

PLUCK

THE HEAD VERSUS THE SCHOOL.
By MICHAEL STORM.
DR. NEVADA'S TRAP.
A Thrilling Tale of the Great Mystery Investigator.

1d

PUBLIC NOTICE

1. LUNCHEON IS INDEFINITELY POSTPONED
2. THE FOLLOWING BOYS ARE EXPELLED :-
J. MOKKON F. ELSTAN
R. HIGGINS J. T. FORBES
F. BRADLEY T. LOW
T. BINGLEY R. FOWNE
J. CARR P. SMYTHE
F. LANGLEY J. SMALL
3. THE WHOLE SCHOOL IS GATED UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE
4. THE CLASS ROOMS, FORM-ROOMS, DORMITORIES AND ALL SCHOOL BUILDINGS ARE CLOSED UNTIL SUBMISSION HAS BEEN MADE

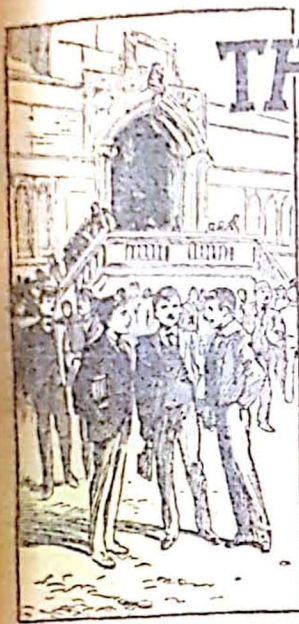
SIGNED
John Manners
HEAD MASTER
RAVENSAR SCHOOL

COUNTERSIGNED
Robert
BARON RAVENSAR
FOR THE TRUSTEES
& GOVERNORS
RAVENSAR APRIL 16



"TAKE THE NOTICE DOWN, COCKEREL, AND SING IT OUT!" CRIED A VOICE FROM THE CROWD STANDING IN FRONT OF THE NOTICE BOARD

THE RIVALS OF ST KIT'S



BRIEF ACCOUNT OF THE FIRST CHAPTERS.

When Pat Nugent arrives at St. Kit's, an election is taking place for the captaincy of the school between Arthur Talbot and Eldred Lacy. Talbot gains the victory, but afterwards resigns his position on account of a mean plot instigated by Eldred Lacy and his brother, who is Squire of Lynwood. Soon after the election for the position of captain, which Talbot has vacated, draws near, and Talbot's chum Brooke, who opposes Lacy, is elected captain of St. Kit's. One morning the Head discovers he has been robbed of £30. He calls a meeting in the hall, and Arthur Talbot is openly accused of the theft. He is sent to Coventry by the whole school except Nugent, Blagden, and Greene, three chums, who believe in his innocence, and who are determined to stand by him. However, Arthur Talbot decides to run away from St. Kit's. He leaves the school by night, and as he is passing over the bridge which spans the river he hears a splash, followed by a weak cry for help. The cry is from the lips of Seth Black, a tramp who has been bribed by Squire Lacy to claim Talbot as his son. When Lacy hears that Arthur is going to leave the school he knows that Black will be a hindrance to his plans, so on the night that Arthur leaves St. Kit's the Squire attacks Black on the river-bank, and then throws him into the water. Arthur Talbot, however, eventually saves Black from drowning and takes him to the school. For a whole day Seth Black lies unconscious in one of the bed-rooms. In the night the three chums, by shadowing Trimble and Cleave, are instrumental in recovering the Doctor's stolen money; and it is so proven that Arthur Talbot is no thief. On getting back to the school they find the dormitories in a state of panic, for while the chums have been shadowing Trimble and Cleave, Squire Lacy breaks into the school and is almost successful in silencing Seth Black for ever. He is frustrated by Talbot and rushes down the corridor. Mr. Slaney attempts to stop him, but the Squire springs on to a window-sill, and smashing the glass in-jumps. One wild, despairing cry escapes the lips of the wretched man as he shoots downward into the darkness. (Now go on with the story.)

The Shadow of Doom.

"Heavens," muttered Mr. Slaney—"heavens!"
Thud!

A faint, dull sound from the darkness below, a deep groan, and silence!

Mr. Slaney stepped down from the window, white as chalk. The hand that held the lamp trembled and shook.

"Who was it, boys? Do you know? A burglar, of course?"

"It was Squire Lacy, of Lynwood!"

"What?"

"Is he—is he dead, do you think, sir?"

"Either dead or near it!" said the master of the Fourth Form quietly. "No man could survive that fearful fall!"

He hurried away down the stairs and out into the dim close to reach the injured man.

The chums of the Fourth Form returned to where they had left Talbot.

He had taken off his jacket. In the light of the lantern his face was deadly white, and his shirt showed red, drenched with blood.

Pat uttered a cry.

"Talbot, you are wounded!"

Arthur Talbot smiled faintly.

"It is only a scratch," he said. "The knife glanced along my ribs. He meant ill enough, but it was a blow at random. It is only a scratch. Where is the squire?"

"He jumped from the window at the end of the corridor, and fell in the close!"

Talbot started.

"Then he is a dead man! Heaven have mercy upon him!"

There was a strange quiet upon St. Kit's.

The boys came out of the class-rooms with noiseless steps. When they met in the corridors they spoke in subdued voices.

No merry shout rang in the close. Even the football field was quiet. A shadow seemed to lie upon the old school.

A shadow there was, truly—the shadow of death.

Within the ancient walls of St. Kit's the Squire of Lynwood lay dying!

There had been no hope for Rupert Lacy from the first. The fall from the window had shattered the strong frame, and the marvel was that he yet lived. He lived, half-conscious, while another day ran its course. Night was falling again, and with the spent day the life of Rupert Lacy was ebbing.

There had been strange news for St. Kit's when the school awoke that morning. The discovery that had been made over night had cleared the name of Arthur Talbot. The most obstinate of his enemies could not doubt him further.

His innocence was proved. Eldred Lacy had been the thief; or, to be more correct, had brought about the theft in order to throw the guilt upon Talbot. He had succeeded for a time, but he was known in his true colours now. Of the intention to steal himself, he might be acquitted, but there was no doubt that he had planned to ruin Talbot, and that but for the chums of the end study his success would have been complete.

Now the truth was known!

It came as a stunning blow to the prefect. He had not dreamed of this; when he least expected it his fate had found him out.

But the accident to the squire threw even this into the shade.

It was impossible to expel Eldred Lacy from the school when his brother lay dying within the walls of St. Kit's.

The Head spoke to the prefect plainly, very plainly; it was made clear that Lacy was to leave St. Kit's, and there the matter ended.

Talbot received congratulations from all sides.

Fellows who had been down upon him all the time came up and begged his pardon openly; and as Arthur was not a fellow to bear malice, he allowed bygones to be bygones.

The triumph of the "committee of investigation" may be imagined.

The sentence of "Coventry" was, of course, at an end, and the Fourth Form, having come round, Pat, Blagden, and Greene graciously came round also, and nothing more was said of Coventry.

The three juniors were the heroes of the Form.

Trimble and Cleave left St. Kit's that morning, it being pretty well known that they had been expelled, although the expulsion was not public; and so the greatest enemy of the chums was gone, never to trouble them again.

The "committee of investigation" would have received a grand ovation from the Form, but for the grim shadow that hung over the school.

But with the shadow of death on the place, even the spirits of the end study were subdued.

The hours that brought death nearer to the Squire of Lynwood, brought recovery to Seth Black.

The long unconsciousness of the ruffian was over at last, and he was able to speak.

His first demand when he awoke to his surroundings was for Arthur Talbot.

Talbot came to his bedside at once.

The injured man turned a pale and ghastly face towards him in the shaded sick-room.

"Is that you, Master Talbot?" he asked, peering at the athletic figure beside his bed.

"Yes," said Arthur quietly.

"How did I come here?"

"You were picked out of the river, and carried here."

"Who did it?"

NEXT SATURDAY: "THE SCAMP OF WYCLIFFE," A Powerful Long, Complete School Tale, by Jack North.

AND "DOCCED!" The Story of a Great National Heart. IN "PLUCK," 1D.

Your Editor's Corner.

All letters should be addressed, "The Editor, PLUCK, 2, Carmelite House, Carmelite Street, London."

"THE SCAMP OF WYCLIFFE"

is the title of next Saturday's first extra-long school tale. It will deal with the adventures of the boys of Borden and the Hittites, and is written by Jack North. You must not fail to read it!

The second, entitled

"DOGGED!"

is a thrilling, complete story of a national secret. You will thoroughly enjoy reading "Dogged!"

"THE RIVALS OF ST. KITS"

is now drawing to a close, and I am breaking good news to you, I know, when I tell you the same author will soon be giving us the opening chapters of another splendid tale of school life. It will be entitled "THE SECRET OF ST. WINIFREDE."

Next week I shall be in a position to tell you when it will commence. Meanwhile, tell your special friend about it!

On the great Friday in December three more new additions to "The Boys' Friend" Complete Library will be on sale.

No. 33: "LION AGAINST BEAR."

A thrilling tale of

NEXT SATURDAY'S COVER!

the adventures of Ferrers, Lock, Rupert, Thurston, and Ching-Lang, by Sidney Drew.

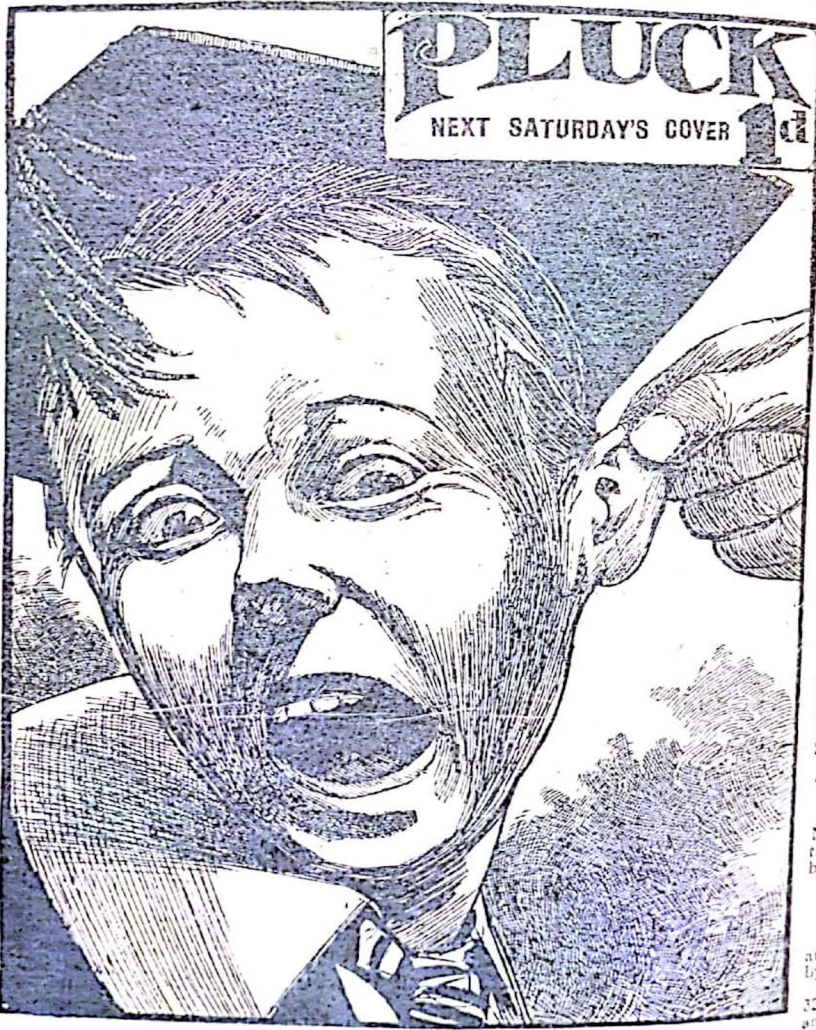
No. 34: "NELSON, LEE'S RIVAL."

A Christmas and New Year's story of the great detective by Maxwell Scott.

No. 35: "PEPE'S CHRISTMAS."

An absolutely new and original story, by S. Clarke Hook. Nos. 30, 31, and 32, are now on sale and obtainable from all newsagents. Price 1s. each.

YOUR EDITOR.



This picture depicts an incident in "The Scamp of Wycliffe," by Jack North, one of the two complete tales in next Saturday's PLUCK. Price 1d.

The ruffian's voice and look were strangely eager. "I did," said Talbot quietly. "I thought so. I had a sorter feelin'—na if I had dreamed it—that I was in the water, and I seed your face, Master Talbot. I felt it must be you who had saved me."

Talbot nodded. "You must not talk much," he said; "I can only stay a few minutes with you."

"I'm in a bad state, I know. But I shall get well?"

"The doctor says so."

"Good! I shall get well, if that murderous villain does not get at me again. You know who threw me in the river?"

"Yes; I think I know."

"It was Squire Lacy."

"I thought so."

"He met me on the bridge that night, pretending to give me money, and he tricked me down to the bank and struck me down. A wonder he didn't kill me; he meant to!"

The ruffian gritted his teeth.

It was evident that all the spite of his nature was roused by his sufferings at the hands of the Squire of Lynwood, and his narrow escape from death.

"Let the police know," he went on. "I'm going to tell them everything now. Let them arrest him; don't let him get away!"

Talbot was silent.

"He meant to murder me, as he did once afore, in a foreign country, where I knew him!" said Black.

"I know his past—he dared not tell me it. And arter I seed you I knew more—I knew where to find the child his father made away with."

Talbot trembled.

"His father? What child? What are you speaking of, Black?"

The ruffian grinned faintly.

"Ah, that's news to you, is it? You never knew?"

"Tell me, Black, if you have any gratitude to me for saving your life—tell me the truth. Is there anything in your assertion that you were my father?"

Talbot bent eagerly to put the question.

Seth Black slowly shook his head.

"No."

"You swear it?"

"Yes. I was lying. It was young Master Lacy who put me up to it. There never was any truth in it. If you knew the truth—"

"Do you know whom my father was?"

"Yes; I know."

"Tell me—tell me—"

"As much as your life is worth to know it until Rupert Lacy is safe under lock and key," replied Black. "Let him be arrested!"

"Listen!" said Talbot. "Rupert Lacy will never be arrested, for he will be a dead man before the morning."

Black gave a start.

Another fine statement next Saturday.)