in his remarks that Hendren became properly fed-up.

"**S**HUT up!" he said to the offender; but the man continued. Again "shut-up!" came from Patsy. "Oh," said the man, "and pray tell me why I should shut up!"

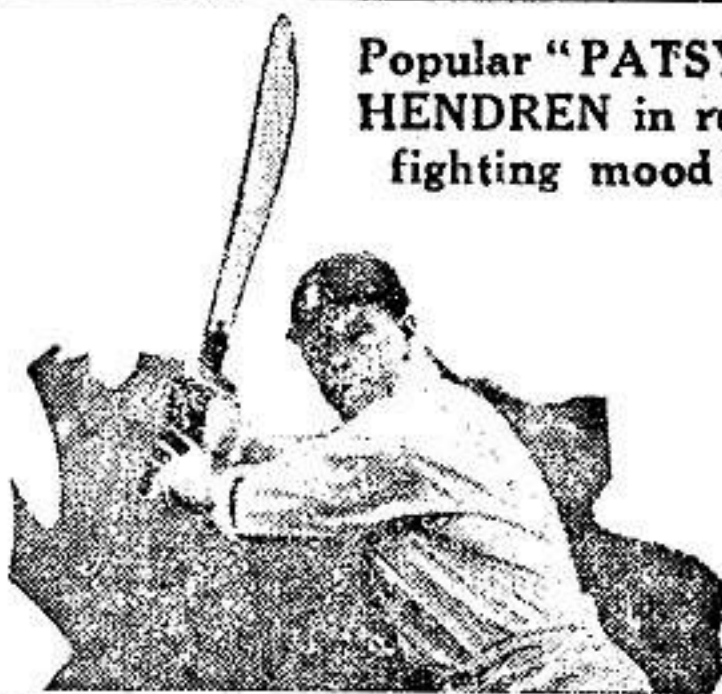
"Judging from the size of your mouth," retorted Hendren, "if you don't you'll get your confounded inside sunburned!"

There was a roar of laughter, and no more was heard from that particular "barracker."

YET, as a general rule, Patsy is loved by the crowd. Wherever he goes he has that remarkable power—which only a few, such as A. P. F. Chapman and Jack Hobbs possess—of making the onlookers want to see him play a big innings, even if such an innings only means the defeat of their own side.

HE plays correctly and with patience when his side is in jeopardy, but if things are going well he hits with tremendous power. I have seen him play some wonderful innings, one of the best being at the Oval last September, when batting for the Rest of England against the Champion County. His 174 was scored at the rate of over 120 an hour.

Popular "PATSY" HENDREN in real fighting mood!



PERHAPS his most prolific scoring in a given time was during fourteen days in 1925, when he got 859 in six consecutive innings. Who will forget his wonderful century in the first Test match in Australia during the past winter? Of course, he has made over a hundred centuries in first class cricket, and could have got many more if he had "played for keeps" and studied his average.

WHERE did he learn his cricket? First of all, in back streets, with lamp-posts for wickets, and later at Lord's, where he was a ground boy and had to help with the roller. Then, on match days, he had to wear a uniform and run round the ground selling match cards.

BUT in his spare time he put in a lot of good work at the nets. He watched the best players, whenever he had the chance, and made a resolve to be a county cricketer. Some of the other boys used to laugh at him for possessing so much optimism, yet one day, when England were opposing Australia, at Lord's, the one-time card-seller walked out from the pavilion proudly carrying his bat, with which he was to uphold the prestige of the country.

AFEW days later I was at Lord's when a stranger broke into a conversation that I was having with the hero of this article. The man wanted to speak to Patsy in private, so I moved away. Two or three minutes later I saw Hendren put his hand in his trouser pocket, pull out all the loose change he possessed and place it in the hands of his interviewer.

WHEN the man had gone Patsy remarked: "Poor chap! He's dead broke!"

"Do you know him?" I asked.

"No," replied the great-hearted cricketer.

"I've never met him before!"

"But—" I started.

"That's all right," interrupted Patsy. "I judge men pretty quickly and, quite apart from that, we're told to help one another."

(Next week's article by "Sportsman" deals with Percy Fender, the Surrey skipper.)

THE HOUSE OF TERROR!

(Continued from previous page.)

"Mr. Cook has a good reason for asking, Packington," said Sir Richard. "I pray answer the question if you are able."

"I am perfectly able to answer it, Sir Richard," answered Packington. "There is no member of the household with such a name."

"You are sure?" rapped out the inspector.

"Perfectly sure, sir! I am acquainted with the names and antecedents of every member of the household," answered Packington respectfully. "That comes within the scope of my duties, sir."

"And you are sure that there is no Edgar among them?"

"Perfectly, sir!"

The inspector gave a grunt.

"Thank you, Packington; that will do!" said Sir Richard; and the butler retired as noiselessly as he had entered.

Inspector Cook stared at the Greyfriars fellows. He had seemed, for a time, to believe that their statements were well founded; but it looked as if he doubted again now. The circumstance that no one in the Grange bore the name of Edgar could not fail to make him dubious, in the face of their belief that the murdered man had been coming to the Grange to meet someone of that name.

There was a short silence.

"What is your opinion, Mr. Cook?" asked Sir Richard at last.

The inspector pursed his lips.

"It is difficult to say, sir," he answered. "I have no doubt—hem!—that these boys are speaking in good faith. If their statements are correct a terrible crime has been committed. Perhaps a search by daylight may reveal some corroboration. But the absence of a body—Hem! It may, however, be possible to trace the man. From the description given by Master Wharton he was a man to attract notice; and if he once belonged to this neighbourhood he may have friends or relations here aware of his coming. For the present, sir, I can only say that I shall investigate the matter very thoroughly."

He glanced at the juniors once more.

"You have nothing more to tell me?" he asked.

Harry Wharton drew a deep breath.

Nothing had been said of the bloodstain on Captain Ravenspur's coat; and the juniors had wondered whether the captain intended to mention it. Evidently he did not intend to do so. Whatever his reason might be he preferred to say nothing on the subject. But Harry did not intend to leave unmentioned such a proof of the truth of the juniors' story.

"I think Captain Ravenspur has something to tell you, Mr. Cook," said Wharton, in a clear voice.

The inspector stared.

"Captain Ravenspur?" He turned to the captain. "Have you anything to tell me, sir?"

"Nothin'."

"What do you mean, then, Master Wharton?" exclaimed the official from Leyford testily. "You do not intend, I suppose, to imply that Sir Richard's brother knows anything about this matter?"

"Captain Ravenspur was on the spot a few minutes, at the most, after we left it," said Harry.

"That is correct," said the captain, with a nod.

"He saw nothing of the body—"

"And does not believe that there ever was a body!" interjected the captain coolly.

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"Allow the young gentleman to speak, sir," said the inspector, with a rather curious look at the captain. "Pray proceed, Master Wharton."

"Captain Ravenspur has told us that he came in by the door in the park wall," continued Wharton; "he was, therefore, a little ahead of us, as it seems to be a short cut, when we reached the house. We entered almost at the same moment; the footman drew attention to a large stain of blood on Captain Ravenspur's raincoat."

"Perfectly so," yawned the captain.

"Captain Ravenspur mentioned that he had stumbled near the little door in the park wall," said Harry; "that was before the rain had washed the blood away, of course. But there was blood there when the captain stumbled, or it could not have been on his raincoat."

Inspector Cook's lips shut hard for a moment.

"This is important," he said. "If this is correct, it is a proof that the body was there. You admit the bloodstain, sir?"

"Certainly; at all events, the footman found a dark stain on my coat, and declared it to be blood," said Cecil Ravenspur calmly.

"How do you account for it, unless you stumbled in the blood shed on that spot?" asked Mr. Cook.

"I do not account for it," drawled the captain. "I think the stain was of blood, but I did not examine it closely, and cannot say for certain."

"It was blood!" exclaimed Bob Cherry hotly. "We all saw it!"

"I stand corrected!" said the captain sarcastically. "I cannot say for certain, Mr. Cook, but these schoolboys can say for certain."

"We certainly can!" exclaimed Nugent. "The coat was stained with blood, and James, the footman, will say so, too!"

"The point may easily be settled by sending for the coat," suggested Sir Richard Ravenspur.

"I was about to suggest it," said the captain.

"Certainly I should be glad to see the coat," said the inspector in a rather dry tone. "Where is it now?"

"I left it in the footman's hands to be cleaned," said Captain Ravenspur. "It was muddy, in addition to the stain."

"Has it already been cleaned?" asked the inspector, with the sudden alertness in his manner that the juniors had noticed once before.

"I cannot say."

"How long ago was this?"

"An hour, or an hour and a half."

"You are not sure that the stain was of blood?"

The captain appeared to reflect.

"No, I cannot say I am sure what it was," he answered. "The footman thought it was, and I took my impression from him; but I did not, of course, give the matter any special attention. It was a stain of some sort, a dark stain, and I must have picked it up somewhere. That is all I can say."

Sir Richard had touched the bell, and Packington appeared once more in the doorway.

"Please send James to me, Packington, and tell him to bring with him the coat Captain Ravenspur left with him to be cleaned."

The butler retired, and a few moments later James, the footman, arrived, with a coat over his arm and a surprised expression on his face.

"The coat isn't quite dry yet, sir," he said, addressing the captain. "But it is quite clean, sir."

"Oh gad! You've cleaned it

already?" asked the captain, with a laugh.

"Yes, sir. You asked me—"

"Give me the coat!" grunted the inspector.

He took the raincoat from the footman. He examined it, with a lowering brow. There was no trace of any kind of a stain on it now. It was still damp, but spotlessly clean. James had done his work well.

With another grunt, the inspector handed it back.

"Nothing to be learned from that," he said. "It was very unfortunate that the coat was cleaned, Captain Ravenspur."

"Had I been aware that it would interest you, sir, I would have ordered it to be left soiled," answered the captain politely. "Naturally, it did not occur to me."

"It might have occurred to you, sir, as a possible proof of the story these schoolboys have told!" said the inspector sharply.

"No doubt; but I regarded—and still regard—the story told by these schoolboys as sheer balderdash!" answered the captain coolly. "I will change my opinion when a body is discovered—not before!"

Inspector Cook gave him a very penetrating glance. Something in that glance seemed to stir the cool, sarcastic young Army man; for he started, and an angry flush came into his cheeks.

"Good gad!" he ejaculated. "Perhaps I am under suspicion myself—an imaginary bloodstain a clue to an imaginary murder!" Pah!

"Nothing of the kind, sir!" said the inspector, rather hastily. "Sir Richard, I can do nothing further here now. At the first glimpse of dawn the search will commence. I will take my leave, sir."

And Inspector Cook departed. Captain Ravenspur, with a glance of deep anger and dislike at the juniors, followed him from the library.

"You boys had better go to bed, I think," said Sir Richard quietly. "The hour is very late."

"Good-night, sir!"

"Good-night, my boys!"

Harry Wharton & Co. went to their quarters. But it was much later before they slept that eventful night. And there was now one idea fixed in their minds—that in the search for the murderer of the scarred man, it was not necessary to look farther than the walls of Ravenspur Grange, and that the stain on Captain Ravenspur's coat was the stain of guilt!

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

Unwelcome!

BRIGHT sunshine streaming in at the latticed windows awakened the chums of Greyfriars to a sunny August morning.

They sat up in bed and rubbed their eyes, a strange feeling of oppression upon them, but not for the moment recalling the cause of it.

Then, as they remembered the happenings of the night, they almost wondered whether it had all been a dream.

In the sunshine of the bright morning it seemed fantastic to their recollection.

Bob Cherry was the first out of bed.

"Turn out, you slackers!" he called out cheerily.

"My hat, it's late!" said Nugent, looking at his watch. "Past nine o'clock. Still, we went to bed late."

"The lateness was terrific!" said Hurree Janset Ram Singh. "But the esteemed risefulness is now the proper caper."

"The search will be going on," said

Johnny Bull. "We want to help. I wish we'd been called."

"I dare say we shall be in time," said Wharton.

The juniors turned out.

Their quarters were in a large, long room, high up in the old ivy-clad house—a room almost half the size of the dormitory of Greyfriars. Five beds had been ranged along it, so that the Famous Five were all together. Latticed windows looked down from a considerable height upon wide, green gardens and stretches of parkland with ancient oaks and beeches.

The juniors looked from the windows with interest; it was their first visit to Ravenspur Grange, except in the case of Nugent, and Frank had not been there for years. Beyond the walls of the park they had glimpses of a green and smiling countryside, with the winding Thames in the distance. Hardly a trace of the last night's storm was to be seen; a fresh and balmy breeze rustled the ivy round the windows, and the sky was almost cloudlessly blue.

They looked towards the wide, green park, with its masses of foliage, which the building faced at a distance. Among those shadowy old trees the assassin of the scarred man from Australia had fled and lurked the night before. Here and there they could see moving figures, and once they glimpsed a policeman's helmet. The search was going on. Whether Inspector Cook believed the story of the schoolboys or not, he was taking all the steps that his duty required.

"They're at it!" remarked Johnny Bull.

"We shall be in time to help," said Frank. "They've discovered nothing yet, or they'd be coming back to the house."

"That's so. Buck up!"

The Famous Five were not long in getting downstairs.

In the breakfast-room, a pleasant room looking out on a rose-garden, they found Packington.

The Ravenspur Grange butler was standing at one of the windows, looking out across the rose-garden towards the park.

He turned instantly at the sound of the juniors' footsteps and saluted them with respectful politeness.

"Good-morning, Packington! I suppose my uncle's down?" said Frank.

"Yes, Master Frank. Sir Richard was down early, and he has breakfasted some time ago," said Packington. "He has joined the police who are searching the park."

"And my other uncle?"



"Oh, sir!" said James, as he took the raincoat from Captain Ravenspur. "Have you had an accident, sir?" The footman held the coat up to the electric light, with amazement and horror in his face. On the light fawn was a dark splash, and the eyes of Harry Wharton & Co., as well as the footman's, fastened on it. "Blood!" gasped Bob Cherry. (See Chapter 3.)

"Captain Ravenspur is also with the search-party, sir."

"They've found nothing yet?" asked Harry.

"I believe not," said Packington.

He coughed behind his hand as he spoke, and Wharton looked at him sharply. It struck him that the butler perhaps shared the opinion of Captain Ravenspur—that it was a cock-and-bull story told by the Greyfriars fellows.

If that was the butler's opinion, however, his position in the household made it impossible for him to express it with the same frankness as the captain, and his calm, respectful face gave no sign of his thoughts.

"I will order breakfast to be served immediately young gentlemen!" said Packington.

And he went out.

Breakfast quickly appeared, and the juniors sat down to it. They did not linger long over the meal. All of them were anxious to give what help they could in the search that was proceeding.

As the police and the keepers were beating the park, it seemed likely that they would discover anything that was to be discovered. But the chums of the Remove had faith in their own powers as Boy Scouts, and they hoped to pick up some sign that might have escaped the official eye.

Breakfast over, they left the house immediately.

Packington was in the wide old hall, when they went out, and it seemed to them that the butler's eyes under his thick dark brows, followed them curiously. But they did not give much heed to the butler. On the drive before the house they came on Captain Ravenspur. He was coming back from the direction of the park, smoking a cigar as he sauntered along with his hands in his pockets.

As he met the juniors, he stopped and removed the cigar from his mouth, surveying them with a sarcastic smile.

In the daylight, with the bright sunshine on his face, the captain did not look so young or good-looking as he had seemed the night before. He was a handsome man, but there were lines on his face that gave it a hard, sardonic look—lines that told of a life lived hard and fast. Dissipation marked his face, hardened and coarsened it, and there was something about his whole personality that jarred on the healthy-minded schoolboys. His manner now was polite enough, but satirical.

"Good-mornin'!" he said.

"Good-mornin'!" said the juniors civilly; and they would have passed on but the captain motioned them to stop.

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THE HOUSE OF TERROR!

(Continued from page 13.)

"Don't hurry!" he said. "You are goin' to help in the search—what?"

"Yes," said Harry.

"Then there's no hurry—nobody has been found yet," said the captain. "You're in ample time for the grand discovery."

"We'll get on, anyhow," said Wharton, rather abruptly.

The undertone of mockery in the captain's manner irritated him.

"Hold on!" said Captain Ravenspur. "I've hardly exchanged a word with my nephew yet—you're my nephew, I suppose?" he added, fixing his eyes on Frank Nugent.

"Yes," answered Frank; but he did not add "uncle" as he would have done in speaking to the elder brother. The younger brother undoubtedly was his uncle, too, but Frank did not like the idea of it, and did not feel disposed to give him the title.

"I've never had the pleasure of seein' you before," said the captain, in a more agreeable tone. "You're still at school, I suppose?"

"Yes—at Greyfriars."

"Enjoyin' your summer holidays now—what?"

"Yes."

"Stayin' here long?"

"Well, I don't know," said Frank doubtfully. "Uncle Richard asked us to come in here to stay as long as we liked, as he knew we were on a walking tour. I thought of staying on a day or two."

"Horrid circumstances for a holiday stay—murders, and so forth, and vanishin' bodies," said the captain. "I should think you'd rather get on your way if you're on a tour."

Nugent looked at him steadily. He had already divined that the sooner the Greyfriars party cleared out the better Cecil Ravenspur would like it. But Frank was not in the least disposed to gratify Cecil Ravenspur. The man was his uncle, but he had never seen him before, and did not feel like a nephew towards him. And he did not like him.

"We shall think it out," he said briefly. "In the circumstances I think we shall very likely stay longer than we intended at first. I shall certainly stay on till this matter is cleared up, if my friends are willing."

"The willingness is terrific," said Hurree Jamset Ram Singh—a remark that brought the captain's eye on him, with a glimmer in it.

"I think we shall have to stay," said Wharton. "The police will want our evidence at the inquest."

"The what?" ejaculated the captain.

"The inquest on the dead man."

"My dear boy, you probably know that an inquest cannot be held without a body," drawled Captain Ravenspur. "The coroner and his jury absolutely require a body for their purpose."

"Then we shall wait," said Harry.

"Until the body is found?"

"Yes."

"Won't that interfere with your going back to school for the new term?" asked the captain blandly.

No one answered that remark, which was evidently intended to be a gibe, as the new term at Greyfriars was still several weeks away.

"Let's get moving, you men," said Johnny Bull restively.

Johnny's patience was beginning to fail him under the mockery of the young Army man.

"The move-onfulness is the proper paper," agreed Hurree Singh. "The

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talkfulness is as waste of the esteemed and preposterous time."

"So you'll be stayin' on—for the inquest," said Captain Ravenspur. "You're not afraid of out-stayin' your welcome?"

Wharton coloured hotly.

"That is for the master of the house to say!" he exclaimed. "If Nugent's uncle does not want us here we shall learn it from him."

"I have the honour of being one of Nugent's uncles."

"I am speaking of the master of this place," said Wharton coolly. "If our presence is unwelcome to you, Captain Ravenspur, I am sorry. But it will make no difference to us. Sir Richard Ravenspur is our host, and the matter rests with him, not with you."

The captain's eyes glittered for a moment.

"That is exactly how the matter stands," said Frank, "and I am quite certain that Uncle Richard will make us welcome for the whole vacation if we choose to stay here!"

"Come on!" grunted Johnny Bull.

Captain Ravenspur compressed his lips. It was plain that Wharton's answer had annoyed him deeply.

"Probably my brother will tire of having cheeky, impertinent schoolboys about the place," he said. "You will not find that impertinence pays here, Wharton."

"Chuck it yourself, if you don't want it from us," said Johnny Bull. "Like your cheek to tell us to get out of another man's house!"

"Hear, hear!" grinned Bob Cherry.

The captain's brow became dark with anger. He made a stride towards the group of juniors, but checked himself at once and stepped back, with a shrug of the shoulders.

"If those are the manners you have learned at Greyfriars your headmaster does not flog you sufficiently," he said. "Unless you are careful you may find someone here to supply the deficiency."

"Oh, rats!" said Johnny Bull unceremoniously.

Again the captain's anger seemed about to break out; again he checked himself, and, turning away without another word, he walked on towards the house.

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

The Shot From the House!

"HERE'S the place!"

Harry Wharton & Co. stopped in the road outside the park wall of Ravenspur Grange, where it bordered the Leyford Road. In the deep recess, almost a porch, in the high brick wall, was the little iron-studded door. It stood wide open now, giving a glimpse of the park within.

The juniors were standing on the precise spot where the body of the scarred man had been left the night before. The ground was still damp from the heavy rain, though it was drying fast in the sunshine.

No trace whatever remained that the eye could pick up. The heavy rains had washed away every sign of a stain. The juniors searched the ground on the spot where the body had lain, and for some distance round. But there was nothing to reward their scrutiny.

"Might have picked up something, if the night had been fine," said Bob.

"But as it is—"

"There's nothing," said Harry.

"Not a sign."

A policeman with a ruddy, rural face looked out of the little doorway in the park wall. He grinned at the juniors.

"Nothing found yet?" asked Nugent.

"Nothing, sir!"

The man's look and tone implied that he did not believe that there was anything to be found.

"Has the search been going on long?"

"Since daylight, sir."

The constable moved back into the park, the grin still on his ruddy face. The search had been going on for hours, and nothing had been found. It was natural, perhaps, that the belief should spread that there was nothing to be discovered, but it was disconcerting enough to the schoolboys.

Harry Wharton frowned.

"The man's got to be found," he said. "It begins to look as if the police will decide that we fancied the whole thing, or invented the story to make a sensation. Such things have happened, of course—"

"If they settle on that, the murderer will get clear and laugh at them," said Bob Cherry.

"Yes; and we shall be set down as a lot of fools or liars," said Harry. "That's not good enough. The body has been hidden somewhere. But where?"

"The wherefulness is terrific."

"The murderer ran back into the park," said Harry. "We know that! He must have got the body away just before Captain Ravenspur came along—unless—" He paused.

"Unless Captain Ravenspur is the murderer," said Johnny Bull. "Put it plain. No good beating about the bush."

"Well, as he's Nugent's uncle—"

"Never mind that," said Nugent quietly. "I don't know the man, and don't like him; and if he is a murderer he's nothing to me."

"Well, then," said Harry, "whoever it was, he dodged back into the park. He knows the place. He met that poor fellow here, intending to kill him—the man was shot down without a chance to defend himself. It was planned in advance—that's plain enough."

"Quite," said Bob.

"In that case, it's pretty clear that the villain had already planned what to do with the body. As he removed it, it seems pretty certain that he intended to hide it, anyhow. Our coming along was a sheer accident that he could not possibly have counted on. He waited inside that locked gate till we were gone, and he could not have known that we were going to the Grange. Well, it seems to me that most likely he took the body into the park, through the door, after we were gone, and that that was what he intended to do from the first. Knowing the place well, he most likely had some hiding-place ready for it."

"If we hadn't come along when we did the whole thing would have passed off undiscovered and unsuspected. That was the game. Nobody would know that that poor fellow had ever come here at all last night. If the body's not found, the murderer's plan will still be carried out—the thing will be dismissed as a silly tale told by a lot of frightened schoolboys."

"We're not allowing that!" growled Johnny.

"No. What I'm coming to is this—that the murderer, ten to one, had a hiding-place all ready, inside the walls of Ravenspur Grange. Whoever he is, he has the run of the place—and had ample time and opportunity to get it ready. A grave already dug, perhaps!" said Harry, with a slight shudder. "I think we'd better get into the park and search there. I believe that the body, if it is found at all, will be found in the park."

His chums nodded assent.

They passed through the little doorway in the wall. The constable inside was leaning against the inner side of the wall. He grinned again as the juniors passed him, and they did not need telling what was his opinion of the whole matter.

The park of Ravenspur Grange was extensive. It was divided by several shady trees; and there were winding paths connecting them. But in many places the trees were thick and almost impenetrable.

A search of the park was a large order, and might have gone on for weeks without a discovery being made. If the assassin had selected some secluded, solitary spot, to hide the evidence of his crime, as seemed most probable to the juniors, it was obvious that it would not be easy to find.

Here and there, as they moved among the old, shady trees, the chums of Greyfriars came on the searchers. There seemed to be four or five police occupied in the task, as well as several keepers in the service of Sir Richard Ravenspur. They came on Joyce, the head keeper, and Nugent called to him.

"Nothing found yet, Joyce?"

"No, sir!" answered Joyce.

"You have a key to the wicket in the park wall, on the Leyford road?" asked Frank.

"Mr. Cook's already asked me about that, sir," said Joyce. "I've got my key safe enough, sir; I ain't never lost it."

The juniors passed on.

"All the keys seem to be accounted for," said Bob. "But it would be easy enough for anyone, with the run of the place, to take an impression of the lock and get a key made to fit."

"Easy enough," agreed Wharton.

The juniors scanned the ground, and the trees, with careful eyes, as they moved into the park. If the body had been carried there, in the darkness of the night, it was likely enough that some sign had been left; but, if so, the wind and the rain had obliterated it. All their skill in Scoutcraft failed them; there was no trace of a sign to be picked up.

The juniors felt a conviction that the body was hidden in the park. But where?

In a shady ride, in the heart of the park, they came on Sir Richard Ravenspur and Inspector Cook. The baronet looked tired and perplexed; the inspector from Leyford angry and irritated. He glanced at the juniors as they came along, with a lowering brow. The futile search had evidently caused the inspector to doubt more and more the truth of the schoolboys' story. And the possibility that he had been given a difficult and almost endless task for nothing was not pleasant to Inspector Cook.

"I am returning to Leyford, Sir Richard," he said. "I will leave two men here to continue the search. I can do no more at present."

"Very well," assented Sir Richard.

And the inspector, with almost a glare at the schoolboys, walked away. Sir Richard turned towards them.

He scrutinised them very keenly.

"You lads are still sure of the correctness of what you described last night?" he asked slowly.

"Of course!" said Wharton.

"No trace either of the murderer or his victim has yet been found," said the baronet. "The search, of course, has not yet covered the whole of the grounds. Some discovery may yet be made; but I fancy Inspector Cook does not believe so."

"You believe us, sir, surely?" exclaimed Wharton, flushing.

"I believe you," said the baronet. "And if the police cease the search before a discovery is made, my keepers shall continue it; and you boys, if you care to remain, may join in."

"That's what we should like," said Harry.

Sir Richard looked at his watch.

"Let us now go in to lunch," he said, and they walked up the ride and emerged into the drive before the Grange. They were only a few yards from the steps that led up to the great door when Sir Richard Ravenspur suddenly uttered a sharp cry, clasped his hand to his breast, and fell heavily at the feet of the juniors. The cry was echoed by the rolling report of a firearm, following the shot that had struck the baronet down.

THE NINTH CHAPTER.

Struck Down!

"GOOD heavens!" panted Wharton. He gazed in horror at the fallen form of the baronet.

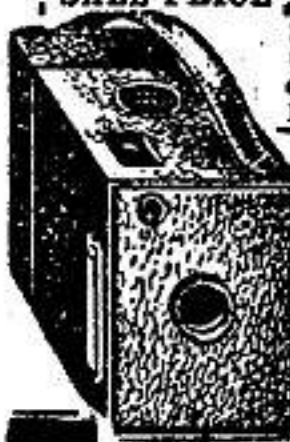
So sudden had been Sir Richard's fall that the schoolboys had been taken utterly by surprise, and there had been no time to stretch out a hand to save him. He crumpled on the ground at their feet, his fingers clutching at his

(Continued on next page.)

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THE HOUSE OF TERROR!

(Continued from previous page.)

breast, and a red stain showing upon them.

"Uncle!" gasped Nugent. He was on his knees by the side of the baronet in a flash.

Harry stared at the wide facade of the Grange. The shot had come from the house, that was a certainty; and it must have come from a window. But there was nothing unusual to be seen at the many-windowed front of the old mansion. No puff of smoke from an open window—no face looking out—nothing! Yet the shot had been fired from a window, and had struck Sir Richard Ravenspur down almost on his own doorsill.

From the open doorway of the house James, the footman, came running, with a startled, scared face.

"The master—" he exclaimed.

"He has been shot!" panted Wharton. "Shot from a window of the house! Frank, he is not—not—"

"No," said Nugent, with a drawn face; "but he is bleeding. Help me to get him into the house. James, call Packington—call the servants!"

There was a swift footstep, and Captain Ravenspur arrived on the scene, coming out of the house from the open french windows of the library.

"What has happened?" he exclaimed.

"I heard a shot—what—good gad! What is the matter with my brother?"

"He has been shot—"

"Impossible!"

Harry Wharton's eyes fixed on something that was in the captain's hand. It was a revolver. The captain had hurried out of the house with a weapon in his hand.

"What—what—" stammered Wharton.

Captain Ravenspur thrust the weapon into his pocket, and bent over his brother. The juniors looked at one another blankly. It was a pistol-shot that had struck the baronet down; and the captain had run from the house, revolver in hand.

Heedless of the juniors, Captain Ravenspur bent over the fallen man. His face was white.

"Dick!" he exclaimed hoarsely.

There was no answer from Sir Richard Ravenspur. He was unconscious.

"We must get him into the house," said Nugent, "We must get a doctor—quick—"

"Packington!" shouted the captain.

"Sir!" The butler was coming down the steps, with a startled expression on his usually impassive face.

"Telephone for Doctor Wood instantly, Packington."

"But Sir Richard, sir—" stammered the butler. "What—"

"The doctor—don't waste a second!" snapped the captain.

"Very good, sir."

Packington hurried back into the house.

Captain Ravenspur tore open the baronet's coat and shirt. There was blood on the shirt, and the juniors gazed on in horror. The baronet was unconscious, but still living; but they feared to see some terrible wound, to see that the kind man had been stricken to death.

"Thank Heaven!" panted the captain.

"He is not—not—" faltered Nugent.

"He is not badly hurt. The bullet glanced on something—it has torn the skin, that is all. The shock has knocked him out!" The captain spoke in tones of deep relief. "You can see the bullet did not penetrate."

"Here, James, Robert, help me to get him into the house."

Captain Ravenspur and the two men-servants raised the insensible man from the ground. The juniors stood back—Cecil Ravenspur taking the control of matters into his own hands. Sir Richard was carried into the house, and up to his own room.

The usually quiet household was in a buzz of excitement now.

Nugent, his face white and set, looked at his chums.

"Come with me, you fellows," he said. "I'm going to stay with my uncle until the doctor comes."

"You—you think—" faltered Wharton.

"I think Captain Ravenspur may try to keep me away—and if he does you are going to handle him," said Nugent between his teeth. "You saw that pistol in his hand—a minute after my uncle was shot down—"

"It couldn't have been him," breathed Bob. "If he had fired that revolver, Franky, he wouldn't have been mad enough to come out with it in his hand."

"Impossible," said Harry.

"I'm going to my uncle. You fellows come with me?"

"Yes, rather."

The juniors hurried into the house. They lost no time in ascending the stairs, and reached the landing upon which the baronet's room opened as the servants were laying the insensible man on his bed.

Captain Ravenspur was in the room, and he frowned at the juniors, and hurled the door shut.

It was hurled savagely open the next instant, and Nugent strode in, his chums close behind.

"Get out!" The captain's voice was sharp and angry. "Do you think this is a place for schoolboys?"

"It is the place for me," said Frank, his eyes gleaming at the captain. "I'm staying with my uncle until he is in safe hands."

"In safe hands?" repeated the captain. "What do you mean? Is not my brother safe in my hands?"

"I want to be sure of that."

"You young hound!" hissed Captain Ravenspur. "Do you dare to imply—"

His eyes blazed at the Greyfriars junior.

Frank met his gaze steadily.

"I'm staying here," he said. "If you want to get busy, look for the man who shot him down. You mayn't have far to look."

"You impertinent young scoundrel! What do you imply by that?" hissed the captain.

"Let me look at that revolver in your pocket!"

"My revolver?"

"Yes. Let me see it."

"And why?"

"To see whether it has been discharged!" said Frank.

"You—you young fool!" said the captain, and even to the angry eyes of the juniors, it seemed that he was more astonished than anything else, by the implied accusation. "Are you mad? The revolver in my pocket is my army revolver—I was cleaning it when I heard the shot—"

"Let me look at it."

"You dare to insinuate that I shot down my own brother?" almost screamed the captain.

"Let me see the revolver."

"I refuse to let you see it! Get out of this room!" roared Captain Ravenspur.

"I refuse to leave this room."

"Then, by gad, I'll kick you out."

Captain Ravenspur advanced savagely

on the Greyfriars junior. His comrades lined up with him at once.

The captain was a muscular man, but he certainly would not have been able to handle the five sturdy juniors together. Perhaps he realised as much, and perhaps, too, he reflected that a scene of violence was out of place in a room where a wounded man lay unconscious.

He checked himself, his face working with rage.

"Will you go?" he said, in a choking voice.

"I will not go!" answered Frank determinedly.

"Is this a place for a mob of school-boys to kick up a shindy?" snarled the captain, with a gesture towards the still figure on the bed.

"It is the place for me till the doctor comes."

There was a cough in the doorway. Packington, the butler, stood there. The captain glanced round at him.

"Is the doctor coming, Packington?"

"Immediately, sir—he is coming over in his car instantly. I have also sent a groom to recall Inspector Cook, sir," said the butler. "I took this upon myself, sir, to save time—I trust you approve."

"Certainly—certainly; I did not think—I am glad you thought of it, Packington. The house must be searched at once—"

"I have already set the servants to search the house, sir, and called in Joyce to help them, and sent word to the constables in the park—"

"Quite right, Packington—you think of everything," said Captain Ravenspur, passing his hand over his brow. "You are invaluable, my good fellow. I will go and join in the search—remain here with Sir Richard."

"Very good, sir."

Captain Ravenspur strode from the room.

He gave the juniors no further heed; indeed, he seemed to have forgotten their existence.

Packington came into the room with his soft tread, and at a sign from him, the two servants who had carried the baronet upstairs left the room on tiptoe. Packington glanced at the group of juniors.

"If you young gentlemen desire to join in searching the house you may trust me to watch over Sir Richard," he said softly.

"That's a good idea," said Bob.

"You fellows go," said Frank; "I'm staying with my uncle. I'm not leaving him with a murderer loose in the house."

"I'll stay with you, Frank," said Harry.

"It is hardly necessary, sir," murmured Packington. "I shall be very carefully on the watch over my master—"

"I'm staying!" said Frank curtly.

"Very good, sir." The butler placed a chair for Frank by the bedside, and he sat down by the side of his unconscious uncle. Harry Wharton sat down on the other side of the bed. Packington retired to a little distance and remained respectfully standing.

The other juniors hurried from the room. Their presence was not required there, and they were keen to join in the search for the man who had fired the shot.

The Grange was in uproar from end to end now. Frightened women-servants whispered together—men-servants with scared faces were searching room after room—two police-constables and several keepers were searching. From end to end, from vault to attic, the rambling old building was searched, but no sign was discovered of any intruder, and by the time Inspector Cook—in a startled



"You dare to insinuate that I shot down my brother!" almost screamed Captain Ravenspur. "Get out of this room, before I kick you out!" "I will not go!" answered Frank Nugent determinedly. The captain advanced savagely on the Greyfriars junior, and then checked himself. "Is this the place to kick up a shindy?" he snarled, with a gesture towards the still figure on the bed. (See Chapter 9.)

frame of mind—returned to the house to take control, it was clear that there was no stranger within the walls of the Grange. Amazing as it seemed it looked as if the shot had been fired by some member of the household—and the Greyfriars fellows, at least, had little doubt who had pulled the trigger.

THE TENTH CHAPTER.

Under Suspicion!

HARRY WHARTON & Co. were waiting in the wide, old hall of Ravenspur Grange when the doctor came down from the baronet's room. Captain Ravenspur was there, also, standing at a distance from the juniors, by one of the mullioned windows.

The search of the house was still going on, but in a desultory way now, for it was clear by this time that no intruder was within the walls.

The juniors were waiting anxiously to see Dr. Wood. Although the bullet had glanced, instead of striking the baronet to the heart, as had evidently been intended, the shock had been a severe one, and the result was quite likely to be serious. Nugent was feeling the matter keenly, and his friends, who had taken a great liking to the kind gentleman, shared his feeling. The matter had quite driven from their minds the affair of the scarred man and the search of the morning. All their thoughts were now fixed on the attempt on Sir Richard's life.

The doctor came down at last. Captain Ravenspur crossed the hall to meet him, and the juniors moved near enough to hear what was said, in spite of a black look from the captain.

"How is my brother?" Cecil Ravenspur's voice was anxious and eager. To all appearances he was shocked and grieved by the occurrence.

But the Greyfriars fellows, at least, did not trust to appearances. They had

not forgotten their suspicions of the captain in connection with the murder of the scarred man, nor the fact that a revolver had been in his hand immediately after the shot had been fired at Sir Richard. In their minds there was no doubt who had fired the shot. Why he had killed the scarred man, if indeed he was guilty, was a mystery; but there was no mystery about the attempt on Sir Richard's life. For if the baronet died of his wound, Captain Ravenspur became Sir Cecil Ravenspur of the Grange—a rich baronet with ten thousand a year instead of little more than his Army pay. The motive, at least, was strong enough, for a man whom the juniors believed to be already stained with the guilt of blood.

No such thought, however, was in the mind of the medical gentleman, and his look at the captain's lined face was sympathetic.

"I am glad to be able to tell you that little harm has been done, sir," said Dr. Wood. "Sir Richard will have to remain in his room and rest quietly for a day or two. That is all."

"Then there is no danger?"

"None!"

"Thank Heaven!" said the captain.

"I judge that Sir Richard made some movement at the moment the shot was fired," said Dr. Wood. "I imagine that it was aimed at the heart, but Sir Richard was turning, perhaps to speak to someone, at that very instant, and the bullet grazed across his chest instead of penetrating. It was a narrow escape—a remarkably fortunate escape. That accidental movement saved your brother's life, sir."

"And now—"

"He is suffering from shock—a very severe shock," said Dr. Wood. "But he is quite conscious now, and in a few days' will, I hope, be perfectly restored. Indeed, he does not desire to remain in bed at all; but I have prevailed upon him to do so. He does not wish me to send a nurse, and, in fact, it is not necessary."

Captain Ravenspur drew a deep breath.

"He will be under my care," he said.

"He could be under no better, sir!" said the doctor, with a polite bow.

"And under mine!" said Frank.

Dr. Wood glanced at him.

"I am Sir Richard's nephew, Dr. Wood," said Frank. "And—"

Captain Ravenspur interrupted him.

"No doubt you will warn these school-boys, Dr. Wood, that a sick man's room is no place for them," he said.

"It is the place for me, until my uncle is well," said Frank.

The medical gentleman looked surprised and uncomfortable.

"These boys," said the captain in a grinding voice, "have an idea in their heads that it was I who fired at my brother, sir, and that my brother is not safe in my care. That is why this stupid boy desires to watch over my brother."

"How utterly absurd!" exclaimed the doctor. "Surely, my boy, you cannot be so foolish, so wanting in common sense—"

"I have my reasons, Dr. Wood," said Nugent steadily, "and I intend to explain them to Inspector Cook."

"Well, well, this is not a matter for me," said the medical gentleman hastily. "I shall call again this evening, Captain Ravenspur."

And the doctor returned to his car and departed.

Captain Ravenspur stepped to the staircase. Frank Nugent followed him, and the captain turned on him passionately.

"Stand back, boy!"

"I am going to my uncle's room."

"I forbid you to do so."

"And I take no notice whatever of your orders!" retorted Frank, with a gleam in his eyes.

Packington came softly down the stairs. He addressed the captain, apparently unconscious of the altercation.

"Sir Richard desires me to tell you, sir, that he is composing himself to sleep, and does not desire to be disturbed," said the butler.

"Someone must remain with him," said the captain decidedly. "He must not be left alone a single moment in the circumstances."

"Sir Richard desires to be alone, sir."

"He cannot be left alone," said the captain almost roughly. "Someone has attempted his life, and is still at liberty. He must not be left alone for one moment."

He made a step up the staircase, and paused.

"I shall have to see Inspector Cook—I cannot remain with him, James!"

The footman came up.

"Go to your master's room and remain there," said Captain Ravenspur. "Take care not to disturb him, but do not leave the room for a single instant until I come."

"Yes, sir."

James went up the stairs.

Captain Ravenspur came back into the hall, threw himself on a settee, and lighted a cigar. Packington, with his noiseless tread and his slight limp, disappeared by a passage that led to his own quarters.

A few minutes later Inspector Cook appeared. The plump rural police inspector was looking greatly perturbed. The search in the house had ended now; it was clear to all that there was nothing to be discovered. It was easy to read in the Leyford inspector's face that he was bewildered by the latest occurrence.

"This is a most extraordinary thing, sir," he said to the captain. "A most extraordinary affair! An attempt has been made on Sir Richard's life—at his own door! There is absolutely no sign of any stranger having been in the house." He turned to the juniors. "I understand that you were with Sir Richard when the shot was fired."

"We were all with him, sir," answered Harry.

"Describe exactly what occurred."

Wharton did so, succinctly enough. But he had nothing to say that could enlighten the inspector.

"You think the shot came from the window of the house?"

"It certainly did," answered Harry. "I have no idea which window, but the report came from the house. I am certain of that."

"The shot came from the house," interjected Captain Ravenspur. "It struck my brother on the breast, and he was facing the house. That leaves no doubt. Had he not been turning at the moment, doubtless to speak to one of these boys, he would have been shot through the body."

The inspector nodded.

"You have no idea of who fired the shot, sir?"

"None."

"Every member of the household is more or less under suspicion," said the inspector. "But—but"—he made a gesture with his plump hands—"I have questioned Packington, and he is prepared to answer for everyone of the servants. It is most mysterious."

"These boys fancy they can furnish you with a clue!" said the captain sardonically.

The inspector stared.

"I do not understand you, sir! What—"

"They fancy that I fired the shot that struck down my brother," said the captain savagely.

Mr. Cook almost jumped.

"What? For what reason—"

"I happened to be cleaning my revolver when I heard the shot,"

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explained Captain Ravenspur. "It was still in my hand when I ran out to see what had happened."

The juniors listened quietly. The captain was, so to speak, taking the bull by the horns. As the matter was bound to be mentioned, he was taking the advantage of referring to it himself.

Inspector Cook's face set a little grimly.

"They did not stop to think," added the captain, "that if I had fired the revolver, I should hardly have kept it in my hand to be seen."

"May I see the revolver, sir?"

"It is here."

Inspector Cook took the revolver and examined it.

"This weapon has recently been cleaned," he said.

"I have told you that I was cleaning it when I heard the shot outside the house," said the captain tartly.

"Do you usually clean your revolver, sir, with your own hands?" asked the inspector.

"Sometimes," said the captain tersely.

"In my own quarters—no. Here, I did so, in an idle moment."

"It required cleaning?" said the inspector. "It had recently been used?"

The captain flushed.

"It had not recently been used," he answered. "It has not been used since I came to my brother's house."

"Then why—"

"I have told you that, in an idle moment, I occupied myself with cleaning the revolver," said the captain irritably. "I can tell you no more than that, because there is no more to tell."

"You can tell the inspector more than that, if you choose," said Frank Nugent quietly.

"You may tell him anything you please," snapped the captain. "I know of nothing more."

"Proceed, Master Nugent," said the inspector.

"Captain Ravenspur could tell you, if he liked, that I asked him to show me the revolver, so that I could see whether it had been fired," said Frank.

"And he showed it to you?"

"He did not!"

The inspector's glance, with something hawkish in it, returned to the captain's angry, moody face.

"You surely did not refuse to let your revolver be seen and examined, sir, at such a critical time?" he asked.

"I certainly did!" snapped the captain. "I am not to be called to account and accused and questioned by an impertinent schoolboy."

"No doubt," said Mr. Cook. "But had you shown the revolver to the boy, as he requested, it would have demonstrated—"

"There was nothing to demonstrate."

Inspector Cook handed the revolver back to the captain.

"There is nothing to prove that this weapon has not been cleaned since the shot was fired," he said. "Had Master Nugent seen it, he could doubtless have proved that it was cleaned and unloaded before the shot was fired."

"No proof is needed," sneered the captain. "I presume that I am not under suspicion of having attempted such a crime as fratricide?"

The inspector did not answer immediately.

"Such a suspicion might occur to these stupid schoolboys," said the captain; "but you, I suppose, are no such fool!"

Inspector Cook grunted.

"Every member of this household is under suspicion until the attempted murderer is discovered," he said, with emphasis. "It was very unfortunate, to say the least, that you refused to allow your weapon to be examined, at the

moment when such examination would have cleared you of any possible suspicion."

"Nonsense!" said the captain brusquely.

The inspector started.

"What?" he ejaculated. "What?"

"Nonsense!"

"Sir! Captain Ravenspur!" gasped the inspector.

"I said nonsense, and I repeat nonsense!" said the captain savagely. "You are talking nonsense, sir, while an attempted murderer is still at large and laughing at you!"

And with that Captain Ravenspur strode away.

Inspector Cook stood rooted to the floor, staring after him, his face as red as a turkey-cock.

"Upon my word!" gasped the inspector.

He made a step after the captain, who had gone into the library. But he checked himself. It seemed to the juniors that the thought had been in the inspector's mind, for the moment, of taking the captain into custody, there and then, on suspicion of attempted murder. But the angry official doubtless realised that such an extreme step was impracticable. There was little doubt, however, that Captain Ravenspur's angry, contemptuous words had crystallised suspicion in his mind.

The inspector, breathing hard, turned to the juniors again.

"How long after the shot was fired was it before Captain Ravenspur appeared?" he asked.

"About a minute."

"He came out by the library windows?"

"Yes."

"He could not have been in his own room, then, when he was, as he states, cleaning his Army revolver?"

"No. He would have to come down the stairs, in that case, and come out of the house by the door."

"Then apparently he had brought the revolver downstairs, and was in the library when he was cleaning it—if his statement is correct?"

"I suppose so."

"A somewhat unusual proceeding, surely?" said Mr. Cook dryly.

"I should think so."

"Only, unless he was out of his senses, he would have put the gun out of sight before he showed himself, surely?" said Johnny Bull.

"No doubt," said the inspector. "But, in the stress of great excitement or fear, a man may forget even an important matter." He checked himself, as if he realised that he was speaking too freely. "You have nothing more to tell me?"

"Nothing, sir."

The inspector nodded, and left them. He went with a deeply thoughtful frown on his brow. What was in his thoughts was no mystery to the juniors. They knew, as well as if he had told them, that he had already fixed, in his own mind, on the guilty man, and that the guilty man's name was Cecil Ravenspur.

THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER.

Ordered Out!

PACKINGTON coughed deferentially.

Harry Wharton looked round, apprised by that deferential cough that the silent-footed butler was at hand.

The juniors had sat down to a late lunch, and now they were on the terrace before the library windows, discussing, in low tones, the matter that occupied all their thoughts.

Sir Richard Ravenspur was in his room, sleeping. Inspector Cook was now

gone, but he had left a constable in the house, and the officer was posted on the landing outside the baronet's room. Where the captain was the juniors did not know. He had not lunched with them, and they had seen nothing of him since the altercation in the hall.

"If you please, Master Wharton—" said Packington, as the junior turned his head.

"Yes," said Harry.

"Perhaps you will tell me at what time you would like the car?" said the butler.

"The car?" repeated Wharton.

"Yes, sir, if you are going to the station."

"The station?"

"But if you are walking, sir, you will not need the car," said Packington. "Perhaps you will kindly inform me—"

"I don't understand you," said Harry. "We're not leaving the house at all, either walking, or going to the station."

Packington coughed again.

"I understand from Captain Ravenspur—" he said apologetically.

Nugent broke in, with a gleam in his eyes.

"Has Captain Ravenspur told you that we are leaving the Grange?" he asked.

"He has certainly intimated so to me, sir."

"Then tell him he is mistaken," said Frank. "We are not leaving, and have no intention whatever of leaving."

"Very good, sir."

The butler, with his limping step, retired as noiselessly as he had come. The juniors looked at one another.

"His nibs wants us to hook it!" murmured Bob Cherry.

"What he wants and what he will get are two quite different matters," said Frank. "I'm staying—and I suppose you fellows are standing by me?"

"Yes, rather!" said Johnny Bull, with emphasis.

"The ratherfulness is terrific, my esteemed Franky," said Hurree Jamset Ram Singh. "We are sticking to you like ridiculous glue."

"We're staying as long as you want us, Frank," said Harry Wharton, "and in the circumstances I think you ought to stay. My belief is that your uncle's life is in danger from a quarter he's not likely to suspect. It's your duty to keep on the spot until the matter's cleared up."

"So I think, and I'm keeping here. I fancy we shall hear from the captain when Packington takes the message back." Frank set his lips. "I don't think he'll get much change out of me."

A few minutes later Captain Ravenspur came out on the terrace. He came directly to the juniors, with a grimly frowning brow.

They faced him quietly. The frown of a man whom they suspected of the guilt of blood had no terrors for the Famous Five of Greyfriars.

"What does this mean?" asked the captain harshly. "You seem to have told Packington that you are not leaving the Grange to-day—"

"And now we tell you the same!" interrupted Frank.

"Well, you are mistaken! Your presence is not welcome here," said the captain. "You will go, all of you—and without delay!"

"We shall not go!"

The captain's lip curved in a sneer.

"You seem to be unaware that I am master here," he said.

"Quite!" said Harry Wharton coolly.

"Sir Richard Ravenspur is master here," said Bob. "He will remain master, I suppose, unless next time he

is killed by a shot from a revolver that somebody happens to be cleaning!"

Captain Ravenspur clenched his hands.

"Do you imagine that I shall allow you to remain when that is the kind of talk you indulge in?" he exclaimed.

"You asked for it!" retorted Bob.

"I have told you that I am master here. My brother is laid up, and until he is about again I am master of Ravenspur Grange," said Captain Ravenspur. "If you have the impudence to doubt my statement, you may refer to the butler. Packington!"

"Sir!"

The silent butler appeared. Evidently he had been within hearing.

"Tell these boys Sir Richard's instructions," said the captain.

"Certainly, sir! Sir Richard has instructed me, young gentlemen, that so long as he is confined to his room all orders are to be taken from his brother, Captain Ravenspur."

"Oh!" ejaculated Wharton.

"Captain Ravenspur is now in authority, sir," said Packington. "The household is under his orders, sir."

The juniors stood silent. This placed an entirely new complexion on the affair, and one that they had not foreseen.

"Is that clear to you now?" demanded the captain.

"Clear enough," said Harry slowly.

"You have made yourselves unpleasant enough, and thoroughly unwelcome here!" said Captain Ravenspur.

"So far as you are concerned, perhaps," said Harry.

"It is I whom you have to deal with now," said the captain bitterly. "And I order you to leave this house!"

There was a pause.

"You will go to your room and pack your things immediately," said the captain. "If you are going to the station you may have the car. In any case, you are going, and at once!"

Frank Nugent compressed his lips.

"We are not going," he answered steadily.

"You dispute Sir Richard's own orders?"

"If my uncle tells me, with his own lips, to go, I will go fast enough," answered Frank. "Until then, I stay, and my friends stay with me!"

"Sir Richard's authority is now deputed to me—"

"I know all that!" interrupted Frank impatiently. "But my uncle never supposed that you would use it to turn his nephew and his guests out of the house! Do you dare to say that you have informed him that you are ordering us away?"

"That is quite immaterial. The authority is mine, and I am exercising it. If you refuse to go—"

"Well, we refuse!" said Frank curtly.

"I am sorry for that, as it will cause a scene," said Captain Ravenspur. "For if you do not go of your own accord you will be removed by force!"

Nugent caught his breath.

"You will dare—"

"I am not to be dictated to by school-boys, as you will find!" said the captain contemptuously. "You will go, or I will order the servants to throw you out of the house. That is your choice!"

"Go?" repeated Nugent, between his teeth. "Go—and leave my uncle to be murdered?"

"Your uncle is under my care—"

"You might be cleaning your revolver again!" said Frank, with bitter sarcasm.

Captain Ravenspur's face crimsoned with rage. He clenched his hands, and made a stride towards Nugent. Packington interposed respectfully.

"Sir! Oh, sir—"

The captain checked himself.

"You are right, Packington!" He calmed himself with an effort. "Listen to me, Frank Nugent, and you others listen, too! You have suspected and insulted me, and you are going to leave this house. I am, for the present, master here, and I will not allow you to remain. But to save scandal—and for no other reason—I will try to disabuse your minds of your childish suspicions of me. You think, and that fool of an inspector thinks, that it was singular that I should be cleaning my revolver this morning. It was perfectly natural. I had intended to join in the search in the park this afternoon. Although I did not, and do not, believe your story of a murder last night and a murderer at large in the neighbourhood, nevertheless, I thought it better to take my revolver with me while searching through lonely woods. That was only sensible."

"For that reason I unpacked it, and brought it downstairs. As it had not been used for a long time, I cleaned it, intending to load it. It was in my hands when I heard the shot fired, and ran out, forgetting that it was in my hand. I should not have forgotten if I had just used it to attempt a murder. The commonest of common sense should tell you that!"

The juniors listened in silence.

There was no doubt that the captain's explanation was plausible enough, and that it accounted for the revolver having been in his hand at the time. And his haughty and disdainful temper probably accounted for his refusal to show it at Nugent's demand.

But suspicion, once deeply-rooted, was not easily eradicated. Someone had fired on the baronet from a window of the house; and all the evidence that had come to light, at least, pointed to Captain Ravenspur—the only man in the household, too, who could be supposed to have any strong motive for desiring the death of the master of Ravenspur Grange.

The captain paused for an answer, but none came.

"Are you satisfied now?" he snarled.

"No!" said Nugent.

Captain Ravenspur rapped out an oath.

"Well, I shall make no further attempt to satisfy you. Leave this house!"

"And leave my uncle in danger?" said Frank. "If you're telling the truth, as I do not believe, there is some other man in this house who seeks my uncle's life. Until he is found, I shall not go."

"Then you will be thrown from the door!"

With that savage rejoinder the captain turned and strode back into the house.

Packington coughed deprecatingly.

"Young gentlemen, to save a most unpleasant scene—" he murmured.

"That need not concern you!" snapped Frank.

"All that concerns my master, sir, concerns me, as his attached and respectful servant," said Packington, with quiet dignity.

"I beg your pardon!" said Frank. "I did not mean to hurt you, Packington. But we are not leaving."

"I fear, sir, that we—the servants—have no choice but to obey any orders given by Sir Richard's brother, in the circumstances," said Packington.

"You mean that you will lay hands on us?" demanded Johnny Bull, with a blaze in his eyes.

"With respect and regret, sir," said

Packington. "It is impossible to dispute the commands of a gentleman placed in authority over us by our master!"

"Get on with it, then!" growled Johnny Bull.

"I am sure, gentlemen, that you will accept my humble apologies, and recognise that I and my fellow-servants have no choice in the matter," said Packington.

"That's all right!" said Nugent.

Packington left the terrace. The juniors, left alone, looked at one another grimly.

"The order of the boot!" said Bob Cherry, with a faint smile. "I suppose we're not going, all the same?"

Frank set his teeth.

"I'm not going!" he said.

"And we're standing by you, old man!" said Harry Wharton.

"The standbyfulness is terrific!"

"We'll show them how we punch in the Greyfriars Remove!" growled Johnny Bull. "There'll be some black eyes and busted noses here before we go, anyhow!"

And the juniors waited.

THE TWELFTH CHAPTER.

Trouble!

CAPTAIN RAVENSPUR paced to and fro in the oak-panelled hall, his lips compressed, his eyes gleaming under contracted brows. The captain had a savage temper when it was not under control—and it was not always under control. It seemed quite out of hand now. Servants who passed in sight of him eyed him curiously, turning their heads quickly away if his glance fell in their direction. In the servants' hall at the Grange they had their own opinion of Captain Ravenspur, but they were aware that he was next heir to the baronetcy and the estate, and that if anything happened to Sir Richard he would be their master. And that day the captain had come within an ace of becoming master of Ravenspur Grange, whether by his own act or the act of another.

Perhaps that was why Packington's manner was so deeply and suavely respectful as he came in from the terrace.

The captain stopped his angry pacing and fixed his eyes on the butler.

"Are they going?"

Packington coughed deprecatingly.

"They say not, sir. I am afraid that they regard your authority with contempt, I am sorry to say, sir."

The captain's face grew crimson, and his eyes flashed. That remark was all he needed to lash his rage to white heat. Had Packington picked his words for the purpose he could not have chosen them better to exasperate Cecil Ravenspur. It might have been supposed by an observer that the butler was as anxious as his master to get rid of the Greyfriars party.

"I will show them," said the captain in a suffocating voice. "They shall see."

"If you will allow me to make a suggestion, sir—"

"Make it," said Ravenspur shortly.

"I fear that the schoolboys intend to resist, sir—"

"Resist!" snapped the captain scornfully. "Let them! I will take my riding-whip if they do!"

"Certainly they deserve as much, sir," said Packington respectfully. "But I was about to suggest they may make some attempt to see Sir Richard, and cause him to intervene. It might be a serious matter for the master to be disturbed by any such excitement—"

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"Such a thing must be prevented, of course," said the captain hastily. "I will not have my brother's health endangered!"

"I was sure you would take that view, sir, and that is why I venture to make a suggestion, with your permission, sir—"

"Speak—speak!" said the captain impatiently.

"I suggest that they should not be allowed to go upstairs again, sir, or they may make an attempt to see Sir Richard. Their bags can be packed and brought down by the servants."

"That is a sensible suggestion, Packington. You are invaluable, as I have said before!" exclaimed Captain Ravenspur.

"It is my duty to be of service, sir," said Packington, "and I fear the result on my master's health if he should be disturbed—"

"Give orders at once for their baggage to be brought down and placed in the drive," said the captain. "As soon as all is ready I will deal with them."

"Very good, sir! Perhaps if a footman were posted to see that they make no attempt to go up the staircase by force—"

"Good! You think of everything."

Captain Ravenspur went to the smoke-room that opened off the hall, and the butler was left to make the arrangements. He was not long in making them.

The juniors had been consulting rather anxiously on the terrace. They could scarcely believe that the captain intended to go to extremes; and yet it seemed certain. They had no intention whatever of going quietly; yet a struggle with half a dozen men-servants was not only unseemly but likely to end in defeat. Naturally, it occurred to Nugent to speak to his uncle and obtain Sir Richard's intervention. Even if he were sleeping, Frank was quite certain that he would rather be awakened than allow such an outrage on hospitality as the captain intended. The juniors therefore came in, with the intention of going up to the baronet's room—a move which Captain Ravenspur, in his angry excitement, had not foreseen until the suggestion came from the butler. But the chains of Greyfriars were too late.

A double staircase ascended from the hall to an oaken gallery high above, from which passages ran. On either staircase a footman was posted, and as the juniors approached the stairs James interposed.

"Excuse me, gentlemen," said James in great confusion, and very apologetically. "You must not go upstairs."

"What?" snapped Nugent angrily.

"Mr. Packington's orders, sir," murmured James.

Nugent's eyes blazed.

"The butler's orders? Are you mad or is he? Stand aside at once."

"Mr. Packington received his orders from Captain Ravenspur, sir! I cannot allow you to pass," said James.

"Stand aside!" roared Nugent.

"I—I can't, sir!" gasped James, scared but determined. "It's as much as my place is worth, sir."

"Shift him, you men!"

"Stop!" Packington appeared in the hall. "Young gentlemen, I beg of you—desist! Captain Ravenspur has given distinct orders—"

"Hang Captain Ravenspur, and hang you!" roared Nugent furiously. "James, stand aside before you get pitched down the stairs!"

"Stand where you are, James!" said Packington.

"Yes, sir!" gasped James.

Over the oaken rail of the hall gallery above the Leyford constable was looking down curiously. Three or four servants

stared on from a distance. Captain Ravenspur stepped out of the smoke-room.

"You young rascals! Get away from that staircase!" he shouted.

"Go and eat coke!" snapped Nugent. "Lend me a hand to shift this fool, you men! Back up!"

"You bet!"

"Come on!" shouted Bob Cherry.

The blood of the Famous Five was fairly up now. They made a rush up the staircase at James and collared him right and left.

"Gentlemen—gentlemen!" implored Packington. "Think of the master! If this disturbance should awaken him—"

Crash! Bump!

James came rolling heavily down, clutching wildly at the banisters. The next moment the captain, who was rushing across the hall, his face inflamed with rage, reached the juniors.

Another moment and there would have been a fierce scuffle on the staircase. At that moment a deep, angry voice shouted from above.

"Cease this instantly! What does this mean? Boys—Cecil—cease!"

It was the voice of Sir Richard Ravenspur. The baronet, in his dressing-gown, stood at the top of the staircase, looking down with an angry brow.

Captain Ravenspur, in the act of grasping at the juniors, dropped his hands. A curse fell from his lips.

"Uncle!" shouted Frank.

The baronet came down a step.

"What does this mean?" he demanded. "A scuffle in my house—between my guests and my brother! I think I must be dreaming!"

"Are we to be turned out, uncle?"

"Turned out! Certainly not."

"Tell Captain Ravenspur so, then."

Sir Richard stared down at the captain, who was biting his lip with rage. Packington had discreetly disappeared; the other men-servants stood back, looking on breathlessly.

"Cecil, what does Frank mean? You have not thought of turning my guests from my door?"

"Let them tell you what they have accused me of," said the captain bitterly. "I am using the authority you placed in my hands, and with good reason."

"You can have no reason for such an outrage on hospitality and good manners," said Sir Richard sternly. "If this is how you use the authority placed in your hands I withdraw it! You give no more orders here!"

"As you choose," said the captain furiously. "They remain—and I go! I will never enter your house again, Richard."

"You will leave this house, in any case, if you do not control your temper," retorted the baronet. "Silence, man! You should be ashamed of yourself!"

"I mean what I say," said the captain savagely, "and I think you will order them to go when you know what offence they have given."

"I will ascertain that," said Sir Richard. "I shall come down presently and until then I command that this dispute cease!"

Captain Ravenspur swung angrily away. He strode into the smoke-room and slammed the door behind him.

Sir Richard went back to his room, from which the disturbance on the staircase had drawn him. The juniors went out on the terrace. There was no question now of their departure—at least, until the matter had been placed before Sir Richard. Ravenspur for his judgment. What view the baronet would take, when he was acquainted with their suspicions of his brother, they could not guess. That they had accused Captain Ravenspur was not the fact; but that

they suspected him they could not deny, and had no intention of denying. The rest of that golden summer's afternoon passed slowly and far from happily, to the chums of the Greyfriars Remove.

THE THIRTEENTH CHAPTER.

The Hand of the Unknown!

THE red embers of a log fire glowed in the wide ancient hearth of the library at Ravenspur Grange. The summer evening was mild and still. Outside

Captain Ravenspur flashed a look at the schoolboys. There was a bitter and malicious triumph in it.

"Frank!" went on the baronet. "This accusation—this foolish and wicked accusation—against one of my own blood—"

"We have not accused Captain Ravenspur, sir!" said Harry quietly.

"Do you deny that you suspect him of attempting my life?"

"No; we can't deny that."

"Then it amounts to the same thing."

"I suppose it does, more or less," admitted Wharton. "But what we suspect,

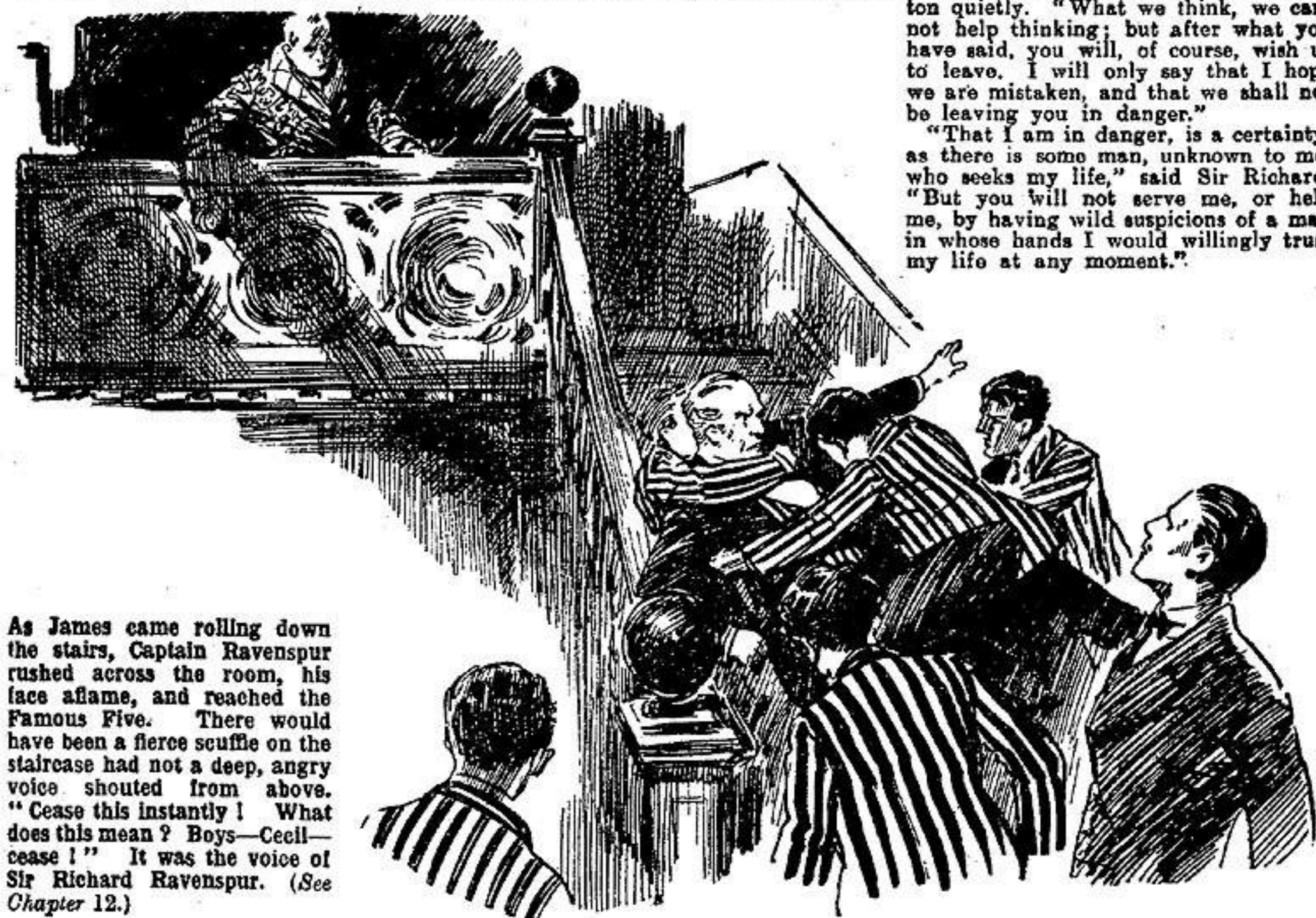
Richard. "The very last person in the household whom I should suspect, is my own brother. No Ravenspur could be capable of such a crime."

"There was one Ravenspur, at least, capable of crime," said Frank. "I have heard of my cousin Edgar."

"Edgar Ravenspur was a wastrel," said the baronet sternly. "But he was never guilty of blood. And there never was another Ravenspur like him. Your suspicion of my brother is monstrous—monstrous. You have done wrong, Frank, in allowing it to enter your mind—you and your friends."

"Very well, sir!" said Harry Wharton quietly. "What we think, we cannot help thinking; but after what you have said, you will, of course, wish us to leave. I will only say that I hope we are mistaken, and that we shall not be leaving you in danger."

"That I am in danger, is a certainty, as there is some man, unknown to me, who seeks my life," said Sir Richard. "But you will not serve me, or help me, by having wild suspicions of a man in whose hands I would willingly trust my life at any moment."



As James came rolling down the stairs, Captain Ravenspur rushed across the room, his face aflame, and reached the Famous Five. There would have been a fierce scuffle on the staircase had not a deep, angry voice shouted from above. "Cease this instantly! What does this mean? Boys—Cecil—cease!" It was the voice of Sir Richard Ravenspur. (See Chapter 12.)

the wide-open french windows the shadows were deepening on the terrace, and the gardens below. Through the silence came the soft tinkling of a fountain. Sir Richard Ravenspur, looking paler and older, sat in the high-backed armchair—his brother standing, with lowering brow, leaning on a corner of the chimney; the Greyfriars fellows a little farther away.

There was silence in the long, lofty room. Sir Richard Ravenspur had listened to what the juniors had to say, and to what the captain had to say, and he was perplexed and distressed. It was against the doctor's orders that he had left his room, and he was pale and tired, and looked ill.

Slight as the injury was, inflicted by the treacherous shot, the shock had been great, all the more so, because he knew now that there was someone—mysterious and unknown—who sought his life. But he was not thinking of that now. There was anger, as well as perplexity and distress, in his fine face, and the juniors realised that the anger was directed towards them. The baronet's deep voice broke the silence at last.

"I can scarcely say what I think of this," he said slowly. "You should not have acted as you did, Cecil! Yet how can I say that I blame you, after what I have just heard?"

is also suspected by a detective officer, Inspector Cook."

"I do not believe so for a single moment," said Sir Richard. "Such a suspicion is monstrous."

"Thank you for that, Dick!" said Captain Ravenspur.

"Monstrous!" repeated the baronet, his brows contracting. "I cannot forgive you, Frank, for allowing such a thought to enter your mind at all."

Frank bit his lip.

"Will you let me speak, uncle?" he said.

"Say what you choose."

"Someone fired at you from a window of this house to-day. There is no man in the house in whom you have not complete confidence."

"That is true."

"Then you were fired at, with the intention of taking your life, by a man in whom you have complete confidence!" said Frank.

The baronet started a little.

"Some stranger—some intruder!" he said slowly.

"Inspector Cook and his men combed the place. There was no sign of any stranger or intruder. The inspector is quite satisfied that it is what he calls an inside job; he had made no secret of that."

"Suppose that is so," said Sir

"There's nothing more to be said, then," said Frank Nugent. "I'm sorry I have displeased you, uncle, and we will go."

"I am sorry," said Sir Richard. "But after such an accusation against my brother, obviously this is no place for you. I should like you, however, to leave me with your mind disabused of this horrible suspicion. Leave us for a little while, Cecil," he added, with a kind and affectionate glance at his brother. "I must talk to these boys."

The captain nodded, and walked towards the open french windows. He paused there, and glanced back.

But this time, there was no malice or triumph in his look. There was something like regret.

"One word, as I shall not see you again, boys," he said quietly. "I am sorry you have this opinion of me. I am afraid it is caused by the opinion I expressed of your story last night. I still believe that you told a foolish tale, and that no murder ever took place by the park wall. I think that somehow your imaginations must have misled you, and if I gave you the impression that I thought you were lying, I am sorry. I am afraid that I made you dislike me, and that this put this wild idea into your head. I repeat that I am sorry."

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Without waiting for a reply, the captain stepped out of the french windows, and his figure became lost in the deepening shadows of the summer night.

There was silence after he had gone. Somehow, his quiet words spoken with some dignity, had impressed the juniors. They wondered a little uneasily, whether it was the captain's mockery, and his evident dislike of their presence in the house, that had made them too ready to leap at a terrible suspicion.

Sir Richard broke the silence. "You have heard what my brother has said," he began. "Surely, on reflection, you must realise that you have done him wrong."

The juniors made no reply to that. "Think a little," said Sir Richard. "Supposing for one moment, that Cecil was guilty of that dastardly attempt on my life, common sense would have made him conceal the weapon he had used. Common sense would have prevented him from seeking to drive you from the house, as he has done."

"I don't see—" began Nugent. "Do you not see that the attempt that has been made once, may be made again?" said Sir Richard. "Some man unknown seeks my life. That is certain. It would appear to be some member of my own household. Heaven knows why—for I do not know that I have wronged any man or given any man cause to hate me. But the fact is certain—my life is sought. The attempt may be made again. It may succeed. In that case, the fact that my brother had driven from the house persons who suspected him, who might have watched him, and prevented the crime, would fix upon him the strongest suspicion."

There was a moment's silence. "The fact that Captain Ravenspur lost his temper, that he was driving you away, that he was utterly reckless of appearances, is a proof of his perfect innocence of any knowledge of the attempt," said Sir Richard. "That should be clear to all of you."

"I suppose there's something in that," said Harry Wharton slowly. "But—" "But I have not succeeded in changing your opinion?"

"No!" said Harry. "I don't mean to say we feel certain—but we suspect Captain Ravenspur, and we cannot help that."

Sir Richard's face set. "Then there is nothing more to be said!" he answered. "I can only hope that when you have left this house, you will at least respect my name sufficiently to say nothing elsewhere of this baseless suspicion."

"We are not likely to tattle about what has happened here," said Harry. "Come, you fellows—the sooner we're gone the better."

The juniors crossed to the door. The baronet made no movement, sitting upright in his chair, his face stern and severe, only his eyes following the movement of his departing guests.

Frank opened the door, and the juniors passed out.

In the doorway he paused.

"Good-bye, uncle!" he said softly.

Sir Richard did not speak. Nugent, with a clouded face, drew the door shut. Outside, he faced his friends, clenching his hands passionately.

"To leave him here—to leave him alone—in danger—with that villain watching for another chance!" he said, in a choking voice.

"You can do nothing more, old man," said Harry.

"I know! But—"

Nugent broke off miserably. He

could do nothing more; he could not even stay in the house, whose master no longer made him welcome. He turned away from the library door at last.

"James!" he called to the footman, who was in the hall.

James came up. "Tell Packington we're going," said Frank. "We shall go to the inn at Leyford, we shall want the car. Tell Packington—"

"Mr. Packington is in his room, sir—lying down with one of his headaches," said James apologetically. "Mr. Packington was in the War, sir, and he sometimes suffers from—"

"It doesn't matter," interrupted Frank impatiently. "Order the car, and— Good heavens!"

He broke off with a cry. From the library came a shriek and a report, followed by a groan. For an instant the juniors stood rooted to the spot with horror.

Then Nugent wrenched open the door he had closed only a couple of minutes before, and rushed into the room.

"Uncle!" he panted hoarsely. But no answer came from the crumpled figure in the high-backed chair.

Sir Richard Ravenspur lay back limp in the chair, his head drooping to his breast, and a stream of blood running down his white shirt-front.

THE FOURTEENTH CHAPTER.

By Whose Hand!

"DEAD!" "No, no!" panted Nugent. He bent over the crumpled, senseless figure in the chair.

Harry Wharton ran to the window.

The french windows stood wide open, as Captain Ravenspur had left them when he went out on the terrace. Wharton stared out into the summer darkness. The shot had come from the terrace—it could have come from nowhere else. From some desperate villain, lurking in the darkness without, the murderous shot had come which had struck down the baronet as he sat in the light within. Harry Wharton's thoughts were of the captain, who had gone out on the terrace.

A moving shadow in the darkness without caught his eye, and the junior leaped out.

"You scoundrel you—" He grasped fiercely at the shadowy form.

"You young fool! What—"

It was Captain Ravenspur.

Wharton did not relax his grasp.

"Murderer!" he panted.

"Are you mad?" exclaimed the captain. "I heard a shot. I came. What has happened? Tell me what has happened?"

"Sir Richard Ravenspur is murdered, and you have murdered him!" shouted Wharton.

"Good heavens!"

The captain flung the junior aside with such sudden violence that Wharton staggered and fell at full length. Captain Ravenspur rushed into the library.

"Dick!" he was crying.

The juniors were gathered round the limp form in the chair. Frank Nugent supported the heavy, drooping head on his shoulder. Frightened servants were staring in at the wide-open doorway. Three or four were in the room. There was a buzz of startled voices, and a woman's shriek could be heard from the hall.

"Dick!" panted the captain hoarsely. Nugent turned on him with blazing eyes.

"You murderer!" he shouted.

"Fool!" "Seize him, you fellows—seize that murderer!" shrieked Nugent.

"Fool! Hands off!" roared the captain.

He wrenched Nugent aside with savage strength, and took his place. Harry Wharton came running in from the terrace.

"Collar him!" he shouted. "Seize that villain! He was here—only a few steps from the window—"

"He has killed him!" breathed Johnny Bull. "Killed him—"

The juniors closed in on the captain, who was standing with an arm about the crumpled figure in the chair. He did not seem to see them. His hand was on the baronet's breast.

"His heart beats!" he said huskily. "Fools—he is not dead! He lives. Packington! Where is Packington?"

"Here, sir!" said a smooth, quiet voice, and the butler came in at the doorway. "What has happened, sir? I thought I heard a shot as I was lying down—"

"Packington! The doctor—quick—quick! Don't stare there, man—don't lose a second!" yelled the captain. "The doctor—quick!"

"Very good, sir!"

Packington hurried to the telephone.

"He lives?" said Nugent.

"He lives, you fool! Stand clear!" snarled the captain.

The juniors stood clear. They had believed the baronet a dead man, and doubted not for one moment that it was by the captain's hand that he had died. But he lived, and there was something in the wild, savage earnestness of Cecil Ravenspur that deterred them. They stood back, watching the man with grim faces.

There was a groan from the baronet.

"He lives!" breathed Frank.

The closed eyes opened, and Sir Richard Ravenspur stared wildly before him. He made a movement as if to rise.

"Quiet! Keep still, Dick!" breathed the captain. "You're hurt—you're hurt, old man! Keep still!"

He glanced round at the scared servants.

"Search the grounds—lose no time—call the constable to help—call the keepers—ring up the police—hurry!" He stared savagely at the juniors. "You young fools, don't stand gaping there—help to search the grounds!"

"And leave you alone with him!" said Nugent. "Not likely!"

The captain gritted his teeth.

But he checked the furious reply that rose to his lips, and turned back to his brother.

"Keep still, Dick." His voice was soft enough now. "Keep still, old man! Let me look at it—don't move."

He tore open the blood-stained shirt. The baronet gave a feeble nod, but he did not speak.

The captain's fingers felt swiftly and gently over the wound. The juniors, watching him, with a dark and terrible suspicion that it was his intention to make matters worse, could not help seeing that he was doing all in his power for the best. He gave a gasp of relief.

"You've been lucky, Dick—you've been lucky! It was meant for your heart, but it glanced on a rib at an angle—" His fingers followed the gash of the bullet. "You've been lucky, old man! Packington! Packington!"

"Sir!"

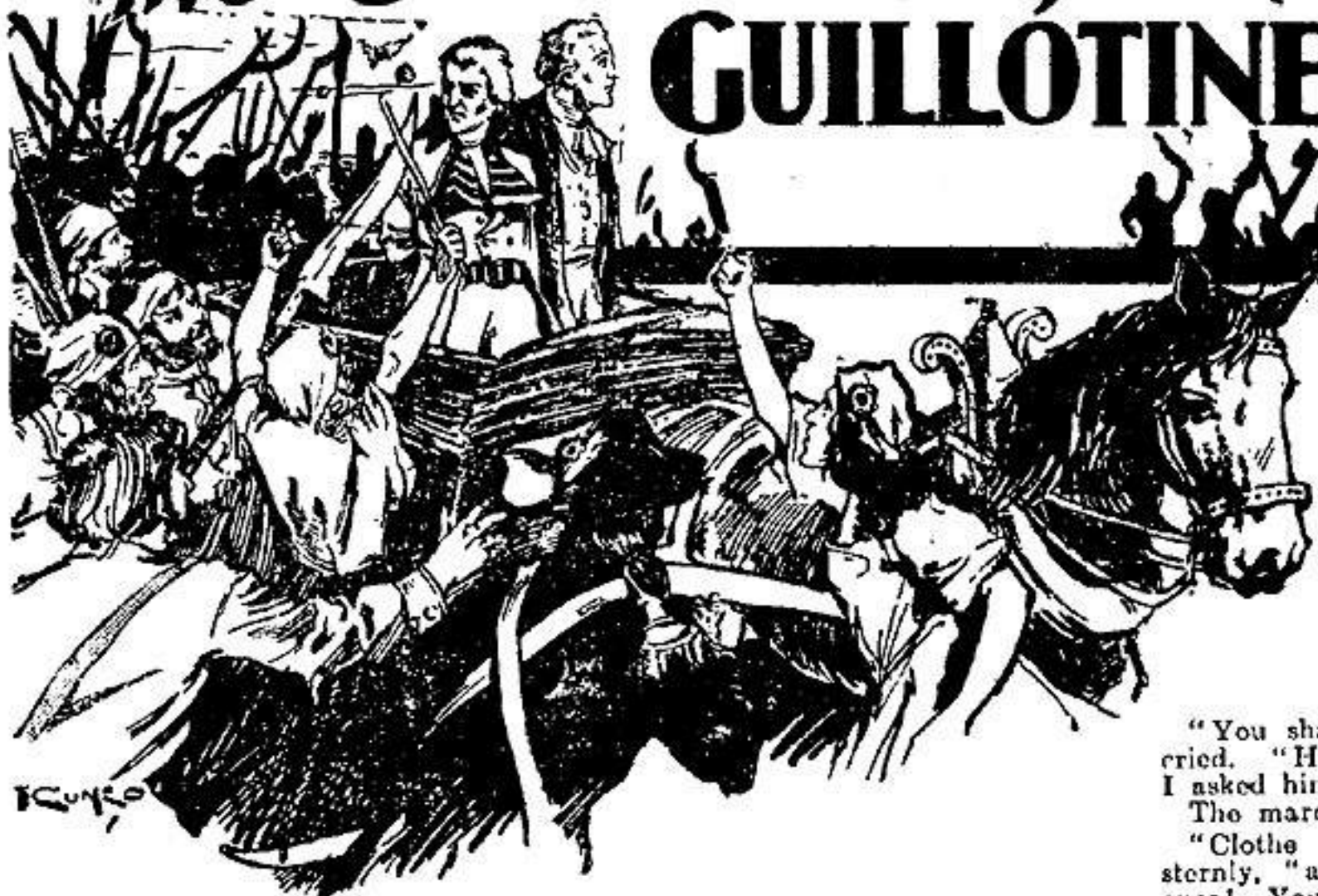
"Bandages—quick—"

With deft hands the captain bound up the wound, stopping the flow of blood. Sir Richard's face was ashen white, but slowly a spot of colour dawned in

(Continued on page 25.)

THE MOST REMARKABLE STORY OF THE YEAR.....STARTS TO-DAY!

The SHADOW of the GUILLOTINE!



By
GEO. E. ROCHESTER

(Author of "The Bulldog
Breed," "The Black
Hawk," etc. etc.)

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

The Spring of 1789.

THE long inquiring nose of Monsieur Beauscrit rose cautiously above a convenient rose-bush. His pale, watery eyes dilated with sudden horror at the sight they saw, and he ducked down quickly.

"Name of a name!" he breathed, and one might have noticed a certain malicious joy in the words. "What will my lord have to say of this?"

Turning, he tiptoed softly away, bent of back; then, straightening up, he sped, full of vengeful spite, across the smooth and velvety lawn of Chateau Fontnoy.

"Monseigneur," he cried, bursting into the room where sat his master, the most noble the Marquis d'Ermonde de Fontnoy, "had I not seen with my own eyes I could not have believed! It is terrible! Words fail me!

"What ails you fool?" cut in the marquis sharply.

"Your kinsman," babbled Monsieur Beauscrit, "your nephew, the Chevalier de St. Clair, bathes in the lake with Paul Dare, son of old Andre, the peasant!"

With an oath the marquis leapt to his feet.

"What?" he thundered. "With that scum? Pardi! But this is too much! I shall teach that peasant animal a lesson which he will not readily forget! Summon me two grooms with whips!"

The foxy-faced, sombre-clad Beauscrit turned towards the door, a grin of delight on his thin lips.

"You!" The furious voice of the marquis brought him up short. "It is you whom I blame for this!"

"Me, monseigneur?" quavered Monsieur Beauscrit.

"Yes, you! As tutor to the young chevalier I hold you responsible for the companionship he seeks. But I shall have something to say to you later on

that matter. The grooms—at once, do you hear?"

The grooms were summoned—two hefty fellows—and, with them at his heels, my Lord of Fontnoy set off across the lawn in the direction of the lake. Following at a discreet distance went Monsieur Beauscrit.

And thus they came upon two boys dressing by the side of the lake—two boys alike in all but birth. For in one flowed the proud blood of the aristocrat, whilst the other was but a humble peasant lad—a son of the people. They were both sixteen years of age; both fine, healthy youngsters, aglow from their plunge in the silvery waters of the castle lake.

The signal comes—

Across La Belle France, in an avenging flood, swoop the children of the Revolution, athirst for freedom—and blood!

And while this danger threatens, my lords of France drink and carouse, unmindful of the storm that is about to break above their heads; deaf to the cry that passes from mouth to mouth: "Death to the Aristocrats!"

It was the Chevalier de St. Clair who first noticed the approaching men and his finely-cut features paled.

"Paul!" he gasped. "See who comes!"

With a quick, nervous movement of his hand he attempted to thrust the half-clad Paul behind him. But Paul Dare stood his ground, albeit a grimace had crept into his level blue eyes and his firm lips had tightened.

"Well, animal," demanded the marquis harshly, confronting him with cold, jaundiced eyes, "from whom have you received permission to pollute the waters of my lake with your filthy carcass? Answer me, you presumptuous clod!"

The Chevalier sprang forward.

"You shall not talk like that!" he cried. "He came here as my guest. I asked him here!"

The marquis turned to his nephew.

"Clothe yourself, sir!" he said sternly, "and return to the castle at once! Your conduct and your friends are a disgrace to the honoured name you bear!"

He wheeled on the grooms.

"Seize that dog," he ordered harshly, "and flog him to the bone!"

The grooms advanced on Paul, uncurling the knotted thongs of their whips. With eyes blazing in his deathly white face the young Chevalier confronted them.

"You shall not touch him!" he shouted passionately. "He is my friend!"

The marquis, strong and powerful of frame, gripped his nephew by the arm and whirled him aside. Then the grooms were on Paul. Desperately the boy fought to close with them, but the cruel, biting lashes coiled about his head and shoulders, keeping him at bay. His coarse shirt was cut to ribbons, laying bare the bruised and quivering flesh as he was forced to his knees.

Goaded, blinded, sick to his very soul with the agony of that brutal flogging, he raised weak hands to ward off the pitiless, stinging cuts.

Now they had him at their mercy, and the whirling, whistling thongs rose and fell

on the defenceless boy until, with a moan, he collapsed, an inert and unconscious heap. Then it was that the marquis released his grip on the arm of the trembling, sobbing chevalier.

Darting forward, the boy threw himself on his knees by the side of his chum.

"Paul—Paul!" he cried, and raised the white face, hideous with its cruel, disfiguring weals. "Paul—speak to me, Paul! Say you know I was not to blame for this!"

Monsieur Beauscrit crept forward and touched him on the shoulder.

"Come, chevalier," he said nervously—"come, I will conduct you to the castle."

"Yes, take the hysterical fool away!"

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1,122.



Paul's shirt was cut to ribbons, laying bare the bruised and quivering flesh, as the grooms forced him to his knees. Goaded, blinded, sick to his very soul with the agony of the brutal flogging, the youngster raised weak hands to ward off the pitiless, stinging cuts. (See page 25.)

commanded the marquis coldly. "Ma foi, that I should see one of my blood on his knees by scum like that!"

Slowly the chevalier rose to his feet and faced his uncle.

"One of your blood!" he repeated quiveringly. "Yes, I am that! And foul blood it is when it can prompt a man to such a cowardly act as yours!"

Brushing aside the obsequious and thoroughly scandalised Beauscrit, the chevalier set off running towards the castle. And Beauscrit, encountering the eyes of the marquis, shuddered.

"Your pupil holds sentiments, Monsieur Beauscrit," remarked the marquis, with a deadly suaveness, "upon which I cannot congratulate you! The Comte d'Espany was droll enough to hang a tutor—"

He completed the sentence with a shrug of his shoulders, and moved forward to where Paul Darc lay.

"Remove this carrion," he said to the grooms, touching the boy with a contemptuous foot, "and inform the creature's father that he has only my forbearance to thank in having the cub returned to him alive!"

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

Mutterings of the Storm.

PAUL DARC opened his eyes to find himself lying on a couch in the humble cottage which he called home. By his side was kneeling a man clad in rough peasant garb—a man who, with gnarled and toil-worn hand, was smoothing the lad's

damp hair and muttering brokenly to himself.

Paul stared at him with slowly dawning comprehension, then struggled to rise.

"Why, father," he exclaimed weakly, "you are crying!"

The old man shook his head.

"You must lie quiet, my son," he said gently, pressing the boy back with tender hand.

"But why do you cry?"

"Nay, see," replied the other bravely, "I am now master of myself. Old Suzanne and I have bathed your hurts, and you will soon be well. In what way did you offend the marquis, my son?"

For a long moment Paul did not answer. His whole body was aching, yet there was nothing of anger in his pain-filled eyes, as he lay staring up at the low ceiling—nothing save a dull bewilderment.

"I was flogged for bathing in the lake," he said slowly, "and yet what harm I did I do not know."

"You were not alone?"

"No; I was with the chevalier."

The old man nodded shrewdly.

"And that was where you offended," he said quietly. "It was not the bathing which angered the marquis. It was the fact that you, a peasant lad, should have presumed to friendship with the high-born chevalier."

"A friendship which was none of my seeking," replied Paul bitterly. "It is eight days now since the chevalier came from Paris to the castle with his tutor. The day after he came he was out riding alone. I removed a stone from

his horse's hoof, and he lingered talking with me."

"And you have met since?"

"Yes, often. He is very lonely up there at the castle, with none of his own age. We became friends, and have explored the woods and had great games together."

"And you like him, Paul?"

The boy was silent, and when he spoke there was a quiver of earnestness in his voice.

"Father, I love him! Except for you, he is the only friend that I have ever known. He is so fine, so upright, and so honourable. We have not known each other long; but, somehow, we have felt like brothers."

The old man rose slowly to his feet. Crossing to the window, he stood staring out with dim, unseeing eyes. His trembling lips were moving in scarce audible words:

"Two manly boys, hungry for friendship, yet the gulf which lies between! Ah, God in heaven, the pity of it!"

He turned at the sound of a footfall on the threshold, and a burly peasant entered the room. The newcomer was a massive, bearded fellow, clad in ragged trousers and sabots, his coarse shirt open at the neck. On his matted raven locks he wore a woollen hat at a jaunty angle.

"Hola, Andre!" he greeted. "What is this I hear about the boy?"

"It will be true what you have heard, Sansarge," replied the old man. "The boy lies there."

He motioned with his hand towards the couch. Sansarge swung his head, staring at Paul with eyes which held a curious glitter in their depths. Then, turning his back on the boy, he took old Andre by the arm and lowered his bearded mouth to Andre's ear.

"This is excellent, comrade," he muttered. "Send him to Paris to-night, before his hurts have healed."

"The hurt to his spirit and his pride will linger long after his bodily hurts have been forgotten," replied Andre, in a low voice. "These are early days yet, Sansarge, to talk of Paris."

"No, comrade, you are wrong," responded Sansarge eagerly. "Things are moving. Ma foi, the day draws nigh more swiftly than you think." His voice rose. "Ay, and more swiftly than my cursed Lord of Fontnoy ever dreams!"

"Ssh!" muttered the other fearfully. "Have a care of your words, Sansarge. The very walls have ears here."

"What care I?" demanded Sansarge roughly.

But he did care, as one could tell by the way he lowered his voice as he continued:

"I have spoken to Maximilien of Paul Darc. He agrees with us that in the boy we have good stuff for the moulding. We shall want leaders, Andre. Send the boy to Paris to-night, and Maximilien will see that before those weals have healed they have seared the very soul of Paul Darc, and born in him a hatred of these cursed aristocrats which will find its vent only in the shedding of their blood."

"It is a great honour for Maximilien to want the boy," muttered old Andre, plucking at his lips with shaking hand. "A great honour indeed! But are you sure the time is ripe?"

"Ay, that it is!" cried Sansarge. "Little longer shall we wait before we rise. Tiens! I will speak to the boy!"

Turning on his heel, Sansarge crossed the floor to where Paul lay. For a moment he stood staring down at him,

thumbs tucked in the worn belt about his waist.

"Paul Daro," he said, and there was that in his voice which caused the boy to gaze up at him in wonderment, "this is an eventful day in your life, for to-day you have grimly learned the difference between aristocrat and peasant. You have felt some little of what we, your elders, have endured throughout the long weary years which have passed. It is said in the village that you have been mercilessly flogged for bathing with one whom you have had the insolence to call your friend."

Paul was silent, and Sansarge went on in a voice quivering with mounting anger:

"And when you bathed, Paul Daro, did you notice any difference between the aristocratic body of the most noble the Chevalier de St. Clair and that humble body of yours? You did not! For the God Who made him made you. And the God Who made the aristocrat of France also made the peasant!"

He leant forward, his voice hoarse and vibrant.

"Who gave the aristocrat the right of life and death over us, Paul Daro? Who gave him the right to grind those of peasant blood beneath his cursed heel? His horses, his animals, are warmly housed and well cared for, whilst for the peasant is reserved the whip, the

sword-thrust, and the galleys. It is insolence for us to lift our eyes to one of noble blood. We must stand bare-headed when their cavalcades ride past, or cower away in our hovels and our kennels. What care they if we are starving? We are the scum—the canaille—unworthy of their glance unless it be that, lashed to their flogging-posts, we afford them some amusement as we writhe beneath the whip, or dangle by our filthy necks from their turrets and their gallows!"

He broke off, seating himself heavily in the wooden chair by the side of the couch.

"But all that is to be changed," he went on in a low, menacing growl. "Already plans are being made, and the peasant—the scum—is about to rise against those who are making his life a misery and a curse. And when that day of rising comes, Paul Daro, we in this village of Fontnoy will turn our eyes towards Paris, proud in the knowledge that you whom we have sent there are a worthy leader of the people!"

"I, Sansarge?" exclaimed Paul, raising himself on his elbow. "I—a leader?"

Sansarge smiled grimly at the wonderment in the boy's voice.

"Yes—you!" he replied. "To-night you leave for Paris, and there you will

meet one who will guide you along the path which you must take—one who some day will be acclaimed throughout France as the saviour of the people!"

"And this man?" demanded Paul. "His name?"

"It is Maximilien Isidore de Robespierre!" replied Sansarge; and again his voice was vibrant. "A name as yet unknown to France, but one which will in days to come strike terror to the heart of every cursed aristocrat in this unhappy land which they have ruled too long!"

Robespierre!

The grim truth of that prophecy was to come back to Paul in the dark days ahead.

"But, Sansarge," exclaimed the boy, "I do not understand this talk of uprising! And why is it I who is being sent to Paris? Are there not others?"

He paused abruptly as there came a sudden clatter of hoofs outside the cottage. Old Andre turned from the window with warning finger to his lips. And as Sansarge scraped back from his chair and rose to his feet, the door was thrown open and the Chevalier de St. Clair strode into the room.

He was in elegant riding apparel, and, doffing his silver-braided hat, he bowed to old Andre with a courtesy

(Continued on next page.)

Come Into the Office Boys!

Always glad to hear from you, chums, so drop me a line to the following address: The Editor, The "Magnet" Library, The Amalgamated Press, Ltd., Fleetway House, Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4.

NOTE.—All Jokes and Limericks should be sent to c/o "Magnet," 5, Carmelite Street, London, E.C.4 (Comp.)

AT LAST!

IT is with confidence that I place this Free Gift Issue before you. I feel sure of its success. I feel that I have not let readers of the MAGNET down. They have been expecting something right out of the ordinary in the way of Free Gifts—they certainly have that now in the Wonderful Working Model Aeroplane that is presented Free with this issue.

I can see all my chums gazing with delight at the FIRST PART of the flying model aeroplane—I can see them asking for a pair of scissors with which to cut out the parts of the machine—I can see them showing with pride their made-up models!

In the Free Gift you now handle with this issue you have the result of weeks of hard work. Expense and time have not been spared in the effort to make the MAGNET Aeroplane the finest Free Gift in the world. And I know you will all agree with me in saying this; we have not failed.

I have done my job in bringing to you the first parts of our real flying model aeroplane, and it is now your job to assemble them. This will not take you long. Our inventor has gone to great pains to simplify the instructions (which you will find on pages 6 and 7 of this issue) and in following them explicitly you will not experience any difficulty in CUTTING OUT and PUTTING THEM TOGETHER.

Don't be in a hurry to do this. Follow the advice of the MAN WHO HAS INVENTED YOUR AEROPLANE. What he says in the article of instructions is wisdom not to be ignored.

model ready for flight.

Talking about flight, you know what this machine is capable of—seventy-five yards if propelled from the air, and fifty from the ground—a wonderful achievement for a cardboard model, what?

Certainly without the SECOND PART of our free gift your aeroplane will be useless, so I must repeat the old warning—ORDER NEXT WEEK'S ISSUE OF THE MAGNET TO-DAY. THERE IS BOUND TO BE A RUSH on this number, and you must be one of the first served.

That's so much for our free gift, then, chums. Now for a laugh with Arthur Broadwell, of 175, Eatecourt Street, New Bridge Road, Hull, who carries off this week's MAGNET pocket-knife for the following amusing joke:

O'Brien had been brought before the magistrate on a charge of "speeding" on a motor-cycle. "What is your reason for exceeding the speed limit?" asked the magistrate. "Why," answered O'Brien, "O! only had a drop or two of petrol left, and O! wanted to get home before O! used it!"

By the way, let me remind readers on holiday at the seaside once again that our representative will be looking out for boys and girls displaying their copy of the MAGNET prominently. When he sees you, which he undoubtedly will, you'll be invited to make your choice from the following selection of novel free gifts: large balloons, kites, windmills, and

In next week's issue you will be presented absolutely FREE with

THE SECOND PART

of our stupendous FREE gift—the Driving Mechanism. This will be found in a packet together with full instructions on completing your

surprise packets. See that you catch our representative's eye, chums.

Before going on to next week's programme, see what you think of the following clever limerick for which Harold Isaacs, of 136, Dunraven Street, Tony-pandy, R.V., South Wales, has been awarded this week's useful leather pocket-wallet:

Billy Bunter, once, feeling gay,
Was heard by Bob Cherry to say,
"Like a cannibal I feel
When I am short of a meal.
So look out, I'm hungry to-day!"

Now for next week's all-star programme. Heading the list comes the second story in our new Greyfriars "thriller" series, entitled: "THE UNSEEN FOE!" which shows the celebrated Frank Richards in tip-top form. You'll be thrilled even more with this second masterpiece than you were with the first. Then there will be another of Dicky Nugent's "shockers" dealing with the further laughable adventures of Jack Jolly & Co. at the seaside. This is entitled: "JACK JOLLY'S JOLLY BOYS!"—a scream of a yarn from beginning to end. Following this, you will get the second instalment of famous Geo. E. Rochester's new serial of the French Revolution: "THE SHADOW OF THE GUILLOTINE!"—undoubtedly the greatest story of the day—which together with another cricket article by "Sportsman," will complete this record-breaking issue. Till then, chums, cheerio.

YOUR EDITOR.



What our wonderful
FREE
AEROPLANE
will look like when
completed.

which brought a sneer to the lips of Sansarge.

"Pray, pardon this intrusion, m'sieur," he said quickly; "but I could not rest until I learned how things are with Paul. May I speak with him, m'sieur?"

Andre nodded in humble assent. Two strides took the young chevalier to the couch. Sansarge drew aside, watching him from under lowering brows, for this aristocratic fledgling was one of the cursed brood.

Suddenly, with quick, impulsive movement, the chevalier bent down and clasped Paul's hand in both of his.

"Ah, Paul!" he cried, a world of misery in his voice. "What can I say to you? The fault was mine, and bitterly have I upbraided myself for having been the cause of your vile treatment!"

"Nay, chevalier," replied Paul softly. "The fault was never yours—it was my own. The lash brought more to me than hurt. It brought an understanding of my presumption in having accepted the friendship which you so nobly offered."

"Presumption—nobly offered!" repeated the chevalier. "These are strange words to use to me, Paul Dare!"

"Nay, that they are not, M'sieur le Chevalier!" growled Sansarge, albeit his tone was respectful. "For you are nobly born, and he is of peasant blood!"

"What he says is true, chevalier," said Paul sadly. "There can never be friendship between such as you and I. Realisation of that will come to you, as it has come to me to-day. Our paths can never lie together, so let us say farewell and part!"

"But we have been so happy in our friendship, Paul—" began the chevalier miserably.

"Yes, and it is a happiness which I shall never forget," replied Paul earnestly. "But you must go now. Were your uncle, the Marquis of Fontenoy, to learn of your visit here—"

"It is he who is to blame!" cut in the chevalier hotly. "It is he who is the cause of this!"

"Indeed!" came a cold, harsh voice from the doorway. "Your sentiments seem on a par with the company you keep, my nephew!"

The chevalier wheeled, to confront the man of whom he had been speaking—the Marquis d'Ermonde de Fontenoy, who was standing on the threshold of the room, two liveried lackeys behind him.

(Staunch chums—but divided by the barrier between aristocrat and peasant! Not such a very bright outlook, is it, chums, for Paul Dare and the young chevalier with a revolution drawing nearer and nearer? Watch out for the thrilling follow-on of this grand new serial, of the French Revolution, which will appear in next week's MAGNET.)

THE HOUSE OF TERROR!

(Continued from page 24.)

either check. He found his voice, a mere whisper.

"Is it the finish, Cecil?"

"No! A thousand times no! I tell you the bullet glanced and did not enter—you'll lose some blood, old man, and that is all! When is that doctor coming? Keep still, Dick."

The room was empty of the startled servants now, except for Packington, hovering respectfully. The juniors remained. They were no longer even thinking of leaving the house. The second attempt on the baronet's life had decided that. Welcome or unwelcome, they were staying that night, at least. Sir Richard Ravenspur could not, and should not be left at the mercy of the man he trusted, and who they believed was seeking his life.

The baronet lay silent, the captain standing by his side. His glance turned on the juniors at last, his eyes glittering.

"So you think—" he said bitterly.

"We know!" said Wharton quietly.

"And we shall tell the police what we know when they come!" said Frank, between his teeth.

"Tell them what you like, you young fool!" snarled the captain. "Now leave this room and this house!"

"We shall leave neither the room nor the house until the police are here!" said Harry Wharton steadily. "Even if Sir Richard orders us to go, we shall not go! We are here to guard his life from a murderer."

"From me?" hissed the captain.

"From you!" said Harry, in the same steady tone.

The baronet's eyes had closed. He lay on the cushioned settee, his brother's arm supporting his head.

Captain Ravenspur gritted his teeth.

"I cannot deal with you now," he said.

"Not in my brother's present state. But later—"

"Cecil!" It was the baronet's feeble voice.

"Yes, Dick!"

"Tell the boys to come here I must speak to them."

"You are in no state—"

"Tell them."

The juniors approached the settee without waiting for the captain's leave. Sir Richard Ravenspur's eyes sought their faces as he lay.

"Frank." His voice was low but steady. "I do not know how badly I may be hurt—whether I am dying. I shall know soon! In the meantime it will be better for you to remain in the house—and your friends, if they are willing."

"Yes, yes, uncle!" said Frank eagerly.

"Remain here—in this room!"

"Yes, yes."

"Dick," said Captain Ravenspur

hoarsely, "that cannot mean that you share the suspicion of those schoolboys—that you think—that you suspect—" He stared down at his brother with haggard eyes.

The baronet's pale face twitched.

"I suspect nothing!" he said. "I cannot suspect you, Cecil! That is impossible—my own brother!"

"You doubt?"

"No!" said Sir Richard faintly. "I do not doubt!"

"You doubt in spite of yourself!" muttered the captain. "You know that I was on the terrace—you think—good heavens!"

A shiver ran through him.

For some moments there was silence. When the captain spoke again his voice was altered.

"Frank!" he said quietly. "Take my place! Dick, I swear that if you doubt me you have no cause. I was on the terrace—I saw no one—he must have passed me in the dark—"

"I believe you, Cecil!" said Sir Richard faintly. "I believe you!"

"You are trying to believe me," said Captain Ravenspur bitterly. "I am a beggar—deep in debt—I have pestered you for money—I should be a rich man if that bullet had reached your heart—I understand! Frank, take my place—watch over him and do not leave him till the police are here! If there is a chance yet that the villain who fired that shot may be found, I will find him."

The captain drew gently away from his brother, strode to the windows, and out on the shadowed terrace.

Harry Wharton shut the french windows after the captain, and drew the heavy curtains. Sir Richard's head rested on Frank Nugent's arm. He had sunk into semi unconsciousness, and he did not speak again.

There was deep silence—till it was broken by the sound of a car on the drive. The doctor had arrived—and a few minutes later Harry Wharton & Co. left the baronet in the hands of Dr. Wood, and went quietly from the library. They waited in the hall. From the open doorway they could see the lights of the searchers gleaming through the summer night. Captain Ravenspur was among them, or had he fled from the accusation that was now certain to come? But even to the man they suspected of the guilt of blood the juniors gave little thought now, their thoughts were with the man, stricken down by the assassin's hand, and hovering now between life and death.

THE END.

(Whatever you do, chums, don't miss the second story in this grand new "thriller" series, entitled: "THE UNSEEN FOE!" You'll vote it one of Frank Richards' finest yarns.)

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WAKING UP WINKLESEA!

By Dicky Nugent



followers. Only when they had reached the stage itself did they halt.

"Is your name Liekham?" demanded the mayor in a bullying tone.

"That's me, sir," said Mr. Liekham, apologetically. "Mr. I. Jollwell Liekham."

"Well, Mr. I. Jollwell Liekham, I've called for the rent of this here pitch. You owe the Corporation of Winklesea ten pounds six shillings and sixpence—a penny for the last two weeks rent. Unless you dig up here and now, I propose to arrest you in the name of the Law. What are you going to do about it?"

Mr. Liekham, rung his hands in an agony of despair, and looked to the other members of the concert-party. But they shook their heads expressively.

Next moment, before Mr. Liekham could plead for mercy, the mayor turned to the percussion.

"Arrest the miscreant!" he ordered.

"I-I-I wash up!"

The two lines of the law produced handcuffs, and were preparing to carry Mr. Liekham away to dunceville when Jack Jolly & Co. rushed forward.

"Half-a-minute!" said Jack Jolly, calmly. "How much did you say, Mr. Mayor? I believe I heard you say ten pounds six shillings and sixpence—a penny?"

"The exact amount!" nodded the mayor. "But what's it to do with you, you cheeky young cub?"

"Just this!" answered the captain of the Fourth.

And with a flourish, he produced a wad of banknotes and started counting them out into the astonished mayor's grubby hand.

"And that's that!" grinned Jack Jolly, when the mayor and his retinue had departed. "Turning to Mr. Liekham, he said, cheerily: 'How do you do, sir?'"

Mr. Liekham rung Jack's hand warmly. "Jolly!" he cried, with a catch in his voice. "You have saved me from the ghastly treadmill and everlasting disgrace; I thank you from the bottom of my heart."

"Oh, that's all right, sir," said Jack Jolly, cheerfully. "Matter of fact, we're very pleased to see you old fix again."

"It's good of you to say that, my boy," murmured Mr. Liekham. "I daresay you were rather surprised to see me running a peccot-show, weren't you?"

"Just a bit!" grinned Jack Jolly.

"How did it all happen, sir?"

"Well, it's like this here: the school orthotics omitted to pay me my salary before I came away, so in my despair I nashed pite I simply had to do some thing. As I have had previous experience of basking, my thoughts turned hitherly to running a peccot-show."

And here I am."

"Well, you don't seem to be making a very great success of the job," said Jack Jolly, frankly. "How would you like us to give you a helping hand in running the show?"

Mr. Liekham fairly beamed.

"Jolly! Do you really mean that?"

"Every word of it," grinned Jack Jolly. "We're only too glad to help, even't we, you fellows?"

"Yes, rather!" grinned Jack Jolly's loyal followers.

"Then I accept your kind offer with the greatest of pleasure!" said Mr. Liekham deliberately. "Come! Let us all adjourn to the nearest café to discuss details over a cheery glass of jolter-pop!"

And over foaming glasses of liverid refreshment, the juniore and their form-masters eagerly fell to discussing weights and means.

THE END.

(Look out for "JACK JOLLY'S JOINTS" in the next yarn in this seemingly funny series which will appear in next week's "MAGNET".)

THE MAGNET LIBRARY—No. 1,122.

"AN'T we wake things up a bit?"

Jack Jolly, of the Fourth Form at St. Sam's, addressed that question to his pals, Merry and Bright and Fearless, as they sprawled out in deck-chairs on the promenade at Winklesea, where they were spending the tail-end of their summer week.

It was a lovely day, and Jack Jolly and Co., were having a first-rate holiday. But they were beginning to find Winklesea a bit tame. Doodle-bug, no longer seemed to thrill them, and they had reached the stage where they could get their pennies back from all the extortionate machines on the pier. Altogether the excitement seemed to have died out of life.

Merry and Bright and Fearless looked rather reflective after their leader had spoken. They were all beginning to feel a bit bored. Barring a shipwreck on the rocks, and an airplane crash on the sands, nothing had happened that morning. Nothing seemed to happen at Winklesea.

"Can't we wake things up a bit?" repeated Jack Jolly, wistfully.

"Duzzent seem much good trying to wake things up, when everybody's going to the peccot-show on the beach," remarked Merry, jerking his thumb in the direction of the crowds who were strolling down to the sands.

Jack Jolly chuckled.

"Well, why not go and wake up the peccot-show, then?" he invited. "After all they're an awfully dull lot."

"Hear, hear!" grinned Fearless and Merry.

Bright, however, looked a bit dubious. "Better be careful, chaps. I've heard that chap Corkbrow who runs the show is the son of the mayor of the place," he said.

"Who cares tuppence about that?" retorted Jack Jolly, cheerfully. "Corkbrow seems to be a swanky kind of ass from what I've seen of him. I vote we trot along and see what we can do about it. Goe your peashooters, you fellows?"

"Yes, rather!"

"Kim on, then!"

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Of all the dreary seaside resorts Winklesea is about the stickiest limit—until Jack Jolly & Co., the cheery chums of St. Sam's, pop up full of beans—not to mention peas. Then all is jolly, merry and bright!

"Oh, all right, then," And the Co. swallowed their roth for the time being, and followed Clarence Corkbrow down to his peccot-show.

Five minutes later, the performance started.

It was a paneled performance for refined, sensitive chaps like our heroes to listen to. The pianer was cracked, the peccots all sang in different keys, and their jokes were awfully feeble. They trotted out all sorts of ancient songs like "Constantinople," instead of up-to-date songs like "The Lost Chord," and they seemed to prefer vulgar ditties like "Yes, we have no Bananas!" to nice, refined ones like "Boiled Beef and Carrots."

"I'm getting fed up with this, chaps," whispered Jack Jolly, evenly. "What about waking the show up a bit, now?"

"Yes, rather!"

The heroes of St. Sam's got out their peashooters and prepared for action, just as Clarence Corkbrow swaggered to the cracked pianer to sing a song in his awful rasping voice.

It was a nice classic song—the kind of thing that Jack Jolly & Co. rather liked. But they didn't let that fact stand in their way.

"Wait for the corns, chaps," breathed Jack Jolly. "Then let him have it hot and strong!"

The Co. nodded and filled their mouths

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"AN'T we wake things up a bit?"

Jack Jolly, of the Fourth Form at St. Sam's, addressed that question to his pals, Merry and Bright and Fearless, as they sprawled out in deck-chairs on the promenade at Winklesea, where they were spending the tail-end of their summer week.

It was a lovely day, and Jack Jolly and Co., were having a first-rate holiday. But they were beginning to find Winklesea a bit tame. Doodle-bug, no longer seemed to thrill them, and they had reached the stage where they could get their pennies back from all the extortionate machines on the pier. Altogether the excitement seemed to have died out of life.

Merry and Bright and Fearless looked rather reflective after their leader had spoken. They were all beginning to feel a bit bored. Barring a shipwreck on the rocks, and an airplane crash on the sands, nothing had happened that morning. Nothing seemed to happen at Winklesea.

"Can't we wake things up a bit?" repeated Jack Jolly, wistfully.

"Duzzent seem much good trying to wake things up, when everybody's going to the peccot-show on the beach," remarked Merry, jerking his thumb in the direction of the crowds who were strolling down to the sands.

Jack Jolly chuckled.

"Well, why not go and wake up the peccot-show, then?" he invited. "After all they're an awfully dull lot."

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