

THE COLLECTORS' DIGEST

VOLUME 13, NUMBER 155

PRICE 1s.6d.

NOVEMBER, 1959

BOB CHERRY'S BARRING OUT. REPRINT OF MAGNET No. 254



BILL MARTIN

93 HILLSIDE : LONDON, N.W. 10

CASH WITH ORDER

WORLD FAMOUS FOR OLD BOYS BOOKS

Phone: ELGar 3230

Cables: SUPERB USED, LONDON.

POSTAGE EXTRA

Bound Volume of Gems, 1928 £4
26 Gems 1928/1932, Red and White
£2 10 0

This month's Bumper Bundle contains Aldine Diamond Libraries, S.O.Ls, Magnets, Gems, Boys' Friend Libraries, Boy Friend Weeklies, 70 copies in all. £5

Early Strand $\frac{1}{2}$ yearly volumes, publishers bindings all feature Conan Doyle. 7/6 each.
3 for 15/-.

Several bound volumes of Magnets, would exchange these for large quantity of S.O.Ls, featuring Greyfriars School.

Several bound volumes School-girls' Own Library. 15/6 each.
2 for 28/-.

50 Magnets from number 1156 - 1599. £7 5 0

12 Badminton Volumes. 5/- each or 55/- the lot.

40 different C.D. monthlies from number 37 - 110. 20/-.

Bound volume Marvels, mint condition (no covers) (26) 37/6.

20 U.S.A. Western, pre 1940. 10/- cost 1/- each 25 years ago.

Volume 1, number 1 of the Magnet 1908 Dual Signatures by F. Richards Chas. Hamilton. £10

Complete run blue and white Gems 586 - 595, mint condition. 5 early Populars, bound Volume Marvels (no covers) (26) plus Miscellaneous lot of Boys Friends, Coloured Comics, making in all grand total of 61 copies.
£5 19 0.

Bound volumes of 5 in all 12/6 each or 50/- the lot of 5 Old and Young.

Conquering the Wilderness, early S. American Data, over 1000 pages published pre 1900. Much sort after in the U.S.A. A free gift at £3.

16 Blue and White Magnets all different. £2 10 0

Old fashioned Victorian Scrap Album contains scraps, Xmas cards, valentines, etc. Period 1840 - 1899. 40/-

(12) U.S.A. Science Fiction Magazines, 1930 - 1940. 60/-

C.D. Annuals, 1951, 1952. 12/6 each.

Bound volume Charles Peace, The Murderer pre 1900. 55/-.

20 U.S.A. Tue Detective Tales, all 1930 - 1940. 20/- They cost more when published 25 years ago.

—THE COLLECTORS' DIGEST—

Vol. 13 No. 155

Price 1s. 6d.

NOVEMBER, 1959

Editor:

ERIC FAYNE
Excelsior House
Grove Road
Surbiton, Surrey.

* * * * *

From the Editor's Chair

THE ANNUAL. I am pleased to report more progress. Since last writing I have received Gerry Allison's "Highlights of Hamilton Lore" - needless to say, it's excellent and Geoffrey Wilde's "The Mystery of Wharton Lodge" - a real Christmassy touch about this. Also, one of Jim Cook's stories which will please all Nelson Lee fans. Yes, all goes well.

The response to my appeal for adverts has been gratifying, but I could still do with a few more.

* * * * *

AMALGAMATION. John Stokes tells me that the "Sun" and "Comet" have been merged, also "Lion" and "Tiger".

Thank goodness no further suggestions of demise where the S.B.L. has been made. All the same, take the advise of Rex Dolphin on another page.

* * * * *

THOSE SUB-WRITERS. It is evident from Mr. Sanway's revelations that some of us have not been fair to the sub-writers in the past, and I have been as guilty as any. It is true that some of the stories were very crude and written by men with little writing experience, but the majority were established authors, quite successful in their own field. I am afraid we did not realise that they were men called upon

in an emergency and asked to turn out a story at very short notice.

Anyway, thanks are due to Mr. Samways for giving us the "inside" story. I may say that what he has told us has created a lot of interest.

* * * * *

Those were the last words penned by our beloved Herbert. Now he has laid down his pen for ever, and it is up to us all, as Gerry Allison so rightly remarks in the letter which follows, to ensure that Herbert's great work is not allowed to die.

Herbert finely personified the spirit, as well as the letter, of our hobby; he was, indeed, the eternal boy. The zest which he put into his work for the hobby was reflected in the stacks of correspondence which lay on his desk, and his enthusiasm, even in his last months of ill-health, was infectious and an inspiration to us all.

This edition of the Collectors' Digest has been produced under great difficulties owing to Herbert's sudden death, but it was felt right and proper that as far as possible it should come out to time and keep faith with Herbert. By the time next month's issue is due, our new editor, Eric Fayne, will have taken control and have had time to sort matters out.

We crave, therefore, the indulgence of readers for any deficiencies in the present issue which is made up of material in Herbert's files and presumably meant for this issue. The Annual will be out on time as usual.

Fuller tributes to Herbert will be contained in next month's issue.

* * * * *

A MESSAGE TO ALL THE READERS OF THE COLLECTORS' DIGEST

Nenston.

October 25th.

Dear Friends,

It is with great sorrow and regret that I have to inform you of the sudden death of Herbert Leckenby, founder and editor of "The Collectors' Digest."

He was found dead in bed on Wednesday, October 21st.

We who have seen him lately were aware that he was a very sick man, but the news of his passing will come as a great blow and shock to many of the readers of this paper, which was so dear to him, and

into which he put so much devoted energy,

Herbert himself realised that his end was imminent, although his letters and conversation did not reveal this. He had, however, quite recently been to London and has arranged for a successor to take over his beloved "C.D." when he had to lay down the reins.

The successor whom Herbert has chosen is Eric Fayne of the London Section O.B.B.C. Eric Fayne has agreed to assume control of the "Collectors' Digest" and is coming to York tomorrow to attend the funeral of Herbert. He will also discuss the future of the "C.D." with Mr. Gore-Browne of York Duplicating Services, the Agency that has produced the paper so perfectly.

I am certain that everyone who reads these lines will feel the loss of dear Herbert as much as I do myself. He had friends all over the world, and many tributes to him have already been received.

Having given you this sad news, I will now end. I would however, like to assure Eric Fayne that he will receive all our help in his task of keeping the "Collectors' Digest" going. That is what Herbert Leckenby would have wanted, and what we must all do.

Yours sincerely,
GERALD ALLISON
O.B.B.C.

3 Bingley Road,
Menston, Ilkley.

WANTED: GEMS - 313, 314, 315, 316, 319, 320, 321, 322, 356, 358, 359, 376, 385, 387, 392, 457, 459, 493, 773, 775, 881, 935, 946, 950, 951, 953, 954, 956, 964, 967, 968, 970, 976, 977, 979, 980, 984, 986, 989, 990, 992, 993, 998, 1116, 1126, 1129, 1133. MAGNETS - 45, 52, 134, 136, 138, 141, 195, 205, 238, 277, 318, 319, 325, 344, 345, 346, 347, 353, 357, 358, 386, 388, 389, 400, 411, 417, 469, 717, 719, 752, 773, 809, 834, 849, 850, 856, 858, 862, 863, 864, 865, 866, 868, 900, 921, 924, 925, 935, 936, 940, 942, 943, 944, 946, 948, 949, 950, 951, 954, 955, 958, 965, 967, 988, 996. POPULARS - 370, 385, 390, 393, 395, 398, 418, 428, 452, 455, 461, 466, 474, 475.
ERIC FAYNE, "EXCELSIOR HOUSE" GROVE ROAD, SURBITON, SURREY.

WANTED: Sexton Blake Libraries, Detective Weekly's, Thrillers.
R. GUEST, 5 RALEIGH GARDENS, LONDON, S.W.2.

Advertise in the Annual - 2d. a word.

Blakiana

Conducted by JOSEPHINE PACKMAN

27 Archdale Road, East Dulwich, London, S.E. 22

I am pleased to say that Josie is getting on very nicely, and all being well she hopes to resume her conducting of Blakiana next month. Meanwhile, we would both like to thank all those who have so kindly written to us during the past few weeks.

The Sexton Blake Circle's feature THE MAN FROM BAKER STREET, is now in course of preparation for the coming C.D. Annual, and judging by the material already to hand, I venture to say that this year's effort will be the best yet. Contributors will include Walter Webb, Victor Colby, Bill Lofts and Derek Adley (in collaboration) and Margaret Cooke. Space permitting, there will be others.

LEN PACKMAN.

* * * * *

CENTURY-MAKERS

(And a few other interesting statistics)

BY WALTER WEBB

INSTALMENT EIGHT

TEED - RECORD-BREAKER!

The year 1922, shadowed by the passing of Lord Northcliffe, who, as Alfred Harmsworth, founded the paper in which Sexton Blake first appeared, began with the attainment of the half-centuries of Blake stories of Robert Murray and Cecil Hayter, to gain for both a permanent place in the records as being amongst the better known Blake writers of all time. With only 17 stories to write - possible a little less - in which to gain for himself the enviable distinction of becoming the first author to chronicle 200 Blake novels, W. Murray Graydon found himself with a commanding lead of 14 publications over his nearest rival, Andrew Murray. But, fresh from his travels abroad and now at work again dashing off stories with astounding rapidity judging by the speed at which they were subsequently published, was G. H. Teed, still far behind in the race but coming up in a great burst of speed to eventually move into third place. With Andrew Murray in failing health and forced to drop out of the U.J. for a time during which interval a ghost writer took over his characters, Teed was able gradually to

decrease the distance that separated him from his rival. Graydon still continued to press forward but much less faster now, for a new editor had taken command of the U.J. and the ageing author's work was not finding much favour in his eyes. But, if Mr. Harold Twyman was not sufficiently impressed by Graydon's work to continue to commission him for further stories in the new year, Mr. Leonard Pratt, as editor of the Sexton Blake Lib., had quite opposite views of the old trouper's ability, and Graydon continued along steadily in the more copious and profitable pages of the monthly.

Newsagents were selling Union Jack's containing Teed's fine story "The Voodoo Curse" that sad Thursday morning of the 17th day of August when he who was known first as Alfred Harmsworth was being laid to rest in St. Marylebone Cemetery at the early age of 57 years. Though he may not have lost the battle for existence also, certainly E. W. Alais lost his place amongst Blake's subscribers, for after 1922 he was never heard of again. He went, with at least 20 novels to his name, very much a mystery man, for at the time of writing very little is known about him. The editor of the "Dreadnought" in an editorial, once said that he was well known in both adult and juvenile fields, but as the name of Alais is unrecalled it much have been under a variety of pen-names that he was more widely known, though what those pen-names were remains hidden in the mist of time. He was, an editor once said, a relative of J. Harwood Panting, the well-known Victorian novelist, who wrote boys' stories under the pseudonym of Claud Heathcote, and father of Phyllis Panting who became Mrs. Digby Morton, she in turn being sister of Arnold Panting, who once edited the Boys' Friend prior to losing his life in the 1914-18 war. In his day Alais conceived a quartette of interesting characters who appeared from time to time in the old Sexton Blake stories but who are now no doubt almost completely forgotten amongst the more colourful personalities of a later era. Chief of them who appeared in several S.B.L. stories and Dreadnought serials, was Captain Horatio Peak, D.S.O. who had experienced tough service overseas in his younger days and was a crook - though a pretty minor one - of sorts; then there was Joseph Humm, an amusing character who was first heard of when acting as footman to the millionaire Morton-Holt, whose kidnapping from his town house in Chelsea brought in Sexton Blake, and incidentally Joseph's summary dismissal from the great man's employ when his aspirations to become a famous detective landed him in hot water; thirdly, Inspector Dick Kite of Scotland Yard, a dapper little man with bird-like eyes, and finally, Sir Francis Hayes, the King's physician, who was described as a famous surgeon and one of Blake's closest friends in the medical world.

In the last week of the first month of 1922 a new paper appeared. It was "The Champion" - the editor being Mr. F. Addington Symonds, whose run of Sexton Blake stories ended when he took up his new post, though he was to contribute one or two more at a later date. To give his paper a good send off, Mr. Symonds commissioned Arthur S. Hardy to write a story of Blake, Tinker and Pedro, and this duly appeared under the title of "Paid to Lose." Nearly two months later a nother Blake story appeared being entitled "The Golden Wolf" and this introduced yet another new author - or at least another name, which much go down in the records - (47) Hartley Tremayne. But the most notable debutante in that year was the ghost writer we have already referred to in connection with the stories and character of Andrew Murray; for he was destined to become one of the leading Sexton Blake writers, a man who was to write stories of a consistently high standard over a period of 27 years and finish high in the records compiled here. (48) Gilbert Chester commenced to write of Blake in the U.J. in 1922 and in that year ghosted for Andrew Murray in three stories, though his name may not appear in the A.P. records as having done so. The reason for this can be a matter for conjecture only, the most feasible explanation being that Chester and Murray worked on the stories together, the latter working out the plot and Chester doing the actual writing. Be that as it may, the text was definitely Chester's and for this reason should be recorded to his name. The stories in question were those published in U.J. Nos. 975, 979, and 987.

In the closing summer days of 1922 came another writer to the Blake field (49) Sapt, his Christian name unknown. He wrote a story into which he brought Cecil Hayter's famous characters, Lobangu the Zulu chief of the Etbaia and Sir Richard Losely, H.M. Governor of the Province of Musardo. At this stage it must regretfully be announced that Hayter, who had conceived the popular paid way back in 1907, and who was living in semi-retirement at Elington, either retired altogether or passed on, for he did not contribute ever again to entertain us with his light-heartedly written tales set in the jungles of Africa and other tropical zones.

G. H. Teed really got into his stride during this year and smashed his 1913 record by reaching a total of 20 Blake stories, 17 for the Union Jack and 3 for the Sexton Blake Library. His 17 equalled the figure he set up for the U.J. in 1913, but it was in the following year, 1923, that we saw Teed at his most prolific. First he shot past the hundred mark thereby becoming the third author to write over 100 Sexton Blake stories, and then he was rapidly over-hauling a tiring Andrew

Murray and shortening with every stride the once commanding lead W. Murray Graydon had enjoyed for so long.

But the veteran author was slowly yet surely approaching that fine record accomplished by so very few Blake authors - the penmanship of 200 novels of the famous detective. During the course of his long fictional standing, has Sexton Blake been better served by those two prodigies of authorship, W. Murray Graydon and G. H. Teed, who must indeed be sagas even unto themselves? Take Teed's record-breaking run in 1923 for example, in which he set up two records which will assuredly stand for all time. He reached a yearly output of 25 stories, easily passing his record total of the previous year, and in the U.J. alone for that same year he reached a target of 21, beating by four his previous figure of 17 set up in the years 1913 and 1922.

Before laying down details of the positions of the leading authors at the end of 1923, let us see what new names appeared in the field prior to its closing. In August came (50) Richard Goyne and then in the last week of all, on the 29th December to be precise, in the pages of the U.J. - as did Goyne - came (51) Dr. W. H. Jago. In November Murray Graydon attained the memorable feat of having had published 200 Sexton Blake stories and by the end of the year had contributed 60 double-length novels for the Sexton Blake Lib. Would he establish yet another record by being the first and perhaps the only, author to pen 100 Blake stories for both the U.J. and the S.B.L.? He was then well on the way and there was at that time still plenty of stamina left in the veteran who had been going hard from the time he had taken up the running in 1904, though now he was handicapped, because, unlike Teed who could present his stories in both the U.J. and S.B.L., Graydon found the former a closed shop. To bring the record up to date, here are the findings at the end of 1923:- W. Murray Graydon (201); Andrew Murray (164); G. H. Teed (120); Mark Osborne (74); Robert Murray and Cecil Hayter (56).

* * * * *

WELL DONE BETTE PATE!

The following is an extract from a letter received by Bill Lofts from Mr. H. W. Twyman - late editor of the UNION JACK. I am sure you will all agree that the bouquet is well deserved.

"I have read through the latest batch of C.D.'s you so kindly sent me, with the usual interest, and especially those items concerning me. I was agreeably interested in the Blake articles by Bette Pate of Australia.

They are unexpectedly literate, and very well done altogether in every way. Surprising to find a girl reader (as was) so enthusiastic, knowledgeable and articulate; she should be very interesting to talk to."

* * * * *

I am indebted to Bill Lofts for the following information which he is permitting me to publish in this issue. I quote from Bill's letter to me:-

"I was very interested in Walter Webb's latest article (Instalment Five), and can tell readers of Blakiana that the identity of "Beverley Kent" has been established. His real name will be revealed in the forthcoming C.D. Annual (in the Sexton Blake Circle feature THE MAN FROM BAKER STREET) together with other revelations. Mr. G. R. Samways remembers the man quite well - smoking a big fat cigar!

John Hunter, whom I know quite well, started writing for CHUMS some years before his photograph was published in 1914. His first story was written in his 'teens, at which time he used the name of A. J. Hunter - which is his correct name. When he got really going he dropped the A. and wrote as John Hunter, for it sounded better.

It was my privilege to meet recently the man who, at one time, lived with both Gwyn Evans and George Hamilton Teed. He himself wrote one Sexton Blake story, this being S.B.L. No. 244 (second series) entitled "The Phantom Bat". His full name - Robert Elliott. Apart from this solitary story he wrote very little other juvenile fiction, his work being mostly romantic, love interest stories for various publishers. In his opinion G. H. Teed was one of the finest friends one could ever have. Incidentally, Teed was a very educated man, having attended McGill University - one of the most famous schools in Canada.

Readers who are desirous of news of Eric Parker, the well-known Sexton Blake illustrator, may be interested to know that I have met him quite a few times. A very humorous type of man, youngish-looking; Eric told me that there have never been any other artists in his family. His father and grandfather were clockmakers. His style is certainly an original one, and in his opinion Warwick Reynolds, the GEM artist, was easily the best Amalgamated Press has ever had. He also liked the work of R. J. Macdonald, the man who drew boys wearing French bows."

(Thank you Bill, for these newsy items - and for allowing me to publish them. I hope that more will be forthcoming in the near future.

Len Packman.)

* * * * *

S.B.L. REVIEWSSEPTEMBER, 1959ESPRESSO JUNGLE (No. 435)W. Howard Baker

One of those cases involving Blake, not only in a financial loss but with little advancement of prestige either. Escorting a beautiful girl home at three o'clock in the morning, he is attacked by a gang of hoodlums, frequents of a Soho rendezvous known as "The Honey Bucket." When, despite his endeavours to protect her, the girl's face is burned by acid thrown by one of the gang, Blake declares immediate war - not so much on them as the Big Man behind them and responsible for their activities. His task is made more difficult by an unco-operative and uncompromising Grimwald of the Yard, who has no sympathy for private vendettas and proves a frustrating barrier in Blake's efforts to unmask the Big Man.

The climax at a fun-fair in Battersea Park rounds off an exciting novel, the fragility of which plot is over-shadowed by the skill of the author in creating an atmosphere of such tension that this vital fact is not brought to the awareness of the reader until the last paragraph.

Rating.....Very Good

* * * * *

HOME SWEET HOME (No. 436)Jack Trevor Story

Here is something rather unique from the files of Sexton Blake Investigations. A murder victim pays Blake a thousand pounds for solving his - the victim's - own murder! Of course, when Blake goes down to the latter's country cottage to protect him, he is still alive - but only just. Then, a few hours later, despite Blake's vigilance, he is a dead man, which doesn't do the detective's reputation any good at all. This is placed in even greater jeopardy when a beautiful actress guest falls desperately for his masculine charms.

Verdict - a decidedly embarrassing, if not too difficult a case, which, one felt, would have been livened up a lot with Paula's presence - especially for her employer's dewy-eyed admirer!

Literally and artistically it's light, it's airy and makes pleasant reading for any mood. Specially recommended as an antidote for the 'blues.'

Rating.....Very Good

WALTER WEBB

HAMILTONIANA

LET'S BE CONTROVERSIAL

(In this series, Eric Fayne touches on certain matters of interest to students of the Hamilton papers. He gives his own views superficially. If you will write to him, expressing your opinions on the topics he discusses, he will summarise readers' views in a future issue.)

No. 32. THE GEM, THE MAGNET and the SCHOOL STORY CLASSICS.

The heyday of the stiff-covered school story seems to have been between the years 1890 and 1910. "Tom Brown's Schooldays" and "Eric" were both continually re-published, and had great sales during the first decade of the century.

"Tom Brown" bored me as a boy, and bores me still with its wordiness, though my Headmaster was always singing its praises. No story has been more the subject of jokes than "Eric" - written exactly a hundred years ago, but I enjoyed it, in spite of its preaching and its cloying sentiment.

Talbot Baines Reed wrote four school stories, each having high sales in the period before 1912. The finest of these, without any doubt, is "The Fifth Form at St. Dominic's" and so well does it read today that it is hard to realise that it was written as long ago as 1881. "The Willoughby Captains" and "The Master of the Shell" are inclined to be stodgy, while "The Cock House at Felsgarth", though deservedly popular for a long time, tends to drag.

P. G. Wodehouse wrote some excellent school tales, some short, some long. He apparently abandoned school life after 1910, and I am probably inviting brickbats when I say that I have never liked anything he has written since. Hylton Cleaver produced some fine school yarns, his short stories being exceptionally good. His "Out of the Rut" is a grand example of a short story at its best.

The most prolific of them all seems to have been Harold Avery, but the quality of his work varied. Generally speaking, he seems to have written for younger boys, and there is little real character work in his stories. I am still coming across titles, under his name, which are new to me, though it hardly seems possible that he can still be living.

In my opinion, the greatest of them all was Desmond Coke. His "Bending of a Twig" I regard as the most true-to-life school story ever

written, though it is consequently rather a dull specimen to any but student boys. Most of Coke's stories, in fact, are about boys, but written for adult consumption.

Many of the stories mentioned so far were first published in monthly magazines, and, for reasons of space, I cannot refer to all of the writers concerned in this type of work. No great school stories of this class seem to have been written after 1910, though the old tales are still re-published from time to time. Why, then, did the era of the stiff-covered school story end about 1912, or earlier? In my opinion, their sales were killed by the Gem and the Magnet.

It is possible to compare work of Charles Hamilton with that of the writers mentioned above? I think not. One could, perhaps, compare some of the shorter Gem series - for instance, the "His Brother's Keeper" series - with "The Fifth Form at St. Dominic's" or a selection of the Rookwood stories with "The Harley First Fifteen", but it would hardly be possible to make any comparison between the "Wharton, the Rebel" series and "The Bending of a Twig", though both are magnificent character studies. The great length of the former, with its immense panorama of background, puts it far away from the class of any story between stiff covers.

Few would gainsay that Charles Hamilton is the century's greatest writer of school stories. He had, in fact, an enormous advantage over any of the writers of stiff-cover stories. His finest plots he could develop over hundreds of thousands of words; his character work he could etch from week to week, month to month, year to year. Could the "Stacey series" have been written between stiff covers? Could the "China series" have been successfully compressed into the number of words used, for instance, in Wodehouse's "Mike"? They could not.

Charles Hamilton's greatest series were remarkable achievements, but they were the result of the almost unrestricted space he had at his disposal. For this reason, those achievements are lost to modern boyhood, and only continue to exist for a handful of lucky collectors. "Eric" or "Cock House at Folsgarth" can be obtained from any bookseller today; the "Stacey series" infinitely greater, will never find its place in any bookshop. Perpetuity is denied to those marathon masterpieces by the very medium which made them possible.

The mighty unrolling canvas of the Gem and the Magnet gave Mr. Hamilton his tremendous advantage, but the important thing is that he had the gifts - and the stamina - to make the most of it. The elastic boundaries of the Gem and the Magnet would have been useless without genius. Other writers were given the same opportunity; few, if any

had the necessary talent to make the most of it.

Destiny provided Charles Hamilton with the medium most suited for his remarkable gifts; it just happened that way. The result was the Gem and the Magnet, plus the other papers and series which were produced to try to cash in on their successes.

The stiff-covered school story died as the Gem and the Magnet came into their own. Those two papers have been gone for nearly twenty years. Will the stiff-cover school story ever return? In these days of a decreasing reading public, too television-conscious, I doubt it, though Frank Richards, heaven be praised, has adapted himself successfully to the requirements of the age.

It's just my point of view! What's yours?

* * * * *

CONTROVERSIAL ECHOES

No. 30. WHAT MAKES A GOOD STORY?

ROGER JENKINS writes: "You are quite right in putting good writing as the main requisite of a first-class story. There are some series which I can open at any page and read on untranced even though I know what is coming. They may be series with unusual plots like the Rebel series or the Bunter Court series. On the other hand, they may be series without any sort of plot at all, like the Old Bus series.

There are certain mediocre stories, such as many detective tales, which one reads quickly because one wants to come to the end and see what the answer to the puzzle is. Having found this out, the story is discarded, never to be looked at again, despite the well-developed plot; after all, a crossword puzzle is not solved twice over. But with Charles Hamilton's best writing the plot is not the main item of importance, and so we can savour them over and over again with never-diminishing enjoyment.

A collector who regards Hamiltoniana in this light - and I am sure that most genuine Hamiltonians do - is therefore not really interested in the substitute stories except as quaint curiosities. Some of the imitators thought up excellent plots, but could not write in the original style, whilst others - especially in the late "Twenties" - made a close study of the original style, but still failed because, although the words were the words of Esau, the voice was still the voice of Jacob.

Mr. Samways is quite right in saying that the substitute stories kept the flag flying and often satisfied most of the readers, but that

does not make these stories any more readable to a collector, and the clever imitations of which Mr. Samways speaks are still an empty shell, with the spark of life missing. It is true that some of Charles Hamilton's stories were below par, especially during the war years, but it is equally true that when he was at his best he was streets ahead of any substitute writer, primarily because of good writing and secondly because of impeccable skill in characterisation."

DON WEBSTER writes: "I think that a good plot is the most important factor in any story. It is Charles Hamilton's skilfully-woven plots that make his stories such a delight."

GEORGE SELLARS writes: "A good story depends largely on how the author uses his characters in a sound theme, plus his ability to infuse his personal charm into the story. Many authors have made their stories tedious by padding and "harping on one string."

Most of the blue Gems and red Magnets, and some Rookwood tales, have been read and re-read many times over by myself and other Hamiltonians. Why? Because Charles Hamilton made his characters live, in his own inimitable way."

VINCENT PAGE writes; "I am sure that you are correct when you say that good writing is the most important quality of any story. But, as human intelligence varies, a well-written story may not prove to be readable by every individual. I think Sir Walter Scott's books were well-written, but I can't read them."

* * * * *

Those of us who enjoyed the Billy Bunter play at the Palace Theatre, London, last Christmas, will welcome the news that the Owl of the Remove will be making another London stage appearance this Christmas. He will, again in the person of Gerald Campion, open in Billy Bunter Flies East, on December 22nd for a four-week matinees only, run at the Victoria Palace. This should prove admirable fare for anyone in London during that month.

* * * * *

Are you selling Gems before 1290, Magnets before 1297, S.O.L. before 262, Nelson Lee before 296? Please write.

Wanted Spring Books, dust cover complete. Tom Merry Triumph, Through Thick and Thin, Disappearance of Tom Merry. State price.

J. S. HUGHES, 184 LEYBOURNE STREET, CHELNER, S.W.3., BRISBANE, AUSTRALIA.

QUIZZLE NO. 12.

A		1							
B	2			3					
C	4	5							
D		6	7						
E				8	9	10			
F		11	12						
G				13					
H	14								
I	15	16							
J		17							
K				18	19	20			
L	21	22							
M	23		24						
N		25	26						
O				27	28				

The letters in the numbered squares, if placed in sequence in the lower grid, will spell out one of the Stately Homes of old England.

CLUE DOWN: A. Descriptive of the Collectors' Digest Quizzes (6, 6, 3)

CLUES ACROSS:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	
20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	

- G. Dr. Chisholm doesn't hold this kind of a degree.
 H. Texas - where, but for a revised start, the Co would have reach an accident.
 I. Prefect who might be sharp.
 J. Probably, Peter learned to do this at an early age.
 K. With aid, you could assist Dutton with this.
 L. The mixed-up little kid, at the end of a short street, is a Removite.
 M. About red as Snithy might be.
 N. Halt, man, here to find the turret room.
 O. Alonzo was once rude and very loud, in a way.

* * * * *

Write on a postcard the words in the lower grid and the answer to the Clue Down. 5/- to the sender of the first correct solution received by the editor.

* * * * *

RESULT OF QUIZ LE NO. 11.

Solution to Clue Down: "Nuts of Highcliffe."

Hidden words: "Unprecedented and unparalleled."

First correct solution was received from C. H. Churchill, 103 Sidwell Street, Exeter, to whom 5/- has been sent.

* * * * *

I MEET GEORGE RICHMOND SAMWAYS

Part 4.

By W. O. G. LOFTS

Q. Were you the author of "Pride of the Ring" first published in the $\frac{1}{2}$ d. "Greyfriars Herald" - and later reprinted in the "Boys Friend Library" both under the name of 'Mark Linley.'

A. Yes, I was the author of these boxing tales - Neddy Welsh the boxer featured was actually the name of a boy at my old school. Archie Howell another character I created in the Magnet, was also a boy from my school in Surrey.

Q. It has recently been suggested that the 'Wingate's Love Affair' series in the Magnet, Nos. 660 - 664, were not written by Charles Hamilton. Can you throw any light on this subject?

A. These stories were certainly not written by me - and I should really like to peruse a copy of the series before making a definite statement. Going strictly from memory I feel sure however that they were written by Charles Hamilton. It well may be that he was sent the plots for them and he may have had to write on a subject with which he had no sympathy or enthusiasm. Hence, his work would appear less brilliant than usual.

Q. I expect that there were many amusing and interesting letters received in the Magnet office during your editorial connection with the Companion Papers. Did many readers think that Greyfriars and St. Jim's were real schools?

A. Where readers believed that the schools and characters were real we did not like to disillusion them. I remember one occasion when we took a young office boy - who believed that Greyfriars existed, down to my old school in Surrey, pointed it out to him from the adjacent pine-woods, and kidded him that it was Greyfriars!

Another time I remember that a brilliant Charles Hamilton story featured the unhappy plight of Dick Penfold - who was in a very dire need of financial assistance. His plight so moved many of the readers

that they sent him gifts of money addressed to 'Greyfriars School', Friardale, Kent. By arrangement with the Post-office these letters were transmitted to the 'Magnet' office - where the money, of course, went to a deserving charity.

On another occasion, I remember a gentleman named Vernon-Smith coming up to the Amalgamated Press - and very annoyed was he - that his name-sake the 'Bounder' was - or had been - featured in a very bad light!

Q. Who was actually the artist of drawings under the pen-name of 'Frank Nugent' mostly featured in the 'Greyfriars Herald.'

A. The artist was actually Lewis R. Higgins, who was first editor of the comic "Chuckles". A big jovial type of man, he unfortunately died at a very early age. Whilst on the subject of "Chuckles" it was myself who created the school of Claremont - featuring Teddy Baxter and Co. I am completely mystified at some appearing under the pen-name of 'Prosper Howard' - as I was never aware of any pen-name given. It is quite possible that they were taken over by another author during my war service.

Q. Were you aware that R.S. Warren-Bell had written a few Greyfriars stories?

A. I was astonished to learn that R.S. Warren-Bell has been credited with having written Magnet yarns. This great author of school stories (his tales of 'Greyhouse' and 'J.O. Jones' in the 'Captain' were classics) was personally known to me. Towards the end of World War I, he was drafted into the Royal Flying Corps, and served with me at Headquarters, South Eastern Area, St. James's Street, London. We often 'talked shop' together, but he never mentioned to me that he had written any substitute stories for the 'Magnet' and 'Gen'. He certainly never wrote any whilst I was on the staff; not did his name appear as a substitute author in records which I had access to. The only solution is that perhaps he wrote some whilst I was away from Fleetway House in the years 1917 - 1918. It may also be possible that he wrote some of the Gordon Gay stories in the 'Empire Library' under the pen-name of 'Prosper Howard' - for Warren Bell's brother wrote under the name of 'Keble Howard.'

(The information that Warren-Bell had written Magnets yarns came from Mr, Fred Gordon Cook, another of the prolific substitute writers, and an author in his own right. These were written under the editorship of John Nix Pentelov in the period 1917-18, which explains Mr, Samways being amazed at Warren-Bell's name included as a substitute writer.

Actually Warren-Bell was a great friend of Mr. Pentelow - and readers may recollect Mr. Pentelow mentioning this in one of his editorial chats - W. O. G. Lofts)

Q. Would you say that John Nix Pentelow was the greatest writer of cricket yarns for boys ever?

A. John Nix Pentelow had a more intimate knowledge of cricket than any other writer of his time. He had been editor of "Cricket"; he knew all the heroes of the game intimately, and was certainly well equipped to write on the subject. His stories may, indeed, have been somewhat too technical.

Q. What in your opinion were most powerful stories that Charles Hamilton ever wrote?

A. In my opinion, undoubtedly the Reginald Talbot yarns, featuring Marie Rivers, and that of her father Professor John Rivers. With the exception of some stories written by me at a later date, all the Talbot yarns were written by Charles Hamilton,

To be continued.

CRICKETANA

The following article by L. E. S. Gutteridge, is reprinted from the April 25th issue of the Cricketer. It is full of interest for members of our hobby circle!

This is in effect a Collector's Corner. It is not specifically called so, since I have a feeling that the term may have been used before. It is proposed to deal with items of exceptional interest at length, and to a lesser extent with such Cricketana as changes hands f from time to time, and may be worthy of note to the interested reader. It is also hoped to keep the reader interested.

That omnivorous collector, the late E. Rockley Wilson, possessed among many other fine things an exceptional collection of what might be called Cricket "Bloods." Such luscious titles as "Body-line Bill the Bowler" and "Cricketer-Cracksman" (run scorer by day and safe-breaker by night) are fair enough examples. They consist of lurid paper-covered magazines of some 64-90 pages most ineffectively secured with a wire staple that rusts rapidly. They retailed at 4d. each. These are a natural evolution of such collectors delights as Varney the Vampire, Dick Turpin, Sexton Blake and The String of Pearls. They have

a recurrent theme of the schoolboy's cricket hero, who, against the vilest jealousy and opposition of the relative of the county chairman, who happens to be captain, finally wins through the marry his beautiful and wealthy niece. He always plays for England and his deed with bat and ball are only equalled by his phenomenal fielding. I have much appreciated the excuse that this article provides to make time to read some of them.

One of particular interest is entitled, "Captain of Claverhouse" and, according to its cover and its half title, it is by "Wally Hammond, England's Famous Test Cricketer." It is a "stunning yarn of school and cricket." It was published by the Amalgamated Press and was No. 293 of The Boys' Friend Library (New Series) and has 64 pages. "Who 'sacked' Barham? All Claverhouse is buzzing with that question from the moment that a housemaster is found tied hand and foot with a sack over his head. Then comes a still bigger sensation; the finger of suspicion points to Drummond Cloyne, the finest cricketer and the most popular captain Claverhouse has ever had."

Does this whet your appetite? Alas it is long out of print and space-travel has usurped its place.

No. 680 of the Boys' Friend Library is also entitled "Captain of Claverhouse", has a new and brighter cover, is dated July 6th, 1939, and has no mention of any author's name. Then appeared a smaller publication with a newly designed cover. It is entitled, "Captains of Claverhouse" (the plural is intentional) and the author is given as John Grey. It is No. 23 in the "Boys' Wonder Library." The publisher is the same, but the price has fallen by half to twopence for 64 pages. How can a book with the same number of pages, but only half the number of words per page contain as much material as the 4d. edition? The answer is that it cannot and does not. The problem of condensing a book has caused many an editor to frown and the manufacturers of blue pencils to rejoice. There exists a perfect method that has the hall mark of genius by virtue of its simplicity and speed. The editor's furrows disappear and the blue pencil manufacturers pay a more modest dividend on their first debentures. Simply remove alternate chapters. I assure you that this method was adopted in John Grey's "Captains of Claverhouse." Doubtless the editor had the best interests of youth at heart and was intent on providing them with an opportunity to exercise their ingenuity and to develop their imagination, by filling in the gaps. I cannot feel that John Grey's edition, although at half-price, was good value as the original Wally Hammond at 4d. In any case, the Wally Hammond would be so much easier to swap.

Other titles are:- "The Mystery Batsman" (Grand Story of Cricket and International Intrigue), "A Wizard at the Wicket", "The Hypnotised Cricketer" and "The School Boy Test Match Player." There are many others.

* * * * *

REX DOLPHIN

Rex Dolphin wishes to thank, through the medium of Collectors' Digest, all those kind people who responded to his S.O.S. in S.B.L. No. 435, for a copy of the out-of-print Peter Saxon novel ACT OF VIOLENCE, all the more because not one asked for payment! Surely a very moving demonstration of the brotherly spirit which animates Blake-lovers. One gentleman (or lady?) omitted to enclose his (or her) address - it is hoped that this reader will accept thanks through the C.D. All others have been thanked personally.

As a result, Rex has a few spare copies of ACT OF VIOLENCE which he would like to dispose of to any readers needing it for their collection. First come, first served; He would also be pleased to hear from any readers interested in Blake - criticisms, collection-talk, gossip - anything, provided that Blake is the focal point.

He also makes a suggestion which might in some small way help to widen Blake's public. As we know, our S.B.Ls are displayed (if that is the word!) buried among piles of similar-sized publications. May we appeal to Blake-lovers on seeing such a display, to take a quick look round to make sure they are not being shadowed, and then very quietly pull out the Blakes and put them in the front of the pack!

* * * * *

DID YOU KNOW.....By Derek Adley

That, one of the most prominent authors concerned in the writing of the yearly Dixon Hawke Case Book was Western Story writer, T. C. H. Jacobs. Mr. Jacobs, whose real name incidentally is Jacques Pendower, does not write juvenile fiction much these days, but in pre-war years wrote for a variety of papers including Triumph, Wizard, Adventure, Dixon Hawke Library, and in more recent years has written for the Comet, Sun and Knockout Comic. Mr. Jacobs was also the author of the majority of Dixon Hawke serials that appeared in the Adventure, adding to this he was yet another of the band of Sexton Blake authors...and so the list grows.

That, the famous fictional character "The Scint" was based on a suggestion given to Leslie Charteris by Mr. Leonard Pratt, one time

editor of the "Thriller."

Leslie Charteris, whose real name is Leslie Charles Bower Lin, is the son of a Chinese surgeon, and today has become world famous due to the popularity of "The Saint" and enjoys a well established residence in America.

That, Frank Howe, who wrote for the post war "Western Library" and is perhaps not so well known to collectors, actually wrote about 150 of the Dixon Hawke Libraries, and all in his spare time, for writing was purely a recreational job, although he has written between 2000 and 3000 stories.

That, the man considered by many other authors to be the most prolific writer for D.C. Thomson's juvenile publications was Reginald George Thomas.

The quantity of stories he wrote was tremendous, one author gives his out ut as being about 12,000 stories and another describes him as Thomson's star writer, it would appear that this did not only apply to Thomson's for looking through the records it is apparent that he was also one of the A.P.'s busiest writers too. R.G. Thomas, who died sometime over a year ago, has a son who is now employed on the editorial staff of an Amalganated Press feminine publication.

That, Max Brand and George Owen Baxter whose stories appeared in the "Western Library" were one and the same man, the real identity being Frederick Faust.

Faust was one of the most prolific writers of this century and actually wrote under nineteen different pen-names, these being as follows:-

Max Brand	George Owen Baxter
Martin Dexter	Peter Dawson
Lee Bolt	Walter C. Butler
George Challis	Evan Evans
Evin Evan	Frank Austin
Peter Henry Morland	Hugh Owen
Henry Uriel	"M.B."
David Manning	John Frederick
Nicholas Silver	Frederick Frost
Dennis Lawton	

Stories under the names of George Owen Baxter and John Frederick appeared in Lloyd's Boy's Adventure Series during the 1920s. Faust who was an American, died from a shell fragment in the chest during world war two, while working as a war correspondent, he was aged fifty - two when he died and for many years previous was one of Street and Smith's

foremost writers.

Note - The above information has been selected from either letters from Editors and Authors or from reference books. Any errors can only be due to time and memory of the original author or recorder of the information.

NELSON LEE COLUMN

BY JACK WOOD, Nostaw, Stockton Lane, York.

Phone: 25795

* * * * *

Was Edwy Searles Brooks too fantastic in his stories of Nelson Lee and Hipper and the boys of St. Frank's, not, of course, forgetting the girls of Moor View?

That is a controversial question, and has received many answers over the years. In advance of his time, maybe, but fantastic? - the following extracts from recent issues of the York evening paper would suggest that fantastic is certainly not the right word to apply to Brooks' superb adventure stories in lands of fancy.

FREAK 'TROPIC' AREA IN THE ANTARCTIC

Members of the New Zealand Antarctic expedition who returned to Wellington today reported a strange "tropical place" in the heart of the Antarctic continent, says Reuter.

Dr. C. B. Bull, leader of the New Zealand Victoria University Antarctic expedition, said his party had struck "fantastically high temperatures" in a sevenweek expedition into strange dry valley systems of Victoria Land, west of McMurdo Sound.

"The highest temperature was 47 degrees and minimum temperatures 22 degrees Fahrenheit at our base" he said. "Winds blew up or down the valley where our base was set up.

"The wind from the plateau was warm, and the wind from the sea was cold. It was all crazy."

Glaciers melted

Dr. Bull said that, during his seven weeks in the Antarctic, his party worked in a "very special area" where glaciers melted and lakes of fresh water sparkled in the sunshine.

The dry valley area was a meteorological puzzle to which the expedition would seek an answer this winter from data gathered in the field.

According to all known facts, the wind from the 10,000 foot high polar plateau should have been cold and the wind from the sea warm.

It was possible that a large area of ice-free rock in the dry valley area had something to do with the puzzling weather conditions he said.

"We did not feel cold until we returned to Scott Base (McMurdo Sound). The base was at least 20 degrees colder than our tents in Rocky Valley in Victoria Land."

* * * * *

PLANET VENUS IS TARGET FOR JUNE

The United States Air Force will make two attempts to send space vehicles to the planet Venus in June, usually well-informed sources told Reuter at Cape Canaveral today. They will be part of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration's space programme for this year.

An official said the launching would be done by two-stage versions of the Thor and Atlas missiles, known as the Thor-able and Atlas-able.

The two shots at Venus would probably be attempted in the middle of June, when the earth and the planet are in the best positions relative to each other.

One shot would probably be an attempt to put a satellite into orbit round the planet, the other might go past it and beyond into outer space.

Old Boys Book Club

LONDON SECTION. The second meeting of the Michaelmas term took place at St. Frank's College alias Bob Blythe's abode at Neasden. Bob opened the lectures with a humorous reading from Nelson Lee Library No. 400 (old series) Petticoat Rule. This was well received as was Don Webster's "Anagrams" quiz. Eric Fayne's lecture this time was "Totto" with very acceptable prizes, new student John Brazier, winning one of the coveted etched drinking glasses.

"Lotto", by Bob Blythe, was thoroughly enjoyed; "Show Business"

Quiz by myself went down well and the ever popular Eliminator was another success. Bill Lofts rendered his selection of "Desert Island Books", quite a good collection for a castaway. His number one of "The Hotspur" which he shewed, was all the more memorable as he informed the gathering that all too soon "The Hotspur" was reverting to all picture strips. Pleasing to see Josie Peckman again amongst the gathering of 29.

Reuben Godsave hopes to have a likewise attendance when we meet at his residence at 35 Woodhouse Road, Leytonstone, London, E. 11. Phone: MARYland 1737. Sunday, November 15th. Those intending to be present kindly inform our host, Reuben Godsave. Full directions for getting there will appear in Newsletter. **UNCLE BENJAMIN.**

NORTHERN SECTION O.B.B.C. MEETING. 239, Hyde Park Road, Leeds - 10th October, 1959. Another excellent attendance for a popular Gerry Allison evening. Before the tea interval, Gerry delighted his audience with a survey of three main facets of the work of Charles Hamilton, comedy, drama and characterisation. His talk, which it is hoped will be printed in the Annual, was admirably illustrated with readings from Hamilton stories, notably of Clarence Cuffy's arrival at Rookwood and of the early adventures of Frank Courtenay, the Boy without a Name, at Highcliffe.

After tea, Gerry kept us on our toes with a subtly contrived puzzle in which we had to find, in order, the names of a number of St. Jin's scholars hidden in an accrostic. Geoffrey Wilde found the solution first.

In what has since turned out to be his last appearance at a meeting of the Club, Herbert provided more interesting news from C.D. sources and said the Annual was making good progress.

MIDLAND SECTION O.B.B.C. Meeting held 28th September, 1959. Apart from a quiz set by Tom Porter, which included Hamilton items and a reference to "A Magnet" and "A School Friend" in Win Partridges selection of eight books she would take on her Desert Isle, there was not much of the usual run of old boys book lore about this meeting. Norman Gregory gave us a very interesting talk on Talbot Baines Reed, who he claimed was the forerunner of the authors specializing in the school yarns we are familiar with. T.B. Reed began as a junior reporter in 1879 and wrote for the B.O.P. under the pen-name of Tibby. From then onwards up to 1892 his famous school yarns ran as serials in the B.O.P. These included, besides his best known classic - The Fifth Form at St. Dominics - such grand yards as "Tom, Dick and Harry" -

"The Three Guinea Watch" - "My Friend Smith" - "Master of the Shell" - "A Dog with a Bad Name" - and "Cock House at Fellsgarth." A remarkable fact was, that though all these classics showed a profound knowledge of life at a public school, it was established that Talbot Baines Reed had never been to a public school. Again Norman drew attention to the way these yarns of school life by Talbot Baines Reed (and others like him) were generally ignored by the O.B.B.C. and that despite the fact that one and all they were of a high moral standard.

During the night there was a very interesting discussion on the life and work of Zane Grey "The Man of the West". It transpired that quite a number of our members are Wild West fans and it was obvious that these tastes would have to be catered for in future programmes. This talk on Zane Grey followed on or was introduced by Win Partridge whose choice "The Deerstalker" - Grey's novel of the Grand Canyon of Colorado game reserve, as one of her Desert Island Books. Outdoor life in Canada was exemplified in a Jalna Book by Mazo De La Roche, also "British Birds" by Gordon Hamelyn. Her own selection from an anthology of poems was another choice and also "The Mermaid" by Hans Anderson. She would take a "Magnet" and a copy of the "School Friend." To complete this interesting mixture, Boccaccio's Decameron. A very interesting programme for the ten members who were present. A quiz of 15 items set by Tom Porter was won by myself with 11 right and the library raffle was won by Jack Corbett. The report in a London paper of an interview with Frank Richards by Brian Sayer, our young postal member, was passed round, too.

HARRY BROSTER - Secretary.

MERSEYSIDE BRANCH O.B.B.C. Sunday, 4th October, 1959. There was quite a good gathering for this: the eighth Annual General Meeting of the Merseyside Branch O.B.B.C. The election of officers was the first business to be dealt with and the result was that Don Webster was re-elected Chairman and the writer of these notes, Norman Pragnell, elected Secretary, for the second time in his seven years with the Club. Thirdly, George Riley was re-elected as Librarian.

A letter sent by Frank Unwin, the previous Secretary, to all branch members was fully discussed and debated. Certain conclusions regarding this were reached and agreed upon by all members. Under doctors orders Frank has had to give up many of his hobbies, the Club being one of them, but fortunately for us all, for only six months, when it is hoped that Frank, fully recovered, will return to take up his previous activities. Frank will be missed by us all, for over the past year he has been one of the branch's leading lights. It was also decided that

the office of Vice-Chairman should be dissolved.

It was further agreed upon that as we are a non-profit making branch our Library charge should be reduced - this to the benefit of us all.

After the rather heavy side of the meeting had been disposed of, tea and biscuits came as a welcome relief, and we all took time off to delve into the many new books that have been added to the library.

Further discussion of the Greyfriars Cup Competitions took place next and it was agreed that all entries would be read and finalised at the November meeting.

Don Webster's quiz came next, in which we were given three answers to each of fifteen questions. All we had to do was to signify the right answer. This turned out harder than it sounded with questions ranging from the F.A. Cup to twenty year old films. The quiz was won by Jim Walsh with eleven points, followed by Bill Windsor, Bill Greenwood and Frank Cass with ten points each. This quiz incidentally, completes our League Table, shewing Greyfriars to be at the top.

Members present were Don Webster, Jim Walsh, Frank Case, Bill Windsor, Ernie Steer, Pat Laffry, Bill Greenwood and yours truly.

Next meeting, 8th November at 6.30 p.m. when a special attraction will be a brand new musical quiz by Bill Windsor. Please note the new address. 7 GWENWYLLA ROAD, WATERLOO. NORMAN PRAGNELL - Secretary.

* * * * *

NOTICE

It would be greatly appreciated if all future correspondence and remittances for the Editor of the C.D., monthly or Annual, were sent to the new editor, Mr. Eric Fayne, Excelsior House, Grove Road, Surbiton, Surrey.

In order to clear up Herbert's estate, the following information would be welcomed by Jack Wood, 328 Stockton Lane, York, as soon as possible, so that the solicitors may complete their inquiries.

1. Details of present state, so far as known, of subscriptions for C.D. and C.D. Annual. Please bring up to date if in arrears.
2. Statement as to any books which Herbert may have held in transit between collectors; borrowed by him; or loaned by him. This will enable the Northern Section O.B.B.C. at his request, to dispose of Herbert's own books and papers to the best advantage.

The current issue of the C.D. has been produced and edited under great difficulties. The Agency has done a great job in ensuring that it is out as near to time as possible, and they are also working full pressure on the Annual. Please excuse any errors which may have crept in unnoticed.

JACK WOOD.

* * * * *

HERBERT LECKENBY
An Appreciation

Yesterday marked the passing of a milestone in my life. Yesterday I paid my last earthly respects to a wonderful man - a character the like of whom I am certain I shall never meet again, an enthusiast whose influence spread far beyond his native land, a writer of well above average ability, an acknowledged authority on all matters pertaining to juvenile and semi-juvenile literature, broadcaster, Coronation Medalist, a kindly and truly simple man, respected and loved by all who knew him and, to me, a close personal friend. Herbert Leckenby was guide, philosopher and mentor to all interested in old boys' books. He was also a real friend to all who had the honour of knowing him. Something vital has gone from the world with the passing of Herbert. We shall not see his like again. In the words that he once used when reporting the death of another old colleague - may the soil rest lightly on him!

Herbert Leckenby, we who knew you give thanks for that privilege. In that Valhalla to which you have gone, may you be able to continue with your life-long hobby. We can picture you debating and talking over new discoveries with Harry Stables, John Medcraft, Barry Ono and Joe Parks. We can visualise your enthusiasm in meeting some of those who have given you, and us, so much pleasure - with John Nix Pentelow, Bracebridge Hemyng, Gwyn Evans, Clarke Hook and Arthur Hardy, with Ballantyne and with Henty and others whose names, like your own, are loved throughout the world.

Au revoir, Herbert! I am convinced that we shall meet again and when that time comes, I look forward to many more long chats like we had on this earth, round that fireside in York. May we again ride the range with the Rio Kid and visit the ends of the world with Ferrers Lord, cheer on the Blue Crusaders in their battle for League and Cup, solve deep mysteries with Sexton Blake, and what I know would please you most of all, go back in memory to your beloved Wycliffe. Remember, Herbert, the first line of their school song? "She made him a gentleman, frank and free." Yes, she did, Herbert! Thank you! Au revoir!

R.I.P.

STANLEY SMITH