

**DON'T MISS THE BRILLIANT NEW ST. FRANK'S STORY
INSIDE!**

THE NELSON LEE

2nd LIBRARY



"The Shadow!"
**THE MAN OF
100 DISGUISES!**

Now Series No. 131.

OUT ON WEDNESDAY.

July 23rd, 1932.

The SHADOW!



CHAPTER 1.

The Tragedy of Abbeydale Manor!

THE Shadow was known to everyone in the United Kingdom by name. His exploits were constantly narrated in the newspapers, and the authorities were at their wits' ends to know what to do. He dealt in counterfeit and forgery.

There was hardly a bank or firm of standing in the country but what had suffered from his depredations. He forged Treasury notes, bank notes, bills, cheques and bonds to such an extent that eventually the bankers got together and formed a committee that endeavoured to stop the career of the criminal whose name and fame were unknown to them all.

... Starring NELSON LEE, the famous detective, and his young assistant, NIPPER!

THE MAN OF 100 DISGUISES



He is known as "The Shadow," this mystery man who has baffled the police for years with his daring and ruthless crimes. So cunning have been his plans, so ingenious his disguises that no one has ever suspected his real identity. Such is the man whom Nelson Lee sets out to unmask, and the result is a titanic battle of wits between master-detective and master-crook!

But it came to nothing. They called in the services of Nelson Lee and Kontos, the famous Greek handwriting expert, and all the time Scotland Yard was busy, but the Shadow still remained at large. He was an expert not only in the art of forgery, but in disguise, so that he could get away with the proceeds of a clever forgery in London, then travel up north, commit a burglary and be back in London the following day, and no one could testify to having caught so much as a glimpse of him. The more his fame grew the greater was the mystery that surrounded his personality.

Yet, all the time, Lockwood Beck, the rising young scientist, lived in St. John's

Wood, honoured and respected by all. The policemen on the corner near his house always saluted him. The learned societies heaped honours on him, and crowds gathered to hear his lectures.

But Lockwood Beck was the Shadow!

His one aim was to amass wealth, and the faster his riches grew the more greedy he became, while his success at evading discovery emboldened him to fresh endeavours. The fabulous family jewels of the ancient Abbeydale family had excited his cupidity, and he laid his plans in order to secure them. He knew that the heirlooms would be taken out of the safe deposit and taken to Abbeydale Manor for the festivities which marked the coming of age of Lady Eileen Talbot, Lord Abbeydale's only daughter, and that would be his opportunity.

The Shadow rented a furnished cottage near Abbeydale Manor. It was perched on the summit of a lofty cliff overlooking the English Channel, and bore many traces of its former owner's calling, that individual having been a sea-captain. The sitting-room was arranged and furnished like the cabin of a ship.

There were three doors in this curious little room. One led straight into the garden at the front; the second led into the scullery at the back; the third gave on to a staircase. At the top of the staircase, right and left, were two small bed-rooms, and in one of these bed-rooms was a rope ladder leading through a square trap-door in the wooden ceiling to the attic under the tiles. This attic, which was used as a lumber-room, was lighted in the daytime by a tiny skylight in the roof about the size of an ordinary pane of glass.

In this cottage Lockwood Beck took up his residence. He had disguised himself as a youngish Frenchman, with dark brown, curly hair and a well-trimmed beard and moustache. He had given his name as Jean Lerouge, and had taken the cottage for a month. Mornings and afternoons were spent in painting in the neighbouring woods and lanes, whilst in the evenings he would explore the outskirts of Abbeydale Park and make himself acquainted with every inch of ground between the manor and the cottage.

When the great day arrived—the day on which Lady Eileen Talbot attained her majority—he laid his painting aside and threw himself heart and soul into the festivities which had been organised in honour of the event. He was one of the carvers at the public luncheon which was held in the village school-rooms; he was one of the judges at the sports which were afterwards held on the village green; he led the cheering at the firework display in Abbeydale Park. And at eleven o'clock he returned to his cottage and calmly went to bed.

He rose again at two o'clock on Wednesday morning, which was the hour at which the ball at Abbeydale Manor was expected to end. Dressing himself with his customary

care, he unlocked his suitcase and took out a black crêpe mask, a revolver—which he loaded in every chamber—a diamond glass-cutter, a small lump of putty, a pair of rubber-soled goloshes, an electric torch, a tiny case of silver-plated tools, and a duplicate key of Lord Abbeydale's safe. This had been made for him by one of his confederates known as the Scorpion, from a cast which had been obtained by bribery from a dismissed indoor servant.

Having distributed these things amongst his various pockets, he put on his hat and left the cottage, locking the door behind him. Three-quarters of an hour later—or at half-past three in the morning—he vaulted over a low stone wall, and found himself in the grounds of Abbeydale Manor. With eyes and ears alert, he groped his way through the pitch darkness until he reached the south front of the house. Everybody was apparently in bed. Not a light was visible in any of the windows; not a sound was to be heard.

Thanks to the knowledge he had gained during the celebrations of that exciting day, he made his way to the library window without a moment's hesitation. It was a large French window, consisting of two long, upright panes. With the aid of his tools he quickly unfastened the bolts and noiselessly opened the window. Then, donning his mask and rubber-soled goloshes, he switched on his electric torch and crept into the deserted room. One swift glance showed him that the safe was between the fireplace and the door.

He pulled out his duplicate key and glided to the safe. Placing his torch on the ground, he oiled the key and slipped it into the lock. A moment later the iron door swung open, and the contents of the safe were at his mercy. The safe was divided into two compartments. In the upper compartment were a cash-box, two or three account books and a jumbled heap of private papers. In the lower compartment was a strong box, enclosed in a leather case, with a handle at the top for carrying.

"The Abbeydale Diamonds!" muttered Lockwood Beck, as he drew this box from the safe and placed it on the floor beside him. "So far, so good! Now, I wonder if there's anything else in the safe worth taking?"

He produced a bunch of skeleton keys and forced the lock of the cash-box. It contained about two hundred pounds in silver and notes. He shovelled the money into his pocket, then thrust his hand into the safe again, pulled out a handful of private papers and carefully glanced over them. Suddenly his eyes fell on a large envelope, sealed with three seals, inscribed on the outside in Lord Abbeydale's handwriting: "Strictly Private! Not to be opened until after my death."

"H'm! This has all the appearance of a family secret—a skeleton in the cupboard!" muttered Lockwood Beck. "Family secrets

are precious things. Sometimes they're worth more than the family jewels! Yes, I think I'll take the liberty of opening this sealed envelope now."

He ripped open the envelope and drew out several sheets of notepaper closely covered with writing, and two or three legal-looking documents. He unfolded the notepaper, which was fastened together with a small brass clip, and glanced at what was written on the first page. But no sooner had he read the opening sentence than a look of incredulous amazement swept over his face.

"Jove!" he gasped. "This is a bigger find than ever I dreamed of. This is worth all the Abbeydale Diamonds. Talk about a skeleton in the cupboard—here's one with a vengeance!"

Then, suddenly, the sound of an approaching footstep fell on his startled ears. Before he could pull himself together, the door was suddenly flung open, and Lord Abbeydale stood on the threshold, clad in his dressing-gown and slippers, with a lighted candle in one hand and a loaded revolver in the other.

"Hands up!" cried his lordship. "I have you covered, so it's useless to—"

As he uttered these words Lord Abbeydale suddenly paused, for at that moment his eyes fell on the large envelope. In a moment he realised that this unknown burglar had opened the envelope and had read its contents. So terrible was the shock of this discovery—so completely was Lord Abbeydale overwhelmed with dismay and despair that he staggered back as though he had received a blow. His face turned deathly pale, his arm dropped limply to his side.

This was Lockwood's opportunity. He saw that Lord Abbeydale was off his guard—that the revolver was no longer pointed at his head—and with a single panther-like bound he leaped to his feet and grappled with his lordship at close quarters.

For one brief instant the two men reeled and staggered in a desperate hand-to-hand encounter; then a loud report rang through the room, and Lord Abbeydale sank lifeless to the ground.

Almost before the echoes of the shot had died away the house resounded with the cries of frightened servants. But never for an instant did Lockwood Beck lose his presence of mind. Swiftly, but coolly, he gathered up the papers, thrust them back into the envelope, and slipped the envelope into his pocket. Then he whipped the key out of the keyhole of the safe, switched off his electric torch, snatched up the jewel-case, darted to the open window, and vanished!

CHAPTER 2.

The Lost Cap!

IT was mid-term at St. Frank's, and in consequence the boys were allowed an unusual amount of liberty, and as soon as tea was over, instead of settling down to prep., they swarmed out of the

college grounds and proceeded to amuse themselves according to their tastes. Some strode over to the nets, some repaired to the gymnasium, and others wandered down to the village. But Richard Hamilton, otherwise known as Nipper, slipped away without being seen and went for a solitary walk. He would have taken Wolf, Nelson Lee's Alsatian, but the big dog had, the day before, run a thorn into his foot, and a long tramp was undesirable for him, to say the least.

As soon as Nipper was clear of the college ground he struck a bee-line for the cliffs. The sun was just setting when he came within sight of the sea, and for the next half-hour he lay face downwards on the edge of the cliffs, watching the lights of the ships passing up and down the English Channel. Then he rose to his feet with the intention of returning to the school; but even as he did so, a sudden puff of wind whisked off his cap and gently deposited it on a narrow ledge about half-way down the cliff.

Nipper glanced at the cap, then at the steeply sloping wall of rock between himself and the ledge.

"I think I can do it," he muttered. "Anyhow, I'll have a try!"

He started to climb down the rugged face of the cliff, and had almost reached the ledge on which his cap was lying, when he suddenly felt himself slipping. He made a desperate effort to anchor himself by clutching a tuft of grass above his head; but the tuft came away in his hands, roots and all, and the next instant he found himself falling through space. He was dimly conscious that a clump of bushes lower down the cliff arrested his fall, and held him for a moment in its prickly embrace. Then the sound of rending branches fell on his ears, something seemed to rise up and strike him, and all became blank.

HOW long Nipper remained unconscious he never knew. When his scattered wits returned he found himself lying on the sandy beach at the foot of the cliff. It was quite dark, and the waves of the incoming tide were gently lapping his feet. He shouted for help, not once but twenty times, but the sullen boom of the sea was his only reply. Again and again he tried in vain to climb beyond the reach of the waves; and then, when the tide was up to his knees, he boldly took his pluck in his hands and plunged into the sea.

His intention was to swim round one of the headlands and explore the beach on the other side. Before he had taken a dozen strokes, however, he found that he was being carried out to sea by one of the numerous currents which infested that part of the coast. Presently he discovered that the current had changed its direction, and instead of carrying him out to sea it was bearing him rapidly towards the west in a direction parallel with the coast. Overjoyed by this discovery, he turned over on his side and struck out for the shore. For several

minutes he appeared to make no headway, but at last his indomitable perseverance met with its reward, and at two o'clock in the morning, more dead than alive, he scrambled ashore at the foot of a lofty cliff.

He had no idea where he was, nor did he very much care. There was a narrow, winding path running up the face of the cliff, and after resting his weary limbs for nearly half an hour, he struggled to his feet again and began to climb the path. When he reached the top he was delighted to see the shadowy outline of a cottage not more than twenty yards away. It was the cottage which Lockwood Beck had left, ten minutes before, to go to Abbeydale Manor!

Nipper decided to rouse the inmates of the cottage and beg a night's shelter. With this intention he dragged himself to the front door and loudly knocked. Receiving no reply to his repeated knockings, he groped his way round to the back and examined the kitchen window.

"I couldn't walk another twenty yards to save my life," he muttered. "As there doesn't seem to be anybody about, I'll take the liberty of breaking in and bagging a night's free lodging."

With this object in view he smashed one of the panes in the kitchen window, forced back the catch, raised the sash, and squeezed himself through. After closing and fastening the window, he groped his way into the sitting-room, where he found a box of matches, and struck a light.

"Well, I'm jiggered!" exclaimed the boy, as he glanced round the curiously furnished room. "A ship's cabin on dry land! And bunks, too! Well—a bed or a bunk—it's all one to me just now, seeing that I'm dead beat!"

With this he calmly climbed into the lowermost bunk—boots, wet clothes and all—and in a few moments was fast asleep.

An hour and a half later, or at half-past four, a man walked rapidly down the road and turned into the garden gate. It was Lockwood Beck returning from the manor! The upper part of his face was still concealed by the black crêpe mask; the rubber-soled goloshes were still on his feet. In his hand he carried the jewel-case.

He unlocked the door and entered the sitting-room. Still Nipper slept.

The Shadow closed the door and locked it; then he placed the jewel-case on the table and lit the hanging lamp, electricity and gas not yet having reached the top of the cliffs. His back was towards that side of the room where the bunks were situated, and he saw nothing of Nipper. Nipper heard nothing of him.

Without troubling to remove his hat or mask, he unstrapped the leather case and drew out the box containing the Abbeydale Diamonds. With his bunch of skeleton keys he tackled the lock, and after one or two failures, picked it and raised the lid. Then he seized the box in both hands, lifted it

up, turned it upside down, and emptied its contents in a glittering heap on the table.

The rattle of the jewels as they showered down on the wooden table top woke Nipper in an instant. With a startled gasp he opened his eyes and sat up in the bunk. At the same instant, with an equally startled gasp Lockwood Beck spun round on his heel and whipped out his revolver. For one brief moment Lockwood stared at the apparition in the bunk with scarce-believing eyes. Then, with a hiss like that of a venomous snake, he darted forward, seized Nipper by the collar of his coat, and jerked him out on to the floor.

"Who are you?" demanded Lockwood Beck, pressing the muzzle of his revolver to Nipper's temple. "Answer me quickly—who are you? What are you doing here? How long have you been here?"

"Here, steady, guv'nor," said Nipper, who was always coolest and cheekiest when danger was greatest. "One question at a time, please."

For a moment Lockwood Beck glared at him in speechless fury; then, mastering his rage with an effort, he repeated his first question.

"If you give me any more of your insolence I'll put a bullet through you straight away!" he snapped. "Answer me at once—who are you?"

"Douglas Fairbanks!" gasped Nipper.

As he uttered the word he suddenly wriggled out of his coat, lowered his head, and rammed it into his captor's stomach. The Shadow went sprawling on his back into the farthest corner of the room. As Lockwood Beck felt his revolver explode, and the bullet struck the hanging lamp, shattering it to fragments and plunging the room into total darkness.

Livid with rage, he scrambled to his feet, whipped out his electric torch, switched it on—and then a startled cry of amazement burst from his lips. Nipper had vanished!

CHAPTER 3.

Trapped!

THERE were three doors in the sitting-room of the cottage. One of these was the front door, which opened direct into the garden; the second led into the little kitchen at the back of the house, and the third gave on to the stairs.

Nipper did not see Beck lock the front door after him and put the key in his pocket. On the contrary, he expected that the front door was unlocked, and his intention had been to slip out of his coat and then to dart to the door, throw it open and make his escape in the darkness. Quivering with excitement, he turned the handle, and then discovered for the first time that the door was locked, and the key was missing.

For a moment he was paralysed with despair. To escape by the front door was

obviously impossible; to escape through one of the windows was equally impossible, for these were in the form of portholes, and were secured on the inside by massive brass screws. Lockwood Beck was between him and the door which led into the kitchen, and although there was a third door, almost at Nipper's elbow, it merely opened on to the staircase, but that was the only way available.

"Upstairs and through one of the bedroom windows!" Nipper muttered to himself, suiting the action to the words.

It did not take Lockwood Beck more than half a dozen seconds to discover what had happened. But those half-dozen seconds were of priceless value to Nipper; and at the same moment as Lockwood Beck opened the door at the bottom of the stairs. Nipper darted into one of the bedrooms and slammed the door, and locked and bolted it on the inside. Then he groped his way to the window, tore down the blind, and discovered to his horror that the window was not made to open!

His capture now seemed certain, for in the meantime Lockwood Beck had reached the top of the stairs, and a moment later he hurled himself against the outside of the door with so much force that the upper half of one of the panels was completely stove in. But through the hole thus made the brilliant rays of Beck's torch streamed into the room, and by means of their searching light Nipper suddenly caught sight of something in the corner of the room which galvanised him into life again.

The wooden ceiling of the bedroom was pierced in one corner by a small trap-door, which opened downwards, and which led into the attic beneath the tiled roof of the cottage. The only window in this attic was a small skylight set in the roof, and the only means of entering it or leaving it was by means of a rope-ladder, which was suspended from two hooks in the bedroom ceiling close beside the trap-door. Even as Lockwood Beck hurled himself against the door a second time and smashed it off its hinges, Nipper bounded across the room and began to swarm up the rope-ladder.

Crack! A revolver bullet whistled past his cheek and buried itself in the bedroom wall. Crack! A second bullet carried away the heel of his boot. Then he hauled himself over the edge of the open trap-door and found himself in the attic.

Lockwood Beck darted across the bedroom, seized the rope-ladder with both hands and began to clamber up. Nipper saw him

coming, and prepared to receive him with violence, gazing round in search of a weapon. But when the Shadow was half-way up the ladder he stretched out his hand, caught hold of the trap-door—which opened downwards—and, with a swift and sudden movement, pushed it up and shot the heavy iron bolt home.

Having thus, as he thought, made Nipper secure, he returned once more to the sitting-room. The Abbeydale Diamonds still lay on the table by the side of the open box and the leather carrying case. It was then five o'clock.

The task of removing the diamonds from their setting occupied him from five o'clock until half-past eight. From half-past eight to nine he spent his time packing his suitcase and in making ready for his return to London. At nine o'clock he put the remainder of the jewellery into the box, put the box into its leather case, and buried it in a corner of the garden behind a clump of bushes.

He had just completed his task, and was about to return to the cottage, when a crash of breaking glass fell on his ears. Instinctively he glanced up to the roof, and no sooner had he done so than a savage oath rose to his lips. Nipper had smashed the little skylight in the attic roof

and had thrust out his head. The opening was far too small for him to wriggle his shoulders through, but as soon as he squeezed his head through he opened his mouth and let out a ringing shout for help.

"Game to the last!" muttered Lockwood Beck, who was crouching behind the bushes in such a position that Nipper could not see him.

Suddenly he paused and caught his breath, for at that moment he heard a car. Trembling with excitement, he cautiously raised his head and peered round the corner of the bushes. A man in a powerful two-seater was speeding down the road which led from Abbeydale Manor!

Suddenly Nipper caught sight of the motorist. Again he raised his voice in a lusty shout for help. The man at the wheel of the car gazed in the direction from which the cries proceeded.

"Help!" shouted Nipper again. "Here—on this roof!"

The motorist clapped on the brakes and brought the car to a standstill.

"All right," he shouted. "I see you!"

At the sound of the motorist's voice Lockwood Beck started as though he had been stung. With trembling hands he cautiously

The Shadow Is Still At Large

When everyone thinks that the greatest master-crook of the age, The Shadow, has met his death, he suddenly returns to the limelight in the most amazing and daring fashion. In

"On His Majesty's Service!"

next week's Gripping Complete Detective-Thriller, you will read how "The Shadow" plots to steal an important invention, how Nelson Lee and Nipper are involved in a series of perilous adventures, and how the whole case involves important international issues.

parted the bushes and stared at the man—who was still about fifty yards away—with almost wolfish eagerness. Then a stifled cry of stupefaction burst from his lips, and his face turned deathly pale!

CHAPTER 4.

The Burning Cottage!

EARLY that morning Nelson Lee had been aroused from his bed by a violent peal at the front-door bell.

His housekeeper had just gone down, and a moment or two later she returned with a telegram.

"The boy's waiting in case there's an answer," she said.

He opened the envelope and read the following message:

"Come at once. Father murdered and family diamonds stolen.—Eileen Talbot, Abbeydale Manor."

Nelson Lee slipped on his dressing-gown and slippers and hurried into his study, then wrote out the following reply:

"Motoring down at once. Arrive soon after eight. Disturb nothing till I arrive.—Nelson Lee."

He gave this to his housekeeper, with instructions to give it to the telegraph-boy.

He drove his powerful car down to Abbeydale, and found Lady Eileen anxiously awaiting him. Her ladyship, who had only attained her twenty-first birthday the day before, was so prostrated with grief and distress that the detective found it utterly impossible to persuade her to give a coherent account of what had happened. In the end he gave up the attempt in despair, and interviewed the butler.

"There's not much to tell, sir," said the butler, in answer to Nelson Lee's questions. "There was a ball at the Manor last night, in honour of her ladyship's coming-of-age. The ball was over about two o'clock this morning, and after all the guests had gone, his lordship locked up the diamonds in his safe in the library. He was the only person who had a key to the safe, and it never left his possession day or night.

"About a quarter to four this morning I was awakened by a revolver shot. I jumped out of bed, and, in company with most of the other servants, I rushed down to the library. The safe was open, so was the window, and the diamonds were gone. Lord Abbeydale, in his dressing-gown and slippers, was lying on the floor, with a revolver in his hand. When we came to examine him we found he was stone dead. And that's all anybody knows, sir."

Accompanied by the butler, the detective then proceeded to the library, where he examined the safe, the window, Lord Abbeydale's body, and his lordship's revolver. He guessed that Lord Abbeydale had surprised

the scoundrel at work. He detected signs of a struggle. He found that the assassin's bullet had penetrated Lord Abbeydale's heart, and he knew that death must have been instantaneous. But when he came to search for some clue to the murderer's identity, some clue by which he could trace the direction of his flight, he was bound to confess that no such clue existed.

"It's the old, old story, I'm afraid," he muttered to himself. "From the neatness and skill with which this affair has been planned and carried out, and from the total absence of any incriminating clue, this is doubtless the work of the Shadow."

The thought had scarcely crossed his mind when a footman entered the room with a telegram.

"For you, sir," he said, handing it to Nelson Lee.

The detective tore it open and glanced at its contents. Then an anguished cry burst from his lips, and his face turned deathly pale. The telegram was from St. Frank's. It had been sent to Gray's Inn Road, from whence it had been forwarded to the Manor by the detective's housekeeper. It ran as follows:

"Nipper missing since shortly after six last evening. Went for a walk after tea and did not return for supper. Felt no alarm till bedtime. Organised search-parties. No result. This morning, half an hour ago, found his cap half-way down one of the neighbouring cliffs. Grass displaced and bushes disturbed lower down cliff. Very much fear: fell down cliff and washed away by sea. Can you come at once?"

Could he come at once! Of course, he would leave for St. Frank's immediately. With hasty explanations he rushed out to his car, and was soon speeding away. Ten minutes after leaving the Manor he came within sight of the old sea-captain's cottage. Whilst he was still a hundred yards or more away he heard a shout for help. Without slackening speed, he gazed in the direction from which the shout appeared to proceed.

"Help!" Again he heard the shout. "Here—on this roof!"

"All right!" he shouted. "I see you!"

Naturally, he saw nothing of Lockwood Beck, who was still crouching behind the clump of bushes in the garden. He did not even recognise Nipper until he pulled up at the garden gate; then two excited shouts rang out at the self-same moment.

"Nipper!" cried Nelson Lee, in tones of mingled amazement and relief.

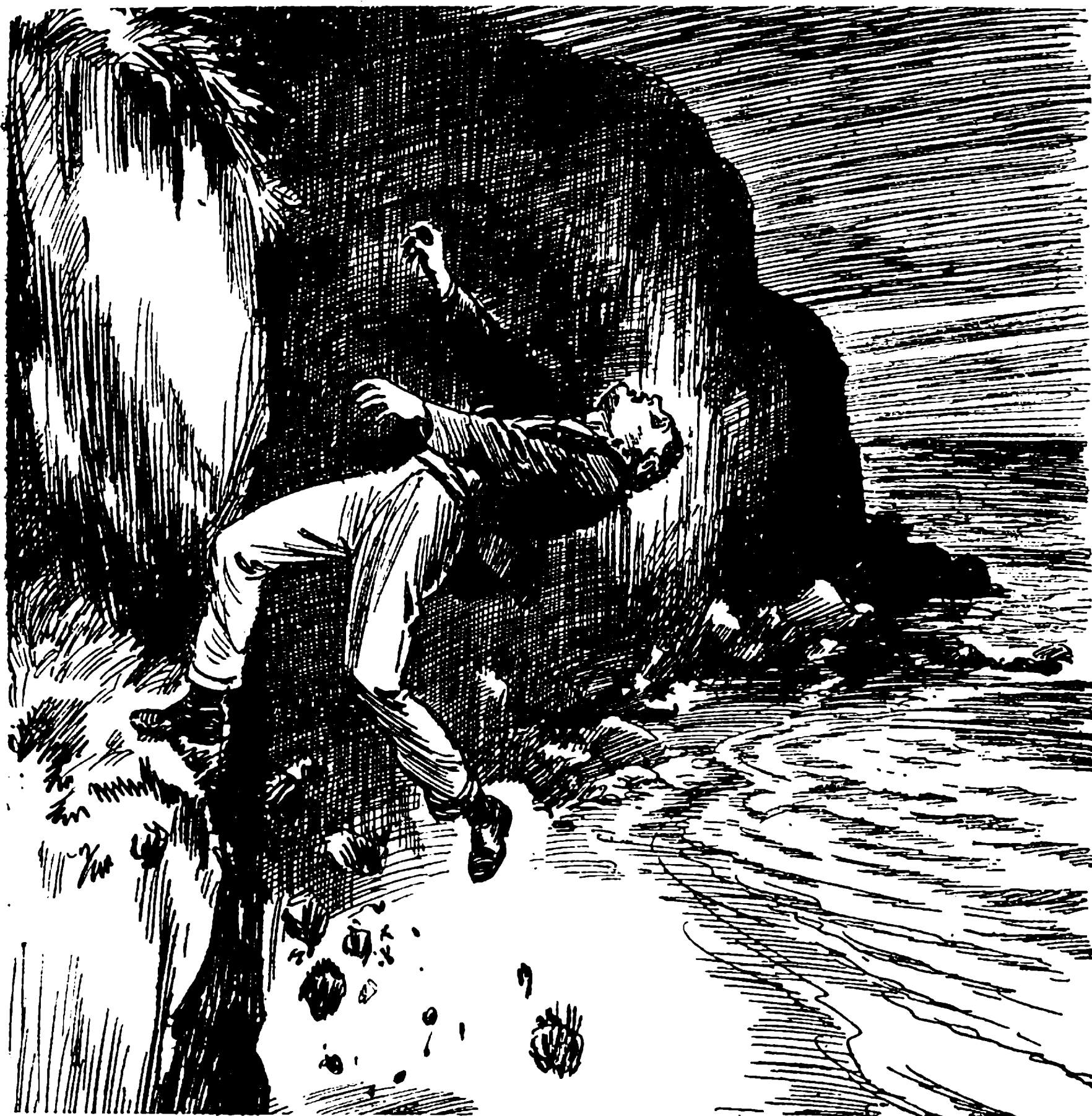
"The gov'nor!" shouted Nipper joyously.

"What are you doing up there?" demanded Nelson Lee.

"I'm a prisoner," said Nipper.

"A prisoner?" cried Nelson Lee, springing from the car. "Who has imprisoned you?"

"Don't know his name," said Nipper. "He's a burglar, I think. Anyhow, he turned up here about half-past four this morning, with a box full of diamonds."



Nipper started to climb down the rugged face of the cliff to where his cap lay on the edge. Suddenly he felt himself slipping. He made a frantic effort to stop himself, but, too late, he found himself falling through space into the darkness below!

The detective drew in his breath sharply. A man had turned up at the cottage at half-past four, with a box full of diamonds. The Abbeydale Diamonds had been stolen, and Lord Abbeydale murdered, at a quarter to four! Was it possible that chance had put him on the track of the Shadow?"

"Is the fellow in the house now?" he asked.

"I expect so," said Nipper. "He was about half an hour ago, because I heard him. Keep your eyes skinned, because he's got a revolver, and he's mighty handy at using it!"

The detective rushed up the garden path, revolver in hand, and burst into the sitting-room. It was deserted, but there was a suitcase on the settee, and a revolver on the table. He secured the gun and darted into the kitchen. That also was deserted. Then he raced off upstairs, and at the same instant

Lockwood Beck crept from behind the clump of bushes and glided towards the cottage, without attracting Nipper's attention.

On reaching the top of the stairs, the detective glanced into the bed-room on the right. Like the rest of the rooms he had explored, it was deserted. He darted into the room on the left. A single glance sufficed to show him the rope-ladder, and he swarmed up it, opened the trap-door, and hauled himself into the attic.

And almost before his legs had disappeared through the opening, Lockwood Beck stole into the bed-room, sprang up the ladder, closed the trap-door, and bolted it.

After pausing for a moment to light a cigarette, he glided downstairs, and presently returned with a large tin of paraffin. Having drenched the bedclothes with half the contents of the can, he sprinkled the rest over

the carpet, walls, and furniture. Then he calmly applied a lighted match to the sheets on the bed, and after waiting until the room was enveloped in flames and smoke, he ran downstairs, seized his suitcase, rushed out to Nelson Lee's car, and drove off in the direction of Eastbourne.

Here he abandoned the borrowed car on the outskirts of the town, caught the 9.55 express back to London, and was in the Metropolis by a quarter to twelve. And at eight o'clock that night, before one of the most brilliant audiences that ever assembled in the rooms of the Röntgen Society, Lockwood Beck read his promised paper on "The Ionization of the Vapour of Methyl Iodine by Ultra-Violet Light."

WHEN Nelson Lee heard the slam of the wooden trap-door, and the grating of the iron bolt as it shot into its socket, his first feelings were merely those of mortification and exasperation. It never even occurred to him that he and Nipper were in actual bodily danger. He thought that the Shadow had merely bolted them in the attic in order to keep them prisoners until he had time to make his own escape.

With a view to frustrating this design, Nelson Lee snatched up an old sporting gun which lay in one corner of the attic, and spent several minutes in a vain attempt to batter the trap-door open. When he found that this was futile he dropped the gun and turned his attention to Nipper, who was standing on an empty box, with his head tightly wedged in the broken skylight.

Having extricated the youngster from this uncomfortable position, he was about to question him as to what had happened, when he suddenly smelt the reek of burning paraffin. A moment later the crackling of flames in the room beneath fell on his ears, and then he noticed for the first time thin wreaths of smoke which came curling up through the cracks in the attic floor. It was then that the detective realised the full extent of their peril.

"The roof!" he cried. "Tear down some of the boards on each side of the skylight, and remove the tiles until we've made a hole big enough to wriggle through!"

Nipper promptly set to work to carry out these instructions. At the same time, the detective picked up the gun again, and, using the barrel as a crowbar, proceeded to loosen the boards on each side of the skylight. Nobody could have performed the work more skilfully or more quickly, but, rapidly as he worked, the fire spread with even greater rapidity, and long before his task was accomplished, the floor was blazing merrily in half a dozen places.

It was, in fact, a race against time—a veritable race with death. And Nelson Lee won! For, just as the floor began to tremble and give signs of falling in, just as the flames began to lick his heels, the detective threw down the gun, snatched up Nipper in his arms, thrust him through the hole he had

made, and hurriedly scrambled through after him. And the next instant the attic floor fell in with a deafening crash, and a roaring tongue of flame and smoke shot through the opening through which they had just escaped.

After this escape was easy, and the detective hitched one end of the knotted ropes to the chimney stack, threw the other end to the ground—Nipper having prepared the ropes from loose pieces kicking about the attic floor—and they swarmed down with scarcely an effort.

The moment his feet touched the ground Nelson Lee darted round to the gate, where he had left his car. A single glance sufficed to show him that the car was gone, and it needed but another glance at the surface of the road to show him that the Shadow had driven off in the direction of Eastbourne.

"Escaped again!" he muttered to himself, in accents of passionate bitterness. "Shall I never catch him?" Then he turned to Nipper. "Tell me quickly how you came here, and all that has happened."

Nipper explained everything briefly, but leaving nothing out.

"And you didn't get a look at his face?" he asked.

"No, guv'nor," replied Nipper. "He wore the mask all the time."

"How would you describe him?"

"About the same height as yourself, and same build, with a short brown beard and moustache. Any idea who he is?"

"Yes. He's the Shadow. I feel sure of it!" said Nelson Lee, and Nipper pursed his lips into a whistle of consternation. "About four o'clock this morning Lord Abbeydale, of Abbeydale Manor, near here, was murdered, and the famous Abbeydale Diamonds were stolen. Lord Abbeydale's daughter, Lady Eileen Talbot, wired for me. I came down to the Manor, and had just satisfied myself that the outrage was the work of the Shadow, when I received a telegram from St. Frank's, informing me that you had been missing since last night. I started off for St. Frank's, and that brought me along this road, and I saw your head poking out through the skylight."

"Then the jewels I saw on the table last night were the Abbeydale Diamonds?"

"Not a doubt about it. The Shadow has probably been living at this cottage for some time while he has been maturing his plans. In all probability he was at the Manor when you broke into the cottage. After murdering Lord Abbeydale and securing the diamonds, he returned to the cottage and found you there."

"Was he here when you came?"

"He wasn't in the cottage, for I looked in every room. But he was evidently hiding somewhere outside, and when he saw me rush into the house he quietly slipped in after me, crept upstairs and bolted the trap-door. Then, after setting fire to the place, he borrowed my car and got clean away."

"And where do you reckon he's gone to now?"

"He's headed for Eastbourne, and that's where we shall have to go next. But, first, I'll just take a look round and see if by any chance he has left anything behind in the nature of a clue."

Even before the detective and Nipper had effected their escape, the lower part of the cottage had been completely enveloped in flames, so that it was quite impossible for Nelson Lee to make any exploration of the interior. In the yard at the back, however, was a wooden shed, which Lockwood Beck had used as a studio. Here the detective discovered an easel, a box of paints, and several half-finished pictures. These told him that the Shadow had posed as an artist during his stay at the cottage; but that was all they did tell him, and he was just about to leave the shed, when his eyes fell on a piece of half-charred paper which was lying on the floor.

On picking up this fragment of paper, the detective found that it had originally been an envelope, which had been twisted into the form of a spill, and used for lighting a candle or a pipe. Half the envelope had been burnt away, but on the half that remained were a stamp and part of address, proving that the envelope had been through the post. The stamp was defaced by the postmark: "London, W.C., 6.30, Mch. 28, '32." And that part of the address which still remained ran as follows:

"—ipson, Esq.,
—rel House,
Riverling,
Herts."

"A clue at last!" exclaimed Nelson Lee, showing the envelope to Nipper.

"Riverling," said Nipper. "I seem to know the name. It's somewhere near London, isn't it?"

"Yes," said Nelson Lee. "It's a quiet little village in Hertfordshire, about half an hour's run by train from St. Pancras—about an hour by car, allowing for traffic jams. We'll now go to Eastbourne, and see if we can pick up any news of the Shadow. After that I must see Lady Eileen again, and get into touch with St. Frank's. We'll then go back to London, and to-morrow morning I'll go to Riverling, and see if I can find out where this letter was sent to, and who Mr. —ipson is!"

"You're taking me with you, guv'nor?" cried Nipper eagerly.

"Yes," said Nelson Lee.

They left the burning cottage and tramped to Eastbourne, where the detective purchased a cap for Nipper, and a coat. After long and patient inquiries the detective found the owner of the cottage, who informed him that she had let it on the previous Thursday to a young French artist named Jean Lerouge. Further inquiries elicited the fact that one of the porters at the station had seen this young French artist leave by the 9.55 express for London; but as the 9.55 was due in London about half-past eleven, and as it was round about tea-time, it was then too late, of

course, for Nelson Lee to wire to London and have Jean Lerouge arrested.

At the conclusion of his inquiries in Eastbourne, the detective, accompanied by Nipper, paid another visit to Abbeydale Manor, where he found Lady Eileen closeted with a tall, military-looking individual, who was introduced to him as Major Talbot. The major, as he afterwards learned, was Lord Abbeydale's nephew, and the heir to the title and estates.

For many reasons the detective did not deem it prudent to mention the envelope he had found, or to refer to it in any way whatever. With this exception, however, he told Lady Eileen and the major everything that had happened. Then he and Nipper, having had their abandoned car restored to them by the police, drove to St. Frank's, and finally went on up to London, spent the night in Nelson Lee's rooms at Gray's Inn Road, and early the following morning took train to Riverling. The detective thought the car would be in the way. He wanted to roam around the village, seeing all there was to see, and hearing all there was to hear, and the car would have been in the way and would have attracted far too much attention.

CHAPTER 5.

The Dead Man's Secret!

ON returning to London on Wednesday afternoon, Lockwood Beck immediately repaired to one of the houses he owned, and which represented one of his possible hiding-places. This particular house was in Lambeth Terrace. Having placed the stolen diamonds in a secret fire-proof recess in one of the walls, he doffed his disguise as Jean Lerouge, and then proceeded to disguise himself as a benevolent-looking, somewhat elderly man, partially bald, with clean-shaven chin and upper lip, bushy side-whiskers, and gold-rimmed eye-glasses.

This was one of his stock disguises. In this disguise he was a familiar figure in Riverling, where he was known as Mr. Philipson, of Laurel House. The villagers regarded him as a retired builder of somewhat eccentric habits. He was supposed to live all alone at Laurel House, and did his own housework, and frequently he went away from home and left the house shut up for weeks at a time.

After putting the finishing touches to his disguise, Lockwood Beck picked up the sealed envelope he had found in Lord Abbeydale's safe, and read and re-read the papers it contained with the utmost care and deliberation.

"Yes," he muttered to himself. "I think I may say this is one of the biggest hauls I've ever made. It puts the Abbeydale Diamonds completely in the shade. I ought to be able to retire after this, for, if I can only find Tom Clayton, and lure him into my clutches, and come to terms with the major, these papers ought to be worth at least ten

thousand a year to me as long as I live. Let's see—what's the address?"

He glanced at one of the papers again.

"No. 2, Tinker's Alley," he read.

He opened a drawer and took out a map of London. He studied it intently for several minutes, and discovered that Tinker's Alley was a narrow lane on the north side of the Euston Road. Then he put the map back in the drawer, replaced the papers in the envelope, and put the envelope in the same recess where he had deposited the diamonds.

Five minutes later he left the house. At half-past four he turned into Tinker's Alley. The door of No. 2 stood open, revealing a small, dimly lighted room that was almost destitute of furniture. In one corner of the room, on a three-legged stool, sat an old, white-haired, wrinkle-faced cobbler, mending a pair of hob-nailed boots.

"Are you Jonathan Clayton?" shouted Lockwood Beck, for the old man appeared to be rather hard of hearing.

"Ay," said the old man. "I'm Jonathan Clayton."

"I want to see your grandson, Tom Clayton," said Lockwood Beck. "Is he in?"

"No," replied the cobbler. "But he won't be long. He's gone to the 'orspital to have his fingers dressed, and he generally gets back about 'alf-past four."

"To have his fingers dressed?" repeated Lockwood Beck. "Has he had an accident, then?"

"Yes," explained the old man. "He got two of 'is fingers badly crushed about a fortnight ago, and the doctors had to amputate 'em—cut 'em off. But they're nearly healed up now, so I don't expect he'll have to go to the 'orspital many more times. What d'you want to see 'im about?"

Before Lockwood Beck could reply, a footstep was heard outside the door, and Tom Clayton himself walked in. He proved to be a tall, raw-boned youth, ragged, dirty and unkempt, with his left hand in a sling. His lips were loose and pendulous, his eyes



Gussy the Runaway!

By

Martin Clifford.

Sooner than face a punishment which he thinks he has not deserved, Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, the priceless swell of St. Jim's, temporarily "retires" from the school. In other words, he bolts! Amazing adventures follow! Gussy jumps for freedom over a wall—into a girls' school! Here is a spanking tip-top yarn, brimful of fun and cheery adventure. Boys, get yourselves a copy of "Gussy the Runaway!" at once and start on this ripping, full-of-laughs story!

Ask for No. 176 of

SCHOOLBOYS' OWN Library

Now on Sale - - - - - 4d.

were small and colourless, and his whole appearance was that of a feeble-minded youth who was not far removed from being an idiot.

"Great Scott!" muttered Lockwood Beck, under his breath. "No wonder Lord Abbeydale hadn't the courage to acknowledge him! Fancy this half-witted loon being now a peer of the realm!"

"Good-afternoon," he continued, turning to the youth. "Are you Tom Clayton?"

"That's me, mister," said Clayton, with a familiar wag of his head. "Who are you?"

"My name is of no importance," said Lockwood Beck, with a smile. "Do you remember a gentleman coming to see you last December?"

"A howling toff?" asked Clayton.

Lockwood Beck nodded.

"He asked you a number of questions about yourself," he said, "and in the end he gave you a five-pound note?"

"That's right," said Clayton. "Have you brought me another?"

"Yes," said Lockwood Beck, producing a five-pound-note and handing it to Clayton. "The gentleman who came to see you last December had sent you that, and he wants you to buy yourself a decent suit of clothes, and to meet me at St. Pancras at six o'clock to-morrow night."

"What for?" asked Clayton.

"He wants to see you," said Lockwood Beck. "When he was here last December he told you he would probably do something for you in the future, didn't he?"

"Yes," said Clayton. "He said he used to know my father—which is more than I ever did—and out of friendship for 'im, said he'd very likely set me up in business, or something like that."

"And now he intends to keep his promise," said Lockwood Beck. "But he wants to see you first and have a talk with you. Of course, if you don't wish to come, you needn't, but I may tell you that you'll be silly if you don't."

Lockwood Beck then took his departure and returned to the house in the Lambeth Terrace, where he wrote the following letter:

"Dear Sir,—I have in my possession certain papers which prove that you are not the heir to the late Lord Abbeydale's title and estates. The rightful heir is known to me, but he himself is ignorant of his identity, and nobody but myself can prove it. If you will call upon me about eight o'clock to-morrow—Thursday evening—I will gladly show you the papers and give you incontestable proof of what I say. My address is Laurel House, Riverling. The house is only a few minutes walk from the station, so that if you leave St. Pancras at 7.35, you will be there in ample time, and you will be able to return to London by the 8.44. If you do not come I shall forward the papers to the late Lord Abbeydale's solicitors by the first post on Friday morning. On the other hand,

if you honour me with a call, at the time and place I name, I have no doubt that we shall be able to come to some arrangement for suppressing the papers.

"Yours faithfully,

"JOHN PHILIPSON."

He enclosed this letter in an envelope which he marked "Private and Urgent," and addressed it to "Major Talbot, 16, Wharncliffe Mansions, Fitzwilliam Square, London, W." Then he once more doffed his disguise, resumed his character of Lockwood Beck, and returned to his house in Grove End Road, St. John's Wood, posting his letter on the way.

CHAPTER 6.

The Interview!

LOCKWOOD BECK and Tom Clayton arrived at Laurel House, Riverling, at about a quarter to seven the next evening. It was then growing dusk.

"Is this where the gentleman lives?" asked Clayton.

"No," said Lockwood Beck. "This is my house. The gentleman is coming here at seven o'clock, so you've just time for a cup of tea before he arrives."

He brewed some tea and poured it out into a cup. Unseen by Clayton, he dropped a couple of morphia tablets into the cup. Ten minutes after Clayton had drunk the tea he was snoring like a grampus. Lockwood Beck carried his stupefied victim into a small sitting-room at the back of the house and laid him on the couch. Then he cleared away the tea-things, and at a quarter past eight Major Talbot arrived.

Like Nelson Lee, he could have come by car, but preferred the train. A car bears its registration number for all to see, and this mysterious affair was one which the major wanted kept secret.

"The meaning of my extraordinary letter," said Lockwood Beck, when he and the major had seated themselves in the front sitting-room. "I should have thought it explained itself."

"Well, it doesn't," said the major curtly. "You say in your letter that you have papers proving that I am not the heir to the Abbeydale title and estates. I say such a statement is ridiculous on the face of it. Everybody in the world knows the late Lord Abbeydale's history. He was my uncle. He was married in 1910, and in 1911 the present Lady Eileen was born. In 1920 his wife died and he never married again, so that Lady Eileen is his only child. As she is a girl, she cannot succeed to the title and estates, which are strictly entailed. I am his next-of-kin, and I succeed to the title and estates as a matter of course, and I defy either you or anybody else to prove the contrary!"

Lockwood Beck smiled and softly rubbed his hands.

"You only know Lord Abbeydale's history as known to the world," he said. "I will now tell you a part of Lord Abbeydale's history which is not known to the world. In 1905 Lord Abbeydale secretly married a chorus girl named Jessie Clayton, who was the only daughter of a London cobbler named Nathaniel Clayton. He did not tell his wife his real name, and to the day of her death she never knew that he was Lord Abbeydale. In 1906 she presented him with a son, who was registered as Thomas Clayton, and in the following year she died, leaving her son to the care of his grandfather, the old cobbler.

"By that time Lord Abbeydale had bitterly repented of his marriage, and, as even the old cobbler didn't know the name of his daughter's husband, his lordship wisely held his tongue, with the result that nobody but himself ever knew of his secret marriage or that he had a son.

"Last December his lordship's conscience began to prick him. He made cautious inquiries and found that his son was still alive, and was still living with the old cobbler. In a fit of remorse he decided to acknowledge his secret marriage and restore his son to his rightful position as his heir. With this end in view he went to see his son, but when he saw what sort of a fellow he was his courage failed him. In the end, to make a long story short, he gave the fellow a few pounds, promised vaguely to do something for him in the future, came away without telling him who he was, and never attempted to see him again."

"I don't believe a word of this fantastic rigmarole!" cried the major, white with anger.

Again Lockwood Beck smiled, and again he softly rubbed his hands. He drew the sealed envelope from his pocket and pointed silently to the inscription outside: "Strictly Private! Not to be opened until after my death."

"Do you recognise this writing?" he asked.

"Yes," said the major. "My uncle's writing."

"Now, kindly glance at these," said Lockwood Beck, drawing the papers out of the envelope. "Here's Number One—a signed confession by Lord Abbeydale, giving all the particulars of his secret marriage, and all the details I've just told you. Read it."

Lockwood Beck handed the paper to the major, and when the latter had read it he handed him a copy of the marriage certificate, a copy of Tom Clayton's birth certificate, the copy of Jessie Clayton's death certificate, and finally a photograph of Tom Clayton, taken the previous December.

"How did these papers come into your possession?" asked the major huskily.

"That's not the question," said Lockwood Beck, as he replaced the papers in the envelope, and put the envelope back in his pocket. "The question is, are you satisfied

that I spoke the truth when I said that you were not Lord Abbeydale's heir?"

"No," said the major. "I'm satisfied that my uncle contracted a secret marriage and that he had a son, but how do I know that that son is still alive?"

Lockwood Beck rose to his feet.

"Come with me," he said.

He led the way into the little sitting-room at the back of the house. Clayton was still snoring on the couch.

"You've seen the photograph," said Lockwood Beck. "Now you see the original. That is Tom Clayton—or, rather, to be strictly truthful, that is now Lord Abbeydale! Are you satisfied now?"

"Yes," said the major huskily, when they had returned to the other room. "What are your terms?"

"I don't want to be hard," said Lockwood Beck. "The Abbeydale rent roll is about forty thousand a year, I believe. I will be satisfied with a quarter, or ten thousand pounds a year."

The major pondered a moment or two in silence. As a matter of fact, he was not thinking of the terms at all just then. He was a major in the Engineers, and knew quite a lot about bombs and explosives. He was, actually, an inventor of a timed bomb himself that had done good service during the war, and he thought he saw a way out of the fix in which he found himself.

"Will you give me until to-morrow to consider the matter?" he asked at last.

"Yes," said Lockwood Beck. "Will you write, or will you come to see me?"

"I'll come to see you," said the major, his eyes glinting.

"Very good," replied Lockwood Beck. "I'm leaving here to-morrow, but I'll wait here till noon. If you haven't come then I shall place the papers in the hands of Lord Abbeydale's solicitor to-morrow afternoon."

It was then half-past eight. Five minutes later the major left to catch the 8.44 for St. Pancras. As he passed through the garden gate a figure rose from behind one of the bushes and stealthily glided after him.

It was Nipper!

CHAPTER 7.

The Explosion at Laurel House!

NELSON LEE and Nipper had made good use of their time in Riverling, yet it was little enough that they found out about the mysterious Mr. Philipson. They found out all about his eccentric habits, and that was all, but while they were scouting round Laurel House, the benevolent old "Mr. Philipson" arrived with Tom Clayton.

Whether the "Mr. Philipson" they saw was the Shadow, the man Nipper had seen in the sea-captain's cottage, it was hard to say, but knowing the Shadow's skill with disguise, Nelson Lee reckoned it might be one and the same. But the most amazing part of

it was that Nipper recognised the youth from London.

Before Nelson Lee had taken him under his wing Nipper had been living in Tinker's Alley and knew every living soul in that dingy thoroughfare.

"That's Tom Clayton—bit of half-wit, guv'nor," he said in a hoarse whisper. "He can hardly remember his mother. She died when he was three or four years old. And he never did know who his father was. He used to live with old Nat Clayton, the cobbler. What's he doing here?"

"That's what we've got to find out," returned Nelson Lee.

They saw "Mr. Philipson" and Tom Clayton enter the house, but, of course, they did not see the Shadow drug Tom Clayton with morphia and carry him into the little room at the back of the house. Presently, however, they saw him close and fasten all the shutters on the ground floor, and shortly after eight they were astounded to see Major Talbot walk up the path and ring the front door bell.

They had both been introduced to the major at Abbeydale Manor the previous afternoon. They knew he was the late Lord Abbeydale's nephew and the heir to the title and estates, but what his object was in coming to Laurel House they could not even guess.

After Lockwood Beck had admitted the major into the house the detective waited nearly half an hour; then the door opened and they saw the major shake hands with "Mr. Philipson" and walk away.

"After him," whispered Nelson Lee to Nipper, when Lockwood Beck had closed the door. "Shadow the major while I remain here. Follow him, find out where he goes and what he does; then go to Gray's Inn Road."

Without a word Nipper rose to his feet and glided after the major. After his departure the detective made a cautious tour of the outside of the house, and found, as he had expected, that the iron-sheeted shutters effectually prevented him obtaining the slightest glimpse of the interior of any of the rooms.

Presently he saw the front door open, and again he saw "Mr. Philipson" transfer the key to the outside, lock the door, put the key in his pocket and walk away. For a moment the detective was undecided whether to shadow him, or whether to try to break into the house in his absence. In the end—not knowing where the crook was going, and fearing to lose all trace of him—he decided to shadow him.

But nothing came of it, for "Mr. Philipson" merely walked to the village post office, sent off a telegram, went back to Laurel House, let himself in and once more locked the door.

It was about twenty minutes to ten, then; and exactly an hour later—or at twenty minutes to eleven—the detective heard a

faint rustling in the bushes on his right. Quick as thought he whipped out his revolver, and even as he did so the bushes parted and disclosed the grinning face of Nipper.

"What have you come back for?" asked the detective. "Have you lost the major?"

"No fear," said Nipper. "But don't waste time asking questions. I've a lot to tell you, and the major'll be here before I've finished if I don't hurry up!"

"What!" whispered the detective excitedly. "Has the major come back here?"

"Yes," said Nipper. "He left here by the 8.55 for St. Pancras. So did I. He drove to some flats in Fitzwilliam Square, and I followed him. He went in, then in about ten minutes out he came again, and seemed to have something bulky in his pocket. He went to a garage and came out in a car, and I reckoned I would lose him then, but he got held up in a traffic jam, and I managed to nip into the tonneau, and it's lucky for me it was a tourer. I hid under a rug, and by jiminy, guv'nor, he made that car mop! And when he stopped I found he'd got her right up in the hedge, just outside this village. When his back was turned I nipped out, dived through the hedge and came on here. I reckon this is where he's making for, and—Ssh, here he comes!"

The boy's quick ears had just caught the sound of a stealthy footstep at the garden gate. The detective heard it, too, and a moment later they saw a shadowy form stealing through the darkness in the direction of the house.

"He's got something in his hand, hasn't he?" whispered Nipper.

"Yes," replied Nelson Lee. "I can't make out what it is."

The detective was right. Major Talbot held a timed bomb in his hand. On arriving at the garden gate of Laurel House, he stole on tiptoe to the window of the little sitting-room and placed the bomb on the sill. With trembling fingers he pressed the button which started the mechanism inside, and then, with a low, malignant chuckle, he swiftly stole away.

"After him!" whispered Nelson Lee to Nipper for the second time that night. "Shadow him as you shadowed him before, while I see what it is he's placed on the window-sill."

Once more Nipper glided after Major Talbot. As soon as they were out of sight the detective rose to his feet and stole towards the window. Owing to the inky darkness he could not see the thing on the sill; but as he drew near a faint, monotonous ticking fell on his ears.

"I guessed as much!" he muttered under his breath. "Some sort of timed bomb!"

Quivering with excitement, he darted to the window and snatched up the metal box.

In feverish haste he fumbled for the switch which controlled the mechanism; but before he could find it the ticking suddenly ceased and an ominous whirr-r! proceeded from the interior of the bomb.

With a gasp of alarm he spun round on his heel to hurl the box across the garden in the direction of the fields. Even as the bomb flew from his hands the darkness was rent by a blinding flash of light, accompanied by a deafening roar, and the next instant Nelson Lee was swept off his feet by the concussion of the air and hurled against the side of the house with so much force that he lost consciousness.

The major, who by that time was half-way down the road towards the spot where he had left his car, heard the roar of the exploding bomb and broke into a run. Nipper also heard the roar, and hesitated for a moment how to act. Should he continue to shadow the major, or should he go back and see if Nelson Lee was injured?

"I'll go back!" he muttered at last.

Suiting the action to the word, he scurried back towards Laurel House as fast as his legs would carry him. When he came within sight of the house he saw that the door was open, and that "Mr. Philipson" was just about to enter the house with the unconscious form of Nelson Lee in his arms. The next instant the two men vanished into the house and somebody closed the door.

For a second Nipper stared at the closed door in speechless stupefaction; then, pressing his elbows to his sides, he dashed away in the direction of the village.

CHAPTER 8.

At Bay!

IT was a few minutes after half-past eight when Major Talbot left Laurel House the first time. After his departure Lockwood Beck peeped into the back room to make sure that Clayton was still asleep; then he sauntered back into the front room, lit his pipe, and settled down to read the evening paper he had purchased at St. Pancras. And almost the first item of news that caught his eye was a brief account of Nelson Lee's escape from the burning cottage the day before.

Up to that moment Lockwood Beck had never doubted that his famous rival was dead. When he discovered that Nelson Lee was alive, he crumpled the paper into a shapeless mass and sprang to his feet.

"I must return to Grove End Road at once," he muttered. "I'll wire to the Scorpion to come here to-night in one of my motor-cars; then I'll leave him here in charge of Clayton, and I'll go back by car."

It was with this object in view that he left the house and went to the village post office. The telegram he sent off was in

cipher, and was addressed to one of his confederates known as the Scorpion. It ran as follows:

"Go to my house on receipt of this. Get the Buick and come to Laurel House as fast as you can."

It was twenty minutes to ten when he returned to Laurel House. About half-past ten he went into the back room and shook Clayton, who opened his eyes, stifled a yawn and sat up.

"Ah, so you're awake at last, are you?" said Lockwood Beck pleasantly.

"Yes," said Clayton, somewhat grumpily. "Is the gent 'ere?"

"No," Lockwood Beck replied. "I've just had a wire from him to say that he won't be here until to-morrow morning, so you'll have to stay here all night. Come into the other room, and I'll make you some tea."

They adjourned to the front room. Lockwood Beck prepared the tea, and was just about to drop a couple of morphia tablets into the cup—in case Clayton objected to staying all night—when his ears were deafened by a loud report, and the whole house shivered from basement to attic. Dropping the cup with a cry of alarm, Lockwood Beck rushed to the door and threw it open. He whipped out his electric torch and switched it on. Then a cry of stupefied amazement burst from his lips. Lying on the ground, almost at his feet, was the senseless form of Nelson Lee.

For an instant the Shadow was literally paralysed with bewilderment. Then, thrusting the torch into his pocket, he hurriedly raised the unconscious detective in his arms and staggered back into the house. Clayton closed the door and followed him into the sitting-room.

"Who—who is it? What's 'appened?" he stammered in a husky, terrified voice.

What had happened was just what Lockwood Beck would have liked to know himself. At the same time, he had no intention of confessing his ignorance to Clayton. On the contrary, he thought he saw a chance of turning the affair to his own advantage.

"This is the man I was telling you about just now," he said, pointing to Nelson Lee. "He's the relation of the man who wants to do something for you. He has evidently tracked you here, and intended to murder you by throwing a bomb at the house, but the thing exploded before he was ready and stunned him."

Like all half-witted persons, Tom Clayton was a terrible coward, and the thought that somebody had tried to murder him turned his blood to ice. If this was the price he had to pay for having "something done for him," he would very much prefer having nothing done for him.

"I'll be out of this!" he muttered under his breath. "The gent can do something for somebody else! I'm off!"

With stealthy, cat-like steps he glided to the door, silently opened it, and took to his heels. He was half-way down the garden path before Lockwood Beck missed him. With a roar of fury, the latter whipped out his revolver and dashed out of the house in hot pursuit. He caught up with Clayton at the garden gate, and seized him by the arm. In abject terror Clayton opened his mouth to shout for help, but before the cry could

CHAPTER 9.

The Scorpion to the Rescue!

Of all the confederates the Shadow employed—and he had many—John Banasco, alias the Scorpion, was the only one who ever knew that the master-crook was Lockwood Beck, the brilliant young scientist of the Grove End Road. The Scorpion was a native of Gibraltar,



Nipper woke with a start to find himself staring at the back of a black hooded figure. The man was bending over the table, examining the glittering contents of a broken jewel-case. It was the Shadow!

cross his lips, Lockwood Beck clubbed his revolver and dealt him a savage blow behind the ear that felled him like a log, and he lay there senseless.

At that moment the light of an oncoming car flooded the road, and Beck heard an amazed shout. There was a grinding of brakes, and the car came to a standstill.

"Scorpion!"

"Yes, chief. Quick—the police. Just passed them not a dozen yards up the road, coming along at a rush."

Then a few yards up the road the Shadow saw the dark form of several men; prominent amongst them was the uniform of the village constable.

"Stop him!" came a shout. "Stop him! He's a crook—the Shadow!"

who had originally come to England as assistant to a Birmingham locksmith. He had been Lockwood Beck's right-hand man almost from the beginning of the latter's criminal career, and, although he was not permitted to know everything, he knew more of the Shadow than any other living man.

As the chosen confederate of the greatest criminal of modern times, and the chief assistant in some of the most notorious burglaries of recent years, it was not surprising that the Scorpion found it necessary to change his name and address frequently. While, as an adept in the art of disguise, he was second only to Lockwood Beck. At the time when the Shadow wired him from Riverling, he was living in rooms in Maida

Vale, under the name of David White. He was supposed to be a journalist, employed on the staff of one of the London evening papers, and it was on his return from his supposed duties at ten minutes to ten on Thursday night that he received Lockwood Beck's telegram from Riverling.

There was no signature to the telegram, but, of course the Scorpion knew at once from whom it came. He had been to Laurel House scores of times before, and he was well aware of the fact that Lockwood Beck was in the habit of staying there as Mr. Philipson.

"I wonder what's up?" he muttered to himself, as he made for the Grove End Road.

Lockwood Beck owned two cars. The Scorpion took the Buick, as instructed, and drove off for Riverling. Eleven o'clock was striking as he sped past the village church, and a few moments later the car flew over the railway bridge and whizzed round a curve in the road about fifty yards from Laurel House. At that moment Lockwood Beck was standing at the garden gate, with the senseless form of Clayton at his feet.

The Scorpion saw a group of men running upon the scene—and one of them was a constable. It did not take him long to realise that they had been warned and were out after the Shadow. He passed them in a flash, and brought the car to a halt right by the waiting figure of the master-crook.

Not a moment too soon. The police were almost upon them. Lockwood Beck grabbed up the figure of Tom Clayton and bundled him into the back of the car. Then he hurled himself beside the Scorpion.

The car began to move. It gathered speed just as the figure of Nipper came racing forward, the constable at his heels.

"In the name of the law——"

But the voice was lost in the roar of the car that ground down the lane in a cloud of dust and disappeared into the night round a bend.

"**T**HANKS, old man! That was very neatly done!" said Lockwood Beck, as the car whizzed round the corner. "But, Jove, you were only just in time. Which way did you come—through Edgware?"

"Yes."

"Well, we'd better not go back by the same route!" said Lockwood Beck. "As soon as those idiots have recovered their wits, they're sure to set the wires working, and every road cop on the Edgware Road will be on the look-out for us."

"Are we going back to London, then?" asked the Scorpion.

"Yes; to Lambeth Terrace," said Lockwood Beck. "Turn to the right at the end of this road, and work your way back to town via Chipping Barnet, Whetstone, Finchley and Highgate. You know the way?"

"Perfectly," said the Scorpion. "But what happened? I don't get the hang of this at all. Who's the fellow we've got with us?"

Before Lockwood Beck replied he stooped down and examined Clayton, who was lying in a huddled heap at their feet.

"I must have hit him harder than I intended," he muttered, rather perturbed. "Hope he gets over it. I shall be in a fix if he doesn't."

"Who is he?" asked the Scorpion again.

"Lord Abbeydale," said Lockwood Beck.

"Come off it!" retorted the Scorpion, with a scornful laugh. "What d'you take me for? Lord Abbeydale is dead. You shot him yesterday morning. I read all about it in the papers."

"That's perfectly true," said Lockwood Beck calmly. "His lordship surprised me while I was examining the contents of his safe at Abbeydale Manor, and I was compelled to shoot him in self-defence. But it was the ninth Lord Abbeydale I shot. This fellow is his lordship's son, and consequently he is now the tenth Lord Abbeydale."

He explained tersely all that had happened, and much of what was to happen in the future.

"While we hold this fellow and the papers we can blackmail the major to the tune of ten thousand a year," he said grimly.

"Gosh, and we'll be on velvet for the rest of our lives," murmured the Scorpion.

"That is, of course," said Lockwood Beck seriously, "if I haven't hit him too hard. He seems very still."

And Tom Clayton was still unconscious when they reached the house in Lambeth Terrace.

In the meantime, Nelson Lee was recovering consciousness in the sitting-room at Laurel House, and found himself lying on the couch, with Nipper sitting by his side.

"Bravo! I said you were coming round," exclaimed Nipper, when the detective opened his eyes. "Don't get up. The doctor'll be back in a minute, and he said I wasn't to let you sit up till he saw you."

"Where am I? What has happened?" asked Nelson Lee, sitting up in spite of Nipper's objection, and gazing round the room.

In reply to these questions Nipper soon explained, and at that moment the doctor arrived.

"Well, how d'you feel?" he asked.

"A little bit queer and dizzy, but otherwise all right," said Nelson Lee. "Thanks for all the trouble you have taken on my behalf. Any news of the fugitives?"

"I don't know," said the doctor. "But the constable is outside. I'll send him in to you."

The policeman came in and explained that nothing had been seen or heard of the car since it vanished round the turn in the road.

"If Mr. Philipson, as he calls himself, is the Shadow," argued Nelson Lee, "he would undoubtedly make for London. The Edgware Road would be the shortest and quickest route."

"I've sent out word all along the route, sir," said the constable. "But so far we've heard nothing."

It was then about half-past twelve. Two hours later the detective was able to leave the house and walk with Nipper to the police-station. But there was no news of the Scorpion's car from any point along the Edgware Road.

Accompanied by the constable, the detective then went to the village post-office, and knocked up the old postmaster, and asked to see the telegram which Mr. Philipson had sent off at half-past nine. After some demur it was produced for their inspection. The body of the telegram was in cipher, and was consequently unintelligible. The address was: "White, 16, Denton Road, Maida Vale."

A 'phone call was immediately put through to Scotland Yard, asking them to send a man to Denton Road and interview "Mr. White," at once. This was done, but nothing came of it. Long before the Scotland Yard man arrived at Denton Road, Mr. White—alias the Scorpion—had disappeared, and nothing was ever seen or heard of him again at that address.

At seven o'clock in the morning—Friday morning—Nelson Lee decided to return to London. Nipper, of course, accompanied him, and on the way the detective proceeded to unfold his plans for the future. What these plans were may be judged from the fact that as soon as they reached London Nipper trudged off to Tinker's Alley, to find out all he could about Tom Clayton, while Nelson Lee hailed a taxi and drove to Major Talbot's rooms in Fitzwilliam Square.

The major was at breakfast when Nelson Lee arrived. His face paled when the great detective entered the room. Even his voice scarcely rose above a husky whisper as he was asked the nature of the detective's visit.

"For some considerable time," said Nelson Lee, as he calmly seated himself in front of the major, "I've been trying to unmask the greatest criminal of modern times—the scoundrel who is known to the world as the Shadow. A couple of days ago I discovered that he was living at Laurel House, Riverling, under the name of Mr. Philipson."

The major started, and turned a shade or two paler. But he quickly recovered his composure.

"All this is very interesting, no doubt," he drawled, "but what has it to do with me?"

"Yesterday," continued Nelson Lee, fixing his eyes on the major's face, "my assistant and I devoted the day to watching Laurel House. About half-past six last evening we saw Mr. Philipson arrive, in company with a young fellow named Tom Clayton. A few minutes after eight we saw you arrive. You stayed at Laurel House about half an hour. When you left, my assistant shadowed you to London and back again to Laurel House. When you came back you brought with you a timed bomb of some sort, which you placed on the sill of one of the windows at the back of the house, and then ran away. What explanation have you to offer for this extraordinary behaviour?"

The major was a superb actor. While the detective had been speaking a brilliant plan had occurred to him, and almost before the last words had crossed the detective's lips the major seemed to crumple up in well-feigned remorse and fear.

"Have mercy on me, Mr. Lee!" he whined. "Don't ruin me, and I'll tell you everything. Six months ago I was mad enough to forge a cheque. In some way or other Mr. Philipson got to know of this, and secured the cheque. He has been levying blackmail ever since, until at last he has fleeced me of every penny I possess. Last night I went to Laurel House to plead for mercy, as he had threatened to expose the forgery unless I gave him a thousand pounds before the end of the week. He only laughed in my face, and, stung to desperation, I determined to kill him."

"How I tried to do that you apparently know already. Now I'm glad I failed. I've been through agonies all night, but I see by the papers this morning that nobody was killed by the explosion. You and your assistant are the only persons who know that I caused the explosion. I was mad—maddened by despair. Don't ruin me and make things harder for me by exposing my guilt, and I swear to you that I will make every reparation that lies in my power."

"Will you help to bring the Shadow to justice by telling me all you know about Mr. Philipson?" asked Nelson Lee.

"I will," said the major eagerly. "But I'm afraid I can't tell you anything more than you already know. All his dealings with me have been by letter, and I never set eyes on him until last night."

"What do you know about Tom Clayton?" asked Nelson Lee. "What was he doing at Laurel House last night?"

"I don't know," said the major. "I never even heard the fellow's name mentioned until you spoke of him just now. If you say he was at Laurel House last night I must believe you, of course, but I never saw anybody there except Mr. Philipson."

He had scarcely finished speaking when somebody knocked at the door. He hurriedly rose to his feet and seated himself again at the table in agitation.

"Come in!" he called, struggling to remain calm.

The door opened and the hall-porter entered the room.

"Please, sir," he said, addressing the major, "there's a gentleman downstairs wishes to see you for a few minutes."

"Who is it?" asked the major.

"Mr. Whitaker," replied the hall-porter. "He said you'd know what he'd come about if I told you he was Mr. Philipson's lawyer."

This announcement had a startling effect on both Major Talbot and Nelson Lee. The major was literally dumbfounded. His heart almost ceased to beat, and every vestige of colour drained from his face.

The detective, on the other hand, was delighted at the turn of events, and he sprang to his feet with a cry of triumph.

"One of the best chances I've yet had!" he muttered, half to himself. He turned to the hall-porter. "What name did the man give?"

"Mr. Whitaker, sir."

"Did you tell him I was here?"

"No, sir. I didn't know that anybody was here. You must have come up without me seeing you. I told Mr. Whitaker that, Major Talbot was alone."

"Splendid!" said the detective. "Just wait outside a moment while I speak to the major. Don't go downstairs."

The porter withdrew and closed the door.

"Now, I want you to do me a favour," said Nelson Lee, turning to the major. "Mr. Whitaker, as he calls himself, has doubtless come to see you in order to extort more blackmail from you by threatening to denounce you to the police. For my own part, I don't believe that the fellow is a lawyer at all. I've a very shrewd suspicion that he'll prove to be Mr. Philipson himself in a new disguise. That is to say, if my theory is correct, the man downstairs is the Shadow himself."

He pointed to a large Japanese screen which stood across one corner of the room.

"I want you to let me conceal myself behind that screen," he said, "and then I want you to tell the hall-porter to show Mr. Whitaker up to your room. I shall then be able to hear all he says to you, and when he leaves I shall be able to shadow him and find out who he really is. You said just now that if I wouldn't ruin you by informing the police what I know about that bomb outrage, you would do anything in your power to help me unmask the Shadow. Here is a chance for you to fulfil your promise. Will you do it?"

Desperation sharpened the major's wits. A brilliant idea had suddenly occurred to him.

"Of course I will grant your request," he said. "I promised to give Mr. Philipson his answer to-day, but I didn't expect he'd want an answer so early as this, and I had intended to call on some friends this afternoon and see if I could borrow the money."

"Well, tell him so," said Nelson Lee. "Say that you're not prepared to give him an answer just now. Say that you're going to try to get the money this afternoon, and you'll give him a definite answer to-night. Say anything, in fact, to put him off for an hour or two, until I've time to shadow him. Have I your permission to tell the porter to show him up?"

"Certainly!" said the major.

The detective accordingly opened the door and beckoned to the porter who was waiting outside.

"Show Mr. Whitaker up," he said, slipping a ten-shilling note into the porter's hand. "Don't tell him I'm here. When you usher him into the room, you'll find that I have disappeared. Don't appear surprised or ask any questions. Just show the fellow into the room, and go downstairs."

The porter grinned and touched his cap.

"I understand, sir," he said.

The porter then retraced his steps downstairs, while the detective closed the door and hastily concealed himself behind the screen.

Major Talbot had been at breakfast when Nelson Lee arrived, and the white linen cloth was still on the table. While Nelson Lee was talking to the porter the major was fumbling in his waistcoat pocket for a pencil, and as soon as the detective had concealed himself behind the screen—where he could neither see nor be seen by anybody in the room—the major whipped out the pencil and swiftly wrote the following words on the tablecloth:

"Nelson Lee behind the screen. Saw me at Laurel House last night. Suspects you are the Shadow, and intends to shadow you when you leave here. Have told him Philipson blackmailing me on account of cheque I forged six months ago. Told him P. demands £1,000 before end of week, and you have come for my answer. Have said I know nothing about Clayton, whom he saw at Laurel House. Don't give me away, and I'll accept the terms P. offered at Laurel House last—"

Before he could finish his writing there was a knock at the door.

"Mr. Whitaker, sir," said the hall-porter, opening the door.

Lockwood Beck, in the disguise of a broken-down lawyer, entered the room, hat in hand, and made the major a profound bow.

"Good-morning, sir!" he said.

"Good-morning?" growled the major, when the porter had closed the door. "You're early. Take a seat."

As he uttered these words he waved his hand towards the chair from which he had just risen, while at the same time he pointed silently and meaningly to the writing on the tablecloth.

Somewhat surprised and bewildered, Lockwood Beck sank into the chair and glanced at the pencilled scrawl. At the sight of the words "Nelson Lee behind the screen" he gave a start, but his matchless coolness quickly reasserted itself, and he read the message to the end, and gave the major an almost imperceptible nod.

"Why hasn't Mr. Philipson come himself, as he promised?" asked the major, while Lockwood Beck was reading the message.

The latter smiled and shrugged his shoulders.

"My dear Major Talbot," he said, "have you seen this morning's paper?"

"Yes," replied the major, dropping into another chair. "I see there was a mysterious explosion at Laurel House last night after I left, and that Mr. Nelson Lee, the famous detective, was subsequently found unconscious in the house. The newspaper account also says that Mr. Philipson fled in a

motor-car, and it more than hints that he is that daring criminal known as the Shadow."

"In that respect the papers are absolutely wrong," said Lockwood Beck. "Mr. Philipson, my client, is certainly not the Shadow. He has a complete answer to all the charges which have been levelled against him; but in the meantime I quite agree with him that it would not be wise for him to show himself in public just at present. That is why he has sent me here this morning, instead of coming himself."

"Where is he?" asked the major.

"That is a question I am not at liberty to answer," said Lockwood Beck.

"And what was Nelson Lee doing at Laurel House last night?" asked Major Talbot. "He wasn't there when I was there. The papers also mention a young fellow who was stunned by Mr. Philipson and carried off in the car. Who was he?"

"Those are also questions which do not concern us now," said Lockwood Beck. "My object in coming here this morning is simply to ask you for a definite answer to a definite question. You know what that question is, of course?"

"I am not prepared to answer it at the moment," said the major. "You see, I didn't expect to be called upon for an answer so early in the morning as this. As I told Mr. Philipson last night, I haven't the money myself, but it is just possible that I may be able to borrow it from some of my friends."

"There ought to be no difficulty in that," said Lockwood Beck. "As soon as the late Lord Abbeydale has been buried and certain formalities have been complied with, you will succeed to the title and forty thousand. In such circumstances it ought to be a very easy matter to raise a thousand pounds."

"Quite so," said the major. "To whom shall I pay the money, assuming that I am successful in borrowing it?"

Lockwood Beck took out a pencil and scribbled something on the tablecloth.

"When will it be most convenient to you to pay the money?" he asked while he was writing.

"Say six o'clock to-morrow evening," replied the major.

"Here?"

"Yes."

There was a large silver dish on the table containing the remains of a curried chicken. Lockwood Beck stretched out his hand and drew the dish across the table until it completely covered the writing on the cloth.

"Very good," he said, rising to his feet and picking up his hat. "Then I'll call here to-morrow evening at six. Good-morning! Don't trouble to open the door. I can let myself out."

He crossed the room and opened the door. Then he bowed himself out and disappeared. The moment he had closed the door Nelson Lee emerged from behind the screen.

"You acted splendidly!" he said, addressing the major in hurried tones. "I'll thank

you later. Just at present I must lose no time in shadowing 'Mr. Whitaker.' Good-bye for the present."

Without giving the major time to reply, he darted from the room and glided downstairs. The major waited until the sound of his footsteps had died away, then he swiftly rose to his feet and drew the silver dish aside. And this is what Lockwood Beck had scribbled on the tablecloth:

"Thanks! I'll not forget the service you have rendered me this morning. Don't worry about Nelson Lee. Let him shadow me if he likes. He'll never shadow anybody else again if he does!"

CHAPTER 10.

"The Golden Butterfly!"

IT was striking nine as Lockwood Beck left the major's rooms. Without once glancing back or giving any sign that he knew that Nelson Lee was shadowing him he walked at a leisurely pace to Waterloo and booked a first-class single to Chertsey. Leaving Waterloo at five minutes past ten, he arrived at Chertsey to find the weather rather cold and bleak, with a thick white mist slowly rising from the river and gradually spreading across the water meadows.

Lockwood Beck found it desirable to have many places in various parts of the country to which he could run to on occasion, and at Chertsey he owned a houseboat called the Golden Butterfly. On reaching the spot where this craft was moored—quite close to the river's bank—he saw that some mischievous person had tampered with the ropes. There had been three of these ropes originally, but two of these had been deliberately cut across, and the third was only holding by half a dozen strands.

"Done this morning, by the look of it," he muttered. "The first time the wind rises, or there comes a bit of a flood, that rope will give way, and the boat will drift off down the river. However, it isn't worth my while to get a set of fresh ropes. There's no wind to-day, and no likelihood of any. This rope will hold quite long enough for me to settle Nelson Lee."

He pulled out his bunch of skeleton keys and stepped aboard. Walking round to the front of the houseboat, he unlocked the door, made his way to the little kitchen and cautiously peered through one of the windows at the back. He saw dimly the figure of Nelson Lee standing under one of the trees on the river's bank, and staring at the houseboat.

"So far, so good!" he muttered to himself with a low, grim chuckle.

In pursuance of his plan he made his way into the miniature larder, where he found a tin of biscuits, a box of sardines, and a broken case of wine. After making a frugal lunch he lit a cigar, mounted to the roof—in full view of Nelson Lee—and sauntered

up and down for nearly twenty minutes. Then, as if tired of this exercise, he threw away his cigar, went below, and arrayed himself in a suit of boating flannels, launched the canoe and paddled away in the direction of Staines.

By that time the mist on the river had grown so dense that objects twenty yards away were quite invisible. As soon as he had paddled this distance, therefore, the Shadow suddenly altered his course, paddled to the side of the river, and drifted back under cover of the overhanging trees until he obtained an uninterrupted view of the front door of the houseboat. Then he anchored himself by grasping an overhanging bough, and waited to see what would happen.

Ten minutes passed and nothing happened. Then a thrill of triumph quivered through his nerves. Nelson Lee had boarded the boat, and was stealing on tiptoe towards the door. With eager, straining eyes, scarcely daring to breathe in his excitement, the Shadow saw Nelson Lee halt outside the door and apply his ear to the keyhole. Then he saw the detective glide up to one of the windows and cautiously peer through. Next he saw him glance up and down the river, as though to make sure that he was unobserved. And finally he saw the detective return to the door, open it and disappear inside.

"Got him!" muttered Lockwood Beck exultingly.

With half a dozen swift, strong strokes he brought the canoe alongside the Golden Butterfly. Whipping out his revolver, he sprang aboard and dashed through the open door with the swiftness of a lightning flash. Nelson Lee was in the drawing-room. He heard the canoe bump up against the side of the houseboat, and he heard someone leap aboard. With a gasp of alarm he sprang towards the door; but even as he did so the muzzle of a revolver was levelled at him, and a quiet voice said:

"Hands up, Mr. Nelson Lee! I caught you nicely."

Resistance at that moment would have been sheer madness. The detective meekly held up his hands.

"Thank you," said Lockwood Beck, with mock politeness. "I'm glad to see you have the sense to know when you're beaten. I'm truly sorry it has come to this, Mr. Lee. I have always been one of your warmest admirers. But you are seriously hampering my plans, and consequently I have reluctantly come to the conclusion that I must now sweep you from my path. Kindly oblige me by stepping back into the drawing-room. Backwards, if you please, and remember, at the slightest sign of treachery I shall shoot you down like a dog."

Nelson Lee stepped backwards into the room, Lockwood Beck following him and holding the muzzle of the revolver steadily before him.

"Halt!" said Lockwood Beck, when they reached the middle of the little room.

The detective halted with a vengeance. For almost before the word had crossed Lockwood Beck's lips, Nelson Lee lashed out with his fist and struck an upward blow at the revolver.

Quick as thought, Lockwood Beck pressed the trigger. But Nelson Lee had been the thousandth part of a second too quick for him and his knuckles came in contact with the under surface of the barrel at the same



Even as the bomb flew from Nelson Lee's hand, the next moment the detective was swept clean of the side of the

instant with the result that the bullet buried itself in the wooden ceiling of the room. The next instant the detective had closed with Lockwood Beck, and the Shadow and his rival were rolling over on the floor in a desperate hand-to-hand encounter.

Never were two men more evenly matched, not only in strength and skill, but also in courage and indomitable resolution. Nelson Lee tried every dodge and feint that he knew, but for every feint the Shadow had a counter-feint; for every dodge he had another dodge which thwarted it.

In the midst of this titanic struggle—possibly owing to the violent rocking of the houseboat to which it gave rise—the single weakened rope by which the Golden Butterfly was moored suddenly snapped in two. For a little while the houseboat hugged the low-lying bank, then she slowly drifted out into the middle of the river.

Suddenly the silence was rent by the shrill, discordant blare of a Klaxon horn. Then came



There was a blinding flash and a deafening explosion. His feet and crashed with sickening force against the mystery house.

a deafening crash, while at the same instant the houseboat gave an ugly lurch. Nelson Lee and Beck scrambled to their feet at the self-same instant, but even as they did so the sharp bows of a powerful motor-launch crashed through the wooden walls of the room, water spouted up through the floor, and the houseboat suddenly heeled over and began to sink.

Even in the face of this appalling disaster, the Shadow never lost his presence of mind for a single instant. Not for a moment did he forget that he himself had a revolver in

his hand, while Nelson Lee's gun was in his pocket. And the instant he leapt to his feet he levelled his revolver at the detective and pressed the trigger. With a choking cry the detective threw up his arms and sank to the floor, a bullet wound in the right side of his chest. The next moment the Shadow sprang on to the deck of the sinking houseboat, leaped into the river and struck out for the bank.

Those on board the launch were aghast, for they had thought that the houseboat had no one aboard her. In the launch were a well-known West End surgeon and a party of friends, together with a waterman. Fortunately for them, the launch, being stoutly built, sustained but little damage. The engines had been reversed before the actual collision occurred, and consequently it began to back away as the houseboat began to sink.

The sight of the Shadow diving into the water was the first inkling they had that anyone was aboard. And then the blood-stained figure of Nelson Lee appeared at the door of the sinking boat, shouting and gesticulating.

"Stop—stop that man!" gasped Nelson Lee, pointing to Lockwood Beck and swaying to and fro like a drunken man. "He's a crook—stop—"

Blood welled up into his mouth and choked his further utterance. He staggered blindly to the edge of the deck; then his legs gave way beneath him, and even as he fell the houseboat sank and he vanished from sight. Seeing that the doctor and his friends had lost their heads, the waterman promptly threw off his coat and dived after Nelson Lee. By the time he brought the unconscious detective to the surface, those on the launch had partly recovered from their panic, and a few moments later the detective was hauled aboard.

"Shot through the right lung," said the doctor, after a rapid examination of the detective's wound.

"Fatally?" asked one of his companions in an awed voice.

"I'm afraid so," replied the doctor gravely. "However, we'll take him to my house at Chertsey as quickly as possible and see what we can do for him."

The launch was put about and headed back for Chertsey. And the Shadow, lying panting and exhausted on the river's bank, heaved a long-drawn sigh of relief as he heard the throbbing of the engine grow fainter and fainter in the distance and finally die away.

CHAPTER 11.

The Shadow Checkmated.

IT was on the afternoon of Friday that Nelson Lee was landed at Chertsey and carried to the doctor's house. For the next three days the detective remained in an unconscious condition, and literally hovered between life and death. On the

Monday afternoon he began to show signs of returning consciousness, and on Tuesday he was able to relate the story of his adventure on the houseboat.

Two days later an operation was performed and the bullet extracted from his lung, after which he became delirious, and for more than a week it was doubtful whether he would recover. About the end of the month, however, an improvement began to manifest itself, but another month elapsed before he was able to leave his bed, and it was some time before he was permitted to go out. Even then the doctors forbade him to do any work, and eventually they insisted on his going for a cruise to the Mediterranean.

From this trip he returned to London completely restored to health and strength, during which the Shadow was so far free and unmolested. But if that scoundrel was not pestered by the unwelcome attentions of Nelson Lee he could not stave off the consequences of his own actions and the strokes of bad luck which now descended upon him.

After his encounter with Nelson Lee the Shadow returned to the house in Lambeth Terrace, disguised himself as "Captain Anderson," and packed up a disguise for the Scorpion, who now appeared as Robert Ward, the captain's servant. He then went to a house in Pimlico which he owned and spent a couple of hours with the Scorpion discussing future plans. He then made it his business to settle things with Major Talbot.

He had not one trouble during all this time. Tom Clayton had not fully recovered from the savage blow on the head he had received at Riverling. Maybe there always had been something wrong with his head and the Shadow, by hitting him behind the ear with the butt of his revolver had not improved matters.

In any case, after a time Major Talbot succeeded to the title of Lord Abbeydale, and the Shadow was paid the sum of eight hundred pounds a month, in return for which he undertook to keep Tom Clayton a prisoner and suppress the secret papers.

But two days after the first payment had been made, Tom Clayton was taken worse and died in the house at Lambeth Terrace—a fact which greatly upset Lockwood Beck.

"It's checkmate!" he muttered. "I have put Nelson Lee out of the running, only for this to happen!"

"I don't see why you need be so upset," growled the Scorpion. "It's a pity Clayton's dead, of course. But what's the odds? I can easily dispose of the body and Lord Abbeydale need never know that he's dead, so that he'll go on paying your eight hundred a month the same as usual."

And that, indeed, was what happened. The body of poor Tom Clayton was buried in concrete under the kitchen earthstone, and for several months the Shadow and the Scorpion lived in luxury.

But Fate took a hand in the game, and while shooting on the Yorkshire moors, the tenth Lord Abbeydale—who had formerly

been Major Talbot—was accidentally shot, receiving wounds from which he never recovered.

"That puts a stopper on our little game!" said the Scorpion, when he read the news in the paper. "It's all up with the eight hundred now. The title has died with him, and the estates will go to Lady Eileen, and we shall be out of it altogether."

Lockwood Beck made no reply. A daring and ingenious idea had suddenly occurred to him. Slowly but surely the idea grew and developed in his fertile brain, till at last he sprang to his feet with a low cry of triumph.

"I've got it!" he cried. "The game isn't up yet! In fact, I think I see how I can make a better job of this than ever I dreamed of before. You've heard me speak of Gavin, the man who fakes up stolen gems for me?"

"Yes."

"Well, Gavin has a son named Jim, who's the very image of Tom Clayton, in face and figure, in height and age, in size and build—in fact, they might be twins. Jim Gavin isn't quite such an idiot as Clayton was—in fact, he's sharp-witted—but he's a born actor, and with a little coaching he'll soon learn how to assume Tom Clayton's imbecile expression and manner. I'll bring Gavin here and rig him out in Clayton's clothes. After I've coached him up in the part he is to play I'll give him the papers I found in the late Lord Abbeydale's safe and I'll send him to Tinker's Alley.

"When he gets to Tinker's Alley he'll go to the old cobbler—Clayton's grandfather, you know—and spin a long yarn about being kidnapped and kept a prisoner and making his escape. Clayton's grandfather is deaf and almost blind. He'll never doubt that Jim is Tom Clayton. He'll advise him to take the papers to a lawyer. The lawyer will read them and make an application to the Courts to have Jim acknowledged as Lord Abbeydale. The Courts will grant the application when the papers are produced and Jim will succeed to the title and the estates, and we'll all share in the plunder. Isn't that great?"

"But Tom Clayton had lost two fingers on his left hand, and that's what people will remember," growled the Scorpion.

"I've thought of that," said Lockwood Beck. "After I've got Jim Gavin here I shall lure a doctor to the house and compel him to amputate two fingers of Jim's left hand."

"But will Jim let him?"

"Of course he will if I make it worth his while. What's the loss of two fingers compared with a title and forty thousand a year?"

"But what about the doctor? If you lure him here and force him to take two fingers off a man who isn't injured he'll talk about it afterwards."

"The doctor won't have the chance to recognise him," said Lockwood Beck coolly. "After he has performed the operation I shall keep him here until the scars are healed, and then I shall put a bullet through his head."

And in this fashion was born one of the most ingenious and daring schemes that ever originated in the subtle brain of the Shadow.

But once Nelson Lee got about again he was by no means idle. He had plenty of time in which to think over things, and he saw much to puzzle him. Nipper had been to Tinker's Alley and had reported the disappearance of Tom Clayton. Looking back, Nelson Lee felt sure that Major Talbot had deliberately lied to him about the forged cheque.

He knew that somewhere and somehow there must be some connection between the Abbeydale inheritance, Major Talbot and Tom Clayton, while the actual theft of the Abbeydale Diamonds was simply a theft and nothing more. It dawned in upon him that maybe the burglar had found something more than diamonds in the safe at Abbeydale Manor, and consequently he started a patient and thorough investigation into the birth of Tom Clayton and the history of his mother. And he brought Nipper from St. Frank's again to help him.

It was plain that the Shadow must have made, or be making, a lot of money out of all that had happened, because his daring and clever frauds ceased, and the bankers were no longer troubled by him.

It was about a week or so after the death of the new Lord Abbeydale; Nelson Lee was in his study going through the papers concerning this strange case, when there came a rap at the door, his landlady entered and handed him a lady's visiting card.

"Miss Talbot, St. Monica's Nursing Home," he read.

"Show her up," said Nelson Lee, pushing his papers aside.

The landlady obeyed and ushered in a tall and beautiful girl who was dressed in the outdoor uniform of a private nurse.

"Lady Eileen!" cried Nelson Lee, shaking her warmly by the hand. "This is indeed a surprise," he continued, when his visitor had taken her seat.

"I have taken up nursing, and I do not use my title," she explained. "I have come to ask you to help me, Mr. Lee."

"Why, certainly," said Nelson Lee. "In what way can I be of service to you?"

"You have heard of Dr. Burton, my fiancé—Dr. Burton of Harley Street and—"

"Of course," said Nelson Lee. "Everybody has heard of Dr. Burton."

"Well, Dr. Burton has mysteriously disappeared. He went out on Sunday night, and by the first post on Monday morning his housekeeper received this letter, which states that he has been called away into the country on an urgent case, and will let her know when he expects to get back. It deceived his housekeeper, but it doesn't deceive me. That letter is a forgery, Mr. Lee."

"But what makes you think this letter is a forgery," said Nelson Lee, studying the letter she had handed to him.

"I don't think; I'm sure," said Lady Eileen, in tones of profound conviction. "Here is a genuine letter of Dr. Burton's, written to me. Compare the two."

The detective did so, and a look of suppressed excitement crossed his face. He was an expert in handwriting himself, and the moment he came to examine the housekeeper's letter more carefully, he saw almost at a glance that there were certain peculiarities in the writing on the forged cheques which littered his table. In other words, the hand which forged the cheques—matters which the bankers had long since ceased to worry about—had also forged the letter to Dr. Burton's housekeeper.

"Another sample of the Shadow's skill," he muttered to himself.

"You are quite right," he said to Lady Eileen. "This letter is undoubtedly a forgery, and I have no hesitation in saying that it was forged by the same man who murdered your father. Here are some further examples of his work in the same direction."

He stretched out his hand, intending to pick up some of the cheques and show them to Lady Eileen. By mistake he picked up one of the reports of Otho Kontos, the Greek handwriting expert, who, like himself, had been employed by the bankers' committee to try and stop the depredations of the Shadow. He glanced at it, and was about to toss it aside, when suddenly his face turned pale with excitement, and a gasp of stupefied amazement burst from his lips.

He had noticed for the first time that the characteristic peculiarities he had observed in the writing of the cheques were also present in the writing of Otho Kontos. To Lady Eileen's surprise, he snatched up the remaining cheques and reports and eagerly compared them with the other, and with the letter to Dr. Burton's housekeeper.

"Lady Eileen," he cried in tones of suppressed excitement, "you have brought me luck! I believe I have just made the most important discovery of my life. I believe that at last I know who is the Shadow! I may be wrong, of course, but if my suspicions are well founded, the man who murdered your father, and who is responsible for Dr. Burton's disappearance is at this moment in an office in Basinghall Street. I must interview him at once. Come to me again at half-past seven to-night, and I will tell you the result of my interview."

He saw Lady Eileen out, and then, having thrust one or two of the reports and cheques into his pockets, to serve as an excuse for his visit, he chartered a taxi and drove to Basinghall Street.

It was a few minutes after six when Nelson Lee alighted from his taxi outside a dingy suite of offices. It was an ancient building which had not yet aspired to the possession of a lift. He toiled up four long flights of stairs and reached the topmost landing. Six doors opened on to this landing, and the upper half of each of these doors consisted of a large square pane of ground

glass. On one of these panes, in bold black letters, was the inscription, "Otho Kontos, Expert in Handwriting."

The detective rapped on the glass pane with his knuckles. No sooner had he done so than a sharp metallic click fell on his ears, and the door swung open of its own accord, while, at the same time a silky voice invited him to "Come in."

Somewhat taken aback by this unusual procedure, the detective stepped through the open door and found himself in a room which differed in every possible way from an ordinary City office. There was no counter; no wood-and-glass partitions; no long, high desk; no stools; no copying press; not even a typewriter. In fact, in many respects the office closely resembled a doctor's, for beside the office furniture it had a large laboratory bench filled with chemical glasses.

Otho Kontos, alias Lockwood Beck, was seated at a knee-hole desk, examining some specimens of handwriting with a magnifying glass. He wore a long, black cloak.

"Ah, Mr. Nelson Lee," he exclaimed, having met the detective at the bankers' committee meetings; "this is indeed an honour and a pleasure."

The detective bowed in acknowledgement of the compliment. Lockwood Beck waved his hand towards one of the armchairs.

"Won't you take a seat?" he said.

He seated himself in the chair which Lockwood Beck had indicated. Almost at once the arms of the chair curved in and clasped the detective round the waist, pinioning him so securely that he could not move; while, at the same time, two powerful springs shot out from under the seat and seized his legs in a grip of steel.

Half-mad with mortification and chagrin, the detective made a desperate effort to force the arms of the chair apart and to free his legs from the grip of the springs. Lockwood Beck made no attempt to interfere with him, but merely stood watching him with a cynical smile. He opened one of the drawers of the desk and took out a box of Egyptian cigarettes. Having selected one carefully and deliberately, he lit it and placed it between his lips; then he slipped his hand into Nelson Lee's pockets and relieved him of his revolver.

"You are a clever man, Mr. Lee," he said, blowing out a cloud of fragrant smoke and regarding the detective with a dreamy, contemplative air. "You have penetrated my disguise and you know that I am the man who is known to the public as the Shadow. But that is your death warrant, of course. I have no alternative but to make an end of you here and now. More than once you have come within an ace of catching me; but I am, perhaps, the only man just a trifle more clever than you. I have often wondered how long it would be before you discovered that I am also Otho Kontos. I guessed you would visit me here one day,

and that would mean that you had discovered the truth. So when you entered I was prepared for the worst. Now I must put an end to you, once and for all!"

He moved to the bench, and taking down one or two bottles, proceeded to mix them.

"This little poison will have no after effects," he chuckled over his shoulder. "I will give you a little, and you will say good-bye to this wicked world. But none will ever discover how you met your—"

Then he suddenly paused and uttered a stifled gasp of alarm, for at that moment a low, fierce growl was heard outside the door, followed by a hurried patter of footsteps on the stairs. And at the same instant the detective turned his head and made the room ring with a lusty shout of "Help!"

CHAPTER 12.

Nipper to the Rescue!

NIPPER had been helping Nelson Lee in his inquiries into the birth of Tom Clayton and the marriage of his mother. Nipper was able to go into dark alleys and question people who would have been suspicious if Nelson Lee had plied them with questions. He had found out much which, added to the official records delved into by the detective made interesting reading.

But on this particular day Nipper had been more than usually successful. He had established the fact that Tom Clayton's father was actually a Mr. Talbot, and, of course, Talbot was the family name of the Lords Abbeydale. He had proved this by word of mouth and by musty documents in the Marylebone Town Hall, and it seemed to him to clinch the matter, and he was anxious to tell Nelson Lee.

When he arrived, breathless and eager, at Gray's Inn Road, he found Nelson Lee out, and Lady Eileen waiting for him.

"Do I know where Mr. Lee has gone?" said Lady Eileen, in answer to Nipper's eager question. "I don't; at least, I only know that he's gone to some office in Basinghall Street, to see a man whom he believes to be the Shadow."

That meant danger for the detective. No one understood that better than Nipper, and two minutes later he left the house, leading Wolf, Nelson Lee's big Alsatian, by a light steel chain. He hailed a taxi and drove to the Gresham Street end of Basinghall Street. Having dismissed the taxi, he patted Wolf on the head, and admonished him to "Seek him, boy!" If the dog had failed on account of the number of people who frequented that part of the City Nipper would have been by no means amazed. But Wolf paused merely for an instant, sniffed at the pavement between the kerbstone and the door of a dingy suite of offices; then, with a joyous yelp he broke away from Nipper's grasp, and

bounded up the steps which led into the entrance hall.

He dashed up the four long flights of stairs, with Nipper panting a little way behind, and reached the door of "Otho Kontos'" office without encountering the slightest opposition. On reaching the half-glass door, the Alsatian applied his nose to the narrow chink between the bottom of the door and the floor. Once, twice, thrice, he sniffed suspiciously, and then, warned by some strange, subtle instinct that his master was in danger, he raised his head and gave vent to a low fierce growl.

At that moment Nelson Lee's cry for help was heard, and the big dog leaped through the upper half of the office door, and crashed into the room amid an avalanche of broken glass. A cry of alarm from Lockwood Beck was drowned by a savage roar from Wolf, and before the Shadow had time to defend himself the Alsatian leaped upon him, knocked him down and fastened his fangs in his arm.

A moment later the tense, white face of Nipper appeared at the jagged rent in the glass half of the door. Having grasped the situation in a glance, he tried to open the door. Finding that it was locked on the inside, and that there was no key in the lock, he made the building ring with his frenzied cries for help, and it was not long before a dozen, wildly-excited men were thundering at the door and trying to batter it down. In the meantime, Lockwood Beck had recovered his presence of mind. In spite of the agony he was suffering he fumbled in his pocket with his free hand and pulled out Nelson Lee's revolver.

Crack! Crash!

The revolver spoke and the door gave way at the self-same moment, and even as the faithful Wolf rolled over with a yelp of pain, one leg suddenly limp and bleeding, the door crashed open, and Nipper and his allies rushed into the room.

Nothing daunted Lockwood Beck leaped to his feet and levelled his weapon at Nipper's head, but the bullet merely grazed the tip of the youngster's ear. Then, with amazing speed, Lockwood Beck darted into the inner office and closed and locked the door.

"After him! Burst the door open!" yelled Nipper.

Amid a scene of frantic excitement the door was speedily broken open, but, by that time Lockwood Beck had climbed out of the window and was half-way down the stack-pipe, and by the time his pursuers had reached the window, he had gained the yard at the back of the building, and was racing down the narrow covered passage which led to Coleman Street.

When at last he staggered into the house in Lambeth Terrace, the excitement which had hitherto borne him up began to subside, while at the same time he began to feel the effect of losing so much blood. His head grew dizzy, a cold perspiration bedewed his

brow, the objects in the room began to recede, and in the end, for the first time in his life, he fainted.

His swoon, however, did not last long, and with the aid of a stiff glass of brandy, he managed to doff the clothes he wore when disguised as Otho Kontos, and to re-disguise himself as Captain Anderson of the furnished house in Pimlico.

After switching off the light he walked to the top of the stairs, and was just about to descend, when once again he was attacked by a sudden fit of dizziness. He made a wild and incoherent attempt to save himself from falling; but the effort was in vain, and almost before he had realised his danger, he pitched head-foremost down the stairs, and once more lapsed into unconsciousness.

How long he remained in this condition Lockwood Beck never knew. When he recovered consciousness he found that he was lying on the passage floor at the foot of the staircase, with his left leg doubled under him.

He had dislocated his hip—put it out of joint. The discovery dismayed him, and well it might. To move his leg was torture, to walk was utterly impossible. Until somebody came to his assistance he was absolutely helpless—a cripple and a prisoner!

AT breakfast on Wednesday morning the Scorpion received a great shock. From being merely uneasy he became alarmed at his master's absence—seriously alarmed, panic-stricken! For at breakfast-time the morning paper arrived, and the first item of news which caught his eye was a long and vividly-written account of the affair in Basinghall Street. The Scorpion was terribly afraid. Otho Kontos was at last unmasked—was known to be the Shadow!

As the day wore on and there was still no sign of Lockwood Beck, the Scorpion's anxiety to know the worst gradually got the better of his senso of obedience. Lockwood Beck had forbidden him to leave the house on any pretext whatever, but at ten o'clock at night he could bear the suspense no longer and, muttering to himself that there was a time to obey and a time to disobey, he resolved to sally forth and find out if anything had been seen of the Shadow at Grove End Road or at Lambeth Terrace.

At the bottom of the Buckingham Palace Road he hailed a passing taxi and drove to Lockwood Beck's house in Grove End Road. But his visit yielded no result, for the servants could tell him nothing at all. They believed that their master had gone abroad and had no idea when he intended to return.

The Scorpion returned to his taxi, and was driven to Westminster Bridge. At the end of the bridge he dismissed the cab and walked to Lambeth Terrace. Big Ben was striking midnight as he halted at the door of the small and unpretentious house where he and Lockwood Beck had so often dis-

guised themselves. The house was enshrouded in darkness and silence.

He unlocked the door and stepped inside. The passage was in total darkness. He closed the door and locked it, then passed his hand along the wall until he found the electric switch. He switched on the light, then a cry of amazement burst from his lips.

Lying at the foot of the stairs, in a curiously huddled heap, was the figure of a man—the Shadow.

"Too late!" groaned the Scorpion. "Too late! He's dead!"

CHAPTER 13.

The Doctor's Escape!

THE Scorpion was wrong. Lockwood Beck was not dead, but merely sleeping the sleep of exhaustion. He awoke at the sound of his confederate's cry of amazement.

"Don't touch me!" he exclaimed, as the Scorpion was about to raise him from the ground. "I've dislocated my hip, and the slightest movement is agony. Get me a drink—for pity's sake."

The Scorpion obeyed with alacrity.

"How long have you been here?" he asked, when Lockwood Beck had emptied the tumbler at a single gulp.

"Since eight o'clock last night," said Lockwood Beck. "Anything in the papers about Basinghall Street?"

"Yes; I read it all."

"Well," said Lockwood Beck. "I got away and came here. But that dog had bitten me, and I was faint from loss of blood. I changed and meant to join you at Pimlico, but I came over dizzy, and fell from the top of the stairs."

"And you've been lying here ever since, with a dislocated hip?"

"What else could I do? If I'd attracted the attention of the neighbours, they would have taken me to the hospital, my disguise would have been removed, and I should have been recognised as Lockwood Beck. Now; give me something to eat and then we'll discuss what's best to be done."

The Scorpion explored the larder, and produced some bread and cheese.

"I wish I had your spirits," he said as Lockwood Beck ate ravenously. "You're as cheerful as if all the dangers and difficulties were over."

"So they are!" said Lockwood Beck.

The Scorpion shook his head.

"I wish I could think so,"—he said gloomily. "Of course, if you could walk as far as the front door, I could get a taxi and drive you to Pimlico, and Dr. Burton could attend to your injuries. But you say your hip is out of joint, and you can't bear to be moved until it's put right. That means that I shall have to bring a doctor here, which means that he'll twig you're disguised, and awkward questions will be asked."

"That doesn't matter," said Lockwood Beck. "The doctor you will bring here will be Dr. Burton. As we're going to get rid of him as soon as Gavin is well it doesn't matter how many questions he asks, or how much he suspects."

"But Dr. Burton is at Pimlico; how on earth can I force him to come with me all the way from Pimlico to Lambeth?"

"Easily enough. You will first go to my house in Grove End Road and get the Austin Saloon which I bought last year. You need have no fear about discovery, because the number-plate is faked. You will take the car to Pimlico, bind and gag the doctor, bundle him into the car under cover of darkness. As soon as he has put my hip in place I shall be able to be moved—but it may be some days before I can properly walk, but I may be able to get to the car and return with you to Pimlico. Dr. Burton will then have two patients to attend to instead of one."

The first part of this scheme was carried out without a hitch. Dr. Burton was brought from Pimlico, where he was confronted with the injured master-crook. The Shadow was still lying at the foot of the staircase.

Though the doctor was far from being a coward, he had sense enough to realise that resistance would be futile. In ten minutes' time he reset the dislocated hip; but so terrible was the pain which accompanied the operation—and, of course, there was no means of administering an anæsthetic to the patient—that Lockwood Beck fainted for the second time in his life.

When he came round the doctor asked for a splint.

"A splint?" said Lockwood Beck. "You're not going to put me in splints, are you?"

"If you were in hospital, or anywhere else than here, you would be in plaster," said the doctor. "Under the circumstances we must make do with a splint, and you'll have to keep your bed for at least a week, unless you wish to be crippled for life."

The Shadow was taken aback by this news. But he quickly recovered himself.

"Very well," he said. Then, turning to the Scorpion: "It's up to you now. Take the doctor to the scullery. There are three or four long boards in the corner opposite the door, and I dare say he'll be able to manufacture a splint out of them. For the rest, it means simply that he'll have to come here every night to see me, and return to Pimlico with you to keep an eye on Gavin."

The Scorpion obeyed, and half an hour later a splint had been applied to Lockwood Beck's leg, and he had been carried upstairs and put to bed. The doctor was then rebound and gagged and blindfolded; and as soon as the Scorpion had made Lockwood Beck comfortable for the night, and had placed both food and drink within reach of the patient, he carried the doctor downstairs, placed him in the saloon car, and drove back to Pimlico.

For seven days that went on. Every morning the doctor dressed Gavin's wounds, and

every night he was taken in the saloon car to Lambeth Terrace to attend to Lockwood Beck. Both his patients made a rapid recovery. Gavin began to improve on Thursday morning, was able to sit up on the Saturday, and came downstairs for the first time on the following Wednesday afternoon. Lockwood Beck did equally well, and on the Wednesday night Dr. Burton removed the

other patient. His wounds are quite healed, and his health is even better than it was before the operation. He was downstairs this afternoon. In fact, my work is now practically finished. My original patient is convalescent, and another day in bed is all that is required to complete your cure. In these circumstances, may I ask if there is any reason why I should not be set free to-night,



Held helpless in the chair by the steel bands, Nelson Lee watched with fascinated eyes the Shadow at the bench. "Here we have a wonderful poison," chuckled the master-crook, "a poison of which you will soon have personal experience."

splint and announced that he would be able to leave his bed the following day.

"Can't I get up to-night?" asked Lockwood Beck. "I feel all right now, and I should very much like to go back with you to the other house to-night, in order to see how your other patient is progressing."

The doctor shook his head.

"It would be most unwise to get up to-night," he said. "Another day in bed will probably see you all right again; but if you use your leg to-night you may very possibly undo all the good that has been done by your previous rest. Moreover, there's no need for you to worry yourself about my

in accordance with your promise?"

"Not to-night, doctor," said Lockwood Beck, with a peculiar smile. "I want to have a little chat with you before we part. You shall be taken back to the other house to-night, and, if all goes well, I'll come there myself to-morrow evening, and then we'll talk about setting you free."

Dr. Burton shrugged his shoulders and said no more. Half an hour later the saloon car was once more speeding west, with the Scorpion at the wheel, and Dr. Burton, bound and gagged, on the floor at the back.

"Thank goodness this is my last journey!" mused the Scorpion, as he steered the car

over Vauxhall Bridge. "Considering that I've been making two journeys a night like this for the last week, I've been jolly lucky not to——"

The sentence ended in a startled gasp, for at that moment he heard a raucous jangle of a fire-bell, and a fire-engine came sweeping round the corner a little way ahead of him. There was no time to pull up, and precious little time in which to get out of the way. Taken unawares, the Scorpion lost his head for one brief second—and one second was enough to bring disaster. The saloon car swerved wildly, and mounted the pavement. There was a crash as it hit a lamp-post and tilted over precariously.

It seemed as if the car must turn turtle, but somehow it didn't, although one mud-guard was buckled and one wheel knocked off. There was a shower of splintering glass, and the near-side doors flew open as the vehicle tilted over, and the doctor, bound, gagged and blindfolded, rolled out on to the pavement!

The Scorpion was cut slightly by the flying glass, and it was a miracle that he had not been killed outright. He saw people running towards the spot where the doctor lay. He knew that this meant discovery, and he did the only thing left to him to do. He sprang from the wrecked car, rushed down to the Embankment, leaped into the river, and was quickly lost to sight in the darkness.

CHAPTER 14.

The Triumph of Gavin!

THERE was one thing in favour of the Shadow. The doctor did not know where the houses to which he had been taken forcibly were situated. All he knew was that the man who was really Lockwood Beck had been called "Captain Anderson" in his presence, and his servant was Robert Ward. Yet the doctor had had his wits about him all the time, and, judging from the sounds he had heard, he declared that the house where he had performed an operation on an unknown man—namely, amputating two fingers on his left hand, must have been close to the river and close to a busy railway line.

It was Nelson Lee who tackled the job of finding this house, and he did it with characteristic patience and skill. He found out from the doctor the exact composition of all the prescriptions which the Scorpion had had made up by some chemist, and, armed with these, he went all round the chemist shops along the south side of the river until he found the Pimlico chemist who had actually made up the prescriptions. That discovery told him the locality in which the house was situated, and after that a reference to a directory, and assiduous inquiries amongst tradesmen, brought him to the house in Pimlico in which Captain Anderson and his servant, Robert Ward, had lived.

But the Shadow had suspected that this would happen, and actually he welcomed it, for he had made his plans, and was ready for the discovery.

Accompanied by a couple of plain-clothes constables, and armed with a search warrant, an inspector from Scotland Yard proceeded to this house and rang the bell. Receiving no reply to his repeated ringing, he took the liberty of breaking open the door. One glance round the littered rooms told him that he was too late to capture Captain Anderson and his servant; but, nevertheless, he determined to subject the house to a rigorous examination.

"We'll begin with the cellars and work our way——" he began; then he suddenly paused, and a look of excitement crossed his face. For at that moment a faint and far-off cry for help fell on his ears. The cry appeared to proceed from somewhere overhead. Quivering with excitement, he dashed upstairs, with the two constables at his heels.

"Help!"

The shout proceeded from one of the attics. The door was locked, and the key was missing. They burst open the door and rushed into the dimly lighted room. Then a cry of stupefied amazement burst from their lips as their eyes fell on the figure of Jim Gavin, tethered to the wall by means of an iron chain, and apparently half crazy with hysterical delight.

"Saved! Saved!" cried Gavin. "Thank Heaven——"

Then his emotions apparently overcame him, and he sank to the floor in a well-feigned swoon of joy.

His superb acting completely deceived the inspector and his two men. They soon freed him from his bonds and brought him round. When he told his lying story they resumed their examination of the house, and ultimately found the papers which proved that Tom Clayton was the rightful heir to the Abbeydale title and estates. Failing to find any further clues, they chartered a taxi and drove to Scotland Yard, taking Gavin and the papers with them.

In the presence of the superintendent, Gavin repeated his artful tale. At the suggestion of the officials it was taken down in writing and signed, in the presence of Nelson Lee. It ran as follows:

"**M**Y name is Thomas Clayton. I am twenty-six years of age. My mother's name was Jessie Clayton, and she was the only child of Jonathan Clayton, cobbler, of Tinker's Alley, W.C. I never knew my father. My mother died when I was a baby, and I was brought up by my grandfather. Last December a gentleman came to see me. He said he knew my father and was anxious to do something for me. He gave me five pounds, but I never saw him again. I have since learned that this gentleman was the late Lord Abbeydale, and that he was my father.

"Some time afterwards another gentleman came to see me. He said his name was Philipson, and he lived at Riverling. He said he had been sent by the gentleman who had been to see me in December. He gave me five pounds and asked me to meet him at St. Pancras Station at six o'clock the following evening. I did so, and Mr. Philipson took me to a house at Riverling, where he gave me something to drink which drugged me. When I came round I was in a house in London. Another man, whom I had not seen before, was reading a packet of papers. I stunned this man and read the papers. I then discovered that the papers proved that I was the late Lord Abbeydale's son. I escaped from the house and took the papers, intending to go to the police. But before I could get to the corner of the road I was overtaken, stunned and recaptured. When I came round I was taken to a house in Dale Street, Pimlico, and found that I was in the hands of the man known to the public as the Shadow. He said he sometimes lived at Riverling as Mr. Philipson, and sometimes at Dale Street as Captain Anderson. He said he had stolen the papers from the late Lord Abbeydale's safe when he stole the Abbeydale Diamonds and shot his lordship.

"He told me that I was now the real Lord Abbeydale, but he had been bribed by Major Talbot to destroy the papers and murder me, and he wasn't going to be such a fool as to destroy the papers, but he was going to keep me a prisoner for the rest of my life. Subsequently he told me that Major Talbot had succeeded to the title and estates and was paying him eight hundred pounds a month. I was kept a prisoner at the house in Dale Street from that date until this morning. Captain Anderson, as he calls himself, sometimes came to see me, but for the most part I saw nobody but one of his confederates, who went by the name of Robert Ward.

"About a fortnight ago, however, news came that the new Lord Abbeydale had met with a fatal accident, and Captain Anderson said that this meant that his eight hundred pounds a month would cease. He said he was prepared to set me free, and to give me the papers proving my identity, if I would swear to say nothing about what had happened, and if I would sign a paper promising to pay him a thousand pounds a month. I refused to accept the terms, and he left me in a towering rage. Next day he told me that he had found a young fellow who was marvellously like me, except that he hadn't lost two fingers, as I had. He said that if I wouldn't accept his terms and sign the papers he would get a doctor to cut off two of this young fellow's fingers, and then he would shoot both the doctor and me, and pass the young fellow off as me. He said this young fellow had agreed to his terms and to the operation. I thought he was trying to bluff me, so again I refused to agree to his terms.

"On the following Monday afternoon he told me he had kidnapped a certain Dr. Burton, and that the two fingers had been amputated. Again he asked me if I would sign the paper, and again I refused. I have since been told that it is true that Dr. Burton was kidnapped and that the operation was performed. But I never saw the doctor, and I never saw the young fellow whose fingers were cut off. In fact, after the interview with Captain Anderson on Monday afternoon, I never saw anybody but the man who called himself Robert Ward, and who brought me my meals every day. I saw Robert Ward for the last time about half-past eight last night, when he brought me my supper. He said that the young fellow's fingers were nearly healed, and that as soon as they were completely healed they were going to shoot me and bury my body in the back garden. He also said that Nelson Lee was on their track, but that he and Captain Anderson had fixed up a plan for settling his hash.

"About an hour later I heard a great commotion in the room downstairs, as if three men were running from room to room, opening and shutting drawers and throwing things about. Presently I heard the front door bang, and after that I heard no more until the police broke into the house and found me.

"I make this statement of my own free will, and I solemnly declare that it is the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth.

"(Signed) THOMAS CLAYTON."

After Gavin had signed this lying statement he was taken by the inspector to the tumble-down hovel in Tinker's Alley. Jonathan Clayton, who was almost blind, was lying ill in bed. He recognised Gavin—or thought he did—and hailed him as his grandson without the slightest doubt or hesitation. One or two of the neighbours who happened to be about at the time also identified the impostor as Tom Clayton.

Finally, at the inspector's suggestion, they drove to the office of Lord Abbeydale's family solicitor. The lawyer listened to their story and examined the papers. He was staggered by the news, but there was very little doubt about the papers. And to make matters more serious, Nelson Lee was able to add all the facts of his and Nipper's unofficial investigations, all of which went to prove that Tom Clayton was really Lord Abbeydale.

And to cap all this, the Lord Abbeydale who had been killed in a shooting accident on the Yorkshire moors, had left a signed confession amongst his papers concerning the truth of the story and the money he had paid to Mr. Philipson of Riverling in order to suppress the story of the rightful heir to the title and estates. There was a photo of Tom Clayton, too, amongst Lord Abbeydale's papers that clinched the matter.

As a private detective Nelson Lee was rather cold-shouldered during all these sensational happenings. While he obtained due credit from the public for all he had done towards forcing the Shadow to flee into hiding, the lawyers had little to do with him.

If the Shadow was still at large, the case of Tom Clayton seemed to have ended satisfactorily. It took time to have Tom Clayton's claim to the title and estates ratified by the House of Lords, and while the inquiry went on Mr. Fisher, the lawyer, took up his residence at Abbeydale Manor; and Jim Gavin, under the name of Tom Clayton, lived with him there, waiting for the final verdict of the courts in his favour.

DR. BURTON had married Lady Eileen, and was spending his honeymoon with his bride somewhere on the Continent. Of the Shadow and his confederate nothing had been seen or heard, although Nelson Lee hunted for them without ceasing.

"It all sounds nice and plausible," said Nelson Lee one day, when, with Nipper, he was going through the papers of the Abbeydale case for the twentieth time. "But somehow or other it doesn't ring true. It seems to me that the police haven't taken half as many precautions as they ought to have done to test the truth of Tom Clayton's story. So far as I can make out, they have never even asked Dr. Burton to

examine him, in order to make sure that he isn't the man on whom the doctor operated. I'll go down to Abbeydale for a day or two, and keep my eyes on this young fellow, and form my own opinion of him. I can't forget that the Shadow is in hiding and doing nothing, despite the fact that he has, as far as we know, lost eight hundred pounds a month. The whole affair rings false."

In accordance with this decision Nelson Lee and Nipper left London and motored down to Abbeydale, and that evening saw them comfortably installed in the village inn opposite the entrance gates of Abbeydale Manor.

"Seen anything of the new Lord Abbeydale?" asked Nelson Lee, addressing the landlord.

"Oh, yes!" said the landlord, with a laugh. "He's a very free-and-easy young fellow, and he often pops in here for a drink when Mr. Fisher isn't watching him. In fact, he's in the tap-room now I believe."

The detective glanced at Nipper, and the two of them made a move for the tap-room. But the new Lord Abbeydale had just gone out, and on hurrying to the door they saw his lanky figure striding down the village street in the direction of the cliffs. It was then an hour after sunset, and dusk was rapidly merging into darkness.

"He doesn't walk like Tom Clayton,"

A RED-HOT SCHOOL YARN!



THE RIVAL CAMPERS!

THE "Redskins" of St. Jim's have found some rivals—the "Cowboys" of the Grammar School! But the latter don't look too pleased when their camp is visited by a bull, as you can see in the small reproduction of this week's GEM cover shown alongside! Here is a ripping yarn of schoolboy rivalry in the open air, packed with fun and adventure. It only costs you twopence, but it's worth double. Get a copy now and you'll soon get the GEM habit—a copy every Wednesday!

Ask for the

G E M

Now on Sale 2d.

said Nipper. "But it's too dark to see him plainly."

"Let's follow him, then," said Nelson Lee, "and try to get a closer view of him."

They followed Gavin—for such he was—to the edge of the cliffs, where they saw him climb down to the beach and make for a wooden boathouse at the end of the manor ground, which ran down to the sea. Here, to their surprise, they saw him stoop down, lift up one of the stones on the beach, and pick up a folded scrap of paper, which had evidently been concealed beneath the stone. He unfolded the paper and studied it attentively for a minute or two. Then he tore it up into little bits, flung them from him and walked rapidly away in the direction of the manor.

"Come along!" said Nelson Lee to Nipper in tones of suppressed excitement. "Help me collect these scraps of paper and piece them together. For anything we know that may contain a message from the Shadow."

They returned to the village inn, and in the privacy of their sitting-room the detective pieced the fragments together and gummed them on a sheet of cardboard.

"Jiminy! That's the queerest message I ever set eyes on," said Nipper. "D'you think you'll be able to make it out?"

Silently, and with knitted brows, Nelson Lee worked for an hour at the problem of the cipher message, and then, with a gasp of relief he threw down his pencil. Nipper glanced at what the detective had written and cried out with enthusiasm:

"Guv'nor, you're a marvell! It's as plain as a pikestaff now. 'Nelson Lee suspicious and looking into things. Be on your guard! Be on beach to-night at the usual place and time, and I will give you fresh orders.' Jiminy, there'll be somebody else on the beach to-night, I reckon, besides the chap who wrote this message and the chap he wrote it to. You'll be there, for one."

The detective nodded.

"And I'll be there, for another," added Nipper grimly.

CHAPTER 15.

The End of Gavin's Run!

A FEW minutes before ten o'clock the sound of stealthy footsteps coming from the direction of the manor caused the detective—who, with Nipper, was concealed by some rocks on the beach—to prick up his ears.

"Here he comes!" he whispered to Nipper.

A moment later a shadowy form strode past their hiding-place and halted at the water's edge. On reaching it, the fellow struck a match and consulted his watch. And by the light of the flickering flame the detective saw it was the new Lord Abbeydale—the man who called himself Tom Clayton.

Presently the quick ears of the detective caught the faint splash of muffled oars.

"Hallo! This is a new development," whispered Nelson Lee. "The Shadow is evidently coming to meet his confederate in a boat."

But Nelson Lee was mistaken. The man in the boat was not the Shadow. It was the Scorpion.

"Has he landed?" whispered Nipper, as the sound of a boat's keel grating on the pebbly beach was heard through the darkness.

"I don't know," growled the detective, peering over the top of the rock.

He had scarcely finished speaking before the splash of oars once more fell on his ears. The boat was being rowed out to sea.

Without a word, Nelson Lee waded out into the tumbling surf, and struck out in the direction from which the sounds proceeded. Nipper quickly followed his example, and a moment later the detective and his assistant were swiftly but silently breasting the waves in the wake of the unseen boat.

Side by side they swam through the darkness, until the outlines of the little craft loomed up before them, clear and distinct. They then discovered that the rowing boat had headed for a motor yacht, of the cabin-cruiser type, of the most up-to-date design.

When Nelson Lee and Nipper arrived on the scene the cabin door was tightly closed, and the windows were screened with thick black curtains. Not a light, not a single sign of life, was anywhere to be seen, but from the interior of the cabin floated the muffled hum of voices.

"I'm going aboard," whispered Nelson Lee, when he and Nipper had swum round the launch and taken stock of her. "Swim round to the stern, and support yourself by hanging on to that loose rope. Wait there until I return, but if I'm discovered and overpowered cut the boat adrift, row ashore, and inform the police. The name of the launch is sure to be painted on the boat, so the police will have some sort of clue to work on, at any rate."

Without giving Nipper time to reply, the detective swam to the port side of the launch, grasped the gunwale with both hands, and slowly, silently, and cautiously hauled himself aboard. Once aboard, the "ticklish" part of his task was accomplished, for between him and the cabin door were only about a couple of yards of polished oak deck, and on this his wet, stockinged feet made not the slightest sound. A moment later he had gained the outside of the door, and had cautiously applied his ear to one of the panels.

"If he asks you what you know about the Shadow," were the first words Nelson Lee heard, "bear in mind what Clayton knew, and tell him that—that is to say, tell him that you never saw or heard of the fellow till he came to see you at Tinker's Alley. Tell him that he then gave the name of Mr. Philipson, and said he lived at Riverling. Tell him that I afterwards appeared in a

different disguise, and called myself Captain Anderson, of 15, Dale Street. Tell him that's all you know about me. Don't tell him anything else."

The subsequent conversation was of a very important nature, so much so that Nelson Lee had the key to the whole situation.

"I'll send you word in the usual way, when I think it will be safe for us to meet again," said Lockwood Beck. "We won't arrange any time now. In fact, I think we'd better not meet again until after Nelson Lee has been to Abbeydale. It wouldn't be safe in any case, even on board this launch."

"But you won't leave Eastbourne?" asked Gavin anxiously.

"Oh, no," said Lockwood Beck. "I shall remain at the Grand Hotel, as I told you before, until everything is settled; so you'll always be able to communicate with me in the course of half an hour if any fresh developments take place. And now I think you'd better go back as quickly as you can to the manor, or Mr. Fisher will be missing you, and coming out to look for you."

As he uttered these words the Shadow also rose to his feet and moved towards the cabin door. Nelson Lee, who had drunk in every word of the above conversation, heard the sound of his approaching footsteps, and in a trice he glided back to the vessel's side, silently slipped overboard, and swam back to Nipper, who was clinging to the rope at the stern of the launch.

"S-sh! Not a word! They're coming out!" he whispered.

As he and Nipper were under the launch's stern, they were naturally unable to see the cabin door or any part of the deck. But they heard the door open, and almost at the same instant they heard the Shadow say:

"Oh, by the way, there's one thing I've forgotten to tell you. Come back; I won't keep you more than a minute."

Then they heard the three men step back into the cabin and close the door.

"Did you hear anything?" asked Nipper, who was dying to know the result of the detective's visit aboard the launch.

"Yes," whispered Lee. "I heard more than enough to hang the Shadow, and send the other two to penal servitude for life. Tom Clayton, as he calls himself, isn't Tom Clayton. The real Tom Clayton is dead. This other fellow's name is Gavin. He's the young fellow upon whom Dr. Burton operated."

"The other fellow," Nelson Lee continued, "the one who met Gavin on the beach, is the Shadow's right-hand man, and is known familiarly as the Scorpion. They're staying at the Grand Hotel, Eastbourne."

At that moment the cabin door opened, and the three men emerged. The Scorpion went over the side and embarked in the little boat, and Gavin followed suit.

"Good night, Mr. Madison," said Gavin.

"Good night, my lord," said Lockwood Beck, with a merry laugh.

"Now for it!" whispered Nelson Lee. "I'll go aboard first and try to take the Shadow by surprise. When I've got him covered with my revolver, I'll send out the cry of a curlew. That'll be a signal for you to follow me and help to secure him. As soon as you hear my signal swarm up this rope, crawl along the cabin roof, and jump on the deck. Be as quick as you can, and make as little noise as possible, for I don't want to arouse the suspicions of the others, and I want to have the Shadow bound and gagged before the Scorpion returns."

"Right you are, guv'nor!" said Nipper.

LEAVING Nipper still clinging to the rope at the stern, the detective then swam round to the port side of the launch, placed his hands on the top of the gunwale, and was in the act of hauling himself aboard in the same manner as before, when suddenly a hand shot through the darkness, seized him by the collar of his coat, dragged him over the vessel's side, and flung him on his back on the deck.

"Welcome aboard, Mr. Nelson Lee!" said the musical voice of the Shadow.

Then a knee was planted on the detective's chest, a sinewy hand encircled his throat, and the cold steel rim of a revolver barrel pressed deeply into the skin of his temple. And before he had time to collect his scattered wits a lusty shout rang out across the darkness of the night.

"Boat, ahoy! You can come back now. I've got him!"

Gavin and the Scorpion heard the shout, and replied with an answering cheer. Then the latter plied his oars with frenzied haste, and the little skiff shot back towards the launch.

But Nipper had also heard the shout, and in the twinkling of an eye he swarmed up the rope with the agility of a monkey. Unseen and unheard by Lockwood Beck, he crawled across the cabin roof and peered down on the deck. He then perceived that Nelson Lee was lying on his back, and that somebody—whose back was turned towards Nipper—was kneeling on the detective's chest, gripping him by the throat with one hand and holding a revolver to his head with the other.

For an instant, but only for an instant, the plucky youngster hesitated how to act. Then, chuckling softly to himself, he stealthily arose to his feet, measured the distance with his eye, and launched himself through the air in a flying leap, which landed him on the back of the Shadow.

Lockwood Beck was suddenly and violently flung forwards on his face. And before he could pick himself up, even before he had quite realised what was happening, Nipper was sitting on his head, and Nelson Lee was sending cold shivers down his spine by tick-

ling the nape of his neck with the muzzle of the revolver.

"Get rope!" whispered Nelson Lee tersely. "But, first of all, gag this chap with your handkerchief. Hurry up, or the boat will be here before we're ready for them."

Nipper gagged the Shadow, and then set to work to hunt for rope with which to bind him. Owing to the darkness and his unfamiliarity with the launch his search was rather a long one, and by the time he had found the rope the boat was no more than a couple of lengths away.

"Here's the rope, gov'nor," said Nipper. "Sorry I've been so long. Shall I—"

The sentence ended in a gasp of alarm, for at that moment the nose of the returning boat bumped against the side of the launch.

"Leave 'em to me!" whispered Nipper excitedly. "They don't know I'm aboard!"

He snatched up a boat-hook which was lying on the deck, and glided to the vessel's side. By that time the Scorpion had made the boat fast and was preparing to step aboard the launch. At the sight of Nipper's boyish figure looking up through the darkness, a startled oath burst from the scoundrel's lips, and his hand immediately flew to his pocket in quest of his revolver.

But Nipper was too quick for him. Grasping the boat-hook with both hands, he swung it aloft and brought it down on the Scorpion's head with all the strength he could command.

With a howl of mingled rage and pain, the Scorpion lost his balance and fell headlong into the bottom of the boat, knocking Gavin over and smashing two of the thwarts.

Unused to such violent treatment, the little skiff immediately capsized, and both Gavin and the Scorpion were struggling in the water.

Nipper turned on his heel to retrace his steps to Nelson Lee, but no sooner had he turned than a wild cry of alarm broke from his lips.

Bearing down upon them through the darkness were the lights of a large fishing smack, which was skimming along, with the breeze behind her, at eight or ten knots. And the launch was lying at anchor and showed no lights, so that those on board the fishing smack were naturally in utter ignorance of her presence in the bay.

CRA-A-ASH!

The bows of the smack crashed into the side of the launch, and cut her clean in two. Nipper was hurled off his feet and shot into the sea like a stone out of a catapult. Nelson Lee and the Shadow were ruthlessly swept apart and sucked down by the swirl of the sinking launch.

The detective was the first to rise to the surface. Dashing the water from his eyes, he peered eagerly around in the darkness for some sign of the Shadow. For several minutes he saw nothing but fragments of floating wreckage; then suddenly a yard or two in front of him, and evidently making

for the shore, he saw the shadowy outline of a human head.

With two quick strokes he threw himself forward and clutched the collar of a coat.

"Who is it?" he demanded.

A blow in the face was the only reply he received.

But Nelson Lee was on his guard. Nimble dodging the blow, he half turned over on his side, without relaxing his grip on the prisoner, slipped his other hand into his pocket and pulled out his electric torch. Then, pressing the button with his thumb, he flashed the tiny light into his captive's face. The torch was wet, but it made sufficient glow to show that it was not the Shadow he had caught.

One glance was sufficient. A look of intense and bitter disappointment crossed the detective's face. The man he had captured was Jim Gavin!

"So it's you, is it?" he growled. "I had hoped you were the Shadow, or the Scorpion, at least. However, half a loaf is better than no bread, so I suppose I mustn't grumble. What has become of your two confederates?"

"Dunno," said Gavin sullenly. "I ain't seen nothing of 'em since the launch went down. And I don't very much care what's become of 'em, neither," he added viciously. "They ain't treated me fair and square, not by a long chalk. And now the show is busted up I'll be 'anged if I won't round on 'em, and make a clean breast of the whole affair. You can take your hands off my 'air, mister. I chucks up the sponge. I give you my word as I won't try to escape no more!"

"I don't intend to give you the chance!" said Nelson Lee grimly.

And without relaxing his grip in the slightest degree, he waved his electric torch above his head and let out a lusty hail of "Smack ahoy!"

In the meantime the smack which had collided with the launch, and which had sustained but little damage by the collision, had come about and was cruising round in search of survivors. In response to Nelson Lee's repeated hails, and guided by the twinkling light of his fast failing electric torch, the smack was soon alongside, and he and Gavin were hauled aboard.

As soon as Nelson Lee had introduced himself and had explained what had happened, a prolonged and careful search was made for any trace of the others. The detective was most concerned for Nipper, but, although the search was kept up until nearly midnight, the only find which rewarded the searchers was a dark brown wig, which Nelson Lee identified as that which he had seen on the head of the Shadow.

When the search had been finally abandoned the little vessel was put about and eventually arrived off Eastbourne. Here the detective escorted Gavin to the police-station, told his story to the superintendent, and delivered up his prisoner. True to his word, Gavin made a full confession, and as soon as his statement had been taken down and signed, and he himself removed to the cells,

Nelson Lee and the superintendent, accompanied by a constable, proceeded to the Grand Hotel.

Of course, neither the Scorpion nor the Shadow was at the hotel then, and after the police had taken formal possession of their rooms, and had left a constable in charge, Nelson Lee and the superintendent hired a car and set out for Abbeydale Manor, with the intention of acquainting Mr. Fisher, the Abbeydale lawyer, with what had occurred.

Midway between Eastbourne and Abbeydale stood a lonely farmhouse, known as the Red House.

As Nelson Lee and the superintendent approached the homestead, and just when they were abreast of the orchard, they were startled to hear a furious barking in the farmyard, followed by the report of a gun, and the frenzied shout of "Stop him!"

"Pull up!" cried Nelson Lee to the chauffeur. "That's Nipper! I'd know his voice anywhere."

The words had scarcely crossed his lips before a small two-seater car came careering out of the lane that led to the farm, swerved and came shooting down the road towards them at a terrific speed!

CHAPTER 16.

Shadowed!

WHEN the fishing smack crashed into the launch Nipper was not sucked down into the depths of the sea, but was shot up into the air like a stone from a catapult. An instant later he dropped back into the sea, and quickly rose to the surface, and was treading water and peering round in search of Nelson Lee, when he suddenly caught sight of a man's head bobbing up and down, a yard or two in front of him, and evidently making for the shore.

Owing to the darkness it was impossible for Nipper to make out whose head it was, but the very fact that the man was making for the shore convinced the sharp-witted youngster that it was not Nelson Lee.

When they reached the shore the man's height and build soon told Nipper that the man he was diligently shadowing was the Scorpion.

Presently the Scorpion began to stroll along the beach in the direction of the boat-house at the end of the Manor grounds. Scarcely daring to breathe, Nipper stealthily glided after him. Suddenly the Scorpion wheeled round again, and Nipper had barely time to conceal himself behind a massive boulder before the Scorpion limped up to it and seated himself on its rounded summit.

The fact of the matter was the Scorpion did not know what to do next, and Nipper doubted if he could master the big, husky criminal single-handed. The rogue waited there for the best part of two hours, by which time, as the lights of the fishing smack disappeared round the headland, indicating that her crew had abandoned the search for survivors, and as no one else had come

ashore, he knew that he had to shift for himself, and that he had better get as far from that part of the country as he could.

Having arrived at this decision, he rose to his feet, pulled off his wig and artificial beard and buried them in the sand. Then he turned his back on the sea, crossed the south-west corner of the manor grounds, and struck the turnpike road which ran from Abbeydale to Eastbourne.

"It can't be much after one," he mused, as he replaced his watch in his pocket, "and Brighton is only twenty-five miles away. If I could only get a lift—a car—— But I might as well wish for the moon as expect——"

His ruminations ended in a low whistle of satisfaction. He had just caught sight of a large farmhouse a few yards further along the road. It was the Red House.

"This looks promising," he muttered, as he stole to the five-barred gate and peered into the deserted farmyard. "Most farmers run a car these days, even if it's an old crock!"

He endeavoured to open the gate, but that was not easy in the darkness. Eventually he managed it by wrenching the padlock staple clean out of the half-rotten gatepost, and stole on tiptoe across the stone-flagged yard.

Nipper was without boots, having taken them off when plunging into the sea behind Nelson Lee. The Scorpion did not hear him, and had not the faintest notion he was being followed, but Nipper was at the gate before he was half-way across the yard, and following him stealthily.

He peered in at the first shed he came to and halted. It was dark, but to the sensitive nose of the Scorpion came the welcome and familiar reek of petrol. He advanced cautiously, and it said much for his caution that he had not yet aroused the yard dog.

Sure enough, dimly through the darkness he saw the outline of a two-seater car. He approached it and made a cursory examination. He had to strike matches which he had kept in his pocket in a water-tight box, for he was too old a hand at crime to go anywhere unprepared for emergencies.

He soon satisfied himself that the tank was full of petrol, and there was a full can on the running board. What was better, his sense of security emboldened him, and coming on an old lantern, he lit it, to find an old coat and cap hanging on a peg. He took no hat himself, and his own jacket was sodden with sea-water, so that these garments came very acceptable to him.

But he had no sooner made the change than, out in the yard, Nipper trod on a stone and stumbled. The movement, slight though it was, aroused the suspicions of a chained dog at the other end of the yard, and in a second the animal's ferocious growls and barks rendered the night hideous.

Somewhere in the farmhouse a window scrooped, a man put out his head and called.

"Who's that?"

The Scorpion did not know what had given the alarm, but he acted on the assumption that he had been seen. He gave the old car a turn of the crank and her engine leaped into life. He sprang to the seat at the wheel, and slipping in the clutch, drove out of the shed into the yard.

The roar of the engine warned Nipper, but even then he had to spring aside to save himself from being run down. The Scorpion was a clever driver, and he headed the car for the open gate at a reckless speed, while Nipper's youthful voice rang out through the night in a lusty yell of "Thieves! Murder! Help! Stop him!" He yelled the first thing that came to him, his one idea being to get help.

At that moment Nelson Lee and the superintendent were passing by on their way to Abbeydale Manor. On hearing Nipper's voice the detective sprang to his feet and called on the chauffeur to stop.

But the two-seater, without a light showing, came round from the lane into the road at an alarming rate and shot towards them. The chauffeur gasped and wrenched at the wheel. Nelson Lee's hired car jerked sideways, flinging the detective in a heap on top of the superintendent.

Thus a collision was averted as if by a miracle, and the Scorpion, in his stolen car, whizzed by and was lost to sight.

Nipper came rushing up, mingled anger and exhaustion on his tense face.

"The gov'nor!" he gasped, as he saw Nelson Lee. "After him! It was the Scorpion!"

The chauffeur did his best, but the Scorpion carried no lights, and it was by no means easy to make sure which way he had gone, in addition to which he had a good lead.

Through the night Nelson Lee thundered after him. Dawn came and they were still speeding along with no sign of their quarry.

But they found the car eventually abandoned on the outskirts of Brighton.

The Scorpion had got away. He caught a London train, and before eleven o'clock he was back in London, lost in its mazes of slums.

SO far as Nelson Lee and Nipper were concerned, this proved to be their last adventure in connection with what had come to be known as the "Abbeydale Sensation."

Later Nelson Lee, the lawyer and the superintendent held a long consultation.

"I must cable to Dr. Burton and Lady Eileen to return to England at once," said the lawyer. "If Gavin's story is true, and the real Tom Clayton is dead, the title will become extinct, and Lady Eileen will succeed to the estates. In the meantime, what will you do, Mr. Lee?"

"I shall remain here for a day or two, at any rate," said the detective. "If the

Shadow was drowned last night, his body is sure to be washed up sooner or later, and my evidence will be needed for the purposes of identification. On the other hand, if he escaped I may possibly pick up some news of him at some of the villages along the coast."

It was not long after this that Tom Clayton's body was found under the kitchen hearth in the furnished house in Pimlico. Dr. Burton and Lady Eileen returned from their honeymoon, and in due course Lady Eileen succeeded to her father's vast estates.

Gavin was subsequently placed upon his trial, and he proved the sort he was by breaking down and pleading guilty, trying to get his sentence reduced by confessing everything. But his own guilt could not be ignored, and in the end he was sentenced to penal servitude for a long term of years.

"Until I have definite proof," said Nelson Lee some days later, "I will not believe that the Shadow is dead. The Scorpion, I know, is alive, and if I could only find out where he is I would watch him closely. He is bound to get into touch with the Shadow sooner or later. But the luck has been with them."

"One day the Shadow will turn up again, and then the clash will start all over again. Perhaps, the next time, the luck will be on my side. One thing is very certain, the civilised world is not safe until such a clever rogue as the Shadow undoubtedly is lies safely under lock and key or is proved to be dead."

The days, weeks, months went by, and nothing was seen or heard either of the Scorpion or the Shadow. They disappeared from the public gaze as completely and mysteriously as though they had vanished into the air.

But the Shadow had not perished when the fishing-smack cut his launch in two. Like Nelson Lee, he had been flung violently to one side, but before he dropped into the sea, his head crashed against the cabin bulkhead, and his senses left him in a red smother of forgetfulness.

He was carried out to sea, and when he regained consciousness again it was to find a French barge bearing down on him. They took him on board, and later landed him on the French coast.

A few days later he was on the quay at Dieppe, skilfully disguised, to meet the Scorpion, also disguised, and later still, they sat together in a café.

"Our plans have failed," said Lockwood Beck calmly. "But we shall find other things to do. Gavin will go to prison, of course, but we are safe."

And safe they were, for a time, at any rate.

THE END.

("On His Majesty's Service!" is the title of next week's enthralling Detective-Thriller featuring Nelson Lee, Nipper, and The Shadow!)

THE FOURTH ON THE

 **Fighting James Kingswood, Amateur Boxing Champion, is the new headmaster of St. Frank's. He is out to reform the slackers of the school and his campaign takes a very original shape.** 

One morning the Fourth Form is awakened to anger at the sight of insulting epithets painted on their study doors by some unknown practical joker!

The Beginning of Trouble!

ALL day St. Frank's chuckled over the discomfiture of the Fourth.

The Remove chortled and chuckled and hugged itself with glee. Daring fags of the Third yelled jibes at isolated Fourth-Formers, and as the day advanced, Boots and his stalwarts grew more and more desperate. That one jape had set the whole school laughing—and whilst the average schoolboy can stand any amount of good-humoured chaffing, while he can take punishment like a nigger, he simply cannot stand being laughed at. Nothing was better calculated to imbue the Fourth with the grim, fiery spirit of enterprise.

Gone, like magic, was the Form's old slackness; gone was the inferiority complex. At a single blow, the Fourth had been awakened.

Matters were not improved by the attitude of the Fifth and Sixth. The seniors were laughing at the whole affair, and the joke was considered to be all the greater because the culprit remained undiscovered.

After prayers, Mr. Kingswood made a brief reference to the "outrage," and he solemnly called upon the culprit to stand forward. Nothing happened. And Mr. Kingswood expressed the hope that the Fourth would see to it that such epithets could never again, with truth, be written.

That little speech, in its way, was a gem. The Fourth fairly reeled under the blow.

"You heard the Head, you chaps!" said Boots afterwards, in a strained voice. "By thump! The Head hopes that such things can never again be written—with truth!"

"He was practically agreeing with all those rotten things that were daubed on our doors!" said Bob Christine helplessly.

"Of course! What else?" roared Boots. "My sons, we've got to show the Remove something special! It's a challenge! If we lie down under this insult, we shall never be able to hold up our heads again."

Mr. Pycraft was like a man in a daze when he took the Fourth at lessons that morning.

"I can only advise you all to remain calm under this blow," he said. "I cannot help feeling that I am included in the censure—and the whole matter becomes very serious

indeed when the Headmaster himself openly agrees with the wretched boy who so grossly affronted us."

"Is that quite right, sir?" asked Boots bluntly. "The Head only said that he wanted the Fourth to give the japers no further opportunity of saying such things."

"Exactly," said Mr. Pycraft sharply. "And what has Mr. Kingswood done? Nothing! He has not even made a pretence of seeking the guilty party, or parties. Meanwhile, this Form is the laughing-stock of the whole school."

"It won't be, sir," put in Corcoran. "Wait until we show you!"

"I cannot countenance any—er—violence," said Mr. Pycraft. "Such a thing would only aggravate the trouble. No; we must suffer this insult with fortitude and with dignity."

"That's all very well, sir—but it's not really an insult," growled Boots. "Most of those things were true."

"True!" yelled Mr. Pycraft. "Have you taken leave of your senses, Boots?"

"No, sir—I've just come to my senses," replied Boots aggressively. "The Fourth is a dud Form! It's no good at sports, or games or—or anything! But that's going to be different from now on; and the first thing the Fourth must do is to stop the school laughing. Or, at least, turn the laugh against the Remove, instead of against us."

"Really, I cannot permit you to talk in this way any longer!" said Mr. Pycraft hastily. "Good gracious! You'll be dragging me into your plots very soon! We're supposed to be working, aren't we? Silence, everybody!"

Secretly, Mr. Pycraft was very anxious indeed that the Fourth should "get its own back" on the Remove. And, being of a vicious nature, he wasn't at all particular as to the methods. But it was quite impossible for him to take an active part—or even to listen to his Form's plans. So he did the next best thing, and allowed the Fourth to neglect its work during the morning—and during the afternoon, too. The boys soon found that they could talk freely in whispers, and they talked. They plotted and planned, and as the day advanced they became cooler—but no less determined.

In the evening, directly after tea, the entire Fourth Form gathered in the Modern House

Great School Story: "WAKING UP ST. FRANK'S"!

WARPATH!



Junior Common-room—at Buster Boots' invitation.

The Common-room was a large apartment, but it was packed to suffocation. And the noise was terrific.

"Dry up, you yelling idiots!" bawled Buster Boots. "There's no sense in everybody shouting at once. We've got to come to a definite decision—and, above all, we must prove that that unknown japer was wrong!"

"Rather!"

"Down with the Remove!"

Boots listened with grim contentment as the cry was taken up, repeated, and shouted with great vigour.

"That's it!" he sang out. "From now onwards it's going to be war to the knife—and our constant cry must be—'Down with the Remove'! We've got to show the whole school that we're full of energy—that we're as good as the Remove, and better, at japes, games, and everything else!"

"Hear, hear!"

"And, above all, we must keep it clean!" roared Boots. "Always remember that, you chaps—no dirty tricks of any kind! We'll accept this challenge, and we'll fight it to a finish with the Remove—but we'll fight gamely and honestly!"

The meeting proceeded. The East House Fourth Formers were a little disgruntled by the fact that Boots was doing all the talking—that he had automatically taken charge of the meeting. But Lionel Corcoran soon settled all the arguments.

"Just a minute, everybody!" he shouted, leaping upon the platform—which was a table—beside Buster Boots. "There can't be two skippers in any Form. I'm voting, here and now, for Boots."

"Good old Corky!" yelled the Modern House boys. "That's the right spirit!"

And the East House boys were compelled to accept the situation. Corky had waived his

claims to leadership, in favour of Buster Boots. And from that moment Boots became supreme leader and Captain of the Fourth. He obtained a mandate to wage warfare against the common enemy.

Not for terms had there been such a fierce, valiant spirit in the "dead" Fourth.

AT the height of the Junior meeting, Fighting Jim Kingswood "happened" to stroll casually into the Modern House. There could be no mistaking the tumult which came, like the angry noise of a mob, from the Junior quarters. And the Head smiled complacently, and privately congratulated himself. For a "dud" Form, the Fourth was doing pretty well!

He heard footsteps and angry voices, and, turning, he beheld Reynolds and Carlile, of the Sixth, advancing with wrathful faces. Each prefect was carrying a cane.

"Oh, hallo, sir!" said Reynolds, pausing suddenly. "Didn't know you were in the House, sir."

"I just walked in," said Mr. Kingswood. "Quite a sunny evening, Reynolds."

"Yes, sir."

"Somebody in trouble?" asked the Head, indicating the canes.

The two prefects glanced at one another; and then they looked at Mr. Kingswood.

"Can't—can't you hear that awful din, sir?" asked Carlile hesitatingly.

"Din?" repeated the Head, listening in a straining attitude. "What din?"

It came along the passage in waves—rising and falling. It was, in fact, a most unseemly tumult.

"It's the Fourth, sir!" said Reynolds, still staring. "Carlile and I were just going along to put a stop to that meeting. The kids are so excited——"

"Oh, that!" interrupted the Head smilingly. "You're referring to the chorus of youthful voices from the Junior Common-room? I shouldn't bother to go there if I were you."

He took the two prefects by the arms, and he genially marshalled them along to the Senior Day Room.

"I'm not saying that I approve of a lot of noise," he remarked, his rugged face full of contentment. "But it isn't advisable to take too much notice of a Junior Form meeting."

"It isn't an ordinary meeting, sir," said Carlile. "Those kids are up to some mischief. I've never known the Fourth to be like it before!"

"No?" murmured Mr. Kingswood. "That's good!"

"Beg pardon, sir?"

"Apparently, the Fourth is still upset about what happened this morning—or, to be more exact, during the night," said the Head. "You're the Head Prefect of this House, aren't you, Reynolds?"

"Yes, sir."

"Don't you think it would be an excellent idea for you to take Carlile and any other prefects who aren't on special duty and go along to the playing fields?" suggested Mr. Kingswood. "It's quite pleasant out-of-doors."

"But—but those kids mean trouble, sir,"

urged Reynolds, in amazement. "They'll break out soon and raid the Ancient House, or something——"

"Ahem! Don't you think you're exaggerating?" asked Mr. Kingswood. "Leave the youngsters alone, and they'll be all right."

And, with a nod, he strolled out—leaving the prefects bewildered—but with a full understanding of what he meant. In a word, but without actually saying so, he had advised them to keep out of the way! And for any Headmaster to give such advice was unprecedented. Certainly, Mr. James Kingswood was very much of a novelty!

"Listen!" breathed Carlile suddenly.

They went to the door and they could hear the noise and tumult as the Fourth, fairly on the warpath, went charging out into the Triangle.

"The Head's right!" said Reynolds, with a sudden grin. "Come on, old man! Let's slip out the back way, and get as far from this shindy as possible!"

The Fourth Means Business!

AS Mr. Kingswood emerged from the Modern House he realised that he had driven things uncomfortably close.

The noise from the Junior quarters was increasing—and there was every indication, in fact, that the hot-headed Fourth-Formers were about to charge out with intentions which were definitely opposed to all school discipline.

Now, Fighting Kingswood was a man of unconventional ideas. But, much as he approved of the spirit of rivalry in the school, his dignity, as Headmaster, forbade him to stand by and witness a gross breach of discipline.

Having goaded the Fourth to take this action, it was definitely up to Mr. Kingswood to make himself scarce. It was his belief that the end would justify the means—and he was sufficiently daring to take a chance. There would probably be a noisy encounter, and no doubt quite a few black eyes and swollen ears would be distributed. But the Head, being a fighting man, regarded these as trifles. The main thing was to get the Fourth well on the go—to wake it up, to instil it with a healthy, vigorous, "go-getter" spirit.

"Things seem to be going very well," murmured the Head, as he went, with long strides, towards the main gates. "But I really think that it would be diplomatic on my part to go for an hour's walk—and to be well out of the way."

It was a wise decision.

For if he remained, and saw the trouble, he would be obliged—by his very position—to instantly quell it. So it was far better not to see the trouble at all.

As soon as he got out into the lane he turned towards the village, quite unconscious of the fact that Edward Oswald Handforth, having spotted him, had come running out. The burly leader of Study D, in fact, had suddenly made up his mind to be bold enough to ask "Fighting Jim" for his autograph.

As it happened, however, Mr. Kingswood saw two or three seniors strolling leisurely up the lane from Bellton. It was necessary to make a quick decision.

He knew that the Fourth was on the point of breaking out—had probably broken out already. If he met those seniors, they would all hear the row, and he would be expected to go back and to inquire into the cause. Far better, then, not to meet the seniors at all.

So Mr. Kingswood dived with extraordinary agility, for a man of his size, through a gap in the hedge.

"My only sainted aunt!" ejaculated Handforth aghast.

He knew that the Head was different from the usual run of Heads; but to see him diving through a gap in the hedge like this was decidedly disconcerting. In fact, there was something quite suspicious about it—something smacking of mystery. And Handforth, who harboured the delusion that he was something of a detective, immediately became on the alert. After the first shock, he found his wits working rapidly—and, as usual, they worked on sensational lines.

It was Handforth's misfortune that he could never regard any unusual happening in a calm, logical light. He invariably plumped straight for a melodramatic theme, instead of weighing the facts in a calm spirit.

Still, there was some justification for him on this occasion.

Quite obviously, Mr. Kingswood had believed that his movements were unobserved; and, undoubtedly, he had dived surreptitiously through that gap in the hedge. And when Handforth ran across the road, and looked through the gap, he received another surprise. And this, indeed, fed the fire of his first half-formed suspicion.

Mr. Kingswood was doing something very peculiar.

A tramp, ragged, down-at-heel, unshaven—and, indeed, quite villainous-looking—was stamping out the remains of a little fire, and the man had evidently just finished his evening meal. And there was Mr. Kingswood talking with him in an earnest, confidential way!

"By George!" said Handforth, trembling with excitement.

And really, it was not necessary for Edward Oswald to be particularly imaginative just now. The Headmaster was, in all truth, behaving strangely enough. Casting hurried glances at the hedge—as though he feared he might be seen—he took the unshaven tramp by the arm, and led him away.

He saw nothing of Handforth—for the latter's face was low in the hedge, where it was almost invisible. But Handforth had seen—and was still watching.

He saw Mr. Kingswood talking more earnestly than ever with that unsavoury-looking specimen of humanity; and what was more, the pair went across the meadow with stealthy secrecy—to plunge, at length, into the dark shadows of Bellton Wood. Instantly they were swallowed up.

"Well, I'm blowed!" muttered Handforth, in amazement.

He was forced to the conclusion that Mr. Kingswood knew that rascally-looking tramp—that he had forced the man into the wood to get him quickly out of the way. There was probably some secret between the two—some-

thing unsavoury something which should not bear the light of day—

"I've got to look into this," muttered Handforth darkly. "I hate to think that there's anything queer about Kingswood, but a Headmaster who hobnobs with ruffianly tramps ought to be jolly well watched!"

And he was on the point of breaking through the hedge when he paused. From the Triangle came sounds of running feet—shouts—tumult—commotion.

"Down with the Removal."

"Hurrah!"

"Come on, Fourth—this is where we wipe up those Ancient House bounders!"

Handforth jumped. The most prominent voice belonged to Buster Boots—and he was leading a raiding party into the Ancient House.

"My only sainted aunt!" gurgled Handforth, flushing with sudden fire.

Much as he loved detective work he loved a fight more. And the next moment he was tearing into the Triangle—and he was just in time to see a motley crowd of Fourth-Formers pouring holtier skelter into the Ancient House on a hectic, spectacular raid!

A Shock for the Remove!

RALPH Leslie Fullwood, of Study I, dashed into the Junior Common-room, in the Ancient House, with a flushed, excited face.

"Better look out you chaps!" he ejaculated. "Those giddy Fourth-Formers are starting something!"

There was quite a crowd in the Common-room, and most of the fellows had been chuckling at the Fourth's expense ever since they had entered. They now regarded Fullwood with sceptical amusement.

"My poor young friend!" said Travers kindly. "You don't really think that the Fourth can do anything but make a lot of noise, do you?"

"It's all very well to talk like that," replied Fullwood. "But Boots and his gang have been working up for this all day. A big crowd has just come pouring out of the Modern House and it looks like trouble to me."

"Anybody seen Handy?" grinned Tommy Watson. "If some trouble starts, and Handy isn't in it, he'll pine away!"

"Listen!" yelled Jimmy Potts suddenly.

He had flung open the door, and clearly, the Removites could hear the shouting of the raiders.

"Upon my Sampson!" said Travers wonderingly. "I believe you're right, Fully, dear old fellow! The Fourth is on the warpath!"

"Come on!"

"We'll show the cheeky fatheads!"

"On the ball, Remove!"

"Hurrah!"

The very thought of a scrap with the Fourth acted like magic upon the Removites. It was so long since there had been any real rivalry between the two Forms, that the Juniors could scarcely believe in their good fortune. They were not naturally aggressive, but any kind of a "rag" appealed to their adventurous schoolboy spirit.

They went pouring out of the Common-room at top speed; and from various studies in the Remove passage other Juniors emerged, eager to be in the fray.

Nobody was really startled. For Boots & Co. had been so goaded all day long that some sort of activity was more or less natural now that the evening had come.

But never for a single, solitary moment did the Removites fear the consequences of an encounter. The Fourth was only a joke, anyhow! Like the nerve of the fatheads to start the trouble! It wouldn't take the Remove two ticks to put the Fourth in its rightful place!

The two opposing forces met in the lobby of the Ancient House, and on the steps. Handforth, dashing up from the rear, sailed in with great enthusiasm. John Busterfield Boots was in the lead, and he was urging his men on with warlike cries.

"Smash 'em!" he yelled. "Go it, the Fourth! Don't forget what we've come for—we've got to whack out at least a dozen black eyes, and distribute 'em amongst these mouldy duffers!"

The Remove who had been expecting something rather more elaborate, was disappointed—even a bit contemptuous. Having taken all day to plan this affair, the Fourth Formers could do nothing better than repeat the abortive raid of the morning. Just a rush affair, without organisation without rhyme, or reason. Still, it was just what might have been expected from the Fourth!

"Buck up!" came Boots' voice. "It's got

to be quick, you chaps! We must get it over before any masters or prefects jump on us!"

"That's all right—we'll do all the jumping!" shouted Fullwood. "Great Scott! Do these chumps think they can do any damage?"

Crash! Biff! Thud!

Fullwood, very enthusiastic, lashed out to right and left. Handforth was struggling at the top of the steps, with Bob Christine, Yorke, Talmadge and Bray. And it must be recorded that the valient Handforth was getting the worst of it.

Certainly, he had blackened one or two eyes, and he had thickened one or two ears; but the Fourth Formers, revealing a dash and a vigour which took Handforth quite by surprise, were putting up a good show.

"All right, Handy—we're coming!" sang out a breathless voice.

And Church and McClure leapt to the assistance of their burly leader. In next to no time Christine and Co. were routed. Meanwhile, the scrap developed rapidly on the steps, and in the lobby.

Curiously enough none of the Remove fellows noticed that all these raiders belonged to the Modern House. The Fourth Formers were in the minority—and their very action in coming into the enemy's camp like this was more or less suicidal. They were simply asking for trouble at the top of their lungs. What was more, they were getting it.

The Removites did not even dream that it was a brilliant, strategic move!

For while this Modern House contingent gave battle at the front of the Ancient House, an East House Contingent, led by Lionel Corcoran, slipped silently and unobtrusively in at the back!

It was well done.

The noise from the lobby had attracted all the juniors out of the Common Room and out of the studies. Thus, Corky and his men had, during those fateful minutes, everything their own way. The Common room was empty—the studies were empty! Like stealthy shadows, the determined Fourth Formers spread themselves over the junior quarters, none guessing what was happening.

All the honours of the occasion went to Buster Boots and his gallant band. For they had deliberately sacrificed themselves for the cause; they had lured the enemy out and had given battle—knowing full well that there was not one chance in a thousand that they would emerge victorious.

The Fourth Formers were, in fact, bowled out with tremendous violence. The actual battle had not lasted long. In the very nature of things, it could not. For the Removites were in greater force, and they were fighting on their own territory. And once Boots & Co. gave way they were defeated. Battered, bruised and apparently subdued, they picked themselves up, and retreated across the Triangle to their own side.

And strangely enough, not a prefect had sallied forth—not a master had come along to inquire into the meaning of all the noise. True, it was over very quickly, and the Fourth

(Continued on page 44.)

**LOOK OUT FOR THIS COVER
NEXT WEEK.**



The NELSON LEE Is A Real Pal For The Summer Holidays!

MY DEAR CHUMS, — Bright sunshine, warm breezes, long evenings—what does it make you think of, Summer holidays? Yes, that's it. Bathing in the sea, tramping the dusty roads, climbing the hills, camping, oh! dozens of enjoyable times.

It's good to get away from the closeness of the town, to get right away from the noise and bustle and lounge back in a deck chair, and talking of deck chairs brings me to the whole point of this paragraph.

When you're out with the scouts in camp, or down by the sea, or away across the hills, there's just one thing that makes the holiday a complete success. That is your NELSON LEE. No holiday is complete without the old paper, so see that you, at any rate, are certain of your copies whilst you are away.

NEXT WEEK'S STORIES.

What has happened to "The Shadow"? Nelson Lee is baffled. After a very gruelling tussle he has put this ruthless mystery man on the run, and it was only by a bad stroke of luck that he was not able to make his triumph complete by bringing Lockwood Beck to justice.

But the world is not left long in doubt as to what has happened to this master-crook. In his usual daring manner he pops up again, and Nelson Lee finds himself once more entering the ring against his cunning foe.

"On His Majesty's Service!" next week's powerful complete Detective-Thriller, is a story which shows Nelson Lee at his best, fighting not only for law and order, but for his country. Grave international issues are at stake, but Lee is as cool as ice as he tackles the case which he knows might very well cause another world crisis.

Next week's chapters of our grand school story, "Waking Up St. Frank's," are as sensational and humorous as ever. Fighting James Kingswood has at last aroused the Fourth-Form to a fighting pitch. But he is not satisfied with that by a long way. He turns his attention in another direction, and in a moment he has St. Frank's wondering what is going to happen next. Yes, you'll all enjoy reading the next part of this fine story.

READERS' PRIZE JOKES!

Gardener: "This plant belongs to the begonia family."

Old Lady: "How kind of you to look after it while they're away."

(S. G. Lester, "Sunlock," Middleton Road, Banbury, Oxon. A Penknife.)



Letters to the Editor should be addressed to NELSON LEE LIBRARY, Fleetway House, Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4.

Diner: "Waiter, Waiter!"

Waiter: "Yes, Sir."

Diner: "Are you sure this is rabbit pie?"

Waiter: "Certainly, sir."

Diner: "Then how is it I heard it purr when I poured out the milk?"

(R. Baillie, 142, Seatoun Road, Kilbirnie. A Pocket Wallet.)

First Tramp: "I say, Bill, old man, that's a posh new overcoat you're wearing. But I'm surprised to see you wearing such shabby trousers with it."

Second Tramp: "Well, have you ever heard of anybody leaving their trousers hanging up on the stand in a restaurant?"

(C. Parker, 19, McKenzie Street, Brunswick, N.10, Melbourne, Australia. A Grand Prize.)

Shopkeeper: "I found those gold links and rings that I thought I'd lost."

Village Constable: "That's a pity. I've just found a clue to the thief."

(E. Boufield, 27, Oxford Street, Grangetown, Sunderland, County Durham. A Grand Prize.)

First Boy: "My uncle is so absent-minded that one night he struck a match to see if he had turned out the gas."

Second Boy: "Pooh! That's nothing! Why, my uncle once, when retiring for the night, blew himself out and put the candle to bed."

(W. Shears, 79, Laihe Street, Burnley, Lancs. A Penknife.)

A young know-all from the town was showing his ignorance in the country.

"Why do you whitewash the inside of your chicken coop?" he asked the farmer.

"To prevent the hens picking the grain out of the wood," was the quick reply.

(K. Mollier, Totara Road, Miramar, Wellington, New Zealand. A Grand Prize.)

Tommy (to friend with black eye): "Did Bobby Jones give you that black eye?"

Friend: "No. I was watching a cricket match through a hole in the fence and got it sunburnt."

(G. Bathurst, 161, First Avenue, Lowhill, Wolverhampton. A Pocket Wallet.)

O. C. (on inspection): "Did you shave before coming on parade, Smith?"

Cadet: "Yes, sir."

"Did you use a mirror?"

"Yes, sir."

"Try a razor next time; it cuts better."

(M. G. R. Carn, 151, Banket Street, Hillbrow, Johannesburg, S. Africa—a grand prize.)

The FOURTH On The WARPETH !

(Continued from page 42.)

Formers, groaning and wailing, completed their retreat.

"And if this isn't enough to show you which is top Form in the Junior School, we'll give you another battering!" yelled Handforth derisively.

"They must be dotty!" said Travers, in wonder. "Haven't they any ideas at all? H. Samson! Fancy taking all day to think up a miserable wheeze like this!"

They went crowding back into the Remove passage, to their various studies. Many of them were a bit battered, but they did not care. The very novelty of a fight with the Fourth was gratifying.

"I'm sorry for the poor chaps," said Handforth. "They can't even plan a simple raid. I mean, the thing was potty!"

He opened the door of study D, and marched in.

"The idiots—coming over here, all in a bunch—"

Swoooooosh!

Handforth failed to get any further, for at that moment something clattered above him, and with a terrific gush, a mass of thick white liquid surged down upon him, smothering him from head to foot—and splashing over Church and McClure and all the other fellows who were near by.

"Great Scott!" gasped Church, backing away. "A—a booby trap!"

Handforth was making wild, fiendish noises; he had practically vanished beneath the liquid coating of sticky whitewash.

At the same moment, Travers, in entering Study H, was obliterated under a mass of black, evil-smelling, used motor oil—which came pouring down in an appalling flood.

Jimmy Potts and Skeets Bellton shared Travers' eclipse, for they were in the doorway, too. And that was not the worst. A bag of feathers suddenly burst, and the feathers came billowing down like a miniature blizzard.

"Help!" gurgled Skeets. "Gee! What the— How the—"

The feathers settled everywhere, clinging to the sticky oil.

And from several other studies came wild frantic howls. There were more booby traps. The commotion and dismay in the Remove passage eclipsed everything that had gone before.

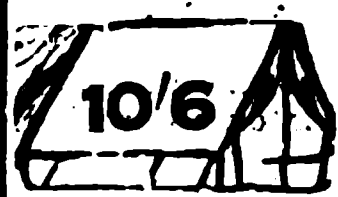
For the Removites suddenly realised the dread, awful truth.

They had been tricked! The Fourth, instead of making a futile raid on the Ancient House, had displayed rare strategy.

Little did the Removites realise it, but the disasters of the occasion had only just commenced! Buster Boots & Co. were well and truly on the warpath.

(Don't miss next week's Thrilling Chapters in this Great School Serial.)

SPURPROOF TENTS. Model X.



Made from lightweight proofed material. Complete with three-piece jointed poles, pegs, guy-lines, and brown valve. Weight 5 lbs. Size 6 ft. X 4 ft. 6 in. X 3 ft. 6 in. With 6 in. wall and 3 in. cave. **10/6**

Accommodates three boys. Extra light. Post 9d. Weight in Egyptian Cotton. Weight 3 1/2 lbs. 15/- Ground Sheets, 6 ft. X 2 ft. 6 in. 2/3 each. Send for beautiful Illustrated Camping List, post free, 2d. **GEO. GROSE & CO., 8, New Bridge St., E.C.4.**

BLUSHING, Shyness, "Nerves," Self-consciousness, Worry Habit, Unreasonable Fears, etc. cured or money back! Complete Course 5/- Details.—L. A. Stebbing, 28, Dean Road, London, N.W.2.

XMAS CLUBS

SPARE TIME AGENTS WANTED
For oldest, largest and best club.

Chocolates, Toys, Fancy Goods, etc. Over 700 articles. No outlay—Excellent commission Write for Art Catalogue and full particulars.

SAMUEL DRIVER, Ltd., Burton Road, LEEDS.

BE TALL. Your Height increased in 14 days or Money Back. Complete Course 5/- Booklet free privately.—**STEBBING SYSTEM,** 28, Dean Road, LONDON, N.W.2.

BLUSHING, SHYNESS.—For FREE particulars simple home cure write Mr. HUGHES, 26, Hart St., LONDON, W.C.1.

STAMMERING. Stuttering. New, remarkable, Certain Cure. Booklet free, privately.—**SPECIALIST,** Dept. A.P., 28, Dean Road, London, N.W.2.



MY GREAT OFFER

Write for my free Bargain Lists of the best A.I.L. BRITISH cycles. 14 DAYS' APPROVAL. CARRIAGE PAID. Cash price £3 10s. or terms. All accessories FREE. Value 21/-.

O'Brien THE WORLD'S LARGEST CYCLE DEALER

2

WEEKLY

BE TALLER! Increased my own height to 6ft. 3 1/2 ins. Treatment, £2.2s.—Details 2d. stamp.—A. B. M. ROSS, Height Specialist, SCARBOROUGH, ENGLAND.

STOP STAMMERING! Cure yourself as I did. Particulars Free.—**FRANK B. HUGHES,** 26, Hart St., LONDON, W.C.1.

MAN SIZE My Two Illustrated Books show a simple, quick way to be TALLER and STRONGER. Write TO-DAY for FREE COPIES. P. Carne Institute, Rhiwbina, Cardiff, S.W.

All applications for Advertisement Spaces in this publication should be addressed to the Advertisement Manager, "The Nelson Lee Library," The Fleetway House, Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4.

Be sure to mention The NELSON LEE LIBRARY when communicating with advertisers.

Printed and published every Wednesday by the Proprietors, The Amalgamated Press, Ltd., The Fleetway House, Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4. Advertisement Offices: The Fleetway House, Farringdon Street, E.C.4. Registered for transmission by Canadian magazine post. Subscription Rates: Inland and Abroad, 11/- per annum; 5/6 for six months. Sole Agents for Australia and New Zealand: Messrs. Gordon & Gotch, Ltd.; and for South Africa: Central News Agency, Ltd.