



CHAPTER 1.

The Disappearance of Maurice Hillyer. ANTHER GRAYLE fround as he present the receiver of the indephone close against his ear. It was a trunk call, and at first he mainly hear little beyond a dulk

grinding, whirring toice, as of inschinery in motion.

"Speak a little more destinctly," A voice that sounded this and metallic reached his ears above the dis.

"You are Gordon Grayle, are you and ?"

A Thrilling Tale of a NEW Detective, BY JACK LANCASTER.

"What has happened!"
"I cannot explain now, but we are in sore trouble. You will be well paid. Can you catch the twelve thirty-dive from Victoria!"
"Will you hold the line a minute, please!" the Panther replied.
He laid down the receiver and turned his face down the receiver and turned his face down the receiver and turned his face down that had been extried on, and was of course, quite unable to fill in the gapt.

The Panther beiefly explained everything.

Now and Interesting Story for All.

S R IRerry Christmas Co you. A TALE OF TOM MERRY'S CHUM

Dolors is Missing!

BIS PENFOLD came into the school-room in her hat and walking-dress, thowing that she had been out that morn-which accounted for no one ing eaught a glimpe of her, out it was her face that the pupils had at.

lating caught a glimpe of her.

But it was her face that the pupils looked at.

Miss Penfold was usually so grave and calm and self-possessed that any emotion in her face was certain to attract attention.

And now she was evidently labouring under a deep emotion.

A thrill ran through the school.

They felt that there was to be an explanation of the strange mystery at lat. They were to learn what had happened in the night of the stranger of t

"Oh!"
"Run away!"
"Good gracious!"
"My hat!" said the slangy Dolly.
"She's loited!"
Ethel did not speak. She was watching Miss Penfold's white, worn face.

watching Miss Penfold's white, worn law.

"I have been mobing inquiries all the morning," said Miss Penfold.
"There is no doubt that the foolish girl took the earliest train for London, and I have wired there. She will be stopped, and brought back bere, and will arrive this afternoon. That is all."

And Miss Penfold left the school-

none.

The girls poured out into the Close mid a babel of tongues.

Dolores's action had taken all by

"llolted!" said Dolly. "I never expected that."

"Bolted!" said Dolly. "I never expected that."
"Oh, vou never know what to expect of Dolores!" said Belle Illied.
"Fancy her running away at night, 1-should be afraid to."
"Oh, vour ea fraid of anything!" said Dolly scorafully. "I shouldn't be afraid to run away if I wanted to. But I shouldn't want to."
"She must have waited a long time for the train." Milly Pratt remarked.
"How lungry she must have been."
Ila, ha, ha!
Dolly Carew drew Cousin Ethel stade.

bolly Carew drew Cousin Ethel side.

"Did you know? she asked.

"Did you know? she asked.

"I suspiceted."

"I suspiceted."

"I suspice to the country of th

"Mways seeing about something beg, aren't you?" said Dolly, laugh-germon about that dress yet?" End flushed.
"Sho is going to wait," she said.

Win paid her the half-sore-

MARTIN CLIFFORD

Ethel Cleveland is a new girl at St. Freda's, and on her first day minds as shool is attracted by the personality of Dolores Pellann, a lught-spirited girl of Spanish descent. Dolores conflicts to Ethel that she hates the school, and intends to run away that night. In spite of on a principal, Miss Penfold, does all Ethel's attempts to stop her, recess causes much speculation.

(Now 90 on with the story.) GLANCE OVER THIS.

Two figures had entered—one that of a burly police-officer, the other that of a slim, pale girl in a cloak— and at the sight of her there was a

"Dolores!"
It was Dolores!
Miss Tyrrell closed the door upon
the hall, but it was in vain to
attempt to reduce the girls to attention again.

"Dolores!"

door was opened every neek was turned, every eye was upon that part of the hall that could be seen from the school-room, and teachers and lessons were for the moment totally forgotten.

"Yes."
"And she agreed to wait for the

reat?"
"Yes!" said Enid impatiently.
"I've told you so! Don't you believe

"Yes!" said End impatently.
"Yes of you so! Don't you believe me?"
"Yes," said Dolly, in surprise.
"Why shouldn't I believe you? How strange you are this morning. End. Didn't you sleep well last night?"
"I never woke up once."
"You look awfully seedy."
"Nomense!" said Entil brusquely. And she hurried out of the gates. Dolly glanced after her curiously, and shook her head.
"She looks cut up about something, doesn't she!" Dolly remarked.
"She may be worried about Dolores," Ethel suggested.
Dolly Carew laughed.
"Not likely! She didn't like Dolores; she was always down on her!"
"That may make her all the

her!"
"That may make her all the sorrier now that poor Dolores is in trouble. It would some people," said Ethal.

trouble. It would some people," said
"II'm, yes! But I don't think
Enid is one of those people. Poor
old Dolores! I auppose she will be
expelled now."
"Ethel started.
"Expelled!"
"Yes; nothing else, after trying
to run away from school. Why, it
might have got the school into the
papers! I really don't believe Miss
Peoflold would ever have got over it
fit had."
Elhel's brow was clouded. She
thought it very probable that Dolores
would be expelled from St. Freda's,
when she came to think of it, and her
heart ached for the wayward girl.

Dolores's Return.

Dolores' Return.

THE St. Freda's girls looked forward anxiously for the return of Dolores Pelham. Miss Penfold had spoken so assuredly that they had not the least doubt that her statement was correct, and that the runaway would arrive that

that the runaway would arrive that afternoon.

Doubtless the police had been communicated with, and probably they had been ready for poor Dolores to slight when the train stopped un London. At all events, the girls had not the slightest doubt that Dolores would be brought back in the afternoon, as Miss Penfold had declared. And they were right.

It was near the end of the afternoon lessons, in which the girls took so little interest, as was natural under the circumstance, that the teachers were less even-tempered than usual.

than usual.

The suppressed excitement did not make for calm work. As four o'clock struck, leaving only another half-hour of school work, the excitement was keen. Nothing had been seen of belorger set.

Nothing had been seen of Dolores yet. But a few minutes after the hour the sound of wheels was heard in the Close.

lose.
A thrill ran through the classes.
"It's Dolores!" murmured Dolly

"It's Dolores: manufac," whispered
"I know that rumble," whispered
Milly Pratt. "It's the hack from
the village.
Ethel smiled. But Milly was right
it was the village heek. The open
deor of the big school-room gave a
view upon the hall, and as the great

"Why should Dolores be arrested?" she asked. Evid turned away without reply-

Early turned away without reply-ing the property of the property of the pro-sen believe. But the girl was short up in Miss Penthol's room with the principal of St. Freda's.

Little did the girls dream of what was passing. In that room believe was setting bolt upright upon a chair, her hands chapped in her lap, when Miss Penthold catterd. The head-mistress's face was hard as grantic, hat Dolores did not look at her. Her own, Jaro was hard with defiance. She had been recaptured, but not conquered.

but Dolores dui not losse. The with defaarce. She had been recaptured, but not conquered.
Dolores did not rise.
Mise Penfold stopped, and looked fisselly at the Spanish grit.
"Dolores' si's he said quietly.
Half unwillingly Dolores cons to her feet. She meant to be defant, but there was something in Miss Penfold's meaner that impelled respect. Her eyes met Miss Penfold's steadily enough, however.
"I am sorry for this, Dolores," aid Miss Penfold quietly.
"I am sorry for this, Dolores, "aid hardly credit it when I found it was the case. In spite of all your faults, capable of this."
Dolores's eyes flashed.
"I hate St. Frea's he said, in a low, firm one. I telest the place—and the people. I will not stay for yeopoly lack, but I will not stay. If my people will not know for most There will be no 'necessity for that," said Miss Penfold quietly.
"There will be no 'necessity for that," said Miss Penfold quietly.
"You will not be allowed to remain at St. Freda's now, whether you wish or not. There is no place for you in this school."
Dolores' sin curled.
"I am glad of it."
"You see glad to be expelled!"
Dolores winced.

ignorant of what happened last night? said Miss Penfold impatiently. ignorant of what nappears inght? said Mis Penfold impatiently. "For your parents sake, and the sake of the good name of the school, I shall hush the matter up. I have sent the policeman away without breathing a word of your action. In time to come you will regard it, I am sure, with as much disgust and horror as I feel now?"

much descen-now!" Dolores panted.
"What-what do you mean?" she "What-what do tunder-stand! What is it you have not told the officer-be knows everything. I was met at the London station by an inspector, as I stepped out of the rinn, and this man was sent down here with me. Ho knows that I had run away from school." Miss Penfold made an impatient

Miss Penton Why will you affect ignorance. Dolores! Hrick called my attention to the broken ivy on the school wall his morning, and asked me to see if there were anything missing in the house, as he feared that burglars had been here."

"And I was missing."

house, as he tests house, as he tests here.

"And I was missing."

"Yes, you were missing, Dolores—
and something else!"

"Something else!"

Dolores's dark eyes were wide open.

Dolores dark eyes were mow.

Miss Penfold made a weary gesture.

"Dolores, why will you prevaricate! You know what was missing."

"I do not."

"Nonsense! As soon as Prick made his statement, I remembered the money I had left in my desk, and I went there to see whether it was safe."

asle."

A strange palences crept into Dolorce's olive checks. She looked fixedly at the principal of St. Freda's.

"The—the money!" she faltered.
"Yes."

But-but what has that to do with

"It was gone."
"The money was gone?"
"Yes."

Dolores's eyes were wide open in

ror. But-but-but-" She faltered I stammered. "But-you do not

"But-but-but-" She fallered and stammered. "But-you do not think that I have taken the money!"
"Do you think I have taken it?" Objects in June 1 you are saying this to frighten me-to punish me-you do not think I am a thie!" "Dolores!"
"Why do you you you you want to see the saying this want to frighten me-to punish me-you do not think I am a thie!" "Dolores!"

am a thief?"

"Dolores!"

"Dolores!"

"Why do you not speak!" said Dolores, her voice breaking. "Miss Penfold! You do not —you carmot think! You do not —you carmot think! I took money from your deek!"

Miss Penfold was silent. This passionate denial quite confounded her. She had not dreamed of thinking otherwise for a moment; the fact that Dolores and the money were missing at the same time had seemed conclusive enough, without much thinking about the mister.

She was startled now, and strangely disturbed.

"Do you mean to say that you did not take it!" she exclaimed.

"I did not—I did not!"

"It was taken—it was gone during the might," said Miss Penfold. "St. Freda's certainly was not entered from outside. Dolores hurst into a dry soh.

"I am telling the truth." Hold not take it—I did not know it was missing. Oh, believe me!"

Miss Penfold shook her head.

"I cannot believe you," she said.

Guilty or Innocent? THERE was a long silence in the

THERE was a long second and sitern, her face very hard and pale. She did not believe Delores; she could not believe be stuned. Her handsome, dusky face was pele and almost haggard. The terrible accusation had burst like a thunder bold upon her.

accessation had burst like a thunders boil upon her. She had been prepared to face het punishment for running away; she had expected that, and she was read to be defiant, whatever was inflicted, but this.

had expected that, and she was ready to be defiant, whatever was inflicted. But this—
This was disgrace—this was shame. The girl's brain seemed to reel as she thought of it.

She realised how she had placed her self under suspicion—her flight, coin ciding with the theft from the principal's desk, had made it inevitable that she should be suspected. And how was she to prove her innocence. That was impossible.

That was impossible.

The world be expelled from St. Freia's—as a thief!
And at the thought of it, the TRE EMPTRE LISBRATT.—No. 5.

Splendid NEW STORY!



"Oh, Miss Penfold, I am innocent-I am innocenti" Dolores, her voice broken and husky. "I am not a sh. belleve me

Burzes of talk would break out again and again, and at last the school was dismissed, a few minutes early, to the equal relief of mistresses and pupils.

Meanwhile, Dolores had gone to Miss Penfold's room. The polices officer who had brought her to St. Freda's was provided with refershment, and departed just as the gittle courted out of the big school room. They watched him with award mistrested eyes as he strole majestically across the Close and distincted by the state of the strength of the state of the big school room. They watched him with award and boys have run away from school before."

"Brought back by a policeman!"

"Brought back by a policeman!"

"State of the her back. Nobody understands to the school was previous and you not have you as proud and was you are."

"What I am! What do you mean, may you on think it wicked!" exclaimed Dolores passionately. "Girla and boys have run away from school before!"

"I was not now speaking of your was gone with the was seller to the school was a characteristics."

"I was not now speaking of your was provided that was seller was the was seller to the school was provided to the back was a supposed."

"I was not now speaking of your was provided and boys have run away from school before."

"I was not now speaking of your was provided and boys have run away from school before."

"I was not now speaking of your was provided and boys have run away from school before." and pupils. Meanwhile, Dolores had gone to Miss Peufold's room. The police-officer who had brought her to St. Freda's was provided with refreshment, and departed just as the girls poured out of the big school-room. They watched him with axed and interested eject as he strode majestically across the Close and disappeared. "Brought back by a policeman!" said Milly Pratt. "How awful! It was like being arrested! "Perhaps Delores was arrested," said Enid Carven.

Dolly stared at her.

before?"

"I was not now speaking of your leaving St. Freda's, though that was very, very wrong!"
"Then whata..."
"Do not attempt to deceive me, Delores; you cannot think I am

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(Continued from the previous page.)

Spanish girl's stubborn pride broke down, and the tears came into her eyer and ran down her cheeks. Miss Penfold watched her severely, "Well, Dolores?" she said, at leasth.

length. "I am innocent!"

You will not believe me?"

youne, come!"
"You will not believe me?"
"I cannot!"
"Oh, but I am innocent! You may search if you like, you will not find the money!" the Spanish girl exclaimed.
"You must be searched, Dolores, if you do not give up the money," said Mass Penfold. "Think, you foolish child! Even if you have parted with the money, it can be traced, and the theft brought home to you. I had, fortunately, not left any gold in the desk; there were two brakentes for five pounds each. One was taken. I suppose you are aware that banknotes are numbered. It will be quite easy for the police to trace the one you took, if you have parted with it."
"But I did not take it." "But I did not take it."
"Dolores!"

"Dolores!"
"I did not take it."
The head-mistress was silent.
Dolores sobbed, and then dashed her

Delores solbed, and then dashed her tears angrily away.

"I am innocent," she said. "I had no thought of taking money—I have money of my own, which I have saved—three or four pounds. You know my father sends me a great deal of treese."

"I know it. But-"

"I fild not need to take any. But I would have died rather than take it, if I had been starving!" exclaimed Dolores passionately. "Oh, it is wicked, wicked, to accuse me! You know that I did not take the money!" Miss Penfold's cheeks burned.

"Dolores! How dare you speak to me like that!"

"low dare you accuse me of being a thief!" exclaimed Dolores. "I am not one—I would have died first! If the money is gone, someone clso has taken it!"

"It is impossible! I tell you there
"It is impossible! I tell you there
were two banknotes, and only one was
taken. It is childish to suppose that
a burglar would have taken one and
not the other!"
"Ho may not have seen the other,"
said Dolores.
"They were folded up together."

They were folded up together."

I—I do not know what happened
only know that I did not go to
r desk!"

I only know that I did not go to your desk!"

"You went to my room."

"I had to go to the room, as it was the only window I could open."

"And you ask me to believe that you did not go to the rook eyect that you did not go to the desk. It is absurd, Dolores; you cannot expect me to believe you."

"I am speaking the truth."

Mise Paridod shock her head.
Dolores sobbed again. In the hard, unbelieving face before her now, she read what the rest would think of her.
All St. Freda's would know—would believe—that sho was a thief.
It was one thing to leave St. Freda's because she had too stubborn a pride to bend to the restraints of discipline. It was quite another to go because she was an thief-because she was unfit for the other girls to speak to.
Dolores realised that.

The more she disliked St. Freda's, the more she disliked St. Freda's, the more she disliked St. Freda's,

Dolores realised that.

The more she disliked St. Freda's, the more she despised the other girls there, the more hitterly humiliated she felt at the thought that they would be a support that they would be supported by the state of the support of

now despise her.

Despise her:

It made the blood flame in her cheeks to think of it. Dolly Carew would despise her, and greedy little Milly Praft; and even Enid Craven, the mean Enid, would be able to despise her now.

would despise her, and greedy little Milly Pratt, and even Enid Craven, the mean Enid, would be able to despise her mean Enid, would be able to despise her might be despise her might be despised at Miss Penfold's feet, elasping the elder lady's creas with convulsive hands. Her white, tear-stained face was turned up to the stem countenance of the St. Fred's. Head.

"Oh, Miss Penfold, I am innocent—I am innocent!" she panted, her voice broken and husky. "Will you to be been been entitled by the stem of the latest ways, Miss Penfold! I know I have done wrong—I can see it how—but—but I am not a thief! Oh, believe me!"

The Empire Library.—No. 5.

The passionate outburst strangely moved Miss Penfold.
"If I could only believe you, Delores!" she said, in a low voice.
"It is translated!"

polores!" she said, in a low voice.
"It is true—true!"
Miss Penfold besitated.
In spite of herself, a feeling was rowing within her that circumstances uight have conspired to east this lack suspicion upon the Spanish girl.
She raised Dolores gently enough.
"Sit down, dear," she said quietly, Let us talk this over. Calm yourelf!"

self!"

"But you believe me?"

I will try to believe you," said
Miss Penfold, with a sigh, "But,
Delores, the banknote was taken.
That you no longer have it is nothing
you may have passed it, or thrown
it away after you were caught. Can
you give me any reason to suppose
that someone else may have taken it?
Goodness knows, my only desire is to
do justice in the matter!"
Dolores started.

"Ethel!"
Miss Penfold looked nurried.

Dolores started.

"Ethel! What do you mean!"

"Ethel Cleveland knows that I did
not take it!" cried Dolores.

"What! How can Ethel Cleveland
know anything about it!"

"Send for her—she will fell you!"

exclaimed Delores triumphantly.

Miss Penfold looked very puzzled.

"Very well; I will send for her,"
she said. "But I really cannot see
how a new girl at St. Freda's can
throw any light upon the matter."

She touched a bell.

The maid masswered it was told
to fetch Ethel, and in a couple of
minutes Ethel Cleveland appeared at
the door of Miss Penfold's study.

"Come in, my deer!" said Miss
Penfold, as Cousin Ethel hesistated.

"You may sit down. Dolores thinks
that your evidence may be of some
use to her; it appears that you know
something of her movements last
night."

Cousin Ethel coloured.

night."
Cousin Ethel coloured.
"Yes," she said quietly.
Her glance rested upon Dolores a moment. She had not expected the Spanish girl to draw her into the matter. But she had no thought but to tell the exact truth. Dolores understood her look, and broke out reassionately.

derstood her 100s, passionately, "You do not understand, Ethelyou don't understand yet! I am accused of stealing a banknote from Miss Penfold's desk when I ran away bet night,"

last night."

Ethel gave a start of horror.

"Stealing a bunknote?" sh

faintly. "Yes."

Hantiv. "Yes."

"Impossible!"

"I hope it is impossible," said Miss Penfold quietly. "That is what we are to find out. Tell me what you know about the matter. Ethe!"
Cousin Ethel glanced at Dolores. "Yes, yes!" exclaimed the Spanish gid eagerly. "Tell Miss Penfold all about the matter—everything as it happened!"

"Very well."
Cousin Ethel told what she knew, quietly and calmly.
"Dolores had told me that she was going to run away from the school. I

going to run away from the school. I tried to persuade her not to do so; and I stayed awake to stop her if she should go."

tried to persuade her not to do so; and I stayed awake to stop her if she should go."

"Why did you not tell me?" said Miss Penfold gently.
"I had promised to say nothing."

"Stay a moment!" exclaimed Miss Penfold, remembering Enid Craven's visit to her the previous evening. "Bid anyone close know of this!"

"Yes Auther girl heard us speking off Auther girl heard us speking off anyone close know of this!"

"Yes Auther girl heard us speking off Auther girl heard us speking off Auther girl heard us speking off Auther girl heard us preking of Auther girl heard us preking of Auther girl heard us preking of Auther girl heard us on."

"Yes, Miss Penfold.
"Yes, Miss Penfold, "She left the school by the window of this room, and'r followed her into the grounds. I persuaded her to return, and we went back to bed. I fell asleep, and then—then Dolores must have left the dormitory sgain, and I did not hear her."

Ethel slodered.

Ethel slodered.

Ethel slodered.

But what does this prove for you. Date the grounds. End ig to this penfold desk, Ethel!"

Ethel sloder.

"On you not see?" oxclaimed Dolores eagerly.

"Do you not see?" oxclaimed Dolores have had the lead.

"Certainly of the lead.

"Certainly of the lead.

"Certainly of the lead.

"And I had gone out, intending to leave then!" exclaimed Dolores hurriedly. "If I had wanted to go

to the desk, Miss Penfold, I should lave gone then, when I first tried to leave the school. I did not know that Ethel was following me."

Miss Penfold was silent. Certainly there was a great deal in what the Spanish girl said.
If she had taken the hanknote for the expenses of her flight, she would certainly have taken it when she left the house the first time. Yet it might, have been an after-thought. the expenses of her flight, she would certainly have taken it when she left the house the first time. Yet it might have been an after-thought. Miss Penfold's mind wavered, but in spite of herself Dolores' carnestness was impressing her. She was no longer certain of the Spanish girl's guilt.

longer certain of the Spanish girl's guilt.

"Was anyone else awake at this time!" she asked slowly.

Dolores shook her head.

"I blink not."

"But, my child, if you did not take the note from my desk someone else must have done so," said Miss Penfold. "Someone else must have been up last night!"

Cousin Ethel gave a start.

"Dolores" she exclaimed breath-lessly. "You remember the light—



Two figures entered—one, that of a burly police-officer, the other that of a slim pale girl in a cloak—and at the sight of her there was a murmur "Dolores!"

the match that was struck in this room while we were in the grounds?"
Then Dolores chapted her hands.
Yes, yes! I remember! Whoever struck that match was the thief!"

On the Track.

On the Track.

M ISS PENFOLD looked at the
two girls in surprise. Her
look demanded an explanatool, and Ethel hastily
The head-mistress listened with
deep attention.
"Then someone else was downsteirs
while you were in the garden?" she
said.

while you were in the garden!" she said.
"Yes."
"You did not see her?"
"No."
"Have you any idea who it was?"
Not at all," said Cousin Ethel, with a shake of the head. "I saw nothing but the match burning for a few seconds."

few seconds."

Miss Penfold compressed her lips.

"This is a very strange story," she

Miss Penfold compressed her lips.

"This is a very strange story," she said. "I will not say that I believe Dolores to be innocent—that would be saying too much. But my belief in her guilt has been very strongly shaken, and I shall not act hastily in the matter. Dolores, you will go to your cubicle, and remain there for the rest of the day, while I consider the matter. Ethel, you will say nothing of what has passed in this room. This is not a matter that I wish to have discussed in the school."

"I understand, Miss Penfold."

"I ean rely upon your digeration."

"I understand, Miss Penfold."

"I understand, Miss Penfold."

"I ean rely upon your discretion, I am sure, You may gon,"

Cousin Kthel left the principal's study, with a smile of encouragement to the Spanish girl as she went.

Elliel went out, with her brain almost in a whirl. The happenings of the last two days had been very sapid and very strange. Little had she dreamed of finding herself in the midst of such a whirl of events when she came to 8t. Freda's. Of one thing she was quite sure—Dolores was

innocent. Little as she knew of the Spanish girl, she was certain that Dolores was incapable of a despicable action, wild and wayward as she might be. The other side seathers. innocent. Little as she knew of the

might be.

The other girls gathered round
Ethel at once as she came out into the
broad, flagged passage, curious to
know why she had been sent for, and
what had passed in Miss Penfold's
study.

Study.

But Ethel would not satisfy their

curiosity.
"Is Dolores going to be expelled?"
asked Belle Hilton.

"I don't know."
"Was Miss Penfold very angry!"
"What did Dolores say!"
"Why did Miss Penfold send for

"Why universely to the state of to say," sho replied.
"Nonsense!" said Belle, in her de-cided way. "What are you keeping secrets for?"
"I am not keeping secrets, hat..."

"I am too."
"Stuff!"
"Yes, stuff and rats!" said Dolly
Carew. "Go ahead, Ethel!"
But Ethel shook her head.
The girls, though considerably surprised and somewhat exasperated, lether alone at last.
Cousin Ethel walked away under the class, to think the matter over alone. Enid Craven followed her there. Lucius, to tuning alone. Enid Craven Iouous there, "Ethel Cleveland!" she said and "be was "be was

Ethel looked round. She had not seen Enid following her, and she was not pleased.
"Yes? What is it?" she said, curtly

"I wish you would tell me what Miss Penfold wanted you for. What did Dolores and Wanted you for. ouss Penfold wanted you for. What did Dolores say? Was Miss Penfold angry with her?"

did Dolores say? Was Mrss Penromangry with her?"
"I suppose so."
"About her running away?"
"Probably anything else!"
Ethel looked at Enid quickly. The
girl's face was very white, and there
was an eagerness there was no mistaking in her look and fone. Did
Enid know anything of that accusation which had, been made in the
seclusion of Miss Penfold's study?
Had she been listening sgain? Ethel's
lip curled.

curled.

Anything else!" she repeated.

that else? What else was there

Miss Penfold to be angry about?" "What

Enid coloured.

"Oh, I—I don't know!" she stammered. "But—"
"You have been listening!" said

Eth

Ethel.
"Then—then there is something else?" cried Enid.
"If you have listened, you know—but if you do not know, I shall not tell you," said Ethel. "It is mean

tell you," said Ethel. "It is mean
to listen—contemptible!"
"I have not listened."
"Then how do you know—I mean,
why do you ask me that question?
What can you know about it?"
"Nothing, but—"
"Well, I have nothing to tell
you," said Ethel. And sho turned
away.

Well, I have nothing to ten you," said Ethel. And she turned away,
Enid Craven did not follow her.
Ethel sat down upon a seat under the shadow of the clms. The sunset was bright on the grass in the Close. She could hear the mery grilish voices as she sat there, but she paid them no heed. She was thinking.
Dolores was in her was thinking.
Dolores was in her doom. That she would have to seemed certain, leave St. Freda's exemed certain, leave St. Freda's exemed certain, leave St. Freda's exemed certain, leaves the word, and it might be possible as the third? That it was not Dolores, Ethel felt certain. It was the unknown person who had struck the match in Miss Penfold's study the previous night, the flicker of which the two girls had seen from the darkness of the Close.
But who was that?
Ethel did not know much as yet of the cuited St. Ereda's, but when also

ness of the Close.
But who was that?
Ethel did not know much as yet of the girls of St. Freda's, but when she the girls of St. Freda's, but when she thought of the fresh, healthy faces, who found it hard to credit that there might be a thief among them. She started as a new thought came into her mind.
The theft had heen so well-timed for suspicion to fall upon Dolors—it looked as if the thief knew that the Shanish girl was about to leave the school, and laid plans accordingly. Who knew it besides herself?
Ethel compressed her lips as she thought of Enid Craven.
Enid had known it, and, contrary to Ethel's expectation, had not betrayed the Spanish girl to the Head.
Enid was the one girl at St. Freda's whom Ethel would have been more wealy to dust than any other.

And what did End's mysterian hints as to the "something chee Was Penfold might be anny about men's his hints as to the "something chee Was Penfold might be anny about men's She knew that Dolora was cherry with something more than the something the state of the something than the state of the something than the something that the something the something that the something that the something the somethi

Ethel!"

"Ethel!"
Ethel turned her head.
Carew was looking at her with with open eyes of astonishment.
Ethel turned between the coloured.
"What is the matter, Ethely exclaimed bolly, "I Came to keek for you! We want you to favor rounders! What is the matter; "Nothing!" said Ethel.
"You'll would rather go for a sale," said Ethel, "if you will come you'll rounders! When you? I have not seen the village retained and—and I want to go there parkey.
Italy noabled!

and—and I want to be a supersonal larly."
Dolly nodded, "Certainly," she said. "I'll ed out to Belle."
And five minutes later the two tris were walking down the leafy lare to Elmhurst.

A Visit to Mrs. Scruss.

D OLLY kept up an increase cluster all the way. She tall Cousin Ethiel everything to knew about the locality, about the footpaths and the woods, that the surroundings of St. Fresh, was so interested in her own outcomes to the table hardly noticed that Ethe said scarcely a word.

id scarcely a word.
Ethel was busy with her one

tion that she hardly noticed that Ebe said scarcely a word.

Ethel was busy with her ear thoughts. She felt that she possessed the class thoughts. She felt that she possessed the class to the mysterious happening at \$t\$. Freda's, and she alone. It was as pleasant to her to make any investration into the matter, but Dolore an accused—Dolores was in danger of being branded as a thicf. To bring the guilt home to the right perse was Ethel's duty if she could do it. "And this is the village," all Dolly at last.

Ethel, as a matter of fact, he hardly heard a word that the volaried Dolly had been saying all the way, but she nodded, with a smile.

"Where does Mrs. Scruton live!" all the way, but she nodded, with a smile.

"Where does Mrs. Scruton live!" between the sked.

"Mrs. Scruton!" ejaculated Dolly, "Yes, but—"
"Under does ahe live!"
"Look hern," said Dolly, "you'te not roing to Mrs. Scruton."
"Why not?"
"Decause she's not a nice veena. She over-charges fearfully, for out thing, and then she encourages prowith money to run into debt, and give all sorts of things on the bill," said Dolly, "Miss Penfold deem! the said to go to her. That is why Enid was to go to her. That is why Enid was to go to her. That is why Enid was so accared."
"I want to see her," be said. "She'n not a nice person to see. She's treating Enid very shabbily, I think, Of course, slips tee Tool of the print debt want to see her," he said. "She'n not a nice person to see. She's treating Enid very shabbily, I think, Of course, slips tee Tool of the print debt course."

not a nice person to see. She's treating Enil very shabbily, I think. Of course, also let Enil get into debt, thinking also would get the money from her people. It would be only what she descrees if she were never paid at all."

paid at all."

"But I want to see her."

"Oh, I suppose you have a nesser from Enid!" said Dolly. "The wel! How dense of me not to thak it that!"

"Oh, I won't ask any question!" said Dolly, laughing. "I'm set interested in Enid's debts and the culties. She is lucky to have a good nature goods like you to help be out of sem. This is Mrs. Scrubal house.

out of sem. This is Mrs. Scow-house.

She stopped at the garden gate of a tasteless-looking, rechrick vila-ous of the few modern house in the village of Elmhurst. A brase par-ticle on the door amounced that is dwelling of Mrs. Seruton, and Mrs. Seruton was a "modific", and prepared to make up laine out

"I'll wait for you here," said Delly,
"I'll come in if you like."
"Oh, not at all! Wait here, then?
a dear!"

a dear!"
"Right-ho!" said Dolly chewfullt.
And Cousin Ethel went up to the
door alone.

(Another big instalment of this op-story in next Wednesday's "he Library, Umal size, and usual p one halfpenny.)

WEDNESDAY. A NEW COMPLETE STORY! A Tale of SLIPPER AND WY WHANG.

cceeeecccccccccccccccccccccccccccc The Rivals of St. Kits.

By CHARLES HAMILTON.

A Short Instalment of this Popular School Tale

At Midnight in the Close.

At Midnight in the Closs.

"I DON'T believe—"
"Oh, shut up, and come on!
You make me tired!"
Timble strode away, and
Cleeve followed him, gruinbling
audibly. It was evident that he did
not believe that his companion in
dishonesty had dealt fairly by him.
The chums of the Fourth remained
where they were until the two
rascals had had time to return to
the school, when they rose to their
feet.

the school, when they rose to their feet.

"This is a stroke of luck," murmured Pat. "The committee of investigation are coming out strong, and no mistake. Come on, Blaggy; quiet does it?"

Pat led the way from the ruins. Keeping carefully in the shadow of the trees, the boys drew nearer to the house. Pat suddenly seized Blagden, and dragged him deeper into the shade of an old elm.

In the dim starlight a figure could be seen crossing the Close towards the School House. It was the figure of a well-built man, who certainly did not belong to the place. His stealthy manner naturally suggested that he was a burglar.

"Great Scott! It's Squire Lacy of Dymwood!"

"Great Scott It's Squire Lacy of Lynwood!"
Suddenly the rquire stopped. He stood staring towards the old elm-tree, in the shadow of which the juniors were crouched.

Squire Lacy had caught a glimpse of them in the starlight. For a moment he had moved in pursuit; then he stopped, swung round, and strode away. He was certainly un-aware that he had been recognized, and he desired to remain unknown. At the window Pat turned back, and was greatly relieved to see that the squire had disappeared.

"Mum's the word, Blaggy.

"Mum's the word, Blaggy. We'll tell Talbot to morrow, and see what he says. Now let's get in, and see if Greene is there."

Greene's face was looking at them through the window. He opened it as he saw Pat at the sill, and gave them a hand in.

"Where are those two rascals?" asked Pat.

"Gone to their little bunks," chuckled Greene. "I watched 'em, and then came back and unfastened the window. Where are you going

the window.

"To wake up Brooke."

And the committee of investigation made their way at once to the
room where the new captain of St.
Kit's lay in slumber.

Mr. Slaney Gets at the Truth-Cleeve's Confession.

Confession.

B ROOKE was sleeping soundly.
From a pleasant dream he was suddenly awakened by a violent shaking.
Pat proceeded to explain matters as briefly as he could.
"Wait here for me," said Brooke.
"Pill be back in a minute or two."
"Righth-io. We'll wait!"
In a few minutes Brooke resourced, accompanied by Mr. Slaney. The latter was in dressinggown and slippers, and looked extremely grave.

Slaney. The latter was me and looked extremely grave. "Tell Mr. Slaney what you have told me, Nugent," said Brooke. Pat went through the story of the night's adventures once more, emitting nothing except the meeting with the equire in the warlit Close. That incident was for Talbot to hear later.

with the squire in the starlit Close. That incident was for Talbot to hear later.

"I believe you, Nugent," said the Form-master gravely: "but the story will soon be put to the test, in any case. Come with me!"

Brooke lighted a candle. Mr. Slaney took it in his hand, and proceeded to the Lower Fourth formitory. They followed him in silence.

"Cleeve!"

Mr. Slaney spoke quietly hut firmly. As if there were some resistless power in the master's voice, Cleave opened his eyes. He had not the nerve to keep up the deception with the Form-master's keen gate fixed upon his face. His eyes opened and met Mr. Slaney's.

The Empire Linnany.—No. 5.

"You have been to the old chapel onight? Answer me—the truth,

"Ye-ces!"
"Why did you go!"
"I-I went because Trimble wanted me to."

"Why did Trimble want you to?"
"To-to get the money that was hidden there," gasped the wretched junior—"the money that was stolen from Dr. Kent's desk!"

om Dr. Kent's desk!"
"How did you know it was hidden

there?"

"I-I saw Lacy hide it there!"
groaned the miscrable wretch, the
words, as it were, torn from him.
There was a general exchanation.
Half the dormitory had been
awakened, and a dozen cars had
caught Cleeve's startling statement.
"Now, will you swear that it was
Lacy you saw hide the money in
the old crypt?"
"Yes, sir. I wondered what he
was skulking into the ruins for at
night, and I watched him, and I
saw it all."
"Where is the money you took as
your share?"
"In—in was pooled; it."

"You share" to the money you took as your share" "In-in my pocket, sir."
"Give me it."
Mr. Slaney, carrying Cleeve's jacket under his arm, utrned and left the dormitory, followed by Brooke and the chums of the end study. He left the room in a buzz of talk behind him.
Meanwhile Mr. Slaney and his companions proceeded to the Upper Fourth dormitory.
The master of the Fourth halted beside the head of Trainble's bed.
"You need not pretend to be asleep, Trimble".

asleep, Trimble."

Trimble had more nerve than Cleeve, but there was something in the Form-master's tone that struck a chill to his very heart. He opened his eves involuntarily.

"What—what's the matter, sir?"

"What—what's the matter, sir, he stammered.
"You have just returned from the ruined chapel, Trimble?"
Trimble's jaw dropped.
"It's—it's not true, sir!" he gasped.

gasped.

"Then if I search your clothes I shall not find any money in them?" asked the master sternly.

"The-the money, sir?"

"Don't say any more, Trimble. Your falsehoods are too palpable for a child to be deceived by them. You cannot expect me to believe you. Where is the money?"

"In-in that pocket, sir."

Mr. Slanev picked up the garment

Mr. Slaney picked up the garment

which Trimble indicated with a trembling finger.

"Very good. I will take this away with me, Trimble."

And the visitors quitted the der-mitory, leaving Trimble white and trembling, and half the Upper the astounding discovery.

The hour of one was booming from the clock-tower as Mr. Slaney turned to his companions in the passage, after closing the dormitory door.

passage, after closing the dormitory door.

"Go back to bed now," he said.
"This matter will be threshed out in the morning, and the innocence of Arthur Tablot proclaimed to all St. Kit's. My lads, you have done well—very well. Go back to bed now. Good-night, lads!" said Brooke. The chums of the end study went back towards the Lower Fourth dormitory, Mr. Slaney went into his room, and Brooke went back to bed. The juniors heard the door close, and then Pat stopped.
"I say, kids," he murmured, "I'm not going in to bed for a bit. Don't you think Tablot would think it worth while to be woke up, to know what's been discovered!"
"I know I should be in his place," said Blagden.
"That's what I was thinking.

sate Biagden.
"That's what I was thinking.
I'll bet a lot that he will be glad
enough to lose his beauty sleep for
the news we can give him!"
"Rather!"

"Come on, then!" said Pat.

(This five school serial will be continued in next week's time of the New "Empire" Library.)

A Wonderful Adventure Story.



Adventures in Search of the Tree of Strength, By F. ST. MARS.

WHAT HAS TAKEN PLACE.

WHAT HAS TAKEN PLACE.
Harold Saxon, gentleman adventurer, with the two Hartings—father and son—makes an expedition into Central Africa in search of the tree of strength—the semodene free. After a journey of infinite hardships the three axceed in securing a small quantity of the precious leaves, which they bring salely to England. The semodene is shared out equally, the Hartings selling their shares, but Harold keeping his by him. Shortly afterwards Hirrold is taken desperately ill, and is on the point of death when he takes his semodene, with marvellous results.

Ho make a splendid recovery, and finds that he has enormous strength, which enables him to defeat two armed men who attack him one evening while he is iduck-shooting on the marrhes. He is telling the Hartings of this when Jim interrupts incredulously. "You're pulling our leg!" he declares. "Must be!" grunts his father emphatically. (Reat on from here.)

(Read on from here.)

The Call of the Semodene.

The Call of the Semodene.

You think so?" replied Harold sweetly. "You mean I'm a prevaricating li—I mean, atranger to the truth?"
"I wouldn't call you a liar, old man," Jim returned, "but what I say is, if you tell mo you whipped them two with your bare 'ands-well, all I say low it you'd do for the War Office, and, 'you'd do for the War Office, and, 'I'l 'Ere! Legge!

all I say is, you'd do for the War Office, and —, 'II' 'Ere! Legge! What the —, 'II' 'Ere! Legge! What the Hall seed and the sofa, for Harold had, without saying a word, leant over Jim, and, catching him by the slack of his garments, picked him up, carried him across the room, dumped him on the sofa, and rammed a cushion over his head—and Jim's strong point was, if you remember, his size, and strength too.

Instantly Jim was up and had run at Harold, with a laugh, to pay him out.

out.
"You young 'un! You thinks
'auso you've caten a few old dead
leaves as you're a bloomin' gorilla!
I'll show you."
"You think so," said Harold, for

I'll show you."

"You think so," said Harold, for the second time, even more sweetly than before. And catching Jim by the wrists, he turned him over, dropped him neatly on the floor, spanked him, and stood up laughing. "It's no good, Jimmy, my lad," he volunteered. "You'd better give in to your master."

Then followed a long, long silence. Jim sat on the floor and stared. Old Harting remained half-risen from his chair, staring also. They were too amazed for words. They could only gasp, and make clicking sounds with their mouths. It was inconceivable that Jim, who any time before had twice Harold's strength, could be so played with by one who was barely recovered from a terrible liness.

"Are we drunk, or are we mad." old Harting burst out at last, his face expressing nothing short of blind amazement.

"Are we mad or are you drunk, or both or what" added Jim. "buth or what" added Jim.

strazement.
"Aro we mad or are you drunk, or both, or what!" added Jim. "And will someone tell me where I am, and how it happeaed? "Arold, explain your blessed saft!"
But Harold would explain nothing. He performed instead a war-dance round the room, singing gaily:

"Wife was waiting up for him.
"Explain yourself!" said she.
He sail, "Listen, darling, I've
been in a fix.
It isn't Soutch-and Polly, dear—
I'm full of politics!" "

It was a snatch from a song called 'Charlia Brown," which may not be ompletely unknown to some of you. "Politics be sugared!" old Harting oared. "Where—where, under

'eaven did you get that strength from, my son! Or are we erazy, or is ut a trick!"
Harold stopped and eyed them, and then, wagging his finger, said:
"Only in this case it isn't polities, as the song says, it's semodene—it's the tree of strength. I am it!
Look!"

the tree of strength. I am It. Look."
He seized hold of the leg of an arm-hair, and, heaving up the chair itself, held it out at arm's-length. This does not sound much, I know, but in case any should deem it too casy, let them hold out at arm's-length for a few minutes a Iuli-size, oak armchair, not resting the caster against the underside of the chow. Harold laughed, put the chair down, and took his stick—a very powerful oak one—and, putting it across his knee, broke it as one breaks a piece of thin firewood, and with no more effort. After that Harold told them all the details of his afternoom adventure.

and with no more clort. Access the Harold told them all the details of his afternoon adventure.

You should have seen the faces of his listeners. They did not express anything in particular—they were blank. Neither spoke first. He did not say much—what he did say was to the point.

"Will it last?" quoth he.

And Harold shrugged his shoulders.
"An't' think we've been an' gone and sold our share, when we might ha' made twice two thousand a-travellin' as Samsons at shows and suchlike! To think what we might ha' exemplished if we 'ad all drunk this 'ero semodene!" Jim banged the floor.
"It makes me sick! And now we've sold it, and we're done!"
"Are you? Why?" Harold turned and looked at the younger Harting searchingly. "Why done, Jim?"
"Why?" cried Jim. "Well, of course, we've done very well out of the job, me an' dad, but what wouldn't I give to be strong like that! Now it's tool late!"

"It—is—never—too—late—Jim." Harold duddenly, gripping him by the shoulder, and speaking with great emphasis.

"What d'ye mean?"
"It mean that there is more seme-

snowner, and speaking with great compliasis.

"What d'ye mean!"

"I mean that there is more semodeno where that semodeno came from," answered Harold.

"Ah-a! An' who dare go get it, my lad?" cut in old Harfing grully.

"I dare," said Harold, straightening himself. "I dare to get it."

"What, alone!" Tho old square one sat back in the armediar with a look half of surprise, half of admiration on his bluff features—those features which resembled, as much as anything I know, a reey and rather wrinkled, but quito polished apple.

"Yes, alone." Harold's answer came quick as a flash.

Here, however, Jim the big awoke.

"Yes, alone." Harold's answer came quick as a flash.

Here, however, Jim the big awoke to life. He heaved himself up off the floor, and strede up to Harold.

"No, I'll be 'anged if you do!" he said roughly, but Harold knew how much kindness lay beneath his words. "You don't go to that forsaken cinder-cap of a Morr alone if I knows it, 'Arold! I'm accomit 'too! Not as your servant, mind, this time! No, as a pardner! I'm accomit, "payin" 'all and 'all! That's fair, ain't it!"

"Harold held out his hand and alook the big paw of Harting heartily. "Bully for you, Jimmy, old pal! Never was partner so welcome!" he answered warmly.

"Bully for you, Jimmy, old pal! Never was partner so welcome!" he asswered warmly.

About this time they were conscious of a movement from the armchair, a stumping of square feet, and then, before you could cry "Great Scott!" of a square hand covering both of theirs, and a square face thrust between them.

"Old on-"old on, you two young-sters! Too old to fight, am I'll show you! United we stands, parted we bleested well falls! That's what the books says, ain't it, 'Arold, sir' Well, we ain't goin' to fall—see'! Well, we ain't goin' to fall—see'!

Wednesday,

Harting, and at this point his 5.4 shot out in company with a least half of the laugh, and, touch of the laugh, and touch of the laugh, and touch of the laugh, and the laugh of t

echo again.

"Come you shall, dad! I pland
it! I put the idea into you both
I wanted you-both of you."
I wanted you-both of you."
Iniphiphurrah!"
But there were three voices in the
last hurrah that time.
I hat hard began the accord excellent
to the "Land of the Black, webs.

The Second Start.

"N OW," Harold had said, when they had left their log-time for London on the Common morning, "our expedition is going to be very differently with the way has time, "William now exactly what we want the convergence of the common was the way has been convergence to the common was the way to be common was the common was the common was the way to be common was the common was tha now exactly what we want. For our thing we will have more animals and

mow exactly what we want time, we have more easient the content of the content of

elephants; three .351 calibre dute in items." He turned to his firela "These will be for emergency, begandements."

Now, the special poculiarity of hautomatics ride is that you do so have to jerk a lever to throw ent be empty cartridge-case each time she firing, as in repeating rifles and Armyridge. All you have to do is to jult the trigger as fast as you can fill he five shots in the magazine have be fired, the "kick" does the rest for you. Automatics are the rery later thing in rifles. Then to the assistant Harold said: "One .405 repeating rifle for elephants, there.35 calibre repeating rifles for lions, five .30 calibre strength and there .25 calibre repeating she game, there .25 calibre repeating she guns, which you call 'brush' guns, which you call 'brush' guns, which you call 'brush' guns, and are for shooting in thick cost. All there are, I believe, five-shed gun —that is, you can fire five shots without reloading, except the last, and this is important. I want you select, most carefully six of your 'riou' guns. Mind you are they work perfectly, for on their working, and you got a first five working and the ready of the carefully six of your 'riou' guns. Mind you are they work perfectly, for on their working may depend not only my life, but have you for only fire her working may depend not only my life, but have you can for the working may depend not only my life, but have you for the working may depend not only my life, but should be a supplement of the weeps.

may depend not be restand, now!"

Now, the riot gun is a tricky ad
fiendish arrangement for those who
are at the wrong end of the weapen
They are exactly as old libraic
devriles, an' no mistake."

In appearance they are inneed,
heing only thirty-four inches lord,
heing only thirty-four inches lord,
have a single barrel, and first
alout by simply jerking addition,
that each of these size of them
it have a single barrel, and for it
alout by simply jerking and for it
that each of these size of them
it hat each of these size cartridges, it
is a ghastly arrangement; it is
you fired nine halfest
you fired nine halfest
explained:

"It will be meet uncomfy for an'
"It will be meet uncomfy for gab-