

The **SECOND PART** of our **FREE GIFT AEROPLANE** inside

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# The MAGNET

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EVERY SATURDAY



*This*  
ISSUE CONTAINS  
**THE PROPELLER**  
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**DRIVING MECHANISM**  
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FREE GIFT  
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FOR THE BEST HOLIDAY YARN OF THE WEEK—SEE INSIDE!

# THE UNSEEN FOE!



## THE FIRST CHAPTER. In the Night!

### MIDNIGHT!

**M** Ravenspur Grange lay buried in silence and slumber. Harry Wharton stirred uneasily, and woke.

He had been dreaming, dreaming of the strange and tragic events that had happened at the Grange since the Greyfriars party had arrived there. Perhaps it was the uneasy dream that had awakened him, or perhaps the chime of twelve from somewhere in the great house.

The August night was warm. The windows of the great room occupied by the Greyfriars fellows, high up in the old building, stood wide open to the night air. High over the park soared the full round moon. The light fell in at the open windows in a flood of silver.

Wharton sat up in bed. "You fellows awake?" he whispered. He did not want to waken his chums, but he would have been glad enough if one of them had been awake.

But there was no answer to his whisper, only the steady breathing of the four juniors, fast asleep.

Wharton sat for a few minutes, and then laid his head on the pillow again. But he could not sleep.

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A sense of oppression was upon him, a strange feeling of impending trouble. He slipped from his bed at last, and moved across to the nearest window, and stood looking out into the bright moonlight.

Under the window, black in the shadow of the house, lay the terrace, far below. Beyond it, bright in the moonlight, the gardens and the drive, and farther, a strange mass of lights and shades, the park. All was still and silent.

From one window below came a glimmer of a dim light. That was the window of Sir Richard Ravenspur's room—the room where the baronet lay in uneasy slumber, or perhaps kept

Sensation has followed sensation at Ravenspur Grange since Harry Wharton & Co. have been there. A man has been killed and the body hidden; a murderous attack has been made on Sir Richard Ravenspur himself; and lastly, the detective in charge of the investigations falls a victim to the haunting terror of the Grange. By whose hand have these mysterious crimes been perpetrated?

awake by the wound inflicted by an unknown hand.

Leaning on the sill amid the masses of clinging ivy, Harry Wharton looked out. Some faint sound from the terrace below reached his ears.

He gazed downward, but where the shadow of the house fell, all was dark, and only the darkness met his eyes.

But he was certain that something was stirring. He listened intently, and in the stillness of the night, the faint sound of footsteps came to his ears.

Wharton felt a throb at his heart. Someone was below—far below—on

the shadowed terrace that ran before the house. Someone who was stirring, while all others slept.

Faintly, but distinctly now that he strained his ears to listen, he heard the footsteps—passing, and re-passing. He listened, perplexed. Twice the life of Sir Richard Ravenspur had been attempted, and the unknown assassin was at large. The thought had come into Wharton's mind, that the footsteps were those of the unknown, that in the hours of darkness, another attempt was to be made. But that could scarcely be. The faint footfalls passed, and passed again, and yet again, and he realised that the unseen man was pacing the long terrace from end to end. It was someone, sleepless like himself, who had gone out into the fresh air of the summer night. Someone, perhaps, keeping watch and ward, lest an attempt should be made to approach the baronet's window in the night.

But Wharton did not feel at ease. He watched from the high window, trying to catch a glimpse of the figure that passed and re-passed below.

The pacing ceased, and a figure emerged into the moonlight, on the wide steps that led down from the terrace.

For some moments, as it descended the steps, it was full in the view of the school-

boy above, and Wharton recognised Captain Ravenspur.

A few moments, and the baronet's brother disappeared into the shadow of the trees.

Wharton's eyes gleamed. It was Cecil Ravenspur who was

awake and abroad at that late hour—the man whom the juniors suspected of the attempt on the baronet's life.

Was it a guilty conscience, fear of accusation, of condemnation, that kept him from sleep? Or was it some desperate and murderous intention?

Yet what could he do? Jervis, Sir Richard's valet, was sitting

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By FRANK RICHARDS.



up by his bedside, watching over his master. Outside the room, the constable from Leyford, whom Inspector Cook had left on duty in the house, was watching. No attempt could be made on the baronet without instant alarm being given.

But Wharton could not feel at ease. He looked from the window, troubled in mind. The captain's tall form had disappeared in the shadows. But as the junior watched, he saw it reappear, and Captain Ravenspur mounted the steps to the terrace again. Wharton had a glimpse of his face in the bright moonlight as he came up; it was white, lined, seamed with brooding care. It was not the face of a man whose mind was at ease.

Straining his ears to listen, Wharton caught the faint sound of a door that opened and closed.

The captain had gone into the house.

Wharton turned away from the window. He glanced at the beds occupied by his chums. Bob Cherry and Johnny Bull, Frank Nugent and Hurree Singh, were sleeping soundly. Wharton crossed to the door, opened it softly, and looking out into the darkness, listened.

There was no sound from below.

The great house was still.

Probably Ravenspur had gone to his room, gone to bed. Even if the junior's suspicion of him was well-founded, what could he do? No one could enter the baronet's room without giving the alarm to the constable in the corridor outside. And Jervis was in the room with Sir Richard. It was surely impossible that even a reckless and desperate man could

be thinking of repeating the attempt on the baronet's life. But Wharton could not dismiss the fear from his mind, and he resolved at last to go down, and make sure that all was safe.

He stepped back into the room, and hastily threw on a few clothes over his pyjamas. He did not wake his comrades. It did not seem worth while to disturb their slumbers for a vague and probably groundless uneasiness in his own mind.

Quietly, he stepped from the room, and groped his way in the darkness towards the stairs.

With his hand on the banisters, he descended the staircase, making no sound with his slippered feet.

The staircase led down to the old oaken gallery that surrounded the ancient oak-panelled hall of Ravenspur Grange. In the hall a light should have been burning, but all was dark now. Inspector Cook had advised that the house should be kept lighted during the night, and Wharton remembered having heard Packington, the butler, giving instructions to the servants. But the light was out now.

Wharton felt his uneasiness intensify.

In darkness, he felt his way to the corridor that led to the baronet's room. In that corridor, a light also should have been burning, but it was dark. Yet the constable was there, the officer whom Inspector Cook had posted to keep watch over the safety of the master of the Grange. It could not be by chance, or accident, that both lights had been turned out. Wharton's heart beat faster as he groped along in the darkness.

What had happened to the constable on duty there? There was no sound from him—no movement. He was there in the darkness—asleep—or—

At the end of the corridor, a high window let in a flood of moonlight. The

silvery glimmer reached as far as the door of the baronet's room.

The door was closed. Outside, on a settee placed back to the wall, was a figure in uniform. The Leyford constable was leaning back, fast asleep. There was a glimmer of moonlight on his unconscious face.

Wharton paused, looking at the unconscious man. The constable was asleep on duty, yet he was a man picked by his inspector, on duty that was a matter of life or death.

Wharton touched him on the shoulder. But the man did not wake. He shook him, and the heavy head sagged a little, but the eyes did not open. The man's breathing was deep and regular, and seemed normal, but he was plunged in a sleep from which no shaking could have awakened him. Wharton realised it, and he released the policeman's shoulder, and stood staring at him, with fear and horror gathering in his heart. It was no natural sleep that held the Leyford officer enchained, and Wharton knew that he must have been drugged. The lights were out—the constable watching over the baronet's safety drugged and insensible—and what was happening in Sir Richard's room?

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## THE SECOND CHAPTER.

### A Deed in the Dark!

**H**ARRY WHARTON stood for a few moments, still, as if frozen with the horror that was stealing over him. There could be no doubt now—what he had seen was proof. In the dark hours, the unknown assassin—whether Cecil Ravenspur or another—was at work, and in those moments the life of Sir Richard Ravenspur was in deadly danger.

It was that thought which roused the schoolboy to action.

He pulled himself together, repressing the eerie dread that was thrilling all his nerves. He shut his teeth hard, and stepped to the door of the baronet's room.

It opened to his touch.

Silently it opened, and Wharton, with staring eyes, looked into the room.

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The night-light, a small shaded electric bulb, burned dimly.

There was no sound.

Wharton stepped into the room, leaving the door ajar. He gazed about him, wondering.

In the great, old-fashioned bed, with its canopy, Sir Richard Ravenspur lay sleeping. Wharton could see his profile, as his head lay on the pillow—the fine, well-cut features, white and worn.

In an armchair drawn to the bedside, sat Jervis, the valet. He, too, was asleep.

Wharton drew a deep breath.

Quietly he stepped into the room towards the bed. Danger threatened, he was certain of that. But whatever it was that threatened, it had not happened yet.

He bent over Jervis.

The valet, a man of about forty, with a smooth, suave, clean-shaven face, slept profoundly. He had been in Sir Richard's service for twenty years, and the baronet trusted him implicitly. Sir Richard himself had chosen him to keep watch by the bedside that night. Yet he was sleeping at his post, like the Leyford constable outside the room.

Wharton shook him by the shoulder.

From a natural sleep, Jervis would have started at once. But it was no natural sleep in which he was sunk. His eyes did not open, and he stirred only under Wharton's hand, and when the junior released him again, he lay still, leaning back like a log in the chair.

"Drugged!" muttered Wharton.

It was only too certain. Two men, who should have been wakeful, and watching over the safety of the master of the Grange, were plunged in sleep from which it was impossible to wake them, and Sir Richard, lying bandaged in his bed, was at the mercy of the unknown assassin. They had been drugged—there could be no doubt of that. And that was a proof of what was already more than suspected—that the assassin was one of the household of the Grange—no other could have administered the drug to the constable and the valet. The junior thought of Captain Ravenspur, and his eyes gleamed. The man had been pacing the terrace, uneasy, unquiet, while he had waited for the drug to work, while he waited till all was sure. It seemed certain to Wharton, as he stood there, gazing at the insensible valet. Now, at any moment, the assassin might come—with nothing, as he believed, to stand between him and the accomplishment of his object.

Sir Richard Ravenspur was sleeping soundly. It was probable that Dr. Wood had given him a sleeping-draught. He was not likely to wake—till the fatal blow was struck.

Harry Wharton breathed hard, his heart throbbing. He was alone, unarmed, a schoolboy, matched against a desperate man when he came. He thought rapidly. To call his chums—that meant leaving Sir Richard at the mercy of his enemy, if only for a few minutes. And one minute might be enough! To shout from the door and awaken the household—even then help might not come in time—the assassin might be at the door in that very moment. But that was the best he could do, he realised that. To alarm the household, to awaken all those within hearing—

He caught his breath and, for a moment, his heart missed a beat. No sound reached him, no faintest footfall, but where the door stood ajar, a hand reached into the room, a slim, long, white hand.

Wharton's eyes fixed on it, spell-bound,

Only for a second he saw it, then the hand touched the lighting switch, there was the faintest of clicks, and the room was plunged into instant darkness.

Wharton stood still, his heart beating to suffocation.

The unknown was there!

There, at the door of the room of the man whose life he sought—there, in the darkness, with only a schoolboy between him and his victim.

There was the faintest of sounds as the heavy door swung farther open on its well-oiled hinges. The faintest of footfalls as an unseen figure crossed the room towards the canopied bed, faint footfalls of a man who knew well the interior of the room, and who came direct towards his objective, swiftly, without a pause, in dense darkness.

Wharton shut his teeth hard, and clenched his hands.

Like a blacker shadow amid blackness, something loomed in the darkness, and Wharton, striking desperately with both fists, felt them crash on an unseen form, and there was a breathless gasp from the man he had struck.

The black shadow seemed to reel for a second in the surprise of that unexpected attack. The next second, hands were on Wharton in the darkness.

But in that second, a wild and desperate shout had pealed from the

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junior's lips, ringing far and wide through the sleeping house.

"Help!"

Then he was struggling.

He heard a gasping breath from his assailant, but that was all. No word—no sound of a voice he might have known. But the powerful grip that was on him told him one thing, at least; it was a young man in whose hands he was fighting for his life. A young man, and a powerful one, and not the slightest doubt was in his mind that it was Captain Ravenspur.

"Help!" shrieked Wharton a second time, as he struggled madly with the unseen figure in the darkness.

A grip was on his throat, choking back the cry he would have repeated. But from somewhere in the house came the sound of an opening door.

The alarm was given!

The grip on Wharton's throat relaxed, the grasp on him was gone. He stood, panting, reeling, dizzy, and then he understood that the unseen man, alarmed, fearful for his own safety, was retreating. The junior's presence in the baronet's room must have taken him utterly by surprise, and his attack had come with the viciousness of a startled wild beast; but with the schoolboy's desperate cry ringing through the house, he realised that he had no moment to lose, if he was to escape undiscovered. Wharton understood—he knew that the assassin was gliding swiftly back to the door by which he had entered, and he rushed desperately in pursuit. To grasp him, to hold him, if but for a minute, till help came—till there was a light,

There was a crash as Wharton came in contact with the invisible figure, a few feet from the doorway.

"Help!" shrieked Wharton, as he grasped at it. "Help! Oh, help!"

He heard a snarl.

The figure turned on him again—a hand caught him—and then something crashed on his head, and his senses spun. For an instant, a thousand wild lights danced before Wharton's eyes as he staggered under the crashing blow from a heavy weapon; then he crashed to the floor, senseless, and all was darkness.

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### THE THIRD CHAPTER.

#### The Hand of a Ravenspur!

"HARRY!"

Frank Nugent's voice, coming as it seemed faintly through veiling mists, was the first thing of which Wharton was conscious.

He stirred.

His eyes opened, staring wildly. He was in bed—a shaded light burned—the surroundings were familiar to his eyes. His head felt wet, and it ached terribly. Had he been dreaming? Recollection told him of his groping down the dark staircase, of a struggle in the dark in the sick man's room, yet here he was, in bed, with his chums gathered round the bedside—other figures, dimmer, in the background. What had happened? Was that fearful experience nothing but a dream?

"Harry! Keep still, old chap!" whispered Nugent.

"What—" muttered Wharton.

"You've had a knock! The doctor's here—keep still."

Then it was no dream. Frank was kneeling by the bedside, his anxious eyes on his chum. Behind him, Wharton made out the plump figure of Dr. Wood, the doctor from Leyford. Then he must have been unconscious a long time; it must have taken some time to bring the medical man from Leyford. He tried to think, but his brain was whirling. He felt bandages on his head—he recalled that cruel, crashing blow. He had been stunned, and his senses were slowly emerging from the mist.

"Sir Richard—" Wharton barely articulated the words. "Is he safe?"

"Quite safe!"

"You're sure?" muttered Wharton.

"Quite sure, old chap—the police are watching him now—"

"Better not speak, my boy," came Dr. Wood's voice, sounding strangely far away in Wharton's ears. "Rest awhile; you can speak later!"

Wharton lay silent.

The pain in his head was cruel and searching. But he felt the relief of knowing that the baronet was safe. He had, at least, saved Sir Richard Ravenspur from the assassin's hand.

Another voice spoke, a voice Wharton knew. It was that of Inspector Cook. So the inspector was there, too! Hours, perhaps, had elapsed since he had been struck down in Sir Richard's room.

"You think I'd better not speak to the boy, sir?"

"Give him time, Mr. Cook." It was the doctor's voice. "He has had a hard blow—a severe shock! Give him time."

"I will wait."

Wharton uttered no word. But he felt his brain clearing more and more, his faculties reasserting themselves. Sir Richard was safe—it was evident that Wharton's cries for help had been

heard and answered. The assassin had struck him down to make his own escape, but had had no time to carry out his deadly purpose. But had he escaped?

His eyes turned on Nugent's face. Frank was white, almost haggard, with anxiety. Harry smiled faintly.

"It's all right, old chap," he whispered. "Only a knock! I'll be as right as rain soon."

He made a movement to lift his head. The throb of pain that followed made him sink back.

"Quiet, old fellow!" whispered Nugent.

Minutes passed—how many Wharton never knew. Many minutes—perhaps half an hour before he spoke again. But he spoke at last.

"Did they get him?"

"Who, old chap?"

"The man in Sir Richard's room."

"Jervis—"

"The man who struck me down."

"No one was found with you there, old fellow. Only Sir Richard and Jervis—both fast asleep."

"Then he got away?" muttered

and recognised him—stirring at that hour of the night?"

"I will swear it."

"There is no need to question the boy on that point," broke in another voice, in cool, incisive tones. "I walked on the terrace till past midnight, Mr. Cook—I could not sleep." Wharton realised that it was Cecil Ravenspur speaking. "I let myself into the house again at about a quarter past twelve, I think, and went to my room."

"I am questioning Wharton now, Captain Ravenspur," said the inspector, in icy tones. "I shall be glad to take your statement later."

"As you please!" came the careless reply; and though Wharton could not see the speaker, he knew that Cecil Ravenspur shrugged his shoulders.

"It was because you saw Captain Ravenspur on the terrace that you went downstairs, Master Wharton?"

"Partly that," said Harry, "but I was uneasy, anyhow. I think I should have gone down in any case. The lights were turned out—"

"I saw for only a second, as the light went out," said Harry. "I could not say that I should know it again."

"We shall see." Mr. Cook's voice showed that he had found, at least, some slight cause for satisfaction. "Was it a large hand—a rough or coarse hand, for instance?"

"No. I am not sure of that."

"A white hand—a carefully kept hand?" asked the inspector. "The hand of a man unaccustomed to manual labour?"

"Yes, I can say that much."

"That is something," said Mr. Cook. "That may be much. If you can, my boy, try to recall it more clearly."

Wharton was silent for some minutes. He was trying to visualise, mentally,



Wharton, disappointed.

"He must have."

"He was not even seen?"

"No."

"The boy can speak now, doctor!" came Inspector Cook's voice.

The Leyford official was eager, impatient, to hear what the junior could tell him.

Apparently the doctor assented, for the Leyford inspector came to the bedside, Nugent standing aside for him. The police-inspector's keen, searching eyes rested on the pallid face on the pillow.

"Do you feel able to tell me what happened, now, Master Wharton?" he asked.

"Yes, yes," breathed Wharton. "I want to tell you! It was someone in the house—I think it was—"

He broke off. Not a glimpse had he had of the figure with which he had grappled in the dark, and it was unfair to say that he believed that it was Cecil Ravenspur, though the belief was deeply rooted in his mind.

"You went down to Sir Richard's room—"

"Yes, yes."

"What made you go down?"

"I woke up," said Harry in a low voice; "that was midnight. I saw Captain Ravenspur walking on the terrace—"

The inspector started slightly.

"Sir Richard's brother?"

"Yes."

"You are sure that you saw him—"

"It was understood that the lights were to be left on," said Mr. Cook.

"You are sure they were out?"

"Yes. I groped my way to Sir Richard's room, feeling that something was wrong. I found the constable asleep—"

"He is still sleeping," said Mr. Cook grimly, "and Jervis has not yet awakened. Both have been drugged. You have no doubt about that, Dr. Wood?"

"None whatever," came the doctor's voice.

"I guessed so," said Harry; "I could not waken them. I was going to alarm the house, when—when—" He shuddered. "Someone reached into the room and turned off the light, and crept towards Sir Richard's bed. I struck at him, and struggled with him—and then—"

"You were struck on the head, and stunned," said Mr. Cook. "This struggle that you describe took place in the dark?"

"Yes."

"Then you saw nothing of the man?" exclaimed Mr. Cook, in a tone of deep disappointment.

"Nothing," said Harry. "Only the hand that reached in at the door, and turned the light off at the switch."

"That is something. A description of a hand is something," said Mr. Cook.



So swiftly did the stranger come out of the ruined lodge that he almost ran into Harry Wharton & Co. before seeing them. "What do you boys want?" he snapped. "We want to know who you are, and what you're doing here?" answered Wharton. (See Chapter 6.)

the hand that had slipped in at the door and turned off the light. In his mind's eye he could see it again; it was burned on his brain like a living picture. He spoke again at last.

"It was a slim hand," he said. "A slim and well-kept hand. I am certain of that. It was like—like—"

"Like a hand you have seen?"

Wharton felt the hush in the room, as the inspector waited for his answer. He answered slowly.

"Yes. It was like Sir Richard Ravenspur's own hand—or—the hand of a relation of his."

"The Ravenspur hand!" said Mr. Cook, with a note of exultation in his voice. "Slim, white, with rather long fingers—"

"Yes, yes."

"It could not, of course, have been Sir Richard's hand, as he was sleeping in bed. The hand of another Ravenspur."

Wharton did not answer. There was only the baronet's brother in the house, who bore the name of Ravenspur. But in his heart, there was the conviction that it was the captain's hand he had seen. He had not thought of it at the moment, but he thought of it now, and was sure of it. The Ravenspur hand was distinctive, slim, white, with long fingers—the hand of an artist. It was THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 1,123.

from his Ravenspur blood that Frank Nugent derived the delicate white hands that had often been remarked on in the Greyfriars Remove. Wharton could have sworn that it was the hand of one of the Ravenspur blood that he had seen switch off the light in the baronet's room.

The silence was broken by the mocking, cynical voice of Captain Ravenspur.

"Why not ask the boy directly whether it was my hand he saw? That is in your mind, Mr. Cook."

The Leyford inspector made no rejoinder to that remark. Wharton's eyes turned on the figure of the captain, standing a little distance back. Cecil Ravenspur was cool, calm, sardonic, as Wharton had seen him before. If he realised that he stood in danger it had no effect on his nerves.

A gleam came into the junior's eyes as he looked at him. No shadow of doubt was in his mind that it was Cecil Ravenspur with whom he had struggled in the darkness in the baronet's room.

The captain met his glance and smiled ironically.

"It was not I, my boy," he said lightly. "I see the thought in your face; but it was not I. I was awakened by your cries, and came—with five or six others. That is all I know."

"You can tell me no more, Master Wharton?" asked the inspector, taking no heed of the captain.

"No, sir."  
"Very well. I had hoped that you might have seen the man; but at least you have been able to tell me something. Rest now, my lad—you need rest."

There was a movement in the room. Something was placed to Wharton's lips, and he drank. His head sank on the pillow, and he slept again.

## THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

### Guilty or Innocent?

**C**APTAIN RAVENSPUR lounged in a deep leather arm-chair in the smoke-room, his long legs stretched on another chair, a cigar between his teeth. The sun of an August morning glowed in at the windows; but the hour was yet early.

In spite of the earliness of the hour, Cecil Ravenspur was smoking a black Trichinopoli cigar, and sipping from a glass which stood on a little table at his elbow.

The captain, evidently, was a careless man in matters of health. As he lounged in the chair, smoking the cigar, and staring at the sunlit windows, his brow was darkly lined and clouded. Save for himself the room was empty; and Cecil Ravenspur, alone, had dropped his cloak of cool insouciance, and his look showed him a man on whose shoulders sat black care. His hard, reckless, clouded face looked old in the bright sunlight of the summer morning.

Cecil Ravenspur was a young man, not yet out of the thirties; many years younger than his brother, the baronet. But that morning he looked old and worn.

Innocent or guilty, the baronet's brother was in a position that might have given any man food for painful thought. Dark despondency made his face almost haggard as he sat there. That the Greyfriars juniors suspected him, that their suspicion was shared by the Leyford inspector, the captain knew only too well; and he knew, too, that his brother struggled hard against suspicion, without being quite able to overcome it. Even Sir Richard's unsuspicious, trusting mind was tinged with doubt.

But as the door moved, the dark despondency vanished from the captain's face, the cloud from his brow, the limpness from his lounging figure. As Inspector Cook entered the room, he did not see the man of a moment before, bowed down by black care. He saw a cool, debonair, Army man, lazily smoking a cigar, with a half-mocking smile on his lips.

Whatever he was, whatever he might be, Cecil Ravenspur was not the man to wear his heart upon his sleeve. No searching eye was ever to be allowed to discover a chink in his armour.

His lazy glance turned towards the

"Cela va sans dire!" drawled the captain.

"What?"

"Excuse me," said Cecil Ravenspur, with insulting politeness. "I forgot that you are probably unacquainted with French. I remarked that that goes without sayin'."

"English is good enough for me, sir!" said Mr. Cook, breathing harder. "It may please you to treat this matter in a jesting spirit, Captain Ravenspur; but you will not find others regarding the attempted murder of your brother as a jest."

Captain Ravenspur's face became grave.

"That is no jest to me, Mr. Cook," he said. "But your childish suspicions of me personally are undoubtedly a jest. How else can I regard them?"

"We shall see!" said the Leyford inspector. "I have stated no suspicions, so far—"

"There is no person in the house, from the butler to the kitchen maids, unacquainted with them, I think," said the captain disdainfully.

"Let us keep to the point, sir! An attack was made on your brother last night, or intended—only the intervention of a schoolboy saved his life. That is clear. The boy saw nothing of the intended murderer but his hand—a hand that had all the characteristics of the Ravenspur hand."

"Imagination goes a long way with an excited and frightened boy," said the captain.

"The boy no doubt was excited, but he certainly was not frightened, as he tackled a man whom he knew to be a dangerous villain, and whom he must have guessed to be armed."

"A plucky lad, certainly," assented the captain. "A lad I should like—had he not made up his foolish mind that I am an intended fraticide."

"I should like to know exactly what occurred in this house last night, from your own experience, sir?"

"That is soon told. After strolling on the terrace, and in the gardens, for some time, I let myself in, and went to bed. Having tired myself out with walking, I naturally slept."

"And you were awakened—"

"By cries for help," assented the captain. "I ran from my room at once, and was, I think, the first to reach my brother's room. Packington, the butler, and James, the footman, were close behind me, however, and, I think, five or six other persons not far away."

"You found Wharton—"

"I switched on the light, finding the room in darkness, and saw the boy lying senseless on the floor. Others saw him at almost the same second," added the captain, his voice rising a little. "Packington was at my very elbow."

"You saw no one leaving Sir Richard's room?"

"No one."

"Yet you must have been on the spot, very quickly after the boy was struck down and stunned."

"The corridor was dark—except for the moonlight at the window. The light was turned on, by Packington, I think, as he followed me." The captain gave a shrug of the shoulders. "No one else saw anyone leaving my

(Continued on page 8.)

## OUR LONG-DISTANCE MODEL AEROPLANE.

The envelope enclosed in this issue of the **MAGNET** contains the following items, which will enable you to complete our Great Gift Aeroplane: Two small eyelets, one large eyelet, two propeller blades, one propeller shaft, one axle, one rear skid and hook, one propeller bearing, one propeller washer, and one length of elastic.

If you missed last week's Free Gift Number, you can obtain it, together with the plane ready for assembling, from **THE MAGNET**, Back Number Dept., Bear Alley, Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4, enclosing 3d. in stamps to cover cost of postage. But you must apply quickly.

ruddy inspector from Leyford, but he gave no other sign of having observed his entrance. He had no politeness to waste upon an official whom he regarded, or affected to regard, as an obtuse blunderer.

Inspector Cook came across to him, a faint flush in his cheeks, a glitter in his eyes. He felt the contempt that the Army man was at no pains to conceal, and it stung him deeply. Certainly, the inspector, in summing up the matter, was not likely to err on the side of leniency towards Cecil Ravenspur. As if from sheer, reckless bravado, the captain seemed to delight in stirring the police-inspector's dislike and distrust, careless if it added to the danger in which he undoubtedly stood.

"A few words with you, sir, if you have the time," said Mr. Cook, breathing heavily.

"I am quite at your service," said the captain. "Naturally, you desire a statement from me. I believe you have taken one from every other person in the house already."

"I have my duty to do, sir," said Mr. Cook.

"Oh, quite!" yawned the captain.

"No trace, sir, has yet been discovered of the unknown person who entered Sir Richard's room last night," said Mr. Cook. "But there can be no doubt that it was the same person who fired at him yesterday, and inflicted the wound from which he is still suffering."

# The "Magnet" FREE GIFT AEROPLANE

By F. J. CAMM (Designer of the Model).

**T**HE envelope in this issue contains all the parts necessary to complete the MAGNET aeroplane, the cardboard parts for which were given away with every copy of last week's issue, and you can now start to fit the bearing. You will remember that in last week's article instructions were given for packing the nose of the model with a piece of cork, and the reason for this will now be seen, for it provides a firm support for the bearing and prevents the elastic when it is fully wound from buckling the card.

The position of the bearing is clearly marked by means of dotted lines at the point B on fuselage; it passes underneath the cardboard, and it will, therefore, be necessary for you to slit the card with the tip of the blade of a pocket knife and

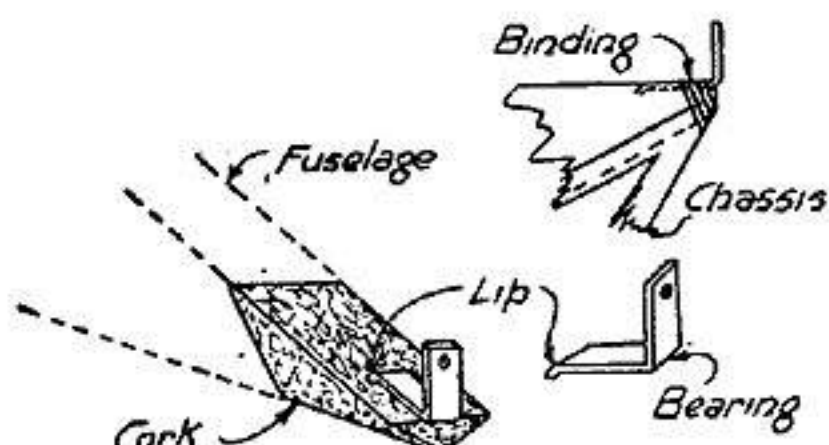


Fig. 1. The bearing assembly, showing the lip formed in the bearing and the cork nose piece.

carefully to push the bearing under the card. So that the bearing may not move, the end which passes underneath the nose of the fuselage has a slight lip formed in it, and this is best done by means of a pair of pliers or pincers. If these do not happen to be handy, hold the bearing over the edge of the table and tap it down slightly with the back of the scissors. The bearing is also bent up at right angles, and it may be so bent in exactly the same manner. It is bent exactly at its centre.

Having made the two bends and slit the card to receive the bearing, smear it with croid, pass it inside the nose, and bind round the nose with carpet thread further to secure it, also smearing the binding with croid. The bearing assembly is shown in Fig. 1.

The rear skid is the hook with a straight tail to it, and this straight tail is pushed through the fuselage just in front of the

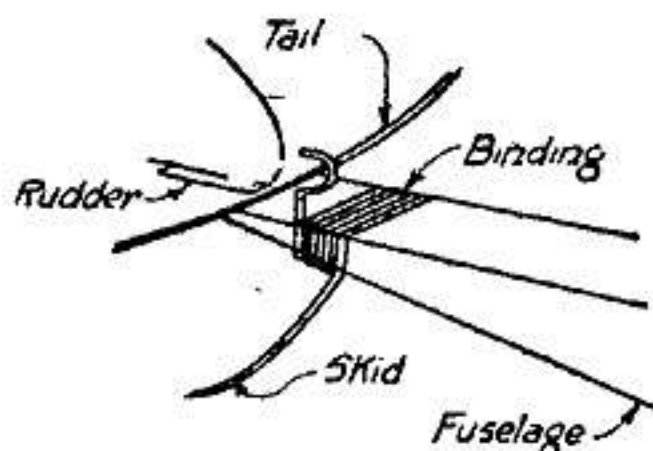


Fig. 2. How the rear skid is bent and fixed.

tail at the point marked A. Then bend it back in line with the bottom edge of the fuselage, as shown in Fig. 2, and bind it with carpet thread, which should be smeared with glue to secure it.

After it is bound into position the projecting end should be bent back with the fingers to form a tail skid, as clearly shown in Fig. 2.

The axle is the straight piece of wire, and before it is passed through the two limbs of the chassis it is bent to the shape shown in Fig. 3. When this is done, prick holes through the white holes on the lower end of each limb of the chassis, and pass the axle through them and the wheels over each projecting end of the axle, and then bend the ends down as shown in detail in Fig. 4. Spin the wheels a few times, to make certain that they run quite freely, and see that the wheels are quite upright, so that the model runs truly along the floor.

And now we come to the propeller, upon the correct making of which much depends, for all the care which has been expended in making the fuselage, wings, and other parts will be of little avail if the propeller is carelessly made and does not convert the power of the elastic into useful work or power.

In last week's issue of the MAGNET we showed you how to put together the cardboard parts of our Great Free Gift Aeroplane, designs for which were given away with every number. In this present issue will be found an envelope containing the necessary fittings with which to complete the plane, ready for flight, as described here.

First of all examine Fig. 5 and obtain a fair idea of its construction. You will see that it consists of two blades, held together by one large eyelet and two small eyelets. The large eyelet is passed through the centre hole of one of the blades, and then the propeller shaft has its closed end passed over the projecting end of the eyelet.

Now take the second blade and pass this over the eyelet, taking care to see that the hooked end of the propeller shaft protrudes from the straight edges of the propeller blades.

Next press the two small eyelets through the two holes provided for them, and spread the ends of the eyelets with a circular movement of the end of a penholder or any other similar blunt, tapering instrument. Lay the propeller on a hard, flat surface, such as the face of a flat-iron, and gently hammer over the eyelets until they are thoroughly clinched, making certain that the centre eyelet, which holds the propeller shaft, is quite tight and holds the shaft securely. This done, we are now ready to bend the blades—an important operation which must be carefully carried out. The blades are made of vulcanised fibre, which can be bent quite cold without breaking; also, it is immensely strong and practically unbreakable.

Fig. 6 shows front, back and side, views of the propeller, and a careful study of these will enable you to bend the propeller to

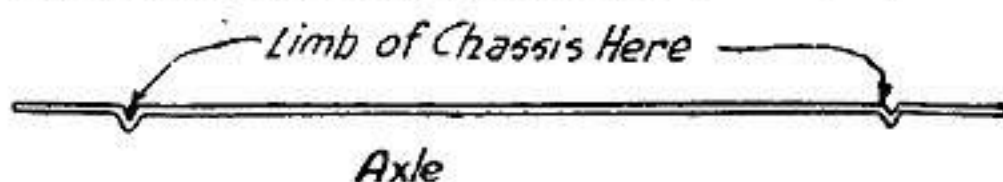


Fig. 3. How to bend the axle.

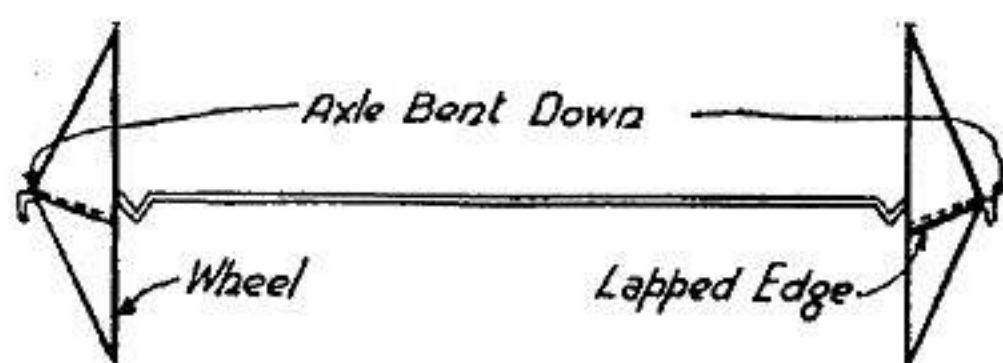


Fig. 4. The finished axle.

its correct shape. Avoid all sharp bends and see that both blades are bent to exactly the same shape, but in opposite directions. View along the tips of the blades and ascertain whether the angle each makes with the shaft is identical; this is important. Only one blade should be bent at a time, and it must be remembered that it must be bent to form a tractor airscrew. To effect this the edge remote from the shaft is bent towards the edge nearest the shaft.

Do not be satisfied until the propeller is identical in every way with Fig. 6; the material bonds easily and errors may easily be corrected. When certain that the propeller is correctly shaped, pass the small brass washer over the shaft and pass the latter through the bearing, when the model is ready to receive the elastic.

A loop must be formed in each end of this, and an assistant

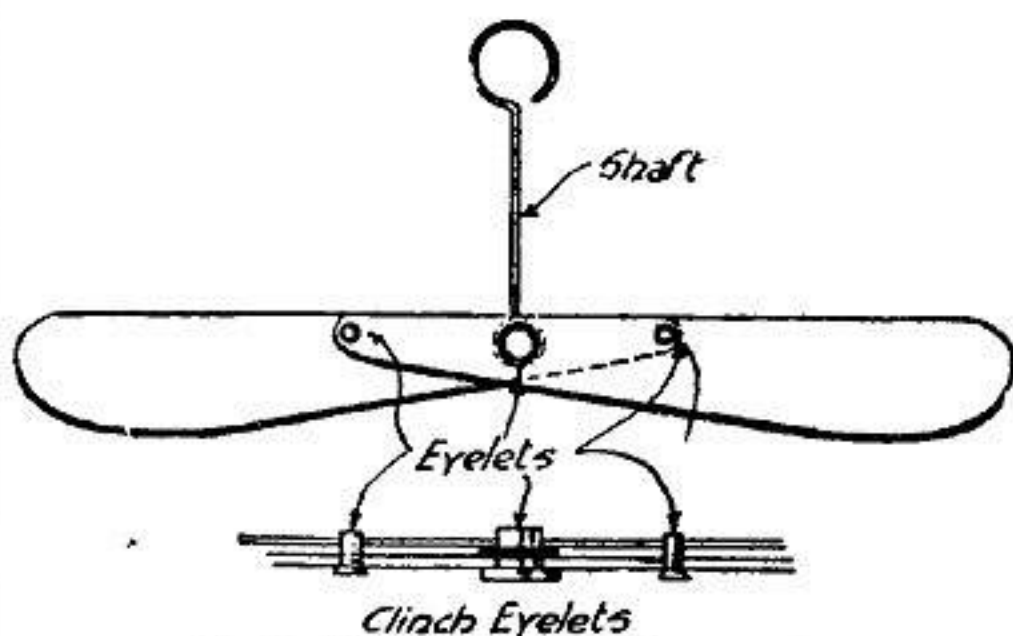


Fig. 5. How to assemble the propeller.

will be required to stretch this loop while you lash it over and over with carpet thread. Now make it into a skein of four strands and connect it to the propeller shaft, through the king-posts and over the rear hook. The elastic must be smeared with soft soap to enable the strands to slide over one another and enable the full number of turns to be given to the skein.

The elastic will soon break if you fail to keep it lubricated with soft soap. It is worth remembering that when it *does* break (and this should not be until many dozens of flights have been made) it may be made serviceable again by getting one of your friends to lap the two fractured ends over one another and to stretch them while you bind them with carpet thread.

Smear some vaseline over the bearing hole to make the propeller run as easily as possible, and wind the propeller a few times and let it run down, so that it wears a smooth seating on the bearing.

The construction is now complete, but before we are ready to make a trial flight it is well worth while going over the model to see that the wings are true, the rudder quite upright, the tail flat, the propeller correctly bent, and that the whole model is trim and shipshape.

Satisfied on this score, and provided the day is not too windy (it must be remembered that the model only weighs an ounce), take it out into a meadow, wind the propeller one hundred times in the same direction as the hands of a clock rotate, hold the model on an even keel well above the head, and lightly thrust it forward, when it should fly for about a dozen yards and gracefully land. If a light wind is blowing, launch it *against* the wind, not with it.

If the model flies at the first attempt, increase the number

of turns on the propeller to 150 and on each subsequent flight by fifty turns, until the full number of 400 turns is reached. The full number of turns should not be applied at once, as new elastic requires to be "broken in" gradually. Don't forget to lubricate the elastic now and again and to vaseline the bearing.

Don't be disappointed if the model fails to fly at the first attempt, for if it has been correctly assembled a slight adjustment will put it right.

If it just flutters to the ground in a lifeless sort of manner it is a sure sign that the propeller is insufficiently bent, and attention to this detail will remedy matters.

In the event of the model diving to the ground, bend the elevator flaps of the tail up slightly; they do not require to be bent up more than an eighth of an inch.

Perhaps the model will swerve sharply to the right or to the left. In this case the rudder should be bent to the left or to the right, as the case may be. The rudder will affect the line of flight of the model in exactly the same way that the rudder of a boat affects its line of travel, and, as the rudder is fixed fairly high above the centre line of the model, only a very slight movement of it is necessary.

If the model flies very steeply banked, make quite sure that the wings are true. Sight along them to see that the front and rear edges are quite in line with one another. Attention to the

tension of the bracing threads will correct any inaccuracy.

I have endeavoured in this article to anticipate every difficulty which the reader may encounter; but should he not be able to follow the instructions, helpful advice will be forthcoming if he addresses a letter to the Editor of the MAGNET.

Here's wishing you every success with your model, chum.

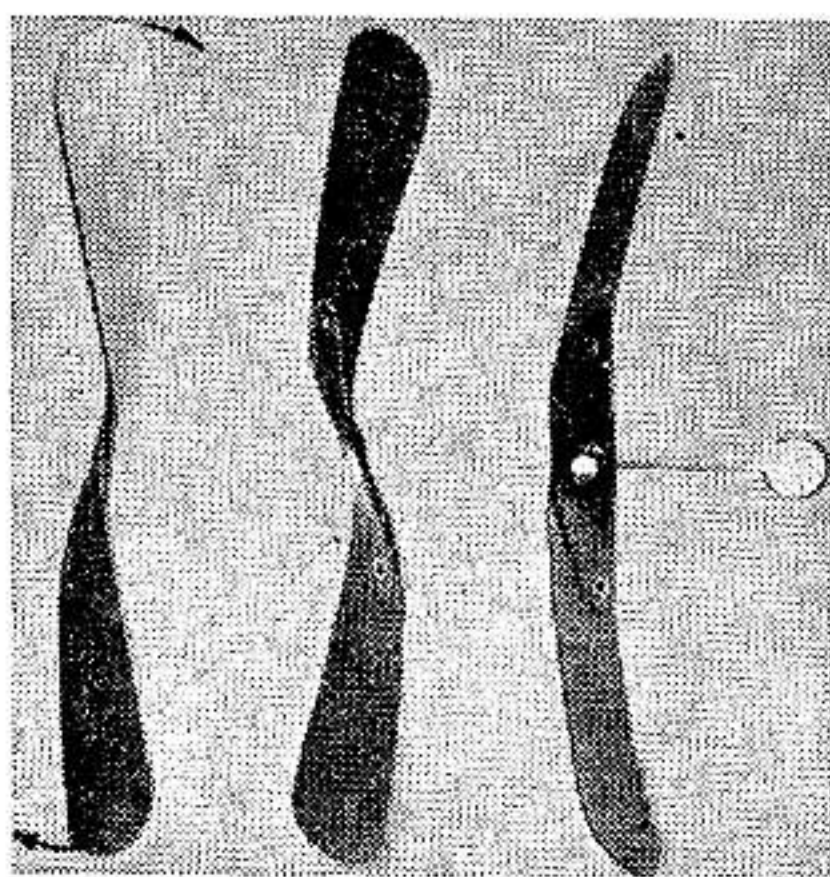


Fig. 6. A photo taken of the actual propeller, showing front, side, and rear views, bent to the correct angles.

## THE UNSEEN FOE!

(Continued from page 6.)

brother's room, either, sir. Bear that in mind."

"It is fairly well established, sir, that Sir Richard's unknown assailant is a member of this household," said Mr. Cook. "He may, therefore, have affected to be hastening towards the room in response to the cries for help, when in reality he had just quitted it."

"Very likely!" assented the captain. "But such a circumstance points as much, I presume, to the butler, the footman, and several others, as to me, Mr. Cook."

"No doubt!" said the inspector dryly.

The captain set his lips a little.

"I read your thoughts, sir," he said sardonically. "You are thinking that the butler, the footman, and the others will not inherit a title and ten thousand a year if Sir Richard should die."

"My thoughts are my own, sir," said the inspector, a little taken aback.

"Oh, quite! But since you do not deny that such thoughts were in your mind, may I point out a weak spot in the chain of reasoning?" sneered the captain. "I am the heir presumptive to the title and estates of Ravenspur; but if my nephew Edgar still lives, as is quite likely, title and estates go to him in the event of Sir Richard's death." He smiled sarcastically. "I can assure you, sir, that I have tried to raise money, in vain, on my prospects as my brother's heir. The moneylenders desire to be assured that Edgar Ravenspur is dead before they will lend on my prospects; and I can give them no such assurance."

The inspector was silent.

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"As Edgar's father was my elder brother, nearer Sir Richard's age than my own, I presume that I need not inform you that, if he lives, he is Sir Richard's heir?" drawled the captain.

"He is supposed to be dead," said Mr. Cook. "I understand that he went abroad years ago, that no word has ever been received from him, and that he is believed to be dead."

"The wish being father to the thought," smiled the captain. "He was a scapegrace and a wastrel, a disgrace to the name of Ravenspur. Not unlike his Uncle Cecil," he added coolly, "but tarred with a blacker brush. Whether he lives no one knows for certain; but if he lives, Sir Richard's death would undoubtedly draw him back from the ends of the earth; and my crime, if I were to commit such a crime, would be purely for his benefit." The captain yawned. "It is as well to bear that in mind, Mr. Cook, before you determine that I have planned Sir Richard's death for the sake of his inheritance."

There was a long silence in the smoke-room. The captain's words seemed to have given Mr. Cook food for thought. Like all who lived near the Grange and knew the Ravenspur family, he had always looked on the captain as heir to his brother, if Sir Richard remained unmarried, which was likely enough at the baronet's age. Sir Richard certainly treated his younger brother as his prospective heir. Yet it certainly was the case that the death of Edgar Ravenspur had never been proved; and that if he lived, title and estates would go to him, leaving the captain what he was now, a penniless dependant on the master of the Grange.

Captain Ravenspur smoked his cigar, looking over the curling smoke at the thoughtful, puzzled face of the Leyford inspector. It was plain that he had, to

some extent, given the inspector a shock.

"Are there any more questions?" the captain asked at last. "This is my hour for riding, sir, when you are done with me."

"You do not admit that you can tell me anything more?"

"There is nothing more to tell, so far as I am concerned."

The inspector's eyes narrowed at him.

"How do you account for the fact that when the servants saw you at the door of your brother's room last night you were fully dressed?" he jerked out.

"You have told me that you left your bed, awakened by cries for help—"

The captain laughed.

"It is easily explained, sir! I had tired myself out with walking, as I said, and threw myself on my bed without undressing."

The inspector was silent again.

"Someone in this household administered a drug to the constable on duty and to Jervis, Sir Richard's man," he said at last.

"It appears so."

"I have now been able to question them," said the inspector. "Neither can throw any light on the matter; and it would appear that the drug was somehow introduced into their food or drink at supper. You can give me no hint as to who may have introduced it?"

"None! That is hardly within my purview," said the captain. "Packington may be able to help you there."

He yawned and rose.

"May I suggest that there is one slight matter you have forgotten, sir?" he asked, with a sneer.

Inspector Cook started.

"What have I forgotten, if you please?" he jerked out.

"I have had no experience, of course, as a detective officer," smiled the captain, "but I believe it is a rule, when

questioning a suspected person, to warn him that anythin' he may say may be taken down to be used in evidence against him. You have omitted the usual warnin', sir."

The inspector flushed red.

"I have taken your statement, sir, as a member of Sir Richard Ravenspur's household, not as that of a suspected person!" he snapped.

"Then I am to take it that I am not under suspicion?" asked Captain Cecil Ravenspur, in a tone of bitter raillery.

"Officially, no!" said the inspector, after a pause.

"Unofficially, yes!" smiled the captain. "I understand, sir! I will leave you now to your mare's nests and wild-goose chases; only suggesting that the attempted murderer of my brother is probably laughin' at you, sir, while you are playing the fool!"

With that Captain Ravenspur swung out of the smoke-room, leaving the Leyford inspector staring after him and trembling with rage.

## THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

### In Sir Richard's Room!

**P**ACKINGTON, the butler, gave his deferential cough as he stood in the doorway of Sir Richard Ravenspur's room.

It was the afternoon, and Sir Richard sat up in bed, propped on pillows and cushions, his fine old face pale and worn. The glancing bullet that had struck him the night before, fired from the terrace into the library, had not, after all, inflicted a severe injury. But the baronet was confined to his room, and it was likely to be some days, at least, before he was able to leave it.

Jervis, who was acting as nurse to his master, was in the room; and Harry Wharton & Co. were there at the present moment. Sir Richard had sent for them, aware now that he owed his life to Wharton's intervention in the night.

He was speaking to Harry, who sat by the bedside with his head still bandaged, when the butler appeared.

The baronet glanced towards Packington. The butler, with his silent tread and his slight limp, came into the room.

"If you will excuse me, Sir Richard—"

"What is it, Packington?"

"I have taken a telephone call from Dr. Wood, sir," said the butler, in his quiet, deferential tones.

"Yes?"

"Dr. Wood is calling again this evening, sir," said Packington. "But he has telephoned that he is sending his assistant this afternoon."

"I did not expect a call from the doctor this afternoon, Packington."

"No, sir; but Dr. Wood stated that he thought it best to let his assistant, Mr. Payne, call—"

"Very well!" said Sir Richard.

"Mr. Payne will be here at four o'clock, sir," said the butler. "No doubt you will desire me to show him up when he comes."

"Certainly, Packington!"

"Very good, sir!"

The butler made a movement to go.

Sir Richard Ravenspur detained him with a gesture.

"One moment, Packington! Is Captain Ravenspur in the house?"

"No, sir; he has gone out in the car," answered Packington.

"Very well."

The butler noiselessly disappeared.

Sir Richard turned to the juniors again. It seemed to them that he was relieved to learn that his brother was

absent. That day, they knew, the captain had not come to his room, and it looked as if he was avoiding it.

That was easy to understand, if he was a guilty man. But it was easy to understand, too, if he felt himself the object of undeserved suspicion. The juniors knew, and the captain knew, that doubt had crept into the baronet's mind. It was quite certain that if the captain was an innocent man, circumstances were very much against him; and that his own careless thoughtlessness was calculated to make the circumstances look blacker.

"My boys," said Sir Richard, in a low but steady voice, "yesterday I asked you to leave my house, offended by your suspicion of my brother. On that point I will say nothing; but I will say that if you care to remain my guests, I shall be glad—very glad and comforted. I know how much I owe to you, Wharton—last night you saved my life. And you, Frank—"

"We shall be glad to stay, uncle," said Nugent earnestly, "until this horrible mystery is cleared up—until you are safe—"

"I am not sure that I desire it to be cleared up," said the baronet, with a contraction of the brow. "If the result should be an indelible stain on the name of Ravenspur, I could find it in my heart to wish that the assassin's bullet had gone to its mark." He checked himself. "But you boys were on a holiday tour, and to stay in this house of mystery and gloom and crime—are you prepared to do that?"

"We want to stay, sir!" said Harry Wharton.

"The wantfulness is terrific and preposterous, honoured sahib!" said Hurree Janset Ram Singh. "In my absurd opinion the stickfulness is the proper caper."

The baronet's grave, troubled face broke into a smile. Hurree Singh's flow of English had the effect, for the moment, of banishing the cloud from his brow.

"It is possible that peril may threaten you if you remain here, my boys," Sir Richard said slowly.

"I don't see—" began Bob Cherry. "Anyhow, that wouldn't make any difference to us, sir."

"No fear!" said Johnny Bull emphatically.

"Danger or no danger, we're staying, uncle," said Frank. "I'm only too jolly glad we came here when we did!"

"I shall be glad if you remain; but remember, if you should change your minds on that point, I shall think it quite natural."

"We shan't change our minds," said Harry Wharton, "and we hope to help in clearing up this mystery, sir. We shall be on our guard, and on the watch."

"The watchfulness will be terrific."

The baronet nodded.

"Very well; that is settled, then. I cannot forget that had you not been here I should be a dead man."

"I want to make a suggestion, sir, if I may," said Harry.

"By all means."

"Until that villain, sir, is found out, and while you are in danger, I think one of us should sleep in the dressing-room next to this room," said Harry. "The door can be left open at night. Last night that villain succeeded in drugging both the constable and your man Jervis. It would be safer with someone else near at hand."

"We'd take night duty in turns," said Bob. "A jolly good idea, sir, if you approve."

Sir Richard smiled.

"I certainly approve," he said. "I

will give instructions for the dressing-room to be prepared. It is a most excellent idea."

That matter was settled when the juniors left the baronet's room. Frank Nugent remained with his uncle. The Famous Five had agreed among themselves that one of the party should be always in or near the baronet's room, day and night, so long as the mysterious danger threatened their host, and so long as he was confined to his room.

"Ring the bell for Packington, Frank," said Sir Richard, when the other juniors were gone. "I will give him instructions about the dressing-room."

Frank touched the bell for the butler. But it was James, the footman, who answered it.

"Where is Packington?" asked Sir Richard.

"He is gone to his room, sir, and gave orders not to be disturbed, sir," said James. "He has one of his attacks, sir."

"Very well, do not disturb him," said Sir Richard; and he gave his instructions to the footman, who proceeded to see them carried out.

"Poor Packington!" said the baronet. "No doubt the disturbance in the night has upset his nerves."

Frank made no rejoinder. It had struck him as curious that his uncle retained the services of a butler who was so frequently unfit for duty, and who apparently gave himself leave of absence without requesting it. Sir Richard glanced at him, and smiled.

"Packington is an invaluable servant, Frank," he said. "He was in the War—you have noticed the limp, of course. One must be tolerant with a man who suffered in the War, though it is sometimes inconvenient. It is only lately that these attacks of his have become rather serious, and I have given him leave to retire to his room whenever he thinks fit. But he manages so well that everything goes like clockwork whether he is in control or not. I fear that the late disturbances have had an ill effect on him."

"He was wounded?" asked Frank.

"Yes. I understand that he was in danger of losing his leg, and it has left him with a limp. He was wounded on the Somme, where he showed great courage, and he was given a commission."

"I don't remember him when I was here before," said Nugent.

"He was not with me at that time. Now, Frank, if you are going to remain with me, you must find yourself a book. Jervis, my paper."

Frank Nugent found a Holiday Annual, which kept him cheerful company as he sat by the sunny window; while Sir Richard, propped on pillows, read his newspaper. There was silence in the room, till the sound of a car was heard from the drive, and James announced the arrival of Dr. Wood's assistant.

## THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

### The Man in the Park!

**H**ARRY WHARTON & CO. walked out of the house into the bright August sunshine after leaving Sir Richard's room. Except for a slight headache, Wharton was no longer feeling the effects of the blow he had received in the night. The four juniors walked into the park. They found it deserted. The search that had been going on in the park had ceased. Whether Inspector Cook believed, or disbelieved, their story of the scarred man from Australia, who

had been shot by the park wall, the juniors could not be sure. The body had disappeared, and a long search had failed to discover any trace of it. Nothing had been learned of the man in the vicinity; no one had been found, so far, who had seen him or known him, and the vanishing body cast grave doubts on the story told by the juniors. Captain Ravenspur had openly derided it; but that did not surprise them, suspecting him as they did of having done the terrible deed. But others, as they knew, shared his doubts, and the chums could hardly blame them, and no trace whatever remained of the crime or its victim.

"Might as well have another look round," remarked Bob Cherry. "But they've combed the park from end to end now, and nothing's been found."

"I'm certain the dead man was carried into the park by the man who shot him," said Harry. "The villain had a hiding-place ready, I'm certain of that. In the open country, the body would have been found before this."

"Franky told us about an old hunting-lodge in the park," said Johnny Bull. "I suppose the police and the keepers have been through it; but we haven't seen it yet. Let's make for that."

"Let's!" assented Bob.

The old hunting-lodge, which Nugent had described to his chums, was in ruins, and had not been used for a century or more. Frank had told them that it lay in a remote part of the great park, overgrown by trees and thickets, and the juniors knew where to look for it. It was quite certain that such a spot must have been searched; and indeed, the juniors found traces of recent search as they approached the spot. There were trampled footprints in the grass, branches broken, bushes torn. It looked as if the old lodge and its surroundings had been subjected to a minute examination. A narrow grassy path, shadowed by thick boughs, led to the old stone buildings, of which only a few dismantled walls remained, the interior open to wind and weather. Near the old doorway they found a cigar-end on the ground, and recognised it as belonging to one of the thick, black cigars smoked by Captain Ravenspur. Bob Cherry picked it up.

"His nibs has been here," he said.

Wharton smiled.

"He joined in the search," he said, "and he always has one of those hefty smokes in his mouth."

"Still, if he was the man——"

"That cigar-end was not dropped the night the body was hidden."

"How do you know that, old bean?"

"Because it was raining heavily that night," answered Wharton. "It would have been soaked with water, and you can see it hasn't been."

Bob Cherry grinned, and threw away the cigar-end.

"Good for you, Mr. Sherlock Holmes!" he said. "There goes my giddy clue!"

"Let's look round, anyhow," said Johnny Bull. "This old place is just the spot for a man who knew the lie of the land, and we know that the murderer does. These heaps of stones——"

Johnny broke off suddenly.

From the interior of the old stone lodge came a sound. The juniors had supposed themselves to be alone there. But the sound from the interior of the ruin showed that someone else was on the spot.

Wharton made his comrades a sign for silence.

"One of the keepers, most likely," he whispered. "But—— Quiet, and keep your eyes open!"

There were footsteps in the ruin. The

crumbling old stone walls, overhung by ivy and creeping plants, hid the interior from the eyes of the schoolboys, save where the old doorway opened. The footsteps were approaching the doorway from within.

They waited and watched. Most likely it was one of Sir Richard's keepers, still engaged on the search. But it struck them that there was something soft and stealthy in the tread they heard, and a keeper, of course, would have had no object in concealing his presence. It was scarcely imaginable that the murderer of the scarred man from "down under" had returned to the scene of the crime; that the body was hidden in the ruin, and that the wretch had come back to the spot. But the juniors felt their hearts beating faster, and their eyes were fixed eagerly on the shattered doorway, waiting for the unseen man to appear in sight.

He appeared suddenly, coming swiftly but silently out of the ruined lodge. So swiftly did he come that he almost ran into the juniors before seeing them, and he halted with a startled exclamation. He was a young man, not more than twenty-five, dressed in dark clothes, with light eyebrows, a sandy moustache, and thick, light sandy hair. In his aspect there was nothing to strike the eye. He looked commonplace enough, such a man as might have been passed on the roads at any moment unregarded. It was his startled exclamation and the blaze that leaped into his eyes that made the juniors more suspicious, and the hurried way in which he attempted to brush past them. Bob Cherry promptly planted himself in the stranger's way and stopped him. For an instant the man looked as if he would spring at the schoolboy, and the other fellows closed up quickly.

"Hold on!" said Wharton quietly.

"What do you want?" snapped the stranger.

"We want to know who you are, and what you're doing here," answered the captain of the Greyfriars Remove. "Don't try to cut and run—we shall stop you fast enough. Who are you?"

The four juniors were round him now, and there was no escape for the man who had come out of the lodge. They scanned his face keenly. So far as they knew, he was a complete stranger to them, yet there was something in his features that struck them as familiar. All the four had the same impression, that they had seen someone strangely like him before, yet at the same time unlike. It was as if he bore a family resemblance to some man of a different age and appearance.

"I don't see why I should be questioned," said the sandy-coloured man, after a pause.

"You are on private grounds," said Harry.

"So are you, if you come to that."

"That's different—we are guests of Sir Richard Ravenspur, and have a right to be here," said Wharton. "You are a trespasser."

"Sir Richard doesn't mind a man walking across his park."

"You were not walking across the park—you were in that lodge, and had been there some time, or we should have seen you as we came up."

"I was doing no harm," said the young man, eyeing the juniors furtively.

"I don't say you were, but you've got to explain yourself," said Harry. "First of all, your name."

"John Smith."

"Where do you live?"

"Mr. Thompson's, the ironmonger's at Leyford."

The man answered readily enough. But it struck the juniors that he answered too readily.

"And what were you doing here?" asked Harry.

John Smith of Leyford grinned a little.

"I've heard about the murder," he said. "All the town's talking about it. This being my afternoon off, I thought I'd come and look round."

"Oh!" said Harry.

It was a probable explanation enough. The juniors could imagine what a sensation had been made in the small country town, by the report of a murder at the Grange, and the disappearance of the body, followed by the murderous attacks on Sir Richard Ravenspur in his own house. It was quite likely that the ironmonger's young man had decided to give the park a look-in, on his weekly half-holiday.

"I never meant any harm, sir," said John Smith frankly. "I jost wanted to see the place, and see if a chap could find anything out. I know I ought not to have got over the park wall. But no harm's done."

Harry Wharton nodded.

"That's so," he agreed. "But you ought not to be here, and we'll see you out of the park. Where did you get in?"

"By the wall on the Leyford road, sir."

"Come on, then."

The young man from Leyford made no demur. He walked with the juniors down the path from the old lodge, turned into a shady "ride," and accompanied them to the park wall that bordered the high-road. He talked freely on the way, asking many questions, and gave the impression of being a talkative and inquisitive young man not over-gifted with brains.

"Give us a bunk up, sir!" he said, cheerily, when they stopped at the high park wall.

Wharton smiled, and gave him a bunk up; the young man stayed a moment on the summit of the wall, and lifted his bowler hat politely to the juniors. Then he dropped into the road, and they heard his footsteps die away in the direction of Leyford.

— — —

## THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

### The Mystery Deepens!

**H**URREE JAMSET RAM SINGH stood still, with a thoughtful expression on his dusky face.

The other three fellows had turned to go back to the old lodge, but the nabob of Bhanipur did not stir. Wharton glanced back at him.

"Come on, Inky," he said.

"My esteemed chums," said Hurree Jamset Ram Singh, "I have been thoughtfully reflecting."

"Oh, come on," said Johnny Bull.

"If you're thinking about that ironmonger johnny, chuck it. He's harmless enough."

"Perhaps!" assented the nabob. "But it has occurred to my absurd brain that the perhapsfulness is terrific."

Harry Wharton smiled.

"My dear chap, there's nothing wrong with the fellow," he said; "only an inquisitive ass butting in."

"Perhapsfully."

"Look here, what have you got in your old black noddle, Inky?" asked Bob. "Give it a name."

"That esteemed young man stated that he was employed by an absurd ironmonger at Leyford, and that he was taking a walk on his excellent and necessary afternoon off," said Hurree Singh.

"What about it?"

"To-day is Friday, my absurd chums."

"Just found that out!" asked Johnny

Bull sarcastically. "My dear man, we knew it was Friday. You see, yesterday being Thursday—"

"It was highly probable, my dear Watson, that the next day would be Friday!" grinned Bob Cherry, in a playful imitation of the celebrated Sherlock Holmes. "You see, my dear Watson, it is a very simple deduction after all."

The juniors chuckled.

"But there is one ridiculous point that has escaped your absurd notice," said the nabob. "The weekly half-day of the esteemed and execrable shop-keepers is a movable feast, and happens sometimes on Wednesdays, and sometimes on Thursdays. But it is preposterously uncommon on Fridays."

"Oh!" said Harry Wharton.

"Anybody know which is early closing day at Leyford?" asked Bob.

There was a shaking of heads. The

juniors had not yet been in Leyford, and knew nothing of the manners and customs in that little Oxfordshire town. But it was, as Hurree Singh pointed out, uncommon anywhere for early-closing day to fall on a Friday.

"My hat!" said Harry. "It struck me at first that that fellow Smith answered up a little too readily. But afterwards, he seemed all right—a talkative ass who couldn't mind his own business. But if he has been telling us lies—"

"Want to walk to Leyford, instead of rooting about the park?" asked Johnny Bull.

"Well, we might—"

"My esteemed chums—" murmured the nabob.

"Go it, Inky," said Bob Cherry.

"Have you dug up any more clues?"

"Can you tell what sort of a merchant

he is, from the colour of his sandy

hair, or the cut of his bowler hat?"

"I was about to make the suggestive remark that there is a telephone in the house, and the esteemed ironmonger can be rung up phonefully."

"Good!" exclaimed Wharton.

"If he was pulling our leg, he may have given us an imaginary tradesman's name," said Johnny Bull. "Still, we can find that out, by ringing up somebody at Leyford. Let's go back to the house."

The juniors walked back to the Grango. To three of them, at least, it seemed improbable that there was anything suspicious about that commonplace young man with the sandy hair. But the matter was worth looking into; the slightest clue was worth following up.

James was in the hall when they entered, and Wharton called to him.

"Is there an ironmonger named Thompson at Leyford, James?"

(Continued on next page.)

# GIANTS OF CRICKET!

By "SPORTSMAN."

Percy Fender, the famous England and Surrey cricketer, who up to last season had scored nearly fourteen thousand runs and taken nearly fourteen hundred wickets in first-class cricket.

**T**WENTY years ago one hot June afternoon I turned into St. Paul's School to watch the boys at practice in the nets. At the principle net there were some half a dozen healthy-looking youths, one of whom was the eleven's best bowler, and, as I took my stand behind a tall young batsman who had just made a spanking drive, he delivered himself thus:

"I say, you mustn't hit a ball like that!"

"Why not?" asked the batsman.

"Well, hang it, that was a ball you should have played very carefully—in other words, it was a dashed fine ball, and if you'd missed it you'd have had your middle stump knocked out of the ground."

"Very likely; but I didn't miss it!"

Another ball was bowled, and again the boy hit with tremendous power.

"Confound it, man, you'll never be a batsman!"

"Quite so!" And the young hitter smiled. "But I'm wondering whether I'm getting more enjoyment out of the game than you correct players do."

**T**HE boy with the bat was P. G. H. Fender at the age of sixteen, and the spirit in which he played that day was precisely the same as that which dominates the Surrey captain's cricket to-day. He plays for the love of the game, and always for the good of his side.

What the youthful bowler of the nets thought only a year later when young Fender was included in the Sussex County Eleven will never be known; yet the boy who, in the bowler's opinion would never become a cricketer, was an acknowledged find for Sussex. He played in two matches for that county during the school vacation and again in the following year, 1911. But it was not until 1912 that he began to show his best form, and I remember the game with Oxford University at Horsham when he scored a brilliant 133 not out.

**P** G. H. FENDER has appeared for England against Australia at the Oval, Manchester, Adelaide, Melbourne, and Sydney, as well as against South Africa.

Up to last season he had scored nearly fourteen thousand runs and taken nearly fourteen hundred wickets in first-class cricket.

**I**T was in the year 1914 that young Fender decided to play for Surrey, and he immediately jumped into favour with the public by reason of his fearless play. The habitues of the Oval are very quick to appreciate vigorous methods, and in that opening season when he scored a brilliant 140 against Warwick he became "Percy," and "Percy" he has remained.



Hats off to Surrey's "skipper," whose dogged perseverance and deadly bowling have made him the idol of his club.

**F**ENDER is one of those great players whose worth cannot be valued by figures and averages. He is a match-winning force to his side if only because of his quiet enthusiasm, his dogged perseverance, and his sharp yet almost inaudible words of advice to his fellow-players.

**A**S an instance of this, I have in my mind's eye the Surrey v. Kent match at the Oval last year. Surrey scored 131, to which Kent replied with 283. Then Surrey got 282, leaving Kent to get 130 to win, which looked like an easy task, seeing that Kent had at one period scored 63 for no wicket.

"What do you think of it?" asked a fellow-member of the club.

"I'm going home," I replied. "It's practically all over."

"Don't go," said the other chap. "Before Fender went out there, he told me he was going to win this match, and I've got sufficient faith in him even now to believe Surrey will win! Wait and see something dramatic!"

I laughed. Kent had already scored more than half the runs needed, and still had all their wickets intact. Then I saw Fender walk across to Peach, with whom he conversed. And the drama commenced. The first wicket fell at 74, the next at 80, the third at 89, the fourth at 92, two more wickets fell at 103, another at 105, and the last three went while the total was 116, Surrey winning by fourteen runs. Fender and Peach did it between them. And, as the popular captain passed my friend, he smiled and whispered: "I always try to keep a promise."

**A**T the Oval the crowd have a way of "spoiling" their favourites, to whom they are very loyal. They are "fans" of the most pronounced type, and their regard for Fender is little short of idolatry; but the Surrey captain is either unconscious of it all or his modesty makes him rebel silently at the fuss which is made of him.

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"Yes, sir," answered James. "In the High Street, sir, next to the post office and the International."

"Which day do they close early at Leyford?"

"Thursday, sir."

"Oh! Sure of that?" asked Harry.

"Quite, sir! Thursday is the early-closing day in these parts, sir."

"My hat!" murmured Bob Cherry. "It looks as if Inky has hit on something, after all."

"I suppose you're sure that Thompson's do not close for the afternoon on Friday, James?" asked Harry.

"Oh, quite, sir," answered James, looking a little surprised. "If you require anything there sir, you will find them open to-day."

"Do you know whether Mr. Thompson employs a young man named John Smith?"

"I am afraid I am unacquainted, sir, with Mr. Thompson's arrangements," said James, with a touch of reserve. The juniors gathered that James held himself a little above any young man who might chance to be employed by Mr. Thompson the ironmonger.

Wharton smiled, and crossed to the telephone cabinet. He found the name and style of Thompson in the directory, and at once rang up Leyford 101.

"Hallo!" came a wheezy voice.

"Speaking from Ravenspur Grange," said Harry.

"Oh, yes, sir! Quite so, sir! What can I do for you, sir?" The wheezy voice was all of a sudden full of suavity. Evidently the name of Ravenspur was one to conjure with in the little town.

"Can I speak to Mr. Thompson?"

"Mr. Thompson speaking, sir."

"Good! You have a young man in your employ named John Smith—"

"Eh?"

"Have you a man in your employ named John Smith?"

"No, sir—Herbert Williams, sir."

"Oh!" said Harry. "You have no John Smith in your place, Mr. Thompson?"

"No, sir."

"A young man, with sandy hair and moustache—"

"No, sir, that's nothing like my young man Williams. What?"

"I have just seen a young man with sandy hair, named John Smith, who told me that he was employed by you."

"Gammon, sir!" answered Mr. Thompson. "Nothing of the sort!"

"Which day do you close early, Mr. Thompson?"

"Thursday, sir."

"Thank you very much!" said Harry, and he rang off, leaving a very puzzled ironmonger at the other end of the line.

The juniors said nothing until they were out of the house again. On the terrace, out of hearing of inquisitive ears, they looked at one another.

"That tears it," said Bob. "That sandy fellow was pulling our leg, lying from start to finish."

"That's clear now," said Harry.

"We shouldn't have spotted him, but for Inky. But we've spotted him now."

"And why was he telling lies if he was up to no harm?" asked Johnny Bull, slowly and thoughtfully. "Of course, a man caught trespassing might give a false name and address, but—"

"But there's more in it than that," said Harry. "A man found hanging about the scene of a murder, who tells a string of lies to account for being there, is open to jolly serious suspicion."

"But—"

"But what?"

"If that fellow who called himself Smith is mixed up in the matter—"

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"It looks like it."

"Well, that rather changes the complexion of things," said Bob. "If there's another man in it, we may have got a wrong impression about Captain Ravenspur. If that sandy man is in it, he may be the fellow the man with a scar was coming to see, and whom he called 'Black Edgar.' In that case, he—"

"But what was he doing there?" said Johnny Bull. "If the body is hidden in that old lodge, it's the last place the murderer would be likely to visit."

"Unless to make sure that what he had hidden was quite safe, after the search," said Harry quietly.

"But—but—" Johnny Bull shook his head. "If he's the man who killed the Australian, he's not the man who attacked Nugent's uncle. The inspector found no sign of the house having been entered—he's sure that it was done from within."

Wharton was silent. The clue, if it was a clue, only seemed to deepen the darkness of the mystery. The juniors had taken it as certain that the assassin of the man with the scar was the man who had attacked the baronet. Now it looked as if that was by no means certain.

Wharton shook his head hopelessly.

"It beats me," he said. "Let's go back to the lodge in the park and see if we can find out what that fellow was up to. We may pick up some trace of him there."

The juniors walked back into the park in a deeply thoughtful mood. The mystery of Ravenspur seemed darker and deeper than before.

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## THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

### The Captain Intervenes!

FRANK NUGENT laid down his book as the doctor's assistant was announced. He glanced without much interest at the man who was shown in. He was a man who looked about fifty, with rather shaggy grey eyebrows, large horn-rimmed spectacles, and a tuft of greyish beard on his chin, dressed in black frock-coat, with shoes that squeaked as he walked across the room. The grave, elderly, studious-looking man was a contrast to the plump, rosy-checked country doctor from whom he came. Sir Richard greeted him with courtly politeness, eying him, however, a little curiously.

"I do not think I have seen you before, Mr.—er—Payne," he remarked, as Jervis placed a chair for the medical gentleman.

"No, Sir Richard—I have not been with Dr. Wood long," answered the newcomer, in a low and rather husky voice. "As Dr. Wood was called away this afternoon for an operation, he desired me to call in his place. Dr. Wood telephoned, I think—"

"Quite so," assented the baronet.

"My butler took the call, and informed me that you were to come. I had not, however, expected a call from the doctor this afternoon."

The elderly assistant smiled faintly.

"I shall not trouble you very much, Sir Richard. Dr. Wood desired me to bring you a medicine he has specially prepared, and to see that your nurse fully understood his instructions regarding it."

"Jervis is my nurse," said the baronet, with a smile. "Jervis, you will take Mr. Payne's instructions."

The valet approached the bedside.

The man in the horn-rimmed glasses fumbled in a little black bag. A bottle was placed on the bedside table.

A slight expression of repugnance crossed the baronet's face involuntarily. Sir Richard Ravenspur was a hearty and open-air man, and illness was a new experience to him.

"It is merely a soothing medicine," said Mr. Payne, as if he read the patient's thoughts.

"Oh, quite, quite!" said Sir Richard hastily.

Mr. Payne blinked at Jervis through his horn-rimmed glasses. Then he blinked at his watch.

"Sir Richard will take the first dose at half-past four o'clock," he said, speaking in a precise, old-fashioned way, "the second dose at half-past five, the third at half-past six. I understand that Sir Richard dines at seven."

Sir Richard nodded.

"I understand from Dr. Wood that there is a slight tendency to fever," said Mr. Payne. "This medicine will counteract that tendency, Sir Richard. Dr. Wood will give further instructions when he calls this evening. You are sure you understand?" he added, blinking at Jervis again.

"Perfectly, sir."

"One hour precisely between each dose, and the first dose at half-past four o'clock," repeated Mr. Payne. "The dose will be taken in half a wine-glass of water."

"Yes, sir."

"You are sure that you understand perfectly?"

"Quite, sir," said Jervis.

"Very good."

Mr. Payne rose to take his leave. The baronet shook hands with him very cordially. There had been no mention of messing, as he mentally termed it, with the dressings of his wound, which was a relief. While he had an immense respect for the medical profession, Sir Richard preferred very much not to be under their hands.

Mr. Payne took his leave, blinked his way to the door, and James showed him down.

On the drive, a small car was waiting. It was not the car used by Dr. Wood. From the window of the baronet's room, Frank Nugent was looking out idly, as the man in the horn-rimmed glasses went down the steps, and James proceeded to open the door of the car for him.

There was a hoot on the drive, and a handsome Rolls came speeding up to the house, with Captain Ravenspur in the driving seat.

Frank's brow darkened as he looked down at his younger uncle.

Believing, as he did, that Cecil Ravenspur was the secret assassin who had sought the baronet's life, it was difficult for Frank to see him without betraying openly his repugnance and dislike.

The captain brought his car to a halt, and jumped down. Frank noticed that the doctor's assistant glanced at him before stepping into the little black car, and drove away hastily. No doubt the medical man was in a hurry, though he had shown no sign of hurry before the captain appeared on the drive.

Captain Ravenspur stood for a moment, looking after the little black car that was vanishing towards the gateway. As it turned into the Leyford Road, the captain turned and spoke to James.

Although he could not hear what was said below, Nugent could guess that Cecil Ravenspur was asking the footman who the visitor was. He seemed surprised by James' answer, and repeated the question, and then entered the house hurriedly.

A minute later he stood in the doorway of the baronet's room.

Nugent, at his footstep, turned from the window. The captain was breathing hard, as if he had ascended the stairs in breathless haste, and his cheeks were flushed, his manner a little excited. Nugent instinctively ran across the room, to place himself between Cecil Ravenspur and Sir Richard. Jervis, at the bedside, squared himself, the thought in his mind obvious in his face. All through the household, suspicion was fastened on the captain. Sir Richard, leaning on his propped pillows, did not stir. But his face paled

Richard Ravenspur seemed about to speak, but remained silent.

It was upon his brother that Cecil Ravenspur fixed his eyes. It was obvious that for Nugent, and the valet, he cared nothing.

"Dick! I've not given you cause to distrust me—no real cause, and that I will swear! I hardly blame you—I know how it looks! But I swear that I know nothing of the attempts that have been made—that, bad brother as I have been to you, I would have stood between you and your assailant with my life!"

sprang abruptly forward, and struck it from his hand.

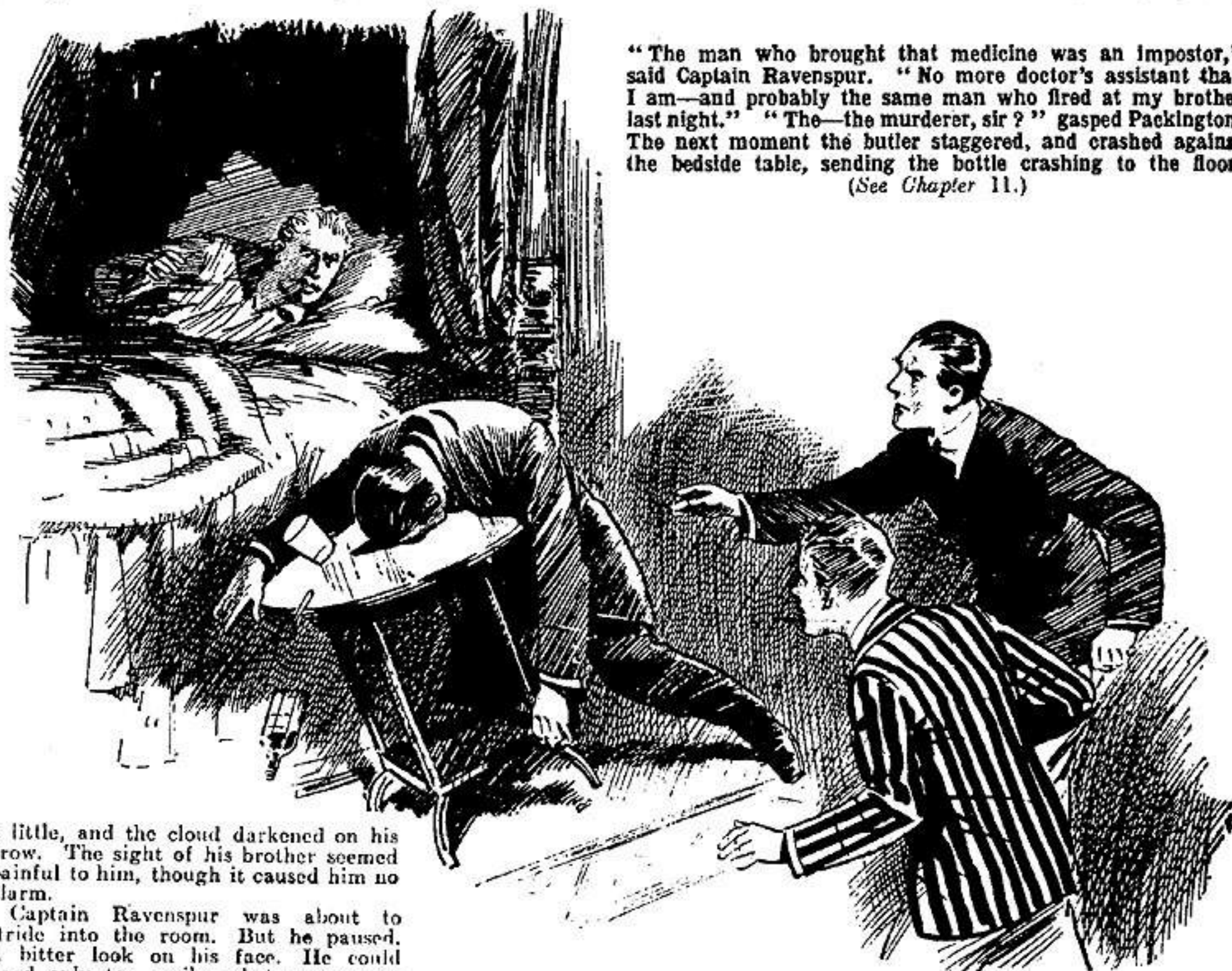
## THE NINTH CHAPTER.

### Danger!

**C**RASH! The smashing of the wine-glass, as it struck the floor, was not loud, but it had an effect almost of thunder in the silent room.

Sir Richard Ravenspur, startled, amazed, sat staring at his brother. Jervis seemed to be rooted to the floor.

"The man who brought that medicine was an impostor," said Captain Ravenspur. "No more doctor's assistant than I am—and probably the same man who fired at my brother last night." "The—the murderer, sir?" gasped Packington. The next moment the butler staggered, and crashed against the bedside table, sending the bottle crashing to the floor. (See Chapter 11.)



a little, and the cloud darkened on his brow. The sight of his brother seemed painful to him, though it caused him no alarm.

Captain Ravenspur was about to stride into the room. But he paused, a bitter look on his face. He could read only too easily what was meant by the attitude of Nugent and Jervis; and behind him he heard the step of a Leyford constable who was posted in the corridor.

A burst of anger seemed imminent; but the captain calmed himself. He looked across the room at his brother. "May I enter, Dick?" he asked.

"Come in, if you wish," answered the baronet, speaking with an effort. The captain stepped into the room.

His glance went to the bottle standing on the bedside table, and to the wineglass of water that Jervis had already prepared. It wanted but a few minutes to half-past four.

He opened his lips to speak, and closed them again. The wary look on Jervis' smooth, suave face, the undisguised hostility of Frank Nugent, the distress in the troubled face of the baronet, seemed to give him pause. His own face paled a little. For a few moments there was silence; and when the captain broke it his voice was low.

"I am not trusted here!" he said. Jervis coughed slightly, apologetically. Frank Nugent's lip curled. Sir

"I—I believe you, Cecil!" said Sir Richard slowly.

Captain Ravenspur gave a short, hard laugh.

"You mean, you will try to believe me; but in your heart you doubt my good faith. Well, let it go at that. It was not to talk of this that I came here."

There was the sound of a silvery chime. It was half-past four. Jervis, with a careful hand, measured out the medicine from the bottle.

As he was handing the wineglass to the baronet, Captain Ravenspur made another step forward.

"Stop!" he said.

Jervis glanced round.

"What do you mean, Cecil?" asked Sir Richard, a little testily. "It is time for me to take this medicine, on the doctor's instructions."

"Stop, I say!"

Sir Richard was holding out his hand for the wineglass. The valet handed it to him.

Captain Ravenspur seemed to hesitate, in doubt. Then, as Sir Richard raised the glass to his lips, the captain

Frank had sprang towards the captain as he approached the baronet; but he stopped now, staring. For some seconds, after the breaking of the glass, there was a tense silence.

Sir Richard broke it.

"Cecil, are you mad?"

"I will prepare another glass, sir," said Jervis in his soft voice.

"Wait!" said Captain Ravenspur.

"Cecil, explain yourself—" exclaimed the baronet impatiently. "What does this conduct mean, if you are in your right senses?"

"I will explain," said the captain quietly. "And I must explain before you take a dose of that medicine, Dick."

"And why?"

"Because I suspect that there may be danger in it."

"You suspect danger in a medicine sent me by my own medical attendant, by the hands of his assistant?" exclaimed Sir Richard.

"Precisely."

"Absurd! Really, Cecil—"

(Continued on page 16.)

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## THE UNSEEN FOE!

(Continued from page 13.)

Jervis, with the bottle in his hand, hesitated. He looked inquiringly at his master; but Sir Richard's eyes were fixed on the captain. Frank looked on in utter wonder.

"Who was the man who left here a few minutes ago?" asked Captain Ravenspur.

"A Mr. Payne," answered the baronet. "Dr. Wood's assistant."

"So I learned from James, downstairs," said the captain. "That is why I hurried here. Dr. Wood's assistant is a young man named Horrocks, Dick."

"Mr. Payne is a new assistant," said Sir Richard impatiently. "Really, I fail to follow you. Jervis, prepare the medicine."

"Dick! I tell you that there may be danger in that bottle!" exclaimed the captain. "I tell you that I drove back through Leyford only half an hour ago, and saw Dr. Wood—"

"Well?"

"He said nothing of having sent his assistant here this afternoon—I do not believe for one moment that this Mr. Payne has any connection with Dr. Wood at all."

"Cecil!"

"When I learned from James that Dr. Wood's assistant, Mr. Payne, had been to see you, and was just leaving, I suspected trickery at once. I tell you, Dick, that man never came from Dr. Wood."

"Why should such a trick be played?" exclaimed Sir Richard. "Do you mean—"

"I mean, that if that man is not Dr. Wood's assistant, he is the man who fired at you yesterday, and attempted to reach you in this room last night," said Captain Ravenspur.

"Impossible!"

"Good heavens!" breathed Nugent.

He was gazing blankly at Captain Ravenspur.

The baronet motioned to Jervis to place the bottle on the table again.

"Cecil! You say you saw and spoke with Dr. Wood in Leyford this afternoon—"

"Little more than half an hour ago."

"Mr. Payne stated that the doctor had been called away for an operation," said the baronet slowly.

"No doubt; he had to give some reason for his call. Dr. Wood certainly was not called away this afternoon, for he is now at home."

Sir Richard breathed quickly.

"Dick!" exclaimed the captain. "In the name of common sense, will you, in the present circumstances, trust your life in the hands of a stranger, on his bare word that he is employed by your medical man?"

"That is not how the matter stands. Dr. Wood telephoned that he was sending his assistant, Mr. Payne."

The captain started.

"The doctor himself telephoned?"

"Certainly."

"But you could not have taken the call—you have not been down—"

"Packington took the call."

"I—I do not understand," said the captain. "Packington should know the doctor's voice. Still, it is possible that he was deceived, not looking for any trickery on the telephone. Dick, whoever it was telephoned to Packington, it was not Dr. Wood. I am sure of that. This Mr. Payne is not his assistant—I am sure of that, too! Dick, there is treachery at work, and on my

soul and conscience I believe that there is death in that bottle!"

Sir Richard shivered slightly.

"I cannot believe that you are right, Cecil," he said, after a long pause. "Packington could scarcely have been deceived, as you suggest, by some trickster on the telephone. But—"

"Uncle!" exclaimed Nugent. "You must not risk it—you must not touch it till Dr. Wood comes—"

Sir Richard smiled faintly.

"After what my brother has said, Frank, I should not be likely to let that medicine pass my lips till Dr. Wood has been here," he said. "I cannot believe that you are right, but—"

"Let the bottle remain, as it stands, until Dr. Wood calls this evening," said the captain earnestly. "In the meantime, I will telephone to the doctor and ask him whether he sent this Mr. Payne here." He paused, at an involuntary look on the baronet's face. "I had forgotten that I am no longer trusted in this house," he added bitterly. "Let your nephew, Frank, telephone. You can take his word."

Sir Richard glanced at Frank Nugent.

"Do as my brother suggests, Frank."

"Yes, uncle. But—" Nugent hesitated. So deep was his distrust of the captain, that he feared that this might be some trick to get him out of the baronet's room.

"I will come with you, boy!" said Captain Ravenspur quietly.

"Very well!" said Frank.

He quitted the room with the captain.

Sir Richard waited.

His eyes rested on the bottle that stood on the bedside table. If it was possible that his brother was right, there was death in the pale liquid it contained. Was it possible?

He waited with a set, grave face. Five minutes elapsed before Frank Nugent came back.

His face was startled.

"Well?" said Sir Richard.

"Dr. Wood is at home, uncle," said Nugent. "He says he was not called away for an operation this afternoon and—"

"Yes?" said Sir Richard, compressing his lips.

"And that he has no assistant named Payne—"

"Good gad!"

"And—and he says you are not to touch anything that may have been given by any person pretending to have come from him."

Sir Richard drew a deep breath.

"Dr. Wood is coming over," added Frank. "He seemed very much alarmed by what I told him of Mr. Payne. He wished the medicine to be kept carefully for him to see when he arrives."

"You will see that that bottle is kept for Dr. Wood, Jervis."

"Certainly, sir."

Sir Richard Ravenspur leaned back on his pillows. His fine old face was white and worn. There could be no doubt, now, that his brother's warning had saved him from a new danger—that the man Payne was an impostor, either a confederate of the assassin, or the assassin himself. And the one from whom the warning had come, the warning that had saved him, was the one whom he had doubted—his brother.

"Frank!" said Sir Richard at last. "Where is my brother?"

"He went to the billiards-room."

"Ask him to come to me."

In a few minutes Captain Ravenspur entered the room. He came to the

bedside, a faint smile on his face. Sir Richard did not speak—he held out his hand, and his brother grasped it. In that grasp of the hand all doubt and distrust were banished.

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## THE TENTH CHAPTER.

### A Discovery!

"NOTHING!" said Bob Cherry. "The nothingfulness is terrific."

"Nothing here!" agreed Harry Wharton.

The four juniors had returned to the ruined lodge in the park. They had searched through it, and found many signs of previous searchers there. But nothing else rewarded them.

The old floor of cracked flags, overgrown with moss, the remains of old stone walls, hung with creepers, were all that met the eye. The roof was entirely gone, and overhead, the branches of trees made a roof of foliage. Up and down and round about the old hunting-lodge, the four juniors roamed, but the result was a blank. If the murdered man with the scar had been hidden there, there was no trace of such a thing, neither was there any sign of what "John Smith" had been "up to" in the old ruin. And even Hurree Jamset Ram Singh, who regarded the sandy-haired young man with deep suspicion, began to think, like his chums, that the young man had only been drawn there by idle curiosity, and had given a false name and address because he had been caught trespassing.

The juniors left the old lodge at last, and walked back towards the Grange.

They had spent a considerable time rooting about the old hunting-lodge, and it was past five o'clock when they left it. About a quarter of a mile from the old ruin, in sight of the house, they came on Inspector Cook, standing under the beeches in a grassy ride, talking to Joyce, the head-keeper. As the four schoolboys came in sight, the inspector left Joyce, and came towards them, and they stopped.

"You've got over that crack, Master Wharton?" he asked genially.

"Only a bit of a head-ache," said Harry.

"You've been searching in the park again?"

"Yes."

The juniors expected Inspector Cook to smile. But his ruddy face was very serious. Hitherto, the Leyford inspector had looked on the schoolboys' story of the man with the scar, with doubt, if not with actual disbelief. But they could see that a change had occurred.

"To tell you the truth, young gentlemen, I think I owe you something of an apology," said Inspector Cook frankly. "You will admit that the story you told me of the events of the other night was a strange one, and the disappearance of the murdered man's body made it seem—hem—well, something like a romance. But since then I—"

"We gave you the facts, Inspector Cook," said Harry Wharton quietly.

"I am sure of that—now."

"Oh!" ejaculated Bob Cherry, "and why—"

"What has happened since has convinced me," said the inspector. "Sir Richard Ravenspur's life has been attempted—there is a murderer at large, somewhere close to the Grange,

if not within it. That gives a very different colour to the matter."

"That's so," said Harry, with a nod. "And but for the attempt on Sir Richard's life, you would have gone on believing that our story of the man with the scar was a romance."

Inspector Cook coughed.

"Possibly," he said—"possibly—unless the body was found; and no discovery of it has been made, as you know. However, let that pass. The two events taken together have a very different aspect. The man who tried to kill Sir Richard Ravenspur may well have had something to fear from a man who knew him—who was coming here to see him—"

"The man came from Australia," said Bob; "that would mean—"

"That the murderer may be a man from the other side of the globe, too," said Inspector Cook. "A man he had known out there."

He knitted his brows.

"You stated that the man with the scar used the name of 'Black Edgar.' You are sure about that?"

"Quite sure," said Bob.

"It fits together," said the inspector musingly.

"What does?" asked Bob.

The inspector did not answer that question. It was obvious that some theory had formed in his mind, in which the murder of the Australian, and the attempt on the baronet's life, and the name of Black Edgar, fitted together like the parts of a puzzle. But it was equally obvious that he had no intention of taking the schoolboys into his confidence on the subject.

"If you young gentlemen should chance upon anything, report to me at once," said Inspector Cook. "The smallest incident—anything—"

"In that case, we have something to report," said Wharton.

"What is that?"

Wharton told of the sandy-haired young man in the old hunting-lodge.

An alert gleam came into the inspector's eyes.

"I searched the old lodge yesterday," he said. "Nothing was to be found there. The man you mention may have been only some curious meddler; but if you know the shortest way to the place, guide me there. I wish I had seen Mr. John Smith; but if you interrupted him there, it is possible that he may return."

"I fancy he was leaving when we happened on him," said Harry. "But it's only a short walk to the place."

The juniors walked back in the direction of the old lodge with the Leyford inspector. Inspector Cook did not utter a word as they went, and his ruddy brow was wrinkled in thought.

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

Through an opening of the trees, within a hundred yards of the old lodge, appeared for a moment the figure of the sandy-haired young man who had given the name of John Smith.

It appeared only for a moment, then the man caught sight of the party, and darted away among the trees.

"Come on!" yelled Bob Cherry, in great excitement.

A glimpse was had of the running man again, as he tore into the tangled, shadowed path that led through the thickets towards the ruined lodge.

"He's making for the lodge again!" gasped Wharton. "We shall corner him there!"

He raced along the path, ahead of his chums. But they were close on his heels as he dashed through the shattered doorway and entered the ruin.

There was a sound in the old lodge as he ran in, but silence followed, and Wharton stared round him blankly.

"Where is he?" gasped Johnny Bull.

"Gone!"

"The gonefulness is terrific!" panted Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

"I heard him!" exclaimed Wharton. "He can't be far away. He must have cut through that gap in the other side. Come on!"

The juniors rushed across the flagged floor, and out of the gap in the opposite wall. Tangled thickets lay beyond, and they plunged through, and came into a path. But there was no sign of "John Smith" there, and they were forced to return to the ruins.

The inspector was scouting about the ruins, scanning the flagged stones of the old floor, and the broken stone blocks of the dismantled walls. He glanced round at the schoolboys.

"You've not seen him?"

"No," said Harry breathlessly. "He's got clear! I was fairly on his heels when he ran through this ruin, but he got clear somehow."

"He ran through?" asked Inspector Cook.

(Continued on page 18.)



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## THE UNSEEN FOE!

(Continued from page 17.)

"He must have! I am certain he entered by the doorway—I heard him—but he was gone when I got in."

Inspector Cook did not answer. He was moving about the old lodge, tapping the moss-grown flags with the end of his stick. The juniors watched him for some minutes, puzzled, and then Wharton guessed what was in the Leyford inspector's mind.

"My hat!" he murmured. "If there should be some secret hiding-place here—It's possible, the place is centuries old—"

"Let's look!" said Bob.

Evidently the inspector was tapping the old flags in the hope of being rewarded by a hollow sound. But every flag sounded hard and firm under his tapping, and he desisted at last. Bob Cherry, groping among the ivy that clambered over the crumbling wall, gave a sudden yell.

His chums rushed to him at once.

"You've found something, Bob?"

"Look!"

"My hat!"

The juniors stared blankly at what Bob held up in his hand. It was a pair of horn-rimmed spectacles.

"What a find!" gasped Johnny Bull.

Bob Cherry grinned.

"These specs don't belong to that sandy merchant," he said. "He never wore specs. Some other inquisitive ass has been here—"

"Give them to me!" said Inspector Cook.

Bob handed the horn-rimmed spectacles to the Leyford inspector. The juniors watched him as he curiously examined them, and they saw a grim smile come over the ruddy face.

"The man who called himself John Smith did not wear glasses?" asked the inspector.

"No."

"Neither did the man who wore these need glasses," said Inspector Cook. "The lenses are made of plain glass, and would be of no use, except to a man with normal sight. They have been used obviously for purposes of disguise, by a man unaccustomed to wearing spectacles."

"Oh!" exclaimed the juniors together.

"Thank you very much, Master Cherry," said Inspector Cook. "I will keep these glasses—which Mr. John Smith dropped in his haste. Mr. John Smith evidently has had occasion to disguise himself at some time—a pair of horn-rimmed glasses being part of the outfit. This discovery may be important, and you boys will be careful to say nothing about it."

"Of course," said Harry. "Excepting Nugent, of course—we've no secrets from one another, sir."

Inspector Cook smiled.

"I allow that exception," he said. He gave a last searching look about the ruins. "We may as well go now—nothing more will be found here—at present."

The last words were uttered in a significant tone. Inspector Cook left the ruined lodge, and the juniors followed him. Inspector Cook's brow was more thoughtful than ever as he walked to the Grange with the school-boys.

The juniors would have given a good deal to know of what he was thinking.

They had no doubt that the Leyford inspector had formed some theory that covered all the known facts which, taken separately, were so perplexing. But it would, of course, have been useless to ask the inspector any questions.

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Inspector Cook was hurrying, as if in haste to reach the house, which surprised the juniors a little, as his movements hitherto had been characterised by anything but rapidity. But since the finding of the horn-rimmed glasses in the ruin, the inspector had shown every sign of haste.

He was puffing for breath when they reached the Grange. Inspector Cook was a ruddy, plump gentleman, unaccustomed to rapid movements, and he had walked fast all the way from the lodge in the park to the house. And immediately he reached it, he hurried up the stairs to Sir Richard Ravenspur's room.

"Cooky's got hold of something!" Bob Cherry murmured to his comrades.

"Or thinks he has!" said Johnny Bull. "Blessed if I can see what the hurry's for."

"The seefulness is not terrific!" confessed Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

"Let's go up, anyhow," said Harry.

And the four juniors followed Inspector Cook to Sir Richard Ravenspur's room.

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## THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER.

### The Broken Bottle.

**F**RANK NUGENT, seated by the baronet's window, had his book on his knees, but he was not looking at it. His eyes were on Captain Ravenspur, who sat at the bedside in conversation with his brother. On the bedside table stood the bottle containing the pale liquid left by the man who had called himself Dr. Wood's assistant, and who was now known beyond doubt to have been an impostor. Nugent was eyeing the captain in strange doubt. If it proved that the bottle contained poison, there could be no doubt that the captain had saved his brother's life from a third attempt. But if that was the case, what became of the juniors' suspicions of Cecil Ravenspur?

The man who had saved him could not be the man who had twice attempted his life; or, if it was so, it was beyond Nugent's understanding. When Dr. Wood arrived, it would be established whether the bottle contained a deadly potion, but Nugent had no doubt that it would prove so. In that case, Captain Ravenspur's dramatic intervention had saved his brother from the assassin. Nugent's mind was almost in a whirl with wonder and doubt, but from Sir Richard's mind, at all events, the last doubt had been banished. His manner to his younger brother was confident, affectionate, and it was clear that he had taken himself severely to task for ever having allowed doubt to creep into his mind.

"Packington should be questioned." Frank heard the captain's voice across the spacious room. "Packington is to blame, Dick. He should have known that it was not Dr. Wood's voice he heard on the phone."

Sir Richard shook his head.

"I cannot blame Packington," he said. "He was, naturally, not on the look out for such a trick, and voices, too, often sound quite different on the telephone. Packington is not to blame, Cecil."

"He should be questioned, at all events, and warned to be more careful," grunted the captain. "Let me ring for him."

"I think he is still in his room, Cecil—the poor fellow has one of his attacks to-day," said Sir Richard. "But I will tell James to send him up as soon as he appears."

It was some little time later that the butler appeared in the baronet's room.

He came in, with his limping but noiseless tread, and Sir Richard beckoned him to the bedside.

Packington's manner was deeply apologetic.

"I am truly sorry, sir," he said, in his soft, well-modulated voice. "James has told me that you wished to see me, sir—"

"Quite so, Packington."

"Had I known, sir, I should have left my room at once, though my head was certainly very bad," said the butler. "I fear, sir, that I am not so useful to you as I should desire to be. I feel that I impose upon your kindness and generosity—"

"Nothing of the kind, Packington!" said Sir Richard. "You have a right to every consideration, my good fellow. I hope you are feeling better now," he added kindly.

"Perfectly, sir; I have had several hours of sound sleep, Sir Richard," said Packington. "But I am well aware, sir, that in any other situation I should never meet with such kindness—"

"Nonsense, nonsense!" said the baronet. "Say no more about that, Packington. I wish to ask you about the telephone call you received, which you fancied to be from Dr. Wood."

The butler raised his eyebrows.

"It was from Dr. Wood, sir."

"It appears that it was not, Packington. You were deceived by some impostor using the doctor's name."

Packington started violently.

"I—I do not understand, sir!" he stammered. "I—I certainly supposed that it was Dr. Wood speaking—the name of Dr. Wood was given, and I had no suspicion—not the slightest—"

"Nevertheless, you were deceived," said Captain Ravenspur brusquely.

"It is true that the telephone was buzzing a good deal, and at such times it is difficult to recognise voices," said Packington. "But may I ask, sir, what gives you the impression that it was not Dr. Wood who was speaking? James has told me that the doctor's assistant has called, as arranged by the doctor when he rang up—"

"The doctor's assistant turns out to be an impostor!" snapped Captain Ravenspur. "And no one here has the slightest doubt that the medicine he pretended to bring from Dr. Wood contains poison."

"Poison, sir?" gasped the butler.

His face was white.

"Poison!" grunted the captain.

"But—but—" stammered Packington. "His eyes went to the bottle on the table. There was, for the moment, a scared look on his face. 'Is it possible, sir—' he stammered."

"Not only possible, but true, I am afraid, Packington," said Sir Richard gravely. "You must on another occasion take every care not to be deceived—"

"Most certainly, sir! I never dreamed—"

"Quite so. Do not think that I blame you in any way, Packington," said Sir Richard. "Neither is it yet established that the bottle contains poison, though I can have little doubt of it, as it was brought here by an impostor. We shall know for certain when Dr. Wood arrives."

"But—but the man who called, sir—"

"An impostor!" growled Captain Ravenspur. "No more the doctor's assistant than I am—and probably the same man who fired at my brother last night."

"The—the murderer, sir?" gasped Packington.

"Undoubtedly, in my opinion."  
 "Hold him, Cecil!" exclaimed Sir Richard, as the butler swayed. But before the captain could reach him Packington staggered and fell, crashing on the bedside table.

"Look out!" yelled the captain.

But it was too late. The table spun over under the crash, the bottle fell to the floor, and was smashed into a score of fragments.

"You fool!" roared the captain.

"Gently, Cecil!" exclaimed Sir Richard. "Packington is ill—help him!"

The valet ran forward and assisted Packington to his feet. The butler leaned heavily on his shoulder.

"Sir Richard, I—I can only say I am sorry—I—I—a sudden weakness—my old wound—" stammered Packington.

"It is nothing," said Sir Richard. "Help Packington to his room, Jervis. The doctor had better see you when he calls, Packington. Not another word, my good fellow—go!"

"You are too kind to me, sir!" faltered Packington, and he left the room, still leaning heavily on the sympathetic Jervis.

Captain Ravenspur muttered an oath as he picked up the bedside table, and scowled at the fragments of broken glass on the floor.

"There goes the evidence!" he growled. "That clumsy fool—"

"Come, come, Cecil! The poor fellow is not to blame," said Sir Richard. "He was in a nervous state, and the news of what had happened here overcame him. The poor fellow thinks that he is to blame for having been deceived by that telephone call—"

"He was to blame."

"I do not agree, Cecil."

A few minutes later Jervis came back.

"How is Packington, Jervis?" asked the baronet.

"He is lying down now, sir; he seems very upset," said Jervis. "Inspector Cook is here now, sir, and wishes to see you—"

"Let him in at once."

Inspector Cook, breathing hard and deep, with a ruddier colour than ever in his plump face, came in. He advanced quickly to the baronet's bedside.

"You are safe, Sir Richard?" he said, panting.

"Quite," said the baronet, with a smile.

"Then nothing has happened—so far?" said the inspector, in a tone of relief. "Very good!"

"Something has happened!" snapped the captain, with a very inimical look at the Leyford inspector. "While you have been on your wild-goose chases, Mr. Cook, my brother has come within an ace of being poisoned."

"What?" hooted the inspector.

He stared at Sir Richard. In a few words the baronet told him of the visit of the pretended assistant of Dr. Wood of Leyford.

"And the medicine?" exclaimed the inspector. "You have preserved it?"

"Unfortunately, the bottle has been destroyed by accident," answered the baronet.

"By accident?"

"Yes."

Mr. Cook uttered a sound like a snort.

"I should like to know how that accident happened!" he grunted. "Accidents like that, sir, should not be allowed to happen. I take it that you, sir, were not the cause of the accident?"

"No," said Sir Richard,

"Captain Ravenspur—"

The captain laughed.

"Not at all, my dear Mr. Cook. I am truly sorry to disappoint you, but I had nothing to do with the accident."

Mr. Cook glanced at him. Then his attention returned to the baronet. It was evident that the Leyford inspector was labouring under some deep excitement; suppressed, but very visible.

"I will tell you this, Sir Richard," he said. "A man has been found lurking in the park this afternoon. He fled and disappeared; and in his haste dropped a pair of horn-rimmed glasses of a kind that can only have been used for purposes of disguise."



"Sir Richard must not touch what is in that bottle!" panted Captain Ravenspur.

"The medicine has been tampered with, and I have swallowed the poison that was meant for him. Heaven help me!" Harry Wharton & Co. sprang forward to catch the captain before he fell. (See Chapter 14.)

"You have described this pretended Mr. Payne as a man wearing horn-rimmed glasses. Obviously he is the same man. From the times you have stated, he was at the lodge in the park a short time before this Mr. Payne arrived here—he was there again a short time after this Mr. Payne left you. He was in disguise when he called on you in horn-rimmed glasses; he was, I believe, in disguise when the schoolboys saw him in the park, in a sandy wig and moustache. I believe, sir, that he is the man who has now three times attempted your life. I demand to know, sir, who caused the accident that destroyed the bottle containing what was almost certainly a poisonous draught."

"My butler," said Sir Richard.

"What?"

"My butler, Packington."

"Packington?" repeated the inspector, stupefied.

"Yes."

"Good gad!" said Inspector Cook.

The astonishment and dismay in his ruddy face were so evident, that the baronet smiled, and Captain Ravenspur burst into a laugh; and Frank Nugent could not help grinning. Jervis coughed behind his hand.

"Packington!" repeated Inspector Cook. "Oh, you are sure of this, Sir Richard. It is not a matter for making mistakes."

"I am quite sure of it," said Sir Richard. "Packington is unwell to-day—ono of his nervous attacks—and he fell half-fainting and unfortunately upset the table and destroyed the bottle—"

"He did not receive a push, or anything of that kind?" asked the inspector, like a man catching at straws.

"He did not, sir!" said the baronet haughtily.

"A sheer accident, then?"

"Perfectly so."

"A very unfortunate one, at all events," said the inspector tartly. "The evidence in that bottle, sir, might have enabled the person who concocted it to be traced! Now it is gone. It is most unfortunate."

"And Packington, if you question him, will undoubtedly tell you that I did not push him," smiled Captain Ravenspur.

Inspector Cook made no reply to that. He left Sir Richard's room without another word, obviously very much puzzled and disturbed. Harry Wharton & Co., at the doorway, glanced at him curiously as he passed; but the inspector did not speak, or heed them.

He went down the stairs, slowly and heavily, looking like a man who had been defeated.

## THE TWELFTH CHAPTER.

### In Doubt!

"PACKINGTON!"

"Sir!"

"I should like a few words with you!"

"I am quite at your service, sir," said Packington, his eyes for a moment dwelling with keen curiosity on Inspector Cook.

The summer evening was closing in.

Harry Wharton & Co. were in the hall, standing at one of the tall windows, looking out at the park in the sunset, and conversing in low tones. They glanced round as they heard Mr. Cook speak—they had not heard the silent step of the butler as he appeared.

The Famous Five were in a somewhat troubled mood.

Captain Ravenspur was with his brother, reading aloud to the baronet as he sat up in bed.

No one else was with them; even Jervis had been dismissed, the baronet insisting that he needed rest.

It was plain that Sir Richard desired to show to all whom it might concern that his faith in his brother was unbounded. He had allowed doubt to creep into his mind; but it was wholly banished now, and he reproached himself bitterly for having entertained it for a moment.

Frank Nugent and his chums could not feel at ease. And they could see that Mr. Cook still regarded the captain with the same distrust as before.

He had not left the house. Two constables were posted in the Grange, and it was understood that Mr. Cook was to remain all night as well as his men. That the inspector was in expectation of some development was not hard to guess. The juniors had a feeling of something impending—of disaster in the air. They had intended to take turns in the duty of watching over Sir Richard's safety. But the baronet, though kind and courteous, had been firm—he was determined to let all the household see that he trusted his brother absolutely.

"Captain Ravenspur is with Sir Richard now. I think?" the inspector went on, addressing the butler.

"Yes, sir; he is reading the evening paper to him," said Packington.

"And no one else?"

"No, sir, by Sir Richard's own instructions. I am to take Captain Ravenspur's place at nine o'clock, sir," said Packington. "Sir Richard has insisted upon Jervis going to bed, as he is to remain up at night."

The inspector granted.

"Sir Richard is master here," he said, evidently dissatisfied. "Now, Packington, I want you to tell me exactly how that bottle of medicine came to be destroyed. Dr. Wood has been here, but, of course, could tell us nothing concerning it, as every drop of the liquid had been spilled. You see yourself how very unfortunate it was."

"Quite, sir," said Packington. "I shall never forgive myself, sir, for my clumsiness. But Captain Ravenspur's sudden communication so startled me—"

The juniors saw the inspector draw a quick breath.

"Captain Ravenspur startled you, Packington, and caused the accident?" he exclaimed.

"Not intentionally, of course, sir," said the butler hastily. "The whole affair was a sheer accident. I was in

a somewhat nervous and upset state, sir; and when Captain Ravenspur told me so suddenly of the attempt on my master's life by poison, I was so startled that I was, for the moment, quite overcome. As it happened, I was standing with my hand resting on the bedside table, and so—so it happened, sir."

The inspector's eyes gleamed.

"What I desired to know was whether Captain Ravenspur was even remotely responsible for the accident," he said.

"In a way, sir, yes; but, of course, quite unintentionally," said the butler.

"Possibly," said the inspector dryly.

"At all events, the bottle was smashed, and no evidence remained of what it had contained."

"That is unfortunately true, sir."

"Sir Richard's confidence in Captain Ravenspur appears to be absolutely complete now, Packington."

"Absolutely, sir."

"Owing to his intervention when Sir Richard was about to take the medicine from Jervis."

"Owing to that, sir."

"And it is useless to give him counsel," said the inspector, biting his lip. "He will listen to nothing."

"The incident has quite restored his confidence, sir," said Packington. "I should never venture to suggest to him, sir, that the whole affair of the pretended doctor's assistant and the bottle of medicine was a—hem!—comedy arranged for the very purpose of restoring his confidence."

The inspector started.

"Then you have thought of that, too, Packington?"

Evidently Mr. Cook had thought of it.

Packington coughed apologetically.

"I would not mention it, sir, except in your presence, and that of these young gentlemen who are devoted to my master," he said. "I trust you do not think I have taken a liberty, sir."

"Certainly not. I think you are a very keen fellow, Packington," said the inspector. "The whole thing, of course, was staged to bring about the very state of affairs now existing."

"I should not like to say that I think so, sir; but if that is your opinion it certainly confirms what has passed through my mind," said the butler.

"Although it is not, perhaps, my place to say so, I do not wholly trust Captain Ravenspur. My devotion to a very kind master must be my excuse for what may seem a liberty on my part. I have received so many kindnesses from Sir Richard that I cannot think with calmness of his danger from an unscrupulous enemy."

"I should like some words with you in private, Packington."

"Certainly, sir! Perhaps you will come to my room."

The inspector followed Packington, leaving the Greyfriars fellows exchanging glances. What the butler had suggested was a new idea to the juniors.

"Is that it?" said Nugent, in a low voice. "That man Payne—whoever he was—was he put up to it by the captain?"

"Looks like it," said Bob. "Anyhow, the result has been to bring about the very state of affairs that the captain wanted—if he means mischief."

"But—" said Nugent slowly.

He shook his head.

"I can see what Packington thinks, and what Mr. Cook thinks," he said. "But it doesn't fit together, to my mind. I—I think we've made a mistake about Captain Ravenspur."

"I don't like your uncle being alone with him," said Harry.

"No; I don't like that," confessed Nugent. "I can't make it all out. But—I'd rather my uncle did not run

risks. Still, if there was poison in the bottle there is no doubt that Captain Ravenspur prevented my uncle from taking it. That is quite certain—I was there, and saw it all."

"But if there wasn't?" said Johnny Bull slowly. "If the whole thing was harmless, perhaps only water. And then the captain would be anxious to get it destroyed before the doctor came, and showed up his game."

"But it was Packington destroyed it."

"According to what he says, the captain was the cause of it."

Nugent shook his head again.

"I can't make it out—it's too deep for me. But I admit I'm uneasy about my uncle; though I don't distrust Captain Ravenspur as I did. Let's go up—at least, I'll go! I want to be near my uncle while the captain is with him."

The juniors went up the stairs.

A Leyford constable was standing by the window in the corridor outside Sir Richard's room. The juniors passed the baronet's door quietly; and caught a murmur of the captain's voice from within. He was still reading aloud to his brother.

Nugent hesitated, tapped at the door, and opened it.

Sir Richard, sitting up propped on cushions in the old canopied bed, glanced at him, and the captain lowered the "Evening News" for a moment, and smiled ironically at the Greyfriars junior.

"What is it, Frank?" asked the baronet quietly.

Nugent coloured a little.

"I—I just looked in, uncle. It will be time for you to take your medicine soon—the soothing draught Dr. Wood left for you—"

"Packington has placed everything in readiness, Frank; and my brother will give me the medicine at half-past eight," said Sir Richard.

"I told Dr. Wood that I should give it to you, uncle, as Jervis will not be here."

"You need not trouble, my boy."

Nugent still hesitated, and the baronet, frowning lightly, made a gesture to dismiss him. Frank closed the door and rejoined his chums, with a dark and troubled expression on his face.

"You heard that?" he said, in a low voice.

"Yes," said Harry.

"It's asking for it—if Captain Ravenspur means mischief," said Bob.

"And he does?" growled Johnny Bull.

Nugent set his lips.

"I'm going to be present when the medicine is given," he said. "I'll wait here."

And the juniors waited, an occasional murmur of Captain Ravenspur's voice reaching them as the minutes slowly passed.

## THE THIRTEENTH CHAPTER.

### The Inspector's Theory!

INSPECTOR COOK glanced round, with some little interest, at Packington's room, as the butler showed him into it. Packington's manner was civil, almost obsequious, as if he realised that the Leyford official was doing him a considerable honour.

It was a handsome room, with a bed-room adjoining, both looking out over the gardens. The rooms were in the oldest part of the ancient house, with oak panelling, black with age, on the walls. Behind the panelling was the solid stone of which all the older part of the mansion was built,

The inspector sank into a deep chair. "You have comfortable quarters here, Packington," he remarked.

"Very comfortable indeed, sir," said Packington, remaining standing. "Sir Richard is a good master, sir. Although I have been with him only three months, I do not think he has any servant more attached to him."

"I am sure of it," said the inspector cordially. "You are on the ground floor here. The former butler, I believe, had rooms upstairs."

"Quite so, sir; but"—Packington glanced down at his leg—"so far as possible, sir, and so far as is consistent with my duty, I desire to avoid stairs, and Sir Richard very kindly allowed me to select these rooms on the ground floor. Moreover, I prefer to be near the silver; there was, I have been told, a burglary at the Grange before I came."

The inspector nodded. "That is correct, Packington. I was called in on the case," he said. "The former butler was severely handled, and Sir Richard retired him on a pension. Indeed, but for that occurrence, I suppose you would not be here."

"Then I cannot wholly regret it, sir, for it has gained me an excellent master, and Sir Richard, I hope, a faithful butler," said Packington. "But you wished to speak to me about something, sir?"

"Yes. Sit down, Packington." Packington sat down, on the edge of a chair.

"You have been here only three months, Packington; but, of course, you are well acquainted with the building," said Mr. Cook.

"I think so, sir." "Have you any knowledge of secret passages existing in the Grange?"

The butler started. "Secret passages, sir?"

"Yes. These old houses are often full of them," said the inspector. "And in fact, that they exist, or did exist, is a certainty. There was a Ravenspur in the reign of Charles the First, who escaped from the Roundheads by some secret passage, or so the story goes."

Packington smiled faintly.

"Since I have been here, sir, I have heard some of the legends of the Grange," he said. "But I have heard nothing of secret passages. Perhaps it is nothing but a legend."

"I think not," said Mr. Cook quietly. "for I have a very strong suspicion that such a secret passage was used only a few years ago, and by a member of the Ravenspur family. You have heard of Edgar Ravenspur, Sir Richard's nephew?"

The butler started again.

"I have heard of him," he assented.

"I do not want to rake up discreditable old stories," said the inspector. "But Edgar Ravenspur was a bad lot—a thoroughly bad lot—not unlike Captain Ravenspur, but decidedly worse in every respect. His father was killed in the War; and Sir Richard showed Edgar every kindness, which he repaid with the blackest ingratitude. Finally he disappeared—went abroad—and nothing has since been heard of him. But"—Mr. Cook paused for a moment—"the matter has been arranged since, and Edgar Ravenspur could return to England in safety, if he liked; but at the time he had to run for his liberty."

"Indeed, sir," said Packington, looking very grave. "If you will excuse me, sir, I hardly think I ought to listen to such details concerning a member of my master's family."

"I have a reason for mentioning it," said the inspector brusquely. "You will kindly give me your attention, Packington."

"Very good, sir."

"In point of fact, Edgar Ravenspur would have been arrested, had he been found here when the officers came," said Mr. Cook. "He disappeared in the nick of time, and no one knew how he had escaped. At the time, it occurred to me that he had used the old secret passage that his ancestor had used in Stuart times. That is years ago, of course; but the passage, if he used it, must be still in existence. You know nothing of it?"

"Nothing, sir."

"You are in such a position to investigate such a matter," said Mr. Cook. "I need not tell you that it is your duty to give me every assistance."

"My devotion to a kind master would be sufficient for that, sir," said Packington. "I shall certainly do everything in my power. If you honour me with your confidence you may rely upon me absolutely."

"It is my intention to confide in you,"

Packington, chiefly because I have no choice in the matter," said Mr. Cook bluntly. "The attempted murderer of Sir Richard Ravenspur is in this house, and has, I believe, some secret means of entering and leaving it."

"You amaze me, sir."

"No doubt. But I have reason to believe that the man, whoever he may be, left this house in secret this afternoon in disguise; that he returned in another disguise as Payne, the pretended doctor's assistant, and after going away in the car, he resumed his former disguise, and returned to the house in the same secret way."

"You—you think so, sir?" gasped Packington.

"I have reasons to think so," said Mr. Cook; "and, if I am correct, a secret passage exists from this house to the old hunting-lodge in the park."

Packington sat staring at him blankly.

"I have no doubt I have surprised you," said the inspector.

"You—you have, sir!" gasped Packington.

(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.)

I CAN just imagine how anxious you all are to get this week's issue of the MAGNET, for it contains the second part of our stupendous Free Gift Model Aeroplane, namely the propeller and driving mechanism. Your plane once assembled, all you've got to do is to attach the driving mechanism—a very simple job I can assure you, chums, if only you follow carefully the instructions given on pages 7 and 8 of this issue.

I hardly need ask if you are pleased with the MAGNET aeroplane. In fact, I can almost hear you saying that it is the finest free gift ever presented with any boy's paper. A real achievement, what? It brings home the fact once again that the MAGNET never fails to hold its head above all other papers of its kind on the market. Here's to wishing you every success with your model.

Before I put you wise to another new feature I have in store, let's have a laugh with Jack Phillips, of 333, Douglas Parade, Williamstown, Melbourne, Victoria, Australia, who has sent in the following amusing joke:

### THE DIFFERENCE.

The truant inspector called on Mrs. Wiggs to ascertain why her son, Sammy, was absenting himself from school.

"Well, he's thirteen years old now," explained Mrs. Wiggs, "and we think it's time he helped us to make a living. Anyhow, he's had enough education."

"But, madam," interrupted the inspector, "I did not complete my education till I was twenty-five years old."

"May be so," agreed Mrs. Wiggs, "but you mustn't forget the fact that Sammy's got brains!"



A "Magnet" pocket-knife has been awarded to Jack for his winning effort.

The new feature mentioned above is a series of interesting and instructive articles on "How to Fly" written by an expert who knows all there is about the art of flying. You'll find the first of these in next week's MAGNET.

If you are bound for the seaside this week, chums, don't forget to display your copy of the MAGNET prominently wherever you go. If our representative spots you he'll ask you to choose a novel gift from the following: kites, windmills, balloons, mystery packets, and flags.

So much for that, then. Now for this week's winning Limerick which has won for Clifford Kelly, of 4, Gamston Road, Abbeydale, Sheffield, a useful leather pocket wallet.

There's a sneaky young chap named Stott,

Who toadies to Skinner a lot.

All the fellows affirm

That he's rather a worm,

In fact on the landscape a blot!

With only a little more space at my disposal I must devote it to next week's bumper bill-o'-fare, the tit-bit of which is thriller No. 3 in our grand new series of holiday adventure yarns, featuring the world-famous Harry Wharton & Co. of Greyfriars. The title of this is:

"THE MYSTERY OF THE GRANGE!" and great praise is due to Frank Richards for the masterly way in which he has dealt with the plot.

Then there will be another "shocker" from the prolific pen of Dicky Nugent, dealing with the further amusing adventures of Jack Jolly's Jolliboys at Winklesea. Note the title, chums:

"DR. BIRCHEMALL AND THE JOLLIBOYS!"

Next on the list comes another gripping instalment of Geo. E. Rochester's latest and best serial:

"THE SHADOW OF THE GUILLOTINE!"

chockablock full of exciting and thrilling adventures which together with No. 1 of our new series dealing with flying will complete a real bumper issue.

YOUR EDITOR,

"Think of it for a moment, and it will not seem so surprising," said Mr. Cook. "The ancient, secret passage certainly exists, and, according to the legend, it has an outlet somewhere in the park. That is local tradition. When I came here this afternoon I had it in my mind that the secret passage was being used at that very time, that some attempt was being planned, and that I should arrive here to find that Sir Richard had been attacked again. That has not taken place."

"But"—the inspector paused impressively—"I am convinced, Packington, that the man who was seen in the park disappeared by some secret means when chased into the old lodge; and I have every reason to fear that he is now lurking within the walls of Ravenspur Grange, looking for an opportunity of renewing his attempt on Sir Richard's life."

The butler's face was quite pale. "I am confiding to you, Packington, because you can help me," went on the Leyford inspector. "This unknown man obviously has a confederate in this household. I need not name him."

"Captain Ravenspur?" gasped the butler.

"Strictly between ourselves, yes," said Mr. Cook.

The butler drew a deep breath. "I have no doubt you are right, sir. But it is terrible," he said in a low voice. "Possibly, sir, you have some knowledge of the identity of this unknown man, Captain Ravenspur's confederate?"

"I have!" said the inspector grimly. Packington rose to his feet. He moved about the room restlessly for a few moments, and then stopped, leaning on the door.

The inspector watched him impatiently.

"My dear fellow, you need not be upset," he said. "You must control your nerves, if you are going to be of assistance to me in saving the life of your master, and bringing his assailant to book."

"Oh! Quite, sir!" gasped Packington. "You may rely on me, sir. You will find me worthy of your confidence, I hope."

"I am sure of that. I must have help within the house, and I have selected you," said Inspector Cook. "You are no doubt aware that if Edgar Ravenspur is still living, he is heir to this estate in case of Sir Richard's death."

"He is supposed to be dead, sir."

"No doubt; but people who are supposed to be dead often turn out to be very much alive," said Inspector Cook. "If Edgar Ravenspur lives, and has secretly returned to England, it may account for a man from Australia having been shot by the park wall the other night—a man who was coming to the Grange to see someone whom he spoke of as Black Edgar. If a secret passage exists from the old hunting-lodge, it may account for the disappearance of the body. In a word, Packington, my theory is that Edgar Ravenspur is at the bottom of the attempts on Sir Richard's life. Captain Ravenspur is his confederate—doubtless for some very substantial consideration. It is hardly a secret that the captain is over his ears in debt, and dependent on his brother. It would be easy for the heir of Ravenspur to make it worth his while to lend assistance in such a scheme."

"You make it very clear, sir."

"I may say that Captain Ravenspur practically gave the thing away, in a conversation with me," said Inspector Cook, somewhat pompously.

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"He would scarcely be a match for you, sir," said Packington.

Inspector Cook smiled.

"Hardly," he agreed. "Now, Packington, you understand why I have taken you into my confidence. I cannot remain in the house—but you are an inmate here. My object is less to lay the villain by the heels, than to prevent the consummation of his crime. I must save Sir Richard—though he is himself placing every difficulty in my way, by his unthinking confidence in a man who seeks to harm him."

"Quite so, sir."

"I rely upon your help, and upon your secrecy," said the inspector.

"You may rely fully upon both, sir," said Packington. "Not a word, of course, will pass my lips, and every assistance I can give—"

There was a violent ringing of a bell.

Inspector Cook started to his feet.

"What—"

Voices could be heard calling. Inspector Cook caught his breath. The butler opened the door.

"Something has happened, sir—"

The inspector tore past him. Packington did not follow. He stood quietly, watching the excited inspector as he flew for the stairs.

## THE FOURTEENTH CHAPTER.

### Poison!

FRANK NUGENT looked at his watch for about the tenth time. It wanted a minute to half-past eight, the time specified by the doctor for the baronet to take his medicine.

Frank rose from the settee in the corridor.

"I'm going in!" he said quietly.

And he entered Sir Richard's room. Captain Ravenspur was standing by the bedside table, measuring out a dose of medicine into a wine-glass.

He glanced over it, with a smile, as Nugent appeared. But there was a slight frown on Sir Richard's brow.

"Frank!" he said, his tone was sharp.

"Let the boy come in, Dick," said the captain. "After all, watch-dogs are useful, though they may bark at the wrong person."

Sir Richard smiled faintly.

"I told the doctor that I should be giving you your medicine, uncle," said Frank.

"My boy," said Sir Richard quietly. "I am aware that it is affection, and a sense of duty that moves you, but I cannot and will not listen to a single word implying distrust of my brother. If you do not wish to make me angry, Frank, say nothing more of that kind."

Nugent compressed his lips.

"You still distrust me, boy?" asked the captain. He seemed rather amused than irritated.

"I—I don't know," said Frank.

"Not so much as I did. But—"

"But you fear that I may have tampered with my brother's medicine, and that I may be going, at this very moment, to give him a draught that will make me master of Ravenspur Grange?"

"Cecil!" said the baronet.

"That is in the boy's mind," said the captain.

"Dismiss such thoughts from your mind, Frank," said Sir Richard severely. "Give me the medicine, Cecil."

Nugent made a step forward.

"Uncle!"

He could not control his alarm.

"Fool!" snapped the captain. "By gad, it is hard to keep patience with

you, boy! If I were the dastard you imagine, do you fancy that I should commit a crime, openly, with no chance of escaping detection?"

"Uncle! Do not touch it!" exclaimed Frank, in great distress. "You know there is at least a risk—"

"There is no risk in anything taken from my brother's hand," said Sir Richard sternly. "Say no more."

"There are poisons—that leave no traces—Indian poisons—"

"And I have been in India!" said the captain. "Take care, Dick—you may be dealing with a man who has learned the poisoning arts of the Hindoos, and may be about to practise them on you."

"Do not jest on such a subject, Cecil! Frank, I command you to be silent!" exclaimed Sir Richard Ravenspur.

Frank set his teeth.

"Uncle! You shall not take it!" he exclaimed. "I will strike it from his hand before you shall take it."

"Silence!"

Captain Ravenspur stood with the wine-glass of medicine in his hand, a mocking grin on his cynical face.

"What will convince you, Nephew Frank?" he asked. "By gad! In olden times, it was customary for a great lord's draught to be tasted before he swallowed it, to guard against poison. Will you act as wine-taster?"

He held out the wine-glass to the schoolboy.

Frank breathed deep.

"I will, rather than see my uncle drink it!" he said steadily.

"A devoted nephew, Dick," chuckled the captain. "Your older nephew, of the name of Ravenspur, would not have been so devoted, I guarantee. The boy is a fool, but I like him all the better for it. Look, Frank, you young ass—you shall not run the risk you fancy—I will drink it myself."

"Nonsense, Cecil!" exclaimed Sir Richard.

"Not at all," said the captain. "It is time for you to take the medicine prescribed by Dr. Wood, and this dose does not come from his precious assistant in the horn-rimmed glasses. Frank!"

"Yes!" muttered Nugent.

"You saw me fill the glass from the bottle?"

"Yes."

"Then if I swallow this dose, will you be satisfied that the next dose may be taken without harm by my brother?"

"Yes," repeated Frank.

"Then you shall be satisfied."

"Cecil!" exclaimed the baronet.

"This is trifling—I will not allow—"

"Why not satisfy the boy?" said Captain Ravenspur carelessly. "After all, he is a good lad, though rather a fool. He means well. Look, Frank!"

He raised the wine-glass to his lips.

Frank Nugent watched him tensely.

From the half-open door, the other juniors looked on. If Captain Ravenspur drank the glass, it was proof enough that the contents were harmless. But if it were a trick—if he intended to spill the liquid, there were many eyes upon him to discern his trickery.

But it was no trick.

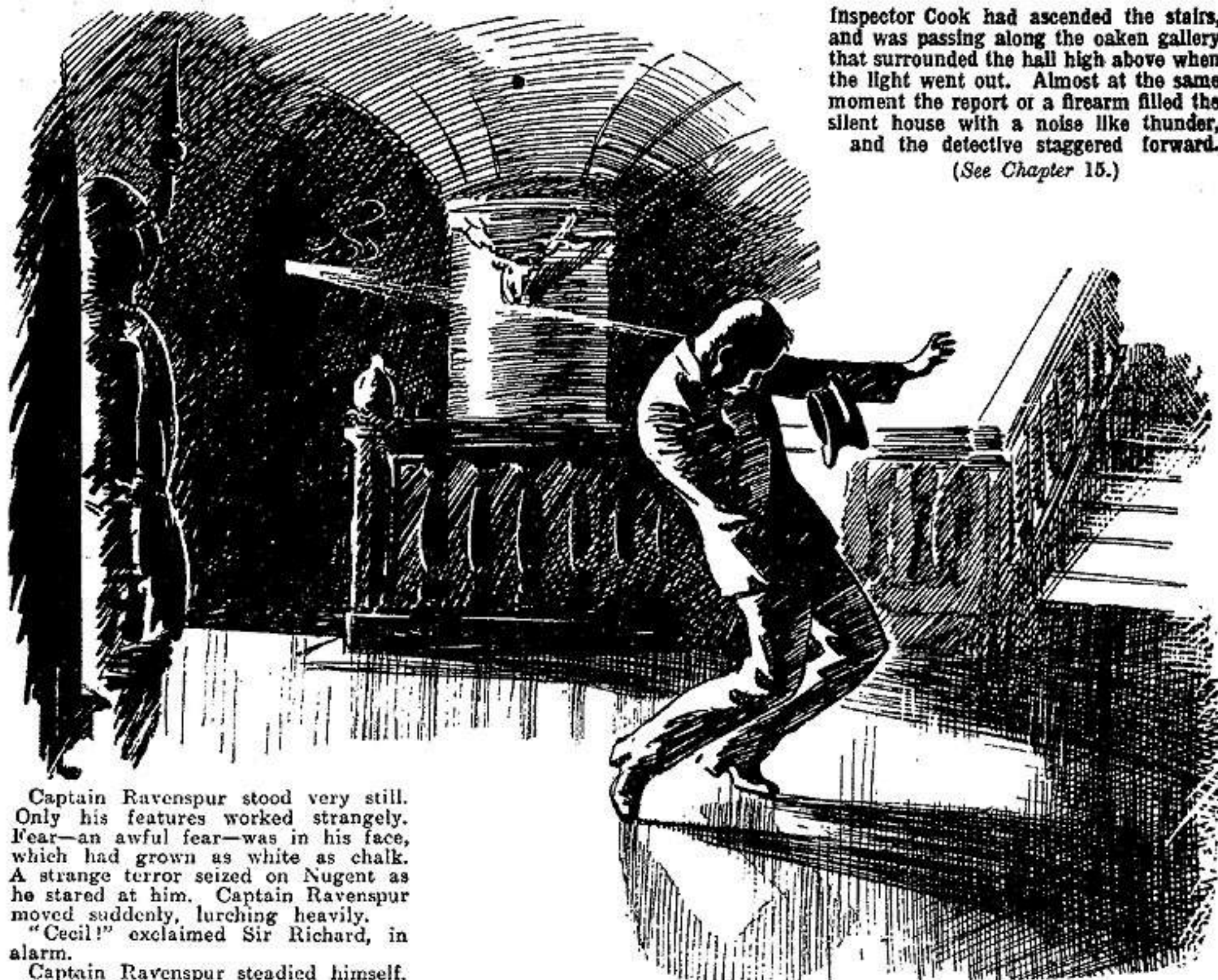
The captain raised the glass to his lips and drank the contents, to the last drop.

He laughed as he set the wine-glass down on the table.

Nugent drew a deep breath.

"Are you satisfied now, Frank?"

"Yes!" said Nugent. "So far as that bottle of medicine is concerned—yes." He started a little, and stared at the captain. "What is the matter?"



Inspector Cook had ascended the stairs, and was passing along the oaken gallery that surrounded the hall high above when the light went out. Almost at the same moment the report of a firearm filled the silent house with a noise like thunder, and the detective staggered forward.  
(See Chapter 15.)

Captain Ravenspur stood very still. Only his features worked strangely. Fear—an awful fear—was in his face, which had grown as white as chalk. A strange terror seized on Nugent as he stared at him. Captain Ravenspur moved suddenly, lurching heavily.

"Cecil!" exclaimed Sir Richard, in alarm.

Captain Ravenspur steadied himself.

"What—what is the matter, Cecil?"

The captain panted.

"The matter, Dick—the matter is—poison! Do not touch what is in that bottle—on your life! The medicine has been tampered with, and I have swallowed the poison that was meant for you! Heaven help me!"

Nugent sprang forward.

He was in time to catch the captain as he fell. Dazedly, he lowered the falling man to the floor.

Sir Richard Ravenspur stared in horror.

"Cecil—my brother—"

Nugent rang the bell violently. Harry Wharton & Co. were already in the room. The Leyford constable came into the doorway. Bob Cherry ran to the stairs, shouting for Inspector Cook.

Captain Ravenspur raised himself on his elbow, and turned his ghastly face to the horrified eyes of his brother.

"Dick!" he panted huskily. "Dick! It was meant for you—someone has tampered with that bottle! You know—you know that I knew nothing of it—should I have swallowed it, if I had known, or even dreamed? Dick, I've not been a good brother to you, but I swear that never, never have I meant you harm, that I'd have given my worthless life to save yours, old man! It's a dying man who tells you so, Dick!"

"Cecil!"

There was a deep groan from Captain Ravenspur, and he sank back. Nugent held his head; in the captain's face was no sign of life. Nugent turned a haggard look on his chums.

"Get the doctor—quick—he may be saved! Quick!"

Harry Wharton rushed from the room.

Still, silent, to all appearances lifeless, Captain Ravenspur lay, with his sagging head on Nugent's arm. He had proved at last his good faith; it could not be doubted now, but in proving it, he had taken the fatal draught intended for his brother.

"Cecil!" said the baronet hoarsely.

"My brother! Speak!"

But no word came from the lifeless lips.

## THE FIFTEENTH CHAPTER.

### By Whose Hand?

"He lives!"

Dr. Wood spoke quietly. Sir Richard Ravenspur uttered a cry, a cry of relief, that came from his very heart.

The hour was late.

In Ravenspur Grange, no one had thought of sleep. Without the great house, the summer night was calm; within, all was unresting. In his room, Captain Ravenspur lay stretched on his bed, and no word had passed his lips since that terrible scene by Sir Richard's bedside. At a late hour, the doctor entered the baronet's room, with the news that his brother yet lived.

Sir Richard, pale, haggard, wan, had not closed his eyes. Jervis was with him, and the Famous Five were in the room. They could not think of sleep. The hours were bitterly anxious for them, as for the baronet. The last attempt on Sir Richard had proved that the secret assassin was in the house or, at least, had easy access to the house, and that he was not, and could not be, Cecil Ravenspur. Who, then,

was the man? The juniors could not even begin to answer that question. But, for the present, their thoughts were less of the unknown assassin, than of the man who had proved his good faith, and proved it, as seemed only too likely, with his life. Dr. Wood's announcement was almost as much a relief to the chums of Greyfriars as to Sir Richard himself.

"He lives!" repeated the baronet.

Dr. Wood nodded. His face was pale and tired.

"And he will live?" said Sir Richard, almost pleadingly.

"I think he will live, Sir Richard," said the medical gentleman. "The worst is over, in my belief. There is no doubt that Captain Ravenspur will have a very long illness, that he must be placed where he can have the most assiduous attention night and day—but he has a strong constitution, and he has a good chance of recovery."

The tears stood in Sir Richard Ravenspur's eyes.

"Save him, doctor," he said brokenly. "He has saved my life—and I had doubted him—though I thank Heaven that I had dismissed my doubts before he gave this final proof. The poison—I should have taken it—"

"In your case, Sir Richard, the result would have been immediately fatal," said the doctor quietly. "Your age, and your present condition, would have made that a certainty. Captain Ravenspur will escape, because he is a much younger man, and was suffering from no such injury as you are suffering from. But he has had a narrow escape. As soon as he can be removed, I recommend that he should  
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be placed in a nursing-home under my supervision in Leyford—"

"Anything that you direct will be done, Dr. Wood. Only save him!" said Sir Richard. "Only save my dear brother."

"He shall be saved, if human skill can save him," said the doctor. "He lies now in a quiet sleep. You, too, should be sleeping, Sir Richard."

The baronet made a gesture.

"Sleep! Impossible!"

"You must sleep, sir!" said the doctor. "I shall give you a draught. After what has happened, Sir Richard, and in view of the danger you run, you must take medicine only from my hands. Your food and drink must be carefully examined and supervised. There is someone in this house who designs your death, and a moment of carelessness may be fatal."

"But who?" muttered Sir Richard.

The doctor shook his head.

"That is not in my province, sir," he answered. "My business is to save you. Every precaution must be taken until the dastard is discovered. It is for Inspector Cook to find him."

The baronet made a hopeless gesture.

"There is no one in the house whom I do not completely trust," he said. "The whole thing is beyond me. What have I done that my life should be sought? So far as I know, I have wronged no man. The only man who could benefit by my death, is the man who has taken the poison in my place, and so saved my life." He made a weary gesture. "Had I swallowed that dose, doctor, who would have doubted that Cecil had poisoned me?"

"No one!" said the doctor.

"Yet he was innocent—he lies at death's door in my place!" The baronet shuddered. "They would have judged him guilty—they must have judged him guilty, had I taken the dose. Poor Cecil! But if his life is saved, I care for nothing else."

"His life will be saved," said the doctor. "Now, Sir Richard, you must sleep."

The juniors quietly left the baronet's room, leaving him with Jervis. Frank Nugent went into the adjoining dressing-room, where he was to sleep that night. The others went downstairs, with grave and shadowed faces.

In the hall below they found Inspector Cook.

The inspector was moving about restlessly, his brows knitted, his lips set, his whole aspect harassed.

Inspector Cook was in no happy mood.

The late happening had completely shattered the theory he had formed, and to which he had pinned his faith.

Had Sir Richard Ravenspur taken the medicine from his brother's hand, the inspector would have entertained not the slightest doubt that Captain Ravenspur had administered it intentionally, that he was guilty. Frank Nugent's intervention had prevented that. And the captain's action, in swallowing the dose, convinced even the most unbelieving that he was innocent—that he had never dreamed of the true nature of the dose. Some other hand had placed the poison in the medicine bottle, unknown to him, unsuspected by him? Whose hand?

Captain Ravenspur was innocent. That was clear now. Circumstances, and his own reckless and mocking temper, had drawn suspicion upon him, but he had proved his faith at last. But if he was innocent, who was guilty? If the heir of Ravenspur, the scapegrace nephew who had been years absent, had secretly returned, as the inspector theorised, he could not have

acted without a confederate in the house. Captain Ravenspur, it was certain now, was not the confederate. Then who was it?

It was not pleasant to the inspector to realise that he had been on a wild-goose chase. But he had to realise it now. In a troubled and harassed mood, the inspector paced the old hall.

Cecil Ravenspur lay between life and death. Soon he would be removed from the Grange, to lie for weeks, perhaps months, under the care of doctors and nurses. He would be gone, but the baronet's enemy, his danger, would remain. The inspector knew that now.

By whose hand, and how, had the fatal dose been introduced into the medicine bottle? Sir Richard had not been left alone. Captain Ravenspur, or Jervis, or Nugent, or Packington, or the doctor himself, had been with him. Had the bottle been tampered with on its way to the baronet's room? Had the dose been taken by its intended victim, no doubt would have existed—Cecil Ravenspur would have been adjudged guilty. That idea was now inadmissible. But the elimination of the suspected man left the Leyford inspector totally at a loss.

Mr. Cook glanced at the juniors.

"Who is with Sir Richard?" he asked.

"Jervis," answered Harry.

"Jervis!" repeated the inspector, pursing his lips.

Wharton smiled faintly. He fancied that Mr. Cook was in a mood to suspect anyone now.

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"Nugent's staying in Sir Richard's dressing-room," said Harry. "We're going up to bed now. Good-night, sir."

"Good-night," said the inspector absently; and the schoolboys left him, little dreaming at the moment how they were to see him again.

Packington came into the hall, with his soft tread. Except for Jervis in the baronet's room, the constable on duty in the corridor outside, and the inspector and the butler, all had gone to bed.

Packington moved about the hall, looking at the fastenings of doors and windows, occasionally glancing at the silent, harassed inspector.

"Your room is ready, sir," he said at last, deferentially.

"I shall not sleep to-night!" grunted the inspector.

"Indeed, sir?"

"And to-morrow," said the inspector, between his teeth, "I shall prove, or disprove, the existence of a secret passage from the hunting-lodge to this house. That, at least, is practicable."

Packington eyed him curiously, under his heavy, dark eyebrows.

"Indeed, sir! I understood that the ruined lodge had been searched very carefully and thoroughly," he said.

"I will root it to pieces, stone by stone!" said the inspector savagely.

"If this passage is there I shall find it, if every stone in the place has to be taken up. And if it is there—"

He checked himself. "We shall see."

Packington eyed him more intently.

"Sir Richard will hardly permit an historic ruin like the old hunting-lodge, sir, to be destroyed," he murmured.

"It will be done," said the inspector

grimly. "Have no doubt of that. It will and shall be done!"

"And if the passage is found, sir—"

"If it is there, it will be found. And we shall see where it leads, at this end," said the inspector. "If into an occupied room—"

He broke off again. "You think of everything, sir," said Packington. "If the secret passage indeed exists, and if it gives access to an occupied room in this building, the occupant of that room will be under very grave suspicion."

"Exactly."

"I trust you will be successful, sir," said the butler. "If you desire nothing further, sir, I shall now go to bed."

"Nothing, thank you. Good-night!"

"Good-night, sir!"

Packington moved away softly. The light remained in the hall.

Inspector Cook paced to and fro, restless. It was an hour later that he ascended the stairs and passed along the oaken gallery that surrounded the hall high above. Suddenly the light vanished, and all was darkness, and almost at the same moment the report of a firearm filled the silent house with a noise like thunder.

## THE SIXTEENTH CHAPTER.

### Dead!

HARRY WHARTON leaped from his bed.

He had been sleeping lightly, troubled thoughts, and a lingering aching in his bruised head, keeping him from sound slumber.

A sudden sound in the silence of the night had banished sleep. He leaped from bed, and stood listening in the darkness, his heart throbbing. What was it that had awakened him?

A sleepy voice came from the shadows.

"What was that?"

Wharton ran to the lighting switch and turned on the light. His comrades were awake.

"What was it?" breathed Bob Cherry.

"A shot!" said Harry.

"Good heavens! Then—"

Harry Wharton tore open the door. He ran for the stairs, and dashed down. His comrades were fast behind him.

A shot had rung through the silent house. That it had been fired in the baronet's room; that it told of another attempt, perhaps successful, on Sir Richard Ravenspur's life, was the thought in the minds of all the juniors. They raced down the staircase.

All was in darkness below.

Only from the corridor that led from the hall gallery to Sir Richard's room came a glimmer of light.

Wharton reached the gallery and ran along it, and stumbled suddenly over something that lay on the oaken floor.

He picked himself up, and ran on breathlessly. He did not even know over what he had stumbled; and he did not pause a second to ascertain. He was full of anxiety for Sir Richard Ravenspur.

He turned into the lighted corridor and ran on to the baronet's room, his comrades at his heels.

The Leyford constable was standing there, his face startled in the light. He was staring along the corridor in the direction of the hall gallery, facing Wharton as he came racing up.

Evidently the constable had been startled by the shot, and was uncertain whether to leave his post to investigate, or remain on guard over the baronet's door. Inspector Cook had given him the strictest instructions to

(Continued on page 28.)

THE MOST REMARKABLE STORY OF THE FRENCH REVOLUTION EVER WRITTEN ! START IT TO-DAY !

# THE SHADOW OF THE GUILLOTINE !



## The Tyrant's Victim !

**O**LD Andre was crouched fearfully against the wall by the window, Sansarge standing bowed of head and humble of mien.

"Pardi!" went on the marquis, advancing into the room. "But I could not have arrived more opportunely. I had reason to think that I should find you here, my nephew!"

His supercilious glance travelled round the room, and his lip curled in disgust.

"Pah!" he ejaculated. "It smells of the byre!"

With slow deliberation, he applied dainty, scented cambric to his nostrils, his cold gaze returning the while to the pale-faced chevalier.

"It is not fitting that I should hold speech with you in front of such seum as this!" he continued. "Your horse and groom await you!"

"I accompany you, sir!" returned the chevalier defiantly.

"Ah!"

Only that monosyllable and a sudden narrowing of his eyes gave token of the anger occasioned in the marquis by the words.

"I had thought," he went on gratingly, "that these animals would have learned a lesson by the flogging which their cub received to-day. But it seems I was too lenient. You would not be here did they not encourage you, so I will teach a sharper lesson, which, maybe, they will in future bear in mind."

He turned to Andre.

"Come here!" he commanded harshly.

Shufflingly, the old man approached, his terror-filled eyes on the superbly-clad and domineering figure of the marquis.

"My lord," he quavered, "have mercy—a-a-ah!"

Like a silver streak the thin rapier of the most noble, the Marquis d'Ermonde de Fontnoy had plunged forward, its point entering the breast of the peasant and protruding between the shoulder-blades. Then, as it was withdrawn, Andre swayed on his feet to slither to the floor a crumpled, pitiful heap.

It was over in an instant, that foul and murderous thrust, dealt with such deadly swiftness, over before horrified

Thirsting for freedom—and blood, the once down-trodden peasants of France have risen against the hated aristocrats. And heavy over the blood-drenched land lies the shadow of the guillotine, lengthening remorselessly towards the chateau of the Marquis de Fontnoy—the most hated aristocrat of all !

voice or hand could be raised in either protest or defence.

Sansarge, his eyes glaring like those of a maddened beast, sprang forward, throwing his strong arms round Paul Dare.

"Quiet, boy—quiet!" he implored. "You can do nothing—nothing!"

With a contemptuous laugh the marquis turned on his heel, handing his blood-stained blade to one of the lackeys.

"You do well to hold that cub!" he exclaimed, over his shoulder. "For I am loth to further soil my blade with such blood!"

"Let me go—Sansarge!" panted Paul, struggling desperately in the vice-like clutch of those encircling arms. "Let me get at—that murderer!"

On the threshold of the room the marquis paused, turning with eyebrows raised in supercilious inquiry.

By

GEORGE E. ROCHESTER.

(Author of "The Bulldog Breed," "The Black Hawk," etc., etc.).

## INTRODUCTION.

It is the year 1789, when the first rumblings of the coming revolution in France are heard. Paul Dare, a young peasant, and the Chevalier de St. Clair, an aristocrat, both young ladies, are staunch chums, but they are soon forced to realize the barrier that lies between them. At the order of the Marquis d'Ermonde de Fontnoy, the chevalier's uncle, Paul is brutally flogged for daring to bathe in the lake at Chateau Fontnoy. Sansarge, a revolutionary, sees in this an opportunity of fostering in Paul, whom he intends to send to the notorious Robespierre in Paris, a hatred of the aristocrats. The chevalier, full of remorse for Paul, visits him at his humble cottage.

"It is my uncle who is to blame for this!" he says hotly.

Then, at the sound of a cold, harsh voice from the doorway, he wheels to confront the marquis himself.

(Now read on).

"Do you find the company of these canaille so fascinating that you intend to linger here?" he demanded coldly of the chevalier.

"Go!" said Sansarge hoarsely to that bewildered boy. "You can only harm us by remaining."

The chevalier hesitated. Then, with one last look at Paul, he turned and walked towards the door where the marquis awaited him. And it was on the marquis that Paul's burning eyes were fixed with a terrible intensity.

"Some day, my Lord of Fontnoy," he cried, "I will take payment in full for this day's work—I swear it by all that I hold sacred!"

"And some day," returned the marquis harshly, "I shall curb that insolent tongue of yours and hang you from the gallows of Chateau Fontnoy."

With that he was gone, and Sansarge felt Paul go suddenly limp in his arms. Tenderly he lifted the boy and laid him on the couch, then crossed to where old Andre lay. Dropping on his knees by the side of the

peasant he raised his head. The eyes in the wrinkled, bloodless face flickered open, a token that some faint spark of life remained.

"Sansarge"—the words came in a whisper, and weak fingers clutched on Sansarge's sleeve—"he did not harm the boy? Say he did not harm the boy."

"The boy is safe, comrade," replied Sansarge. "No hurt has come to him—just merciful unconsciousness."

"Ah, God be praised," whispered the dying man. "It is better that he should be spared this moment. It would have been hard to say—good-bye. For I have loved him as my own. Sansarge"—the weak, fluttering fingers tightened on Sansarge's sleeve—"the secret of his birth—you will tell him—that I am not his father—"

"Yes, I will tell him, Andre!"

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"You promise?"

"I promise!"

The glazing eyes slowly closed. The livid lips twitched bravely in an attempt to smile. Then Andre's head fell back and, lowering it gently, Sansarge rose slowly to his feet. With sombre eyes he stood gazing down on the lifeless form.

"Yes, comrade," he muttered, "I will tell him—but not until he has worked, as we have planned, for the people of France!"

It was a touch on his arm that brought him to himself. Turning, he found himself gazing into the white face of Paul Darc.

"Is—is he dead?" whispered the boy. Sansarge nodded.

"Yes," he said grimly, "he is dead. Slain by the steel of a cursed aristocrat who gave him no chance of life. Are you for Paris now, Paul Darc?"

"Yes, I am for Paris, Sansarge!" cried the boy bitterly. "For Paris—and the day when we shall rise against the foul tyrants who oppress us so!"

### Held at Bay!

**T**HREE years have passed since the day old Andre died, and autumn has come again to Chateau Fontnoy. But the passing of those years has brought a direful change. The visions of Sansarge have come true. Peasant, serf and vassal have risen against the oppressor and heavy over the blood-drenched land of France lies the shadow of the guillotine.

The down-trodden people are now the masters. Drunk with power,

wolfish and bestial with the lust for blood, they have broken the rule of the hated aristocrats. The proud Lilies of France lie torn and riven in the filth of the gutters. Daily, hourly, men, women and children of the old regime bow their noble necks to the National Razor—as with hideous mirth has been dubbed the guillotine.

Liberty, Equality, Fraternity—that is the cry of to-day. And, symbol of this new-found freedom, the tricolour flaunts itself over city, town, and hamlet.

Not yet, however, over the hamlet of Fontnoy. Up at the Chateau the Marquis de Fontnoy still lords it over his estate. He has lingered there, inwardly amazed and, maybe, a little frightened by the upheaval which is sweeping his world away; but outwardly calm, cold, and contemptuous of it all.

His friends have pleaded with him to flee the country before it is too late. There is safety in peaceful England. There is safety beyond the frontiers. But, assuredly, there is no safety in France for him or any of his kind.

Day by day the shadow of the guillotine has lengthened remorselessly towards Chateau Fontnoy and this evening finds the marquis on the verge of departure. Yes, he is going; forced at length to face the inevitable and to realise the suicidal folly of remaining longer. But that his departure should in no way savour of such a discreditable and vulgar thing as hasty flight,

he has arranged a magnificent farewell banquet.

His guests were some twenty aristocrats of the province, as noble, as blindly stubborn, as arrogant as himself. They were garbed in their finest apparel of silk and satin as though to show their supreme indifference to the new order of things. The blaze of light from hundreds of candles glittered on gold plate and silver cutlery. Wine flowed like water, merry jest and quip were exchanged, and care-free laughter ruled. A brave, hilarious company they were, giving, it seemed, no thought for the morrow.

The Comte D'Espany, his sixty years bearing light upon him, was seated on the right of his host.

"The Chevalier de St. Clair," he remarked, toying with his goblet, "already journeys to Holland, I understand?"

The marquis nodded.

"He joins his mother and sister there," he replied. Then added with a shrug of his shoulders. "That is if he has the fortune to evade the soldiers and spies of this amusing National Convention which now appears to govern."

"They let few slip through their fingers," growled D'Espany. "It is their boast that they can smell an aristocrat no matter what his guise."

"Pah!" exclaimed the marquis in disgust. "Let us not discuss the filthy rabble. It is a nauseating topic and one scarce fitting even for the servants' hall."

But it was from the servants' hall that there came running at that moment a white-faced lackey.

"My lord," he cried, bursting wildly in upon that assembly of noble gentlemen, "the peasants have gathered at the village and are on their way here!"

A sudden silence fell, and more than one well-manicured hand moved towards sword hilt.

"What is that you say, fellow?" demanded the marquis harshly.

"They are coming—coming, my lord!" panted the thoroughly frightened servant.

Slowly the marquis rose to his feet.

"Messieurs," he said coldly, "it seems there is no limit to the insolence of these peasant scum. That babbling fool informs me they are marching on the castle. You are my guests and never has the hospitality of a Fontnoy been held in question. Yet under my roof to-night it may be necessary for you to fight for your lives. My greatest regret is that your blades should be called upon to repel such common curs."

He wheeled on the trembling lackey.

"Let the gates be barred," he commanded, "and every servant arm and gather in the courtyard. If the canaille force the gates, then shoot them down!"

"My lord," gasped the man, "there are but a handful of us left."

"A handful?" repeated the marquis angrily. "Where are the others?"

"They—they have joined the peasants, my lord!" was the frightened response.

D'Espany laughed softly.

"Ma foi," he exclaimed, "you keep a loyal following, Fontnoy."

The marquis, his face livid with fury, ignored the sally.

"Sangdieu!" he thundered. "I'll hang them, every one, the treacherous dogs! But to the gates, fool, and do the best you can!"



—T. CUNEO

"My lord," cried Andre piteously, "have mercy—a-a-ah!" Like a silver streak, the thin rapier of the most noble the Marquis d'Ermonde de Fontnoy plunged forward, its point entering the breast of the peasant. (See page 25.)

The lackey withdrew on running feet. Quitting the table, the marquis crossed the room and, drawing aside heavy curtains, opened glass doors which gave on to a wide balcony overlooking the courtyard. Crowding on to the balcony behind him came D'Espany, jewelled snuffbox in hand, the laughing Levanne, the firm-lipped D'Auvignac, and half a dozen other gallants.

Below, in the courtyard, the servants were mustering, armed with carbines and swords. The great gates had been closed and securely locked and bolted. And to the ears of that gay company assembled on the balcony there came, borne on the still night air, a low, menacing roar, rising and falling like that of a tumultuous sea. It grew in volume and its undertone was the remorseless tramp of many feet and the thud of a beaten drum.

Then round a bend in the wide avenue which led to the chateau swung the mob, plainly discernible in the flaring torches which they carried. Shoulder to shoulder they marched. The light of the flaming brands shone on faces leering and wolfish, on eyes glittering with hate and the lust to kill. Every man was armed, some with scythes, some with knives, others with sickles, a few with guns. With them marched frenzied women, in filthy, tattered garments and with crimson caps askew on dishevelled heads.

On they came, led by the thud, thud, thud of that drum which beat the marching step. And from their throats rose, in dread and swelling roar, the terrible cadences of the revolutionary hymn:

"Aux armes, citoyens!  
Formez vos bataillons.  
Allons, marchons!  
Qu'un sang impur  
Abreuve nos sillons!"

They reached the gates, and there came a sudden howl of execration and fury as they found them locked.

"Back!" roared their leader, a huge, swarthy fellow whose son had died on the gallows of Chateau Fontnoy. "Back, comrades, whilst we blow in the gates!"

The mob surged back, and a keg of gunpowder was rushed forward to the gates. There came a deafening explosion, a leaping sheet of lurid flame, then, yelling and screaming in triumph, the peasants poured through the shattered gates into the courtyard of the castle.

"Ma foi!" murmured D'Espany, closing his snuffbox with a snap. "But the rabble mean business!"

The marquis, his hands tight clenched on the balcony rail, was glaring down on the scene below. His servants had been mown down and swept aside by that first savage rush, and now the mob were at the very doors of the chateau.

The marquis turned, pushing his way through the press of his companions.

"With me, messieurs!" he cried. "We will make our stand upon the stairs!"

They rushed to the stairs, naked blades agleam. Some jested with brave laughter, albeit their eyes belied their mirth. Others were grimly silent and tight of lip. And at the head of the great, carved staircase which led down to the entrance hall, they stood waiting. From beyond the quivering oaken doors came the howls of the mob and the thudding crash of battering-rams.

Before long, that handful of aristocrats knew they would be fighting for their lives against overwhelming odds. But not a sign of that knowledge betrayed itself in the proud, careless faces of the Marquis de Fontnoy and his companions.



Skilfully the marquis evaded the slashing blow of the whirling bill-hook. "Insolent dog!" he snapped, his glittering rapier snaking forward with a flick of the wrist. The point buried itself in the peasant leader's throat, and the man staggered back with a choking cry. (See this page.)

#### The Citizen-Deputy!

"SO this, it seems, is where we say farewell to life," observed D'Espany. "I bounded up this staircase as a boy, Fontnoy, and never the droll thought came to me that I should die upon it."

"One quarrels not with time nor place, D'Espany," laughed Levanne, throwing back the lace from his wrist and taking firm grip upon his sword. "It is the manner of our passing which we must needs deplore. The curs are not worthy the honour of our steel."

"Nay, that they are not!" grunted D'Auvignac. "But one is not ungrateful for this chance to die like men. The alternative, I fear, would be the guillotine and that, I am assured, necessitates one being somewhat handled by the unpleasant scum!"

"No finger shall the canaille lay on me!" cried the slim and foppish D'Urville shrilly. "Ma foi, I would die a thousand times than be contaminated by the touch of such unclean scum!"

"Then keep the animals at arm's length, D'Urville," growled D'Espany, "for here they come!"

Here, indeed, they came. The massive oaken doors splintered and crashed open. Yelling like fiends, the jostling, surging mob poured into the hall. At sight of that silent band awaiting them at the head of the stair-

case with gleaming blades advanced, they paused irresolute. Then, with a howl of fury, they swept up the stairs, their leader in the forefront, a great rusted bill-hook in his hand.

"That for you, my cursed lord of Fontnoy!" he roared, his eyes bestial and blazing with hate.

Skilfully the marquis evaded the slashing blow of the whirling bill-hook.

"Insolent dog!" he snapped, his glittering rapier snaking forward with a flick of the wrist.

The point buried itself in the leader's throat, and with a choking cry he staggered back.

"First blood to us!" panted D'Espany, his darting blade keeping at bay two great, hairy fellows armed with hedge-knives. "Ah—animal!"

Screaming and yelling, maddened by this stubborn resistance, crazed by the lust for blood, the peasants pressed relentlessly on up the stairs. Did one of their comrades in the forefront slither to his knees, the lifeblood seeping through his tattered rags, then another was there to take his place with slashing scythe or stabbing knife upraised.

Back and back they forced those gentlemen of France. Levanne was down, trampled under foot. D'Urville's lifeless body lay on the floor of the hall below where it had been hurled by

infuriated hands. D'Auvignac had died, fighting grimly to the last with rapier broken to the hilt. D'Espany and Fontnoy still stood, lunging, parrying, thrusting with crimson blades, their finery slashed and soaked with blood. But of that gallant company less than half now remained.

"At them, comrades!" roared a voice. "Tear down the cursed aristocrats!"

With a sullen roar the peasants pressed on, fighting with a vicious fury born of deadly hate.

"It is the end, Fontnoy!" panted D'Espany. "Farewell, old friend! Heaven send we meet in happier realm than this."

A savage concerted rush swept him back off the stairs. And there, against the closed door of the banqueting-hall, brave old D'Espany turned at bay.

Never had his sixty years of life weighed so heavily on him as at this moment. Ah, were he but younger he would show these animals how a gentleman could die! His face was grey with utter weariness.

Hemmed in by snarling, wolfish faces and bloodstained steel, he knew his course was all but run. Yet his livid, smiling lips gave disdainful word for jeer and curse; his tired arm gave lunge for lunge and thrust for thrust.

Then suddenly from the hall below, reverberating startlingly above the tumult, came a crash of musketry.

So unexpected was such a sound that in an instant every weapon was lowered and men stared at each other in wonderment. Then, turning, they rushed pell-mell for the stairs, there to voice their anger and bewilderment in a wild shout:

"The soldiers! It is the blue-coats!"

In the hall stood a score of soldiers of the National Guard, clad in stained, red-white-and-blue uniforms, and with smoking carbines in their hands. With them was their captain, long and lean, and tanned of feature.

A great giant of a fellow thrust himself truculently forward.

"Hola, citizen-captain!" he growled. "What seek you here?"

The captain surveyed him coldly.

"I seek the Marquis d'Ermonde de Fontnoy!" he retorted gratingly. "I am to convey him to Paris—if he still lives. If he does not, citizen, then you shall answer for it!"

"Answer—to whom?" demanded the giant peasant angrily.

"To the people!" was the harsh response.

"We are the people!" roared the other. "And who has greater right to his life than we of Fontnoy?"

"He is for Paris," returned the captain, obviously unwilling to be drawn into a discussion as to whom had the best right to the life of the Marquis de Fontnoy. "My orders are to convey him to the Luxembourg prison. So withdraw, citizen, with your comrades!"

"We will not!" thundered the spokesman. "You have no right to give us such an order!"

Almost wearily the hatchet-faced captain turned to his soldiers.

"Present arms!" he commanded.

The soldiers obeyed, and every carbine was levelled at the mob.

(Only in the nick of time have the soldiers saved the Marquis de Fontnoy and his companions from the mob! But even now the fate of the aristocrats hang in the balance. Be sure you read the thrilling follow-up of this powerful serial which will appear in next week's MAGNET.)

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NN

# "THE UNSEEN FOE!"

(Continued from page 24.)

remain there, and to leave on no pretext whatever, until relieved by his comrade, now asleep in one of the bedrooms above.

"What was it, sir?" asked the constable, as Wharton came breathlessly up. "Did you see—have you found the—"

"It was not here!" exclaimed Wharton, in relief. "You heard the shot—"

"Yes—yes!"

"It was not fired in Sir Richard's room?" exclaimed Harry.

"No, sir. The sound came from the hall or the stairs."

The door of the baronet's room opened, and Jervis looked out. His face was alarmed. At the same moment, Nugent came out into the corridor by the door from the dressing-room.

"Sir Richard is safe?" exclaimed Bob Cherry.

"Quite, sir—he is still sleeping," said Jervis. "Nothing has happened here. But I heard something—like a shot."

"I heard it," said Frank. "But my uncle is safe."

"The light is turned out in the hall," said Harry. "The officer here thinks the shot came from the hall."

"But who—what—"

The juniors exchanged looks of amazement. Sir Richard Ravenspur was safe—he had not even been disturbed. He was sleeping, under the influence of the soothing draught the doctor had given him. No attempt had been made on the baronet. Yet a shot had been fired in the silent house. At whom—and by whom—was a mystery.

"Inspector Cook should be here," said Nugent. "He stayed in the house tonight. Someone had better call him."

"Queer that the shot did not wake him," said Johnny Bull. "Look here, let's go back to the hall gallery and look round. If the shot was fired there it—"

"I'm sure it was, sir!" said the Leyford constable. "I should have gone at once, but my inspector ordered me not to leave this door."

"Harry!" exclaimed Nugent, in sudden horror.

He stared at his chum.

The juniors, in their haste, had rushed downstairs in their pyjamas. On Wharton's pyjama jacket was a broad stain of red. Nugent's eyes had suddenly fallen on it.

"Harry! What—what is that—"

Wharton glanced down to his jacket as Frank pointed. He started, and stared at the crimson stain. He put his hand to it in wonder, and his fingers came away wet and reddened.

"It is blood!" said Bob, in a hushed voice.

"But what—how—" stammered Wharton, in amazement and horror. "Oh! I—I remember! I stumbled over something in the hall gallery as I was running here—something in the dark. I did not see what it was."

He broke off, his voice faltering with horror. Only too well, after he had seen that crimson stain on his pyjama jacket, he knew what that "something" must have been.

There was a moment of horrified silence. All eyes were fixed on that tell-tale splash of crimson.

Wharton shuddered.

From the end of the corridor where it joined the oaken gallery surrounding

the hall, came a blaze of light. Someone had turned on the electric light there. Voices were heard calling.

"We—we must see what—what it was I—I fell over!" stammered Wharton. "Come with me, you fellows!"

The second Leyford constable was now on the spot, half dressed, rubbing his eyes. He accompanied the juniors, as they went along the corridor into the hall gallery.

Wharton glanced over the oaken balustrade into the hall below. All the lights were on now, and in the bright illumination he saw a group of startled and scared servants. Packington was with them, looking upward.

"What has happened, sir?" called out Packington, as he caught sight of Harry Wharton looking down. "There was something—it sounded like a shot—did you hear it, sir?"

"Better come up," called back Wharton.

Packington went to the stairs, to ascend, some of the servants following him up, others remaining where they were, in a scared group.

Wharton hurried along to the gallery, towards the spot where he had stumbled over the unseen object in the dark.

What the object was he knew now only too well, but who the fallen man might be was still a mystery to him.

The gallery was no longer dark; bright lights streamed down on a still form that lay huddled on the old oak floor.

"There!" muttered Bob Cherry, with blanched lips.

Wharton caught his breath.

It was a figure in uniform that lay huddled on the oaken floor. No movement came from it—no sound! But from it, as it lay, a dark pool was slowly spreading along the oak. Why the alarm had not roused Inspector Cook and brought him to the scene had perplexed all the juniors—till this moment! Now they knew!

Wharton, with an effort, approached the body. At the same time, Packington arrived from the opposite side, with James at his heels.

"It is Inspector Cook!" said Wharton, in a hushed voice.

"I fear so, sir!" murmured Packington.

"Good heavens! And he is—is—"

"Dead!"

Wharton leaned an arm on the oaken balustrade of the gallery, almost overcome with horror.

Inspector Cook lay at his feet—silent, still, with a bullet in his heart!

Had the inspector made some discovery? Had he traced, or been about to trace, the hidden assassin of Ravenspur Grange? What had he known, or suspected, to cause the murderous hand to be raised against his life?

That, now, could never be known! He had died, and what he knew had died with him! In the silence of the night, in the shadowy darkness, he had fallen—by whose hand?

THE END.

(Whatever you do, chums, don't miss the next thrilling yarn in this grand holiday series, entitled: "THE MYSTERY OF THE GRANGE!" You'll enjoy every line of it. Make a point, then, of ordering your copy well in advance!)

**JACK JOLLY'S JOLIBOYS.**  
 HIS high-class concert-party will begin its season at Winklesea with a first-class opening performance at 2.30 p.m.  
**REFINED SINGING! CLEVER DANCING! FUNNY JOAKS! ROLL UP IN YOUR THOUSANDS!**

"That ought to fetch 'em!" said Jack Jolly, glancing over the notices he had painted.



Most of the crowd on the beach had gone to hear

There's room for more than one fish in the sea, but there's only room for one concert-party at Winklesea. Such is the opinion of the mayor of this sleepy old seaside resort. But he makes the biggest mistake of his life when he tries to queer Jack Jolly & Co's pitch!



**Jack Jolly's Joliboy's!**  
 by Dicky Nugent

of you young brats tell me **who** this merchant Jack Jolly is?"

"Why, you've just been speaking to him," grinned Mr. Lickham.

The rival peacot went off into a fresh roar of laughter.

"Ho, ho, ho! Oh, crileys, don't make me last so much! I mean to say that cheeky little cub's running the show?"

"He is. And he'll jolly well nock spots off Corkbrow's Classics Entertainers, too," said Jack Jolly grimly.

"Ha, ha, ha!" shrieked Mr. Corkbrow. Mr. Lickham glanced expressively at the frowning juniors, and jerked his thumb significantly in Mr. Corkbrow's direction.

To intelligent juniors like Jack Jolly & Co., a wink was as good as a nod. Grinning all over their faces, they made a rush at the historical peacot.

An instant later, Clarence Corkbrow was swept off his feet and whirled into the air.

"Dump him, boys!" said Mr. Lickham. "In that puddle will do!"

"Lemme go, you insolent young reptiles!" roared Clarence in sudden alarm.

Humph! Splash!

Mr. Corkbrow gave another shriek—but this time it wasn't a shriek of laughter.

"Varooooo!" he yelled.

"Two more, my boys!" grinned Mr. Lickham.

And the clumps of the Fourth gave their rival another couple for luck. After that, they retired, leaving Mr. Corkbrow, with a frenzied expression on his face, to pick himself up and limp off for a change of clothes.

That afternoon, the Joliboy's gave their first performance.

Our heroes, harts were beating fast as they changed into their smart new peacot costumes in the dressing-room at the side of the stage.

They hadn't any doubt about their own abilities to make a success of the show, but of course, the old fogies were a bit of a problem.

Mr. Lickham could sing after a fashion, but the rest of the grown-up peacots, with the exception of the leading comedian of the party, hadn't a grade deal of talent.

The leading comedian, a fat gentleman named Jimmy Jester, was rather a stur turn.

Jack Jolly looked on him very favorably and hoped that Jimmy Jester and Mr. Lickham would back up him and his pals sufficiently to make the show go with a real swing.

Prompt to the minute, the concert started.

There wasn't many spectators at first. Most of the crowd on the beach had gone to hear

of you young brats tell me **who** this merchant Jack Jolly is?"

"Why, you've just been speaking to him," grinned Mr. Lickham.

The rival peacot went off into a fresh roar of laughter.

"Ho, ho, ho! Oh, crileys, don't make me last so much! I mean to say that cheeky little cub's running the show?"

"He is. And he'll jolly well nock spots off Corkbrow's Classics Entertainers, too," said Jack Jolly grimly.

"Ha, ha, ha!" shrieked Mr. Corkbrow. Mr. Lickham glanced expressively at the frowning juniors, and jerked his thumb significantly in Mr. Corkbrow's direction.

To intelligent juniors like Jack Jolly & Co., a wink was as good as a nod. Grinning all over their faces, they made a rush at the historical peacot.

An instant later, Clarence Corkbrow was swept off his feet and whirled into the air.

"Dump him, boys!" said Mr. Lickham. "In that puddle will do!"

"Lemme go, you insolent young reptiles!" roared Clarence in sudden alarm.

Humph! Splash!

Mr. Corkbrow gave another shriek—but this time it wasn't a shriek of laughter.

"Varooooo!" he yelled.

"Two more, my boys!" grinned Mr. Lickham.

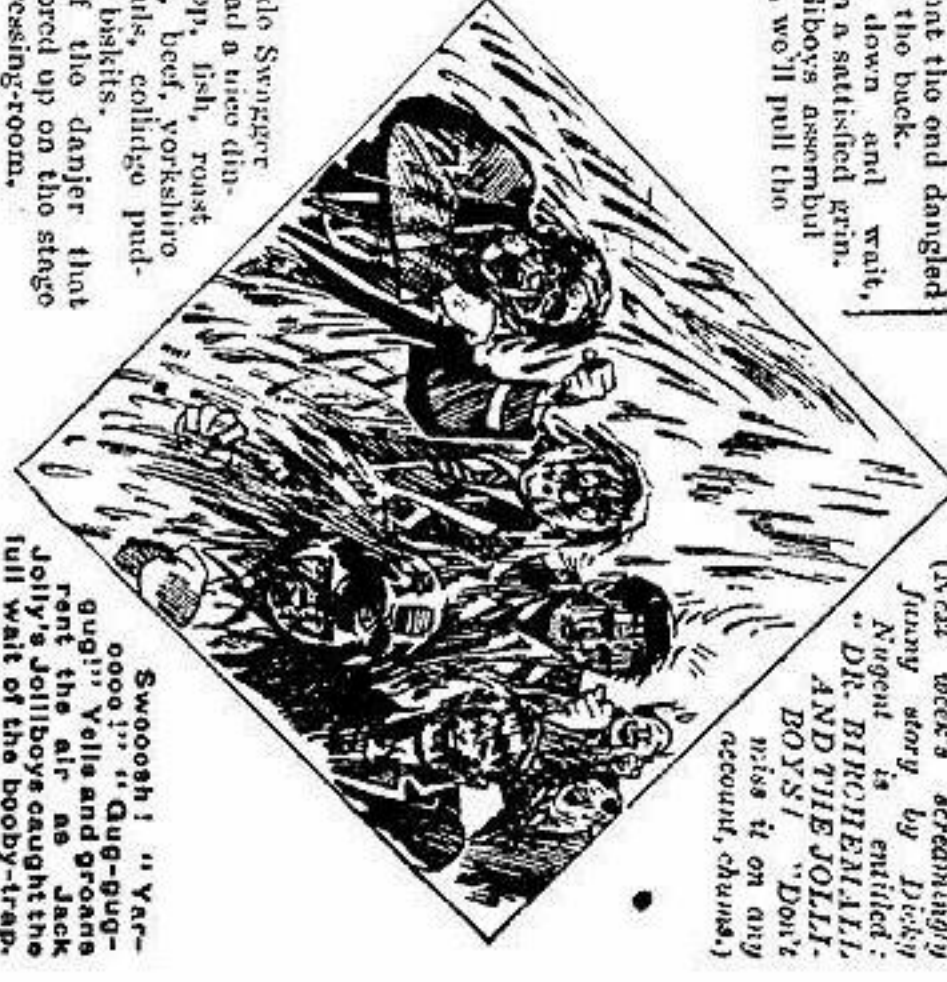
And the clumps of the Fourth gave their rival another couple for luck. After that, they retired, leaving Mr. Corkbrow, with a frenzied expression on his face, to pick himself up and limp off for a change of clothes.

That afternoon, the Joliboy's gave their first performance.

Our heroes, harts were beating fast as they changed into their smart new peacot costumes in the dressing-room at the side of the stage.

They hadn't any doubt about their own abilities to make a success of the show, but of course, the old fogies were a bit of a problem.

Mr. Lickham could sing after a fashion, but the rest of the grown-up peacots, with the exception of the leading comedian of the party, hadn't a grade deal of talent.



Next week's screamingly funny story by Dicky Nugent is entitled: **"DIR. BIRCHEMALL AND THE JOLIBOYS!"** Don't miss it on any account, chums!