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THE COLLECTORS DIGEST



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THE COLLECTOR'S DIGEST.

Editor: Miscellaneous Section:
Herbert Leckenby,
Telephone Exchange,
c/o Central Registry
Northern Command,
YORK.

FROM THE EDITOR'S CHAIR.

With No. 3 we present a designed cover and four more pages. Concerning the cover, collectors will recognise the artist as one of the most enthusiastic members of the circle. To him, and to the duplicating agency which reproduced it I feel sure it is agreed we should say "Nice work". It is hoped we shall be able to offer other sketches by Mr. Whiter from time to time.

As for the four extra pages, as I have stated before, we have planned twenty for No.1; with the third issue we reach thirty-two. This is due to the splendid way in which hobbyists have supplied us with copy. To us it has been more than encouraging. We have a varied selection of articles in hand and if we hadn't to do other work for a living the C.D. would come out oftener. This is not to say that we shall not welcome more, so keep your pens busy, for the more hands there are at work the more variety we shall get, and variety is good for the soul.

In No. 2 we were privileged to make a sensational announcement - the come-back of the most famous character in schoolboy fiction, William George Bunter. Within 48 hours of the copies being dispatched we were inundated with requests for more news, the address of the publishers and so on... Incidentally, the news of Billy's return has been

announced in several National and Provincial newspapers, but remember the C.D. got it first!

Well, in this issue we are happy to present a further letter from (Frank Richards' in which the first two questions at least are answered, together with an interesting account of our author's other activities. Amazing man, Frank Richards! Like Bunter and the rest of the characters we are soon to meet again; he'll never grow old...

Opinions on No.1 are beginning to flow in from overseas, and we publish on another page some of the generous tributes. Thanks, Canada; thanks, Australia! We'll forgive you for keeping those Ashes.

Yours sincerely,
HERBERT LECKENBY.

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-----cut along this line-----

Please enrol me as a subscriber to "The Collectors' Digest" and send me, on publication, consecutive issues commencing with No.
I enclose a postal order/money order/cheque (delete those not applicable) value
Name.....Address..... Date..

It is with great pleasure that we publish the following article written by one of the real 'old boys' and trust that readers will share our enjoyment in reading his anecdotes, hoping like us that we shall have more from the same pen at a later date.

THOSE VERY OLD BOYS' PAPERS

by

R.A.H. GOODYEAR.

Those lively triplets "Pluck", "Gem" and "Union Jack" were babes-in-arms while I was outgrowing my passion for tales of school and adventure, and was, indeed, writing them myself for a living. I am awaiting an interview with a man who knew Maxwell Scott, who was a physician in Hinderwell, a happy village near the North Yorkshire coast. This doctor's literary activities and rural interests will be discussed at the interview, and I hope to pass on to you a lot of interesting things about him.

My own never-failing standby in the sorrows and joys of boyhood was always a penny weekly-paper; at first the "Boys' Comic Journal" then "The Boys of the Empire", "The Boys' Popular Weekly" and "Ching Ching's Own" ('Best for Boys'). To me, those papers meant far more than school, games of football and cricket, which is saying a great deal, for from that time to this I have ever loved watching a good match.

Between the ages of 8 and 14 I was a fervent admirer of E.Harcourt Burrage, originator of the inimitable "Ching", but I find on looking back, that the "Boys' Comic Journal" oftenest awakes the wild flower buds of memory within me. In it, my favourite serials were "The Spies of the School" and "Hereward the Unconquered". I can always vividly recall the front-page illustration which shewed the hero and his chum chaining the two spies to dog-kennels preparatory to going inside the

eating-house and consuming the dinner they (the spies) had ordered for themselves. It was hot sausages and chips, golden-brown, I recall. No wonder, I thought, "Hereward the Unconquered" an uncommonly fine serial, for later on I found to my amazement that it had been cribbed, in an abridged form but mainly word for word, from Charles Kingsley's famous book "Hereward the Wake".

I was hugely delighted and immensely excited by the first number of "The Boys of the Empire", with its coloured pictures and rich smell of printing oils. In my own copy the colours had misprinted, that is they had slipped sideways on the faces and costumes of the serial characters, such as "The Master of the Sword". The colours hadn't "run", but just got out of line and place, with quaint effects. I should have treasured that first number as a novelty, which you collectors of today would have jumped at with leaping hearts, but alas! my mother and sisters quite naturally resented having their cupboards cluttered up for years with what they wrongly deemed "penny bloods", and one spring-cleaning time they made a bonfire of the lot. Ah, woe is me and willy-willy-waley! A small fortune, at today's valuation, went up in smoke and flame.

Pardon my concentration on boys' papers printed many years before most of you were born. I recognise the glamorous fascination of the "Magnets", "Gems", "Plucks" and "Union Jacks", and only wish I'd been young enough then to read and love and cherish them as you do.

R.A.H. GOODYEAR.

Note: We hope that Mr. Goodyear will soon meet that gentleman who knew the inimitable Maxwell Scott. We are sure he will be able to tell us much that has hitherto been unpublished.

R.A.H. GOODYEAR - PROVIDER OF GOOD FARE FOR BOYS.

by Herbert Leckenby.

In this issue we have pleasure in presenting an article by Mr. R.A.H. Goodyear who, for over half a century, has been writing stories to delight the hearts of boys. I read them in my youth and do so still, so I thought it not inappropriate to tell here just a little about the yarns he has written with his facile pen. I will start off with a good story about him, one which I can vouch for being true, unlike some good stories.

Long years ago, at the age of 17, he wrote a serial story and sent it to Hamilton Edwards who had just got the "Boys' Friend" nicely launched on its long career. It was not very long; maybe ten thousand words, and it was called "The Football Rivals". Young Goodyear frankly mentioned his age but the man who was to become the most famous of all editors of boys' papers, impressed with the story, was sceptical about the years of his producer of the story. He made enquiries from the Barnsley police, where Mr. Goodyear lived at the time. I don't know whether H.E. told them his reason; if not, maybe the men in blue of the Yorkshire mining town would wonder what Master Goodyear had been up to. Anyway, that somewhat quixotic editor of the "Green 'Un" was evidently satisfied for the story duly appeared in the first Christmas number of the "2d. Boy's Friend", No. 47, in 1895.

Well, he has written many stories since, stories of all types, but particularly of school and sport. He wrote for Hendersons, especially their "Nugget Library", the Harmsworth papers and the Lloyds Adventure Library before and between the two wars, sometimes under a pen-name, including a feminine one when writing for the womens' papers. But his best work consisted of school stories in book form, grand clean stories suitable for

school prizes or Christmas gifts. He was active in this field right up to the outbreak of the late war. They can be found in the juvenile section of almost any library (public). They have them in mine, but they are seldom in. If that seems an Irishism, I mean that the shelf allotted to them has always a vacant look, for the boys of today evidently know a good book when they see it. One I managed to secure the other day I see has been out 19 times in just 6 months, a fact which speaks for itself.

The stories are reminiscent of Talbot Raines Reed; no better compliment can be paid to a school story than that. They have all the necessary ingredients - excitement; feuds between rival forms or houses; humour of the quiet, witty brand; vivid descriptions of footer and cricket games. Here are some typical titles of stories published by Messrs. Ward Lock:- "Too Big for the Fifth"; "Young Rockwood at School"; "The Boys of Ringing Lock"; "Fenshaven finds its Feet". There are many more, some published by Messrs. Blackie; Nelson; Black.

Collectors sighing for the papers of old might do worse than browse round their own libraries in search of some of these. As I said at the beginning, Mr. Goodyear wrote his first story over half-a-century ago, but, like that other master-craftsman of his time, Charles Hamilton, his pen is still active and he writes with the same boyish enthusiasm as he did on the day when Hamilton Edwards called in the police.

Writing for boys seems to get one that way.

FINIS.

SOME COMING ATTRACTIONS.

A few words on SWEENEY TODD by F.N.Wearing.
 Those were the Days. By F.W.Webb.
 Sentiment in Schoolboy Fiction. By Tom Armitage.
 The Boys' Standard. By Harry Steele.

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Another new contributor with an article guaranteed to appeal to all our readers - Nelson Lee lovers in particular, for it reveals much about:-

MAXWELL SCOTT: ORIGINATOR OF NELSON LEE, DETECTIVE.

By Stanley Maidment.

Stories written by this author and published in the year 1894 reveal little of the quality and characteristics to be found in his later works. Those I have been privileged to read stand up well in comparison with others of the same period, but only here and there is it possible to catch a glimpse of the brilliance that was to be. And yet it is interesting to note how quickly that quality developed as story succeeded story, each better than its predecessor. By 1901 he had travelled so fast and so far from the amateur journalism from which he started that he was able to produce those two great stories "The Seven Stars" and "Birds of Prey".

If he had had no other profession than that of author his output would have been prodigious, but no secret has ever been made of the fact that he was also a doctor. For professional reasons his name, Dr. Staniforth, was not disclosed, and under the pen-name of Maxwell Scott we knew him and as such remember him. Very little seems to be known of his early days, but we know he was educated and took his degrees at a London University and eventually became House-Surgeon at an Infirmary in a Northern town. The cramping confinement of brick and stone apparently became too irksome for this energetic man, and it is not surprising that he soon took a medical position on the Yorkshire coast. Here, between the sea and the moors he loved, he found the ideal environment and outlet for the dynamic energy of his body that was equalled only by the vitality of his prolific brain.

Maxwell Scott's serials were planned carefully and a map of events prepared, to which were fitted schedules of times, giving the character's exact positions

60

throughout the story, thus ensuring that mathematical accuracy so familiar to his readers. But probably his most attractive quality lay in his wonderfully graphic and descriptive style - that inimitable phraseology that was unique to himself alone and was his signature and hall-mark on every story. Anonymity could never conceal him, nor could a 'ghost' writer ever have written under his name. But in spite of this, several authors did try to maintain the character Nelson Lee, but nothing outstanding or worthy of comparison with Maxwell Scott's work was produced. Sidney Drew - Maxwell Scott's personal friend and a famous writer himself - was one who attempted the difficult task, and it is rather strange he did no better, for of his own detective Raymond Weird he wrote some very fine thrillers for the "Glean". I wonder if anyone remembers "The Dread of Denver Baine" and "The Ordeal of Jasper Boyne". These were equal to Edgar Wallace at his best. Being a man of energy and action, it was inevitable that incidents from Maxwell Scott's own eventful life should have added to his writing the quality and colour of reality. For instance, his own experiences both as footballer and cricketer, coupled with his remarkable descriptive power and ability to translate into cold print the speed and action of a game so vividly, contributed largely to the success and popularity of his sporting stories, of which he wrote so many. His serial "Hard Pressed" which ran in the 'Big Budget' 121-163 (1899) was probably the first football story and was almost a record for length.

Inspired by his own personal participation in more than one hazardous adventure in rescue work in connection with shipwrecks off that dangerous coast, Maxwell Scott's epic stories of the sea are not easily forgotten. Somehow or other, the sea and possibly a shipwreck, found its way into most of his stories. Many examples of the way in which his own activities were reflected in his literary work could be given,

as for instance, in regard to his vacations spent abroad, particularly in North Africa. But those who have read his stories need no reminder, and those who have not, would find it tedious.

However, I would like to mention the fact that he had many activities, apart from being a busy doctor with a large practice and 500 ironstone miners under his care, and it is a wonder that he found time to write stories at all. But in spite of all this, he had an amazing output, and as early as 1905 200 of his tales had been published. He wrote stories around every conceivable theme, but his best, and by far the greatest number, were detective tales.

Among the many characters he created were 4 well-known detectives - Nelson Lee, Kenyon Ford, Vernon Read and Martin Dale. Of these, Nelson Lee achieved the greatest fame by reason of having appeared in more stories, in a greater number of journals and for a longer period, than the others.

Nelson Lee made his first bow to the public in a complete story entitled "Nelson Lee, Detective" in the "Marvel" dated 31st October 1894. The same year he re-appeared in "The Adventures of Nelson Lee", four short stories which were of indifferent quality, and formed the "Union Jack" No. 35. According to Maxwell Scott, "The Further Adventures of Nelson Lee" was his first serial of this detective, and appeared in 1895 either in the "Marvel" or the "Comic Home Journal" - most probably the latter. The similarity in the titles is confusing. "Pluck" No. 71 - 1896 - contained a long complete story "Nelson Lee, Detective", after which I have no reference to any others until "A Christmas Mystery" appeared in the "Marvel" No. 158 - 1897. Then blank again to 1900, which gave us "A Christmas Tragedy" - "Boys' Friend" No. 308 Old Series - and "The Fatal Fingerprints" - "Boys' Friend" No. 319.

Up to 1900 Maxwell Scott seems to have concentrated more heavily on the Maiden Lane publications, particularly the "Big Budget" which commenced 19th June 1897, and contained a long complete story "The Secret of the Ruby Ring", in which the author's second detective, Kenyon Ford, made his first appearance. Identical in

every way with Nelson Lee, even to the medical degrees, he was no arm-chair detective, and was imbued with his author's own tireless energy. He appeared in only one serial but in many complete stories, some being 7 or 8 pages in length. The titles are interesting, as they give some idea of the widely varied plots evolved by Maxwell Scott's fertile brain. A full list would take up too much space, but here are a few: "Mystery of the York Express"; "The Missing Forward"; "Stolen from the Stage"; "Wolf in Sheeps' Clothing"; "The Rival Blues"; "Sign of the crossed Daggers"; "Clue of the Crooked Thumb"; "Birds of Prey"; "Avenged on Xmas Day" and "The Poison King". In all, there were about 40 of these Kenyon Ford stories, which reached a very high standard. Undoubtedly, up to 1901, Kenyon Ford was well ahead of Nelson Lee in popularity. Several of these stories were illustrated by Arthur Clarke, an artist of exceptional ability and who so perfectly suited this author's characters. By this time Kenyon Ford's success must have been an established fact, and yet, strangely enough, his chronicles apparently ended with "The Seven Stars", for I can trace no story later than that.

However, compensation for this came in the form of a succession of powerful serials in an unbroken line from the pen of Maxwell Scott. The first chapters of "Birds of Prey" appeared in the "Boys' Friend" No. 1, June 12th 1901. This story was later reprinted in the "Boys' Friend Library" and again as a serial in the "Gem" Nos. 244-263. The "Silver Dwarf" began in the first 2d. Xmas Number of the "Boys' Friend" No. 26. Its sequel, "The Missing Heir" started in No. 42 - 1902. This in its turn was followed without a break by "A Son of the Sea" in which Maxwell Scott, writing of his beloved sea, was at his best. All four stories were illustrated by Arthur Clarke.

TO BE CONTINUED.

LETTER BOX.

That keen student of the work of Charles Hamilton ROGER M. JENKINS, starts another ball rolling when he writes about:

ST. FRANKS versus THE REST.

Without being unkind, I would imagine it would take someone with the proverbial memory of an elephant to remember the day when the last original St. Franks story appeared. For this reason, I was surprised to hear that there are still some people who prefer the work of Edwy Scarles Brooks to that of Charles Hamilton, whose creations include Greyfriars, St. Jims, Rookwood, Sparshott, Carcroft, Grimslade, St. Kits and many other schools too numerous to mention. The primary defect of the St. Franks series was the lack of realism. Their author went to fantastic lengths to arouse interest, but the result was no more satisfactory to the reader than the stories of preposterous nonsense that appeared in such papers as "The Hotspur". As a matter of fact, it was even more humiliating to the intelligence, since as a rule school stories were written with an eye to creditability, but the events that took place at St. Franks would strain the imagination of an angel - masters going mad, the school being destroyed periodically, visits to hidden worlds every vacation and kidnapping thrown in every term.

Nelson Lee was the cause of the trouble. More than 90% of the stories were detective yarns, and after a while it became more than a little annoying for every adventure to turn on a band of crooks and their nefarious attempts to drug Nelson Lee and take the complacent "Nipper" a hostage. Now it is an accepted fact that the more sensational a story is, the more chance exists that it is a bad piece of writing. I see no reason to except the St. Franks stories from this rule.

The truth is, I feel, that St. Franks was based on Greyfriars and St. Jims; it was an attempt to cash in on the popularity and success so well-earned by Charles Hamilton. But this effort did not succeed,

mainly because of the defects enumerated above. Characterisation was another weak point, the only person at St. Franks who stood out being Handforth, and he was a weak imitation of Coker. And as he was the showpiece, he was dragged into every story, until one became heartily sick of him. But the crown of Edwy Searles Brooks' plagiarism was to write that dreadful story "Handforth at St. Jims", probably an attempt to write successfully with other peoples characters. He failed miserably. The fact that Mr. Brooks refuses to answer correspondence about his school would seem to imply his dissatisfaction with his own work; indeed, many people have asserted it to be more than that. But not so the work of Mr. Hamilton; so strong has been the demand that Billy Bunter is to re-appear after nearly seven years' absence, to take his place with the new characters by the same author. The secret of Mr. Hamilton's success is fluent production of stories of varied types with different characters coming forward to take the stage awhile. There is no plugging; no padding and no irrelevant action. The machinery of the plot never creaks; it runs on oiled wheels. And above all, we never feel we have reached saturation point. That is why I think the Saints lose to the Rest by a heavy margin of points.

FINIS.

MAGNETS IN MALAYA!

In the early days of the occupation of Malaya, my son, Clifford, discovered a stack of "Magnets" in a Chinese shop:- C.HANSON, 30, ST. MARGARET'S ROAD, WAINSTEAD PARK, E.12.

(What a delightful reminder of home! Why, even a Chinese knew the attraction of a 'Magnet' it seems, Pat. Editor).

IN REPLY TO YOURS.

T.P.Bretherton, Herkiij, nr. Chorley..."The Far Far

North" (Boys' Herald) was written by Martin Shaw; "The Radium Seekers" (Boys' Realm) by Fenton Ash. Leslie Vosper, 13 Kinlet Road, Woolwich, S.E.18:- We certainly think a Nelson Lee Club is Possible, Leslie. The Sexton Blake fans have theirs; why not those devoted to his greatest rival? There are plenty of collectors who, we are sure, would be interested. Perhaps they will get in touch with you.

MORE ABOUT BILLY BUNTER.

We have pleasure in publishing the following letter from Frank Richards...Prepare for the Spring!

Dear Herbert Leckenby,

Thank you for your letter this morning. Your previous letter I should have answered before now, but I had been waiting for some definite news about dates. But things move slowly these post-war days, and the Bunter date is still "In the Spring". I think I told you that I completed the first volume, called "Billy Bunter of Greyfriars School" some little time ago and that Macdonald is doing the pictures. I mentioned this fact in my Xmas broadcast to Australia; a good many people "down under" are interested in Macdonald. I was very pleased when the BBC repeated this broadcast to South Africa on Xmas Day. The more the merrier! I also told the wide world, over the air, that if they liked the first volume it would be followed by "more and more and more". So one must hope that it will be liked. It will, of course, mean a lot to Frank Richards if Greyfriars goes well in book form. As you know, the publishers are Charles Skilton & Co. Ltd. Their address is 50, Alexandra Road, London, S.W.19. It is very pleasant to know that you are getting enquiries on the subject and that you think there will be a "great demand". Mr. Skilton, after reading the MS., told me that it "sparkled all through" which was very agreeable to hear! The book is about 60,000 words, or a little more; full novel length. Billy Bunter is rather in trouble throughout, being told he will have

to quit Greyfriars if he does not mend his ways - which he resolves to do: but he does not have much luck as a mender of ways! In fact, his ways remain in the same old state of disrepair....Yes, I have been rather busy of late, for in addition to the happy resuscitation of Greyfriars, I have been piling up a mountain of "Topham" and "St.Olive's". I think I told you that these are on sale at Woolworths. I have been astonished by the interest in many quarters in the announcement that Bunter is to return. You seem to have seen the very kind notice that appeared in the Daily Herald. You can bet I was pleased to tell Australia and S.Africa over the air. An evening paper has even asked me to write an article on the subject. I laughed the other day when a local reporter trailed me to my lair for an interview; it may amuse you to see his article, so I enclose a copy. I think something is appearing in the "News Review". I have even had some kind enquiries from the A.P, who seem interested in a friendly way. Altogether, the outlook seems "set fair" and I am feeling very cheery these days.

I am very interested to hear that your next number will have sketches by Robert Whiter. I have some specimens of his drawings which are remarkably good. I used to draw myself, once upon a time; there is a picture of D'Arcy by Martin Clifford in a very old Gem, but I pass it up to Robert! I am very keen to see that number when it comes along.

With kind regards,

Yours sincerely,

FRANK RICHARDS.

Note: The 'News Review' week-ending Feb.1st, carried a full page write-up on the return of Billy Bunter and comments on his past history.

BOUQUETS.

A very good job indeed. Contents nicely varied and the heavy type makes the cover look very effective. Hope the subs. will roll in: W.H.Gander, Transcona, Manitoba.

I admire the patient and

journal. You have collaborated wonderfully, and the print is readable and the matter most interesting and well-constructed. I do cordially admire your great work; Frank Pettingell, Highfield Lodge, Wise Lane, London N.W.7.

Please let me say at once - I think the 'C.D'. is a superb job. The printing is beautifully clear, and altogether the whole mag. is a real work of art: Gordon J. Kirby, 55 Forest Street, Bendig, Victoria, Australia.

The C.D. is a very worthy project and will, I feel sure provide old boys' paper fans with a fine medium of keeping in touch. It has my complete benediction. May it be a definite success - I'm sure it will: Leon Stone, Elgin Street, Gordon, N.S.W. Australia.

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It is very good; no frills but chock-full of all that interests: C.F.F. Richards, c/o Burrard Dry Dock Co., Ltd., North Vancouver, British Columbia.

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No.2 is simply terrific. It is, without doubt, the best paper that has ever been published about old boys' papers. I have read the whole issue with tremendous enthusiasm. It is a pity it could not be published every week: H. Dowler, 86 Hamilton Road, Longsight, Manchester

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FOR YOUR ATTENTION. Mr. John R. Shaw's address is now 4, Brunswick Park, Camberwell, LONDON. S.E.5.

-:-:-: -:-:-:

WANTED: Certain early Magnets, Gems, Plucks, especially Gems No.16, 22, 385. Would gladly buy or exchange. - Shaw, 4, Brunswick Park, Camberwell, London. S.E.5.

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

WANTED: Certain Union Jacks between 1923 and 1927. Also Boys' Magazines: - W. Darwin, 76 Western Road, East Dene, Rotherham, Yorks.

WANTED: Girls' Papers, 1919-1940: School Friends, Schoolgirls' Own, Schoolgirls' Weeklies, Schoolgirl (from No.140 onward); also Schoolgirls' Own Libraries by Hilda Richards and Marjorie Stanton: G.J.Kirby, 55 Forest Street, Bendigo, Victoria, Australia, or c/o. Collectors' Digest.

WANTED: Nelson Lees, 1st new Series, particularly "Doomed Schoolboy" Series: L.Vesper, 13 Kinlet Road, Shooter's Hill, London S.E.18.

WANTED: Sexton Blake Library 1920-35; Union Jack 1920-32; Detective Weekly 1933-34: W.Colcombe, 256, South Avenue, Southend-on-Sea, Essex.

WANTED: Sexton Blake Bust and Sexton Blake Annuals: V.A.Baxendale, 1 Vincent Street, Openshaw, Manchester 1

Tom Armitage, 205 Batley Road, Alverthorpe, Wakefield, Yorks., would like everyone interested in School stories especially Nelson Lee, to write to him. All letters answered.

WANTED: Gems and Magnets before 1930; Populars, Sexton Blake Libraries of Granite Grant and Kestrel; Girls' Friends, Homes and Readers; Butterfly, Merry and Bright Eric Fayne, 23, Grove Road, Surbiton.

MAGNET 1359 WANTED urgently and also many others up to year 1931. Certain Schoolboys' Owns of interest. Please send details to Roger Jenkins, 'Calpe', Town Hall Road, Havant, Hants.

BOXING: Wanted Marvels containing Tom Sayers stories and any other boys' books of boxing interest: G.Neville Weston, Holmwood, Short Heath, Comberton Rd, Kidderminster.

I STILL require a large number of 1st. series Nelson

Lees. I have over 200 2nd. series to exchange. Details and lists from Frank Keeling, 93, Aldridge Avenue, Stanmore, Middlesex.

WANTED: Bound volumes of 'Chums' between 1920 and end of series. Also Triumphs and Champion Libraries: John W.Gocher Junr., Victoria Cottage, Constitution Hill, Sudbury, Suffolk.

WANTED: 'Chums' 1903; Captains; Boys' Realms 1d; Pictorials; All Sports; Sports Budget; Old Comics; Football Weekly; Football Favourite: H.Dowler, 86, Hamilton Road, Manchester 13.

WANTED: Magnet No.1624 and others near it; Schoolboys' Owns Number 185 (The Phantom of the Highlands), 321 (Ghost of Bannington Grange) and others. Good prices paid: William L.Bawden, 7 Penryn St., Redruth, Cornwall.

WANTED: To complete a run - Union Jacks No.1243, 1244, 1245 and 1252. Any reasonable price paid for these issues: H.M.Bond, 10, Erw Wen, Rhiwbina, Cardiff.

WANTED: The Gem 'Arthur Castleton Series' Nos.1022-25 inclusive: Leslie Vosper, 13 Kinlet Rd. Woolwich, S.E.18.

WANTED: Magnets between 1925 and 1933; list supplied on application; also Gems and Holiday Annuals 1920, 1930 and 1931. FOR DISPOSAL: Weekly 'Flyings'; War Weeklys; Triumphs; Champions and War Illustrateds. Lists supplied on application: Robert Whiter, 706 Lordship Lane, Wood Green, London N.22.

WANTED: Magnets, Gems, Schoolboys' Owns etc. Please send details to A.M.O.Adley, FX775918 Air Gunnery Section, Mess 3, H.M.S.Gannet, Eglington, Co.Derry, Northern Ireland.

WANTED: Magnets; Schoolboys' Owns; Nelson Lees: FOR SALE: Childrens' Bound Books etc; Childrens' Model Farm (120 Toys) £3: J.Baguley, Middle Hill, Pensilva, S.E.Cornwall.

THE 'HOLIDAY' SERIES (conclusion). By Tom Armitage.

In 1921 however, we had not one but two holidays in foreign lands. Nos 305 to 311 dealt with ructions and revolutions in an imaginary Balkan country called Mordania. Then 320 to 327 was a Wild West series with stock situations and exploits. In 1922 came a few stories about young Ching the Chinese boy (360 to 365) which were really a prelude to a very long Holiday series from 366 to 380. The first part was a sort of Robinson Crusoe adventure when marooned on a South Sea island. This was immediately followed by a most imaginative but very readable set dealing with the discovery of "Northestria", a sort of Old English settlement beyond the southern ice-fields. 1923 brought us a rousing adventure series across the U.S.A., 424 to 463 (a sequel followed in the precincts of St. Franks, 455 to 463). A sparkling Sahara series followed in 1924, 477 to 484, when the St. Franks boys found themselves in a replica of ancient Rome whence they arrived by the aid of a marvellous invention of Mr. Manners, father of the famous Irere of the Moor View School. This was the 'Adventurer' the "Ship of the Sahara" to quote one of the titles. Another title in this set was "Chariots and Gladiators". From this an idea of the stories can be gained. The last holiday series to appear in the old series N.L.L. was contained in Nos. 529 to 536. It was a Pacific adventure and was very good reading. Further holiday exploits appeared in the new enlarged "Nelson Lee" during its run, but from then it was mostly Handforth first and the rest just 'supporting cast' as they say on the films. I very much doubt if anything like these holiday series of almost 20 years ago will ever be seen again. Somehow, I don't quite see them in future schoolboy fiction.

FINIS.

AUTHORS AND THEIR PEN NAMES. by Herbert Leckenby.
(continued)

Others could be gleaned through errors or short memories on the part of the editorial staff. For instance, when "The Bully of St. Simons" appeared in the 'Boys' Realm' the author was given as T.G.Dowling-Maitland, but later, following the title of a story by Max Hamilton, it was stated more than once "Author of 'A Pit Hero', 'The Bully of St. Simons' etc." Hence it was safe to assume they were one and the same. Here are the details of some of those I knew best, with a few pertinent remarks about each. Other "old-timers" may, or may not, agree:

Maxwell Scott. Author and doctor. Had an extensive practice near Whitby, on the Yorkshire coast. Real name, Dr. J.W.Staniforth. Whilst going his rounds, steadying the pulses of his patients, was planning to quicken the pulses of the thousands of readers of his Nelson Lee stories, detective second only to Sexton Blake. Created his favourite character in 1894. First complete story in the $\frac{1}{2}$ d.Marvel. From then on, wrote continuously of him and had exclusive rights for 20 years. First serial "Birds of Prey" in the Boys' Friend 1901. Had a racy, if somewhat melodramatic style. No consulting-room solutions for him, for he loved to take his characters on chases all over the world. Created also at least 3 other detectives, Kenyon Ford (Big Budget), Vernon Read (Boys' Leader) and Martin Dale (Chums). Was most precise over his detectives' travels and must have worked with a Bradshaw and a Lloyd's List before him. Paradoxically, he had certain pet phrases which he used time and time again. Examples: "Quivering with excitement"; "Like an arrow from a bow"; "As the reader may doubtless remember"; "It was then a quarter to seven"; "In less time than it takes to tell"; "Oh, dear no". Nevertheless, one of the most popular authors of his time. He also wrote sport and school stories.

HENRY ST.JOHN. Add COOPER to get his real name. Related to Gladys, actress and picture-postcard queen.

Pen-names - Lieygt. Paul Lefevre, Gordon Holme and quite often Mabel St. John. One of Hamilton Edwards' star turns and his chief school story-writer. Had some quaint ideas of public schools however, for his appeared like reformatories. Was at his best with adventure yarns, treasure islands, the Navy in Nelson's day, tales of the circus etc. Though many of his stories were numerous, an editor who knew him described him to me as a strange, morose yet kindly man. Thought nothing of having half-a-dozen or more serials in process on his desk at once. Would dash off an instalment of 'The Fourth Form of St. Basils' (his favourite school) then nochantly changing to MABEL, prepare for the readers of the 'Girls' Friend' more of the adventures of sweet Polly Green. In his spare time, he was a breeder of bulldogs.

John Nix Pentelow. I puzzled as to which of his many names to put first but decided upon his real one. He was writing under it for the 'bloods' of the 80's. Later used pen-names. Some of them were Jack North, John West, Richard Randolph, Randolph Ryle and Harry Huntingdon. Whilst editor of the 'Gem' and 'Magnet' was also one of the substitute Martin Cliffords and Frank Richards.

Why he troubled to flit from one pen-name to another was a bit of a puzzle, for he could no more disguise his style than George Bernard Shaw could pass himself off as a woman. Some might consider that style was too leisurely, too 'preaching', but in my opinion his Wycliffe stories were some of the best tales of school ever penned. Had no superior with stories of Test and County cricket and was an authority on the game. He believed there is good in the worst of us and loved gradually to reform his characters.

Here is an extract from "The Runaway" (Boys' Friend Library No. 82, 1st series). Stubborn, wayward, likeable Wilder, having run away from Wycliffe, contemplates it in the early morning:

"He saw the noble massive buildings of the old school;

the cheerful red-bricked, creeper-covered masters' houses, clustered around it, the broad green playing-fields, alive with active figures; the wide stream of Wyvern dancing in the sunlight, and for the first time he realised how goodly a place it was.

The birthpang of loyalty to Wycliffe reached him in that moment when he had meant to destroy the last link that bound him to her. He did not know it until long afterwards, but so it was. Never, throughout his life, will Claude Arthur Coningsby Wilder forget the bridge over the Wyvern at Rylton, and the red sun, low in the eastern sky".

Sentiment, unusual in a boy's story-paper, but sentiment which made some, at least, want to read his stories over and over again.

Tagging a string of Christian names as above was also typical of Pentelow, another of those touches which gave him away. He died many years ago, but some of his stories live after him.

(continued).

SOME COMING ATTRACTIONS!

A few words on Sweeny Todd, by F.N. Wearing.
 Those were the Daysby F.W. Wearing. *Walt.*
 Sentiment in Schoolboy Fiction, by Tom Armitage.
 The Boys' Standardby Henry Steele.

DICK TURPIN TITLES.

- | <u>Title.</u> | <u>Sub-Title.</u> |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| 1. Driven from home | or Dick Turpin and Black Bess seek fame and fortune. |
| 2. The Masked Man of Mystery. | or A story of Strange Deeds. |
| 3. The Secret of the Old Mint. | or Dick rights an old wrong. |
| 4. The Night-riders of Bagshot Heath. | or 'Mid Friends and Foes. |

(continued).

BLAKIANA

A Section of the 'Collectors' Digest' devoted to the Man from Baker Street - Sexton Blake. All communications relating to Blake matters, including letters from members of the Sexton Blake Correspondence Club to be addressed to H.M.Bond, 10 Erw Wen, Rhiwbina, Cardiff. (Please note change of address).

THE EDITOR SAYS:

In this, the third chat to my readers, I can say that "Blakiana" has been a great success. Although I rather expected to receive many letters criticising the matter it contained or the way in which it was laid out, I have been pleasantly surprised at the number of bouquets. You will have seen already some of the remarks made by various readers so I will not say more on this subject except to convey my thanks to all who have written and especially to those who have entered into the spirit of the new venture and sent in contributions. To these latter friends I say - your articles will appear in due course, but in the meantime, please send more. We want as many varied articles as possible.

The article on Eric R.Parker in No. 2 has been our greatest success. I have received many letters from readers who enjoyed the splendid tribute to the most talented of all A.P. artists and to all those who enjoyed it I can say that in an early issue another article will appear from the same pen. The criticism of G.H.Teed, which also appeared in our second number, caused quite a number of Blake fans to write in and I am including a couple of replies in this issue. It is very noticeable though, that of all the letters I have received on this subject, not one of them have agreed with Mr. Colcombe - indicating that G.H.still is one of the favourite Blake authors.

One reader was disappointed that a Crossword did not

appear in No.2. Sorry, but it could not be done. These puzzles call for great concentration seeing that they are of such limited scope, but I hope to be able to include another very soon.

The same reader, who is also a member of the S.B.Club, thinks that the January numbers of the S.B.L.call for another organised protest to the A.P. He thinks it is all wrong to introduce relations of Tinker and says that author Lewis Jackson makes Blake's assistant talk like an illiterate East-end juvenile. Summing up the story contained in No.136 of the Library he says it is "a lazy, meaningless series of dull detail" and states that Jackson is responsible for vandalism towards the Baker Street tradition. I should be pleased to learn what other readers think of this story.

Following close upon the publication of our No.2 came yet another reminder of Eric R.Parker. This time it was a picture of two of him in 'Illustrated' dated w/e 11th January.

Yet another new Blake author has made his appearance. Readers of the December set of S.B.L.volumes will see the name 'Derek Long' at the head of the story. Any opinions of this new writer's work will be welcomed.

Cheerio for now.

H.M.BOND.

READERS ARE ASKED TO NOTE THE NEW ADDRESS OF 'BLAKIANA':
10, ERW WEN, RHUWBINA, CARDIFF. S.WALES.

CONTROVERSY:

Here are two of the replies received to the attack on the work of G.H.Teed By Mr.Wm.Colcombe of Southend/Sea. "Nemo" writes: Your forthright reply to the attack on G.H.Teed has my wholehearted support. It was that 'Authentic' atmosphere of Teed's that helped one to forget the naive, conventional thriller-plots of less gifted and informed Blake writers. And, as you say, the list of Teed's characters is sufficient indication of what Blakiana owes to him.

Mr. Wilfred Darwin of Rotherham, writes: Obviously

Member Bill Colcombe doesn't like stories of foreign adventure. I'm unable to understand why. You will have realised by now that G.H.Teed is a great favourite of mine. I have always found his work very fascinating. The very quality that has made his stories so popular is condemned by Bill. I mean of course, that unique blend of detective work and foreign adventure of which he was such a master. Yarns of this kind have endless possibilities. One tires of the usual murky London background, and the same slick crooks in everyday English apparel. We need a change of scene sometimes, and variety is a good thing for everyone. The straight detective-story that Bill wants can be bought at any bookstall. G.H.Teed was one of the U.J.'s star authors, one of those brilliant few that put that p per on top. I only wish there were more like him.

SEXTON BLAKE QUIZ NO.1.

1. Who, in Blake stories, was called 'The Lord of the Ape Men'?
2. What is the only surname that has been suggested belonging to Tinker, and who was the author who called him this?
3. Who wrote the Blake v Raffles series?
4. Name the Zulu character created by Cecil Hayter.
5. In which story did Blake and Tinker quarrel and part company, and who was the author of it?
6. In which series of Blake stories did the character Oyani appear?

ANSWERS WILL BE GIVEN IN NO.4.

Readers are asked to submit series of questions for this feature, which will be permanent if enough support is forthcoming.

COMING ATTRACTIONS: In addition to those already

announced in this issue, look out for:
 Pierre Quiroule by Eric Fayne.
 The Big Four of the 3rd Series
 by John W. Gocher, Junr.

I VISIT BAKER STREET. No. 1. By H.M.B.

... ..
 With greater ease than I had, at first, imagined, I found the house. It did not look any more imposing than any of the others ranged on either side of it, but I had a peculiar feeling that I had visited this same spot many times before. With fingers that shook slightly I raised my hand and pressed the bell, and at that moment I had a hundred rapid-fire visions of many, many people of whom I had read in countless Blake stories who had pressed that selfsame bell when calling to see the most famous of all private detectives. I caught my breath as I heard a footfall from within. Would it be Mrs. B? That same dear old soul whom I had grown to love in many Gwyn Evans stories? Could it be Tinker? Could it be, possibly, Blake himself? The door opened, and I could see that my first belief was correct. It WAS Mrs. Bardell, and quickly I realised how wonderfully my favourite artist, Eric R. Parker, had portrayed the old dame. I recognised her not so much by the fact she was an elderly, white-haired, homely-looking lady as by the illustrations Mr. Parker had made of her. My thoughts were swept away as she spoke

"And 'oo are you a-wanting, young man" she said.

"I-I-I wished to have a word with Mr. Blake" I replied very timidly.

"What name shall I tell 'im?" asked Mrs. Bardell.

"Well" I said, "my name is Bond, but"

"Mond, is it" she interjected; "Wait...."

"No, no, not Mond" I exclaimed hurriedly; "Bond; - B-O-N-D".

"Not from them there tea-merchants are you?" she cried.

"No" I said, a bit amused, "I'm not selling anything".

" 'old on then" she said "I'll see if the master will talk to you".

With fingers tightly clasped together I waited until once again the stout figure appeared at the door " 'e ain't 'eard of you" she said "but 'e'll see you if you'll step this way sir".

Following her, I walked up those stairs of which I had read so much, but must admit here and now that I had never imagined such exquisite furnishings as caught my eye through partly-opened doors on the second floor. "Gosh" I muttered "not even the David Farrar films pictured it like it really is".

Mrs. Bardell was tapping upon a door. A voice called from within "Come in".

Opening the door, Mrs. Bardell entered, and with my breath held, I followed her.

"Mr. Pond sir", she announced, stepping to one side to allow me to enter the room.

It was then that I caught my first glimpse of Blake...Yes, it was he...Thought I, that bust of mine IS lifelike, alright.

There is no need for me to describe those ascetic features; that faded dressing-gown, that blackened briar...they were all as I had imagined them to be for years...Sexton Blake was smiling.

"Thank you Mrs. Bardell" he said quietly; and as the dear old soul withdrew - "and will you send up a tray of tea, please"?

Turning to me, the great detective held out his hand.

"Mr. Bond" he said "I take it that is the correct name"?

"That's right sir" I smiled, still feeling shaky.

"And what may be your business" asked Blake, indicating me to sit in one of the comfortable armchairs.

"Well sir" I said, "I have come to interview you on behalf of...."

Blake, who had been in the act of stuffing his pipe with tobacco from a jar on the mantelpiece, interrupted:

"A reporter, eh" he said; "Well, young man, I haven't any story for you this time".

"No sir, not a reporter" I exclaimed hurriedly; "I

am here on behalf of an amateur paper which is devoted to the collection of old boys' papers".

"Ah, that IS something different" replied Blake, putting a match to his briar; "Is it 'The Story-paper Collector'?"

"No sir" I replied; "Unfortunately that excellent little paper is suspended owing to the illness of its editor".

"What a pity" said Blake, "It was a little paper which I came across quite by accident when solving a crime at a place in Yorkshire".

"That's interesting" I said.

(continued).

THE TRAVELLING DETECTIVE. (continued).

His final story 'The Fatal Fortune' published in the S.B.L. 2nd series No.656 was a foreign story and re-introduced his 3 most famous characters, Count Ivor Carlac, Professor Kew and the Hon. John Lawless. The latter character was a friend of the sleuth, while the others were amongst his most formidable opponents. The three of them were featured in most of his stories throughout the years.

Pierre Quiroule is the next name that comes to my mind. This author, who created the inimitable Granite Grant (King's Spy) and the delightful and delectable Mlle. Julie of the French Secret Service, was also perfectly at home in most foreign countries, although he seldom roved outside Europe in his stories. The Balkan countries provided much scope for spy work between the two wars and this fact is probably the reason for his concentration on this continent. But I can remember one or two good Blake adventures in North Africa and Ethopia. The detective certainly has seen some exciting times when working with Grant and Julie. George Hamilton Teed was the most travelled of all the Sexton Blake authors and his knowledge of various parts of the world was very apparent. Born in New Brunswick, Canada, Mr. Teed ran away from home when he was 16. The urge to see the world was strong in him and he had a

special desire to see a palm tree. This desire was fulfilled when he first espied Watling Island which was the first land Christopher Columbus saw when searching for the New World. Mr. Teed subsequently led a very varied and adventurous life. He was, amongst other things, a sheep-farmer in Australia, overseer of a banana plantation in Costa Rica; manager of a jute plantation on the Malabar coast of India. Little wonder is it then that Blake travelled extensively while in the capable hands of Mr. Teed. But as well as being at home in tropic climes, he was equally good when writing of Paris and London; in fact, some of his stories set in the French capital are amongst the best in the history of Sexton Blake. His great urge for detail was a feature of all his stories and he made Blake a real human character. Just to give examples of the setting of Teed yarns I am giving a short list of some of the titles: Sexton Blake Library, (2nd series)...

- No.1 The secret of the Cocomnut Groves.
- 19. The Great Canal Plot. (Panama).
- 25. The case of the Chinese Pearls.
- 41. The Island of the Guilty. (Hayti).
- 73. The Riddle of the Russian Gold.
- 113. The case of the Disguised Apache. (Paris).
- 129. The Adventure of the Bogus Sheikh.
- 158. The Terror of Gold-Digger Creek. (Australia).

If you recall such characters as Wu Ling, San, Marie Galante, Yvonne, Prince Menes, The Black Rat, Huxton Rymer, George Marsden Plummer, Hsui Fsi and others, you will probably recall many of the Teed stories in which you once revelled. Yes, Sexton Blake would have stayed at home much more had it not been for that young lad of 16 wanting to see a palm tree! India! There is no doubt of the attractive possibilities one can conjure up in one's mind when thinking of that magic name, and this brings me to an author who is at present doing yeoman work in the Blake world. I refer of course, to the inimitable Anthony Parsons, once an Officer of the Indian Army. He has risen to

great heights, and this can be given a double meaning, for Parsons stands 6'3" in his socks! But I actually mean that he has reached a new high level in the Blake stories, for it is he, in my opinion, who has been responsible for the more sophisticated Sexton Blake with whom we are so familiar today. Gone are the old days of startling deductions; now, our sleuth tackles his cases in a much more orthodox and convincing manner. But - to return to India. As Mr. Parsons has lived so long in that 'jewel of the East', he naturally has a great insight into the native mind, and has consequently given us a series of really first-class stories of that country. It is significant that most of these stories are centred around the British Administration in India, and the reader is constantly reminded of the many ramifications that this involves. Scandal MUST be at all costs held from native ears, and this is where Sexton Blake is always introduced. He and Tinker, in immaculate white, soon strike at the heart of the trouble, and all ends as desired. In his early work, Mr. Parsons borrowed that dastardly Indian thug Gunga Dass, who was created by Coutts Brisbane many years ago, but since the start of the second world-war in 1939, we have not seen any of his evil work in the stories. Anthony Parsons is also very much at home in Egypt, and his yarns of Cairo and Alexandria are equal, in their particular way, to their Indian counterparts. After reading one of his stories set in Cairo one feels that one knows the city intimately and could walk into Sheppard's Hotel blindfold!

Actually, this article could be continued on and on until a veritable book had evolved, but I think I have said enough to recall happy memories to old Blake enthusiasts and set the mind of the new reader thinking on the wonderful tales they have unfortunately missed. As for Blake - well, I suppose he will travel as much again in the days to come, but I think I am safe in saying that his adventures in foreign lands will never be told better than were those old adventures by the old authors.

Long may the world be Sexton Blake's stage!

FINIS.

With this article we introduce our readers to yet another new contributor, WILFRED DARWIN of Rotherham, Yorks. His subject is one which will interest all lovers of the work of G.H. Teed, for it is:

INTRODUCING GEORGE MARSDEN PLUMMER -
SEXTON BLAKE'S ENEMY NO.1.

George Marsden Plummer was one of Sexton Blake's oldest opponents. He figured many times in Blake A Plummer story was always a story in the old U.J. Every time I think of Plummer I also think of George Hamilton Teed, who wrote the best of this series. He was a splendid author at any time, was Teed, but when he wrote about this character he definitely excelled himself. The mere mention of a foreign adventure with Blake v Plummer needed no further advertising. The reader knew from past enjoyable experiences what to expect in the way of thrills and sensation. That Plummer was a desperate criminal, cold, ruthless, cunning and unscrupulous, there can be no question, but that he possessed undoubted talents and was not without the finer qualities must also be admitted. Above all, he had great organising abilities, to judge by his many clever and daring criminal coups and with the power to rule other lesser lights of the crime-world. There was a feeling of strength about him too, and he gave out a strange impression of breeding. His handsome, bearded countenance was known to every Sexton Blake fan and distinguished him from other criminal characters. (With the possible exception of his contemporary, Dr. Huxton Rymer. - Ed). He had little to do with the sneak thief, common-crook variety, but mixed always with the best of his profession.

Let us recall for a moment, his amazing association with Abdel Krim, the Chief of the Riffs. Do you remember Sakr-e;-Droog or The Hawk of the Peak? A colourful and romantic figure who characterised more than one Sexton Blake story.

(continued).