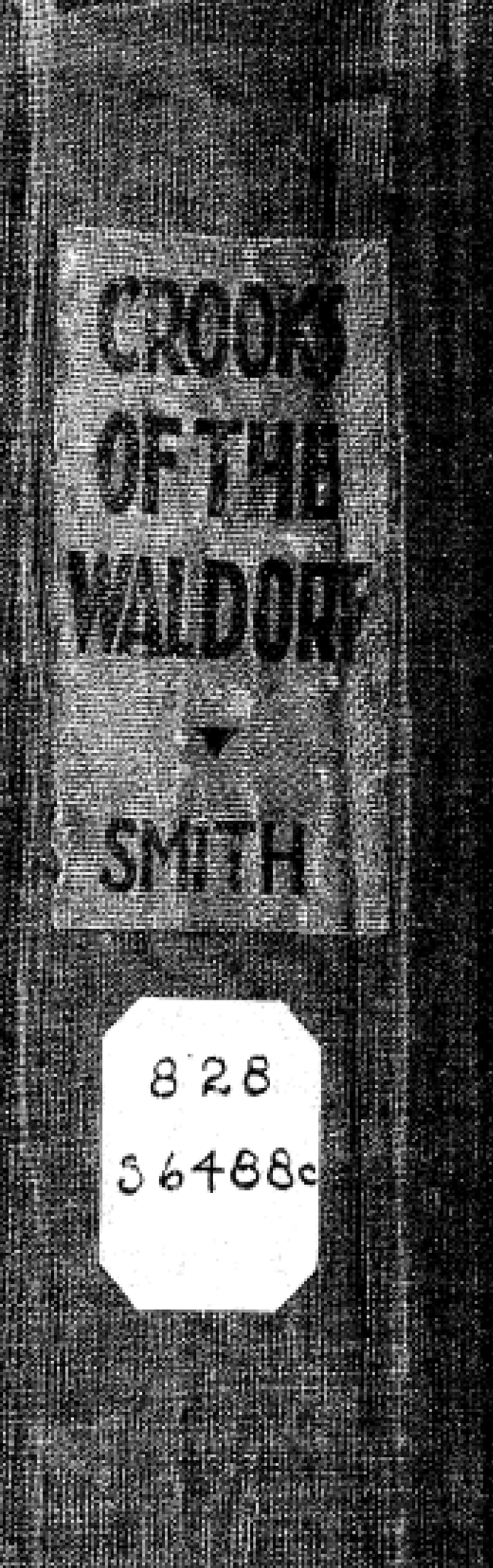

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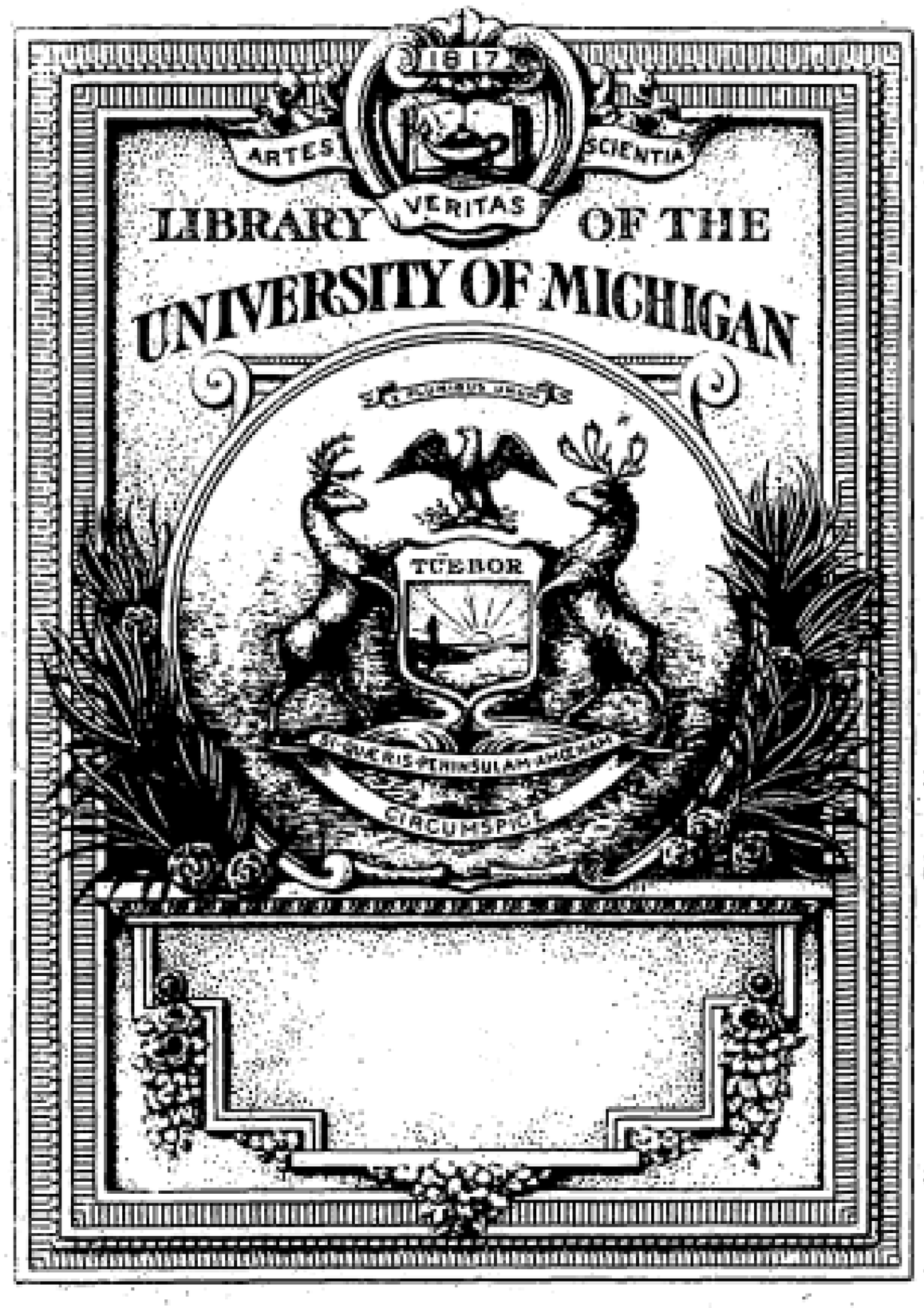

THE GIFT OF

Prof. Howard M. Jones

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CROOKS OF THE WALDORF

Being the Story of
Joe Smith, Master Detective

BY HORACE SMITH

THE MACAULAY COMPANY

NEW YORK MCMXXIX

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Lib
Professor Edward M. Foster
10-22-1931

PUBLISHER'S NOTE

Crooks of many varieties and shades try to prey upon the wealthy patrons in all the leading hotels. "Crooks of the Waldorf" is the story of Joe Smith, master detective, and of his successful career in protecting the fastidious guests of America's most famous and fashionable hotel from cunning criminals. It turns up new criminological information and new information on modern expert methods of crime detection. But it also helps to explain how the Waldorf maintained an enviable prestige and reputation.

Like Oscar of the Waldorf, Joe Smith is a leader in his profession, but his work was done secretly and consequently was little known. Yet here is the evidence that he guarded property and security with the same vigilance and quiet efficiency as the hotel devoted to the accommodation and comfort of its guests.

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FOREWORD

Naturally, I am interested in every criminological book that appears, but when I heard that Joe Smith's story was being told, I waited with an impatience quite unprofessional, to see the script.

For Joe Smith has become a tradition in our world. He is, we agree, the nearly perfect detective, and very different from the common conception of him. I was eager to see what opinions he had to express on matters important to all of us and how his astonishing life and still more astonishing personality has been presented.

Therefore I must pay Horace Smith a compliment. His book presents the Joe Smith we know, and tells Joe Smith's story the way we know it, with the quiet effectiveness that always characterized his own work, and thrilled us.

For that, I am sure, many thousands of readers will thank Mr. Horace Smith. The old truth must be repeated. This true story of Joe Smith is so

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much more fascinating than any detective fiction that it will puzzle me if any fictional story proves more popular.

But I want to call attention to this: The book is of first rate importance for what Joe Smith, out of his unparalleled experience, has to say about crime. His views on the part prohibition plays in our crime record is something every interested social, governmental, and economic agency must seriously consider. Crooks have written their life stories, many of them. They have come out of the shadows to explain, to justify, to play again at being heroes. A detective more rarely comes out of the shadows. He doesn't have to justify himself. But now that one of the greatest of modern detectives comes into the light, many things come into the light with him. His book is of the utmost importance in our crime problem, which President Hoover has reminded us is a national problem.

JOSEPH A. FAUROT,
Formerly Deputy Police Commissioner of New York City

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CHAPTER I

JOE SMITH OF THE WALDORF

SEVERAL rooms at the Waldorf had been robbed in quick succession by an unusually clever and daring thief. In every instance there had been such a lapse of time between his visit and the discovery of it that he made a clean getaway.

The management of the hotel was greatly concerned and its secret service, which had often been commended for its efficiency, was by the ears. Joe Smith, the Chief House Detective, was filled with righteous indignation. His whole nature was outraged. The Waldorf was his church and any violation of its sanctity was a desecration. Several of them, following closely on each other's heels, amounted to sacrilege, an affront to all of his gods. He assigned to himself the task of capturing, red-handed if possible—he did not know how red-handed it would be!—the violator of his holy of holies.

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All of the ransacked rooms had been entered through a window. That stamped the burglar as one of those skilled specialists who always work from fire escapes and ledges in the wall and are never known to enter a hotel through a door. Therefore, even with a good description of him, it would be a waste of time to look for him in the lobby or through the corridors.

From the condition in which the robbed rooms had been left, through certain little signs that are evidence only to the trained eye, Joe believed they had been visited by Señor José Hermidez, known as "The Mexican," a desperate and dangerous hotel thief whom he had caught in the act of burglarizing a guest's room only a year before. As a gentle punishment for that offense, and with the idealistic idea of encouraging him in his professed desire to return to the straight and narrow path, from which he claimed he had only started to stray, José had been sent to the Elmira Reformatory for one year.

Basing his opinion on an experience of more than thirty years as a hotel detective, during which time he had brought about the successful

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prosecution of some hundreds of crooks, Joe Smith was convinced that the only effect of a term in the State Reformatory, as it is optimistically known, was to make men worse instead of better; and here, he thought, was a case in point. Upon inquiry he learned that Hermidez had been released only a short while before the first of the recent room robberies, on his assurance that his reform was complete. He had promised to "go straight" so the State had patted him on the back and turned him loose.

It was one of Joe's firm beliefs that "They always come back" after a successful robbery. Knowing "The Mexican" was at large, and being familiar with his technique, Joe felt certain of the identity of the thief. With that established, the House Detective prepared to welcome him on his next visit. Because of the Mexican's shrewdness and his readiness with a gun or any other weapon that was handy when he was in danger of arrest, Joe was unwilling to assign any of his subordinates to the case. He preferred to match wits himself with Hermidez and take all of the chances to which the man who was on his trail would be ex-

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posed. He had a certain admiration for the nerve and cunning of the Mexican. At the same time he knew he was a very ugly customer.

One evening while Joe was carefully examining all of the fire escapes, the House Detective found a ladder leaning against a pillar on the Astor Court side of the building, where it had been left by workmen who were making some alterations in the rear wall. That side of the hotel faces a narrow private street and is not so well lighted nor so much exposed to view as the three other fronts. From the top of the ladder it was easy to reach the bottom of a fire escape which opened the way to numerous ledges running around the outer wall.

This pointed to the manner in which the thief had entered and left the hotel on his previous visits and it was a natural deduction that, crooks being what they are, he would use the same avenue when he came back. Evidently the ladder had been carelessly placed in a similarly inviting position on the nights on which the robberies had occurred. The House Detective instructed the man in charge of the work to leave the ladder in about the same

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position every evening. Then he took up his vigil on a coping two feet wide on the fifth floor. This coping was only a step from the fire escape, and the windows of many rooms opened upon it.

Every night for six long weeks Joe Smith watched there from darkness until dawn. Whether the Mexican was waiting until he thought the hotel detectives had abandoned the hunt for him, or whether the ladder, left so long in about the same place, made him suspicious of a trap, he deferred his return visit for an extraordinarily long period. But finally his greed overcame his apprehension. He selected a night when the sky was overcast and Astor Court was darker than usual.

Shortly before dawn, Joe Smith's straining ear caught a slight sound in the direction of the fire escape. Seeing nothing, but feeling that someone was approaching, he drew his gun and noiselessly shifted himself into a position where he could use it quickly. In a few moments he distinguished the form of a man on his hands and knees moving slowly toward him on the ledge. The intruder saw Joe at the same time and growled:

"If you move I'll blow your damned head off."

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The fleeting metallic glitter of what seemed to be a gun backed up the threat.

In one quick movement, Joe raised his arm and fired, shooting to maim rather than to kill. The Mexican howled with pain, cursed, and squirmed around on the narrow ledge, moving backward, in the hope of escape, with the detective after him, scornful of the gun he supposed the thief carried. The thief's knees slipped over the edge of the coping; he almost lost his grip and fell, when Joe seized him by the collar of his coat and pulled him back to safety. At the same time the robber grasped the detective around the legs and attempted to throw him from the ledge. The men fought and struggled on the knife-edge battlefield for several minutes. Only Joe's strength and agility saved one or both of them from a fall that would have been fatal. He finally wriggled one of his legs free and got his foot through an open window, dragging his enemy with him. Then he switched on the light.

"I thought it was you," said Joe, "and that's the way I wanted to get you."

The detective's bullet, aimed at the hand that

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appeared to be holding a gun, had gone through the Mexican's shoulder and blood was dripping from his right hand. He had no weapon, it developed, but he carried a searchlight and it was a glint from that which had caught Joe's eye. Hermidez was sent first to a hospital and then back to prison, to which, when his term expired, he was soon afterward returned for robbing a department store. His encounter with Joe Smith caused him to change his line of attack but not his habits.

The window-ledge encounter with José Hermidez was one of the cases that add variety to the life of a hotel detective and keep it from getting tiresome.

Properly speaking, the principal actor in the foregoing episode is Joseph Edward Smith, Assistant Manager of the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel, New York City, and Captain in the U. S. Army Reserve Corps, which rank was given him for tricking and trapping enemy spies during the World War, but it is as plain Joe Smith that he has made himself the most widely known man in his profession.

Wherever there are crowds there are bound

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to be crooks, and at many hours of the day and night there are few places more crowded than the lobby and lounging rooms of a large hotel. The modern metropolitan hotel is a city in itself, with ten thousand or more people under its roof every day in the year, including its registered guests and its employees. Many of them are there only to call on friends, or as patrons of the restaurants, or to keep appointments on a popular meeting ground, or merely to buy a cigar, but so long as they are within its doors the hotel management considers them entitled to its protection.

Every large hotel now has its own detective force, operating under its own Chief of Police, who is known as the House Detective. This secret service functions so quietly and smoothly that its existence, though surmised, is not generally known, so far as its actual workings are concerned. It is the business of the hotel detectives to keep a watchful eye on the swindlers, blackmailers, thieves, beats and tricksters of all kinds who are attracted by the throngs of prosperous people and the enforced intimacy of modern hotel life, and to head off the full-fledged or the budding

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criminals before they reach their prospective prey and keep the corridors clear of them. Their success is reflected in the popularity and prosperity of the hotel.

Unlike the city police, the plainclothes men of the hotel are never on parade. They must see everything without being seen; they must be careful not to attract more than a casual glance. With some of the cleverest crooks in the world constantly matching wits with them in the endless effort to worm their way through the barrier that protects the plunder, they must be shrewd in their judgments of both men and women, and unfailing in memory. They must be certain in judgment as well, for ejecting an honest man or a good woman as undesirable would be quickly followed by a suit for damages, with publicity of the kind that every hotel is most anxious to avoid. So it is that the hotel detectives always work quietly—so very quietly that little is known about them, the cases they handle, or their methods of handling them.

The greatest of these silent sleuths is Joe Smith. He received his early training with Scotland Yard —the most famous of all crime detecting organiza-

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tions, with headquarters in London and arms that extend to every part of the world—where he aided in the solution of some sensational cases. For more than thirty years he has been House Detective at the Waldorf. He has held many other positions as well, including that of Night Manager, which he considers the most exacting of all, but he has never ceased to be the head of the detective force, which is the place for which he was born. In the course of long and lively years he has made more than six hundred arrests, and in every case he secured a conviction. Save for some little "inside jobs"—involving petty thievery, in which it was considered that the ends of justice were satisfied by the discharge of the pilferer—no one has ever robbed the Waldorf or one of its guests and gone unpunished.

Often it took weeks or months to fix the responsibility for a crime and then locate and capture the offender. But sooner or later—and generally sooner—they were all caught and sent to prison, from which they came out more crooked than when they went in. That, however, is another story. Because of this certainty of detection and

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conviction, the underworld grew cautious. There have been periods when Captain Smith's well guarded province was free from invasion for many months on end. But his watchfulness is unceasing. Even when there is no actual trouble he is busy getting acquainted with new schemes that are constantly being developed by the crooks.

Always quietly, usually without scenes of any kind, Joe has ejected thousands of men and women who were planning to take money away from guests of the hotel by some dishonest device. Some of them, who were well aware that Joe knew all about them, went willingly enough when they felt the significant pinch on the arm that is the sign by which officers of the law make themselves known; but many who were close to the line that divides respectability from suspicion and who were, perhaps, just stepping over the border, became indignant and threatened the kind of litigation from which every hotel wishes to keep clear. But Joe's judgment is keen; he has never been sued for damages because of the removal of an undesirable guest or lounger, nor has the hotel.

You might drop in at the Waldorf twenty times

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but, unless you were looking for Joe Smith and he had been described to you, you would never pick him out as the Chief Detective. If you noticed him at all you probably would regard him as a guest from out of town; perhaps a successful business man from some western city. But you can be very sure he would see you, and look you over in one swift appraising glance that told him all he wanted to know about you. If you happened in again a month or two later and engaged him in conversation he could, if he thought it wise, tell you about when you were there before and where he noticed you. That is the way his memory works.

There is nothing at all of the detective of fiction about him, in either his appearance or his actions. He is a quiet, well educated man, a lover of art and of life in the country, far from Peacock Alley and the jostling throngs of the Gilded Canyon. He spends all of his time when he is off duty in his attractive farm house in the Ramapo Mountains near Suffern, forty miles from the city. There he delights in entertaining his friends with hospitality of the old-fashioned kind.

He is five feet and nine inches tall, with the

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build of an athlete, and he keeps himself in athletic trim. Ordinarily deliberate and dignified in his movements, he can be as quick as a cat and as lithe as a panther. His hair is graying and thinning but there are few lines in his clean shaven face and he has an agreeable smile that is easily aroused. His blue eyes shoot fire when he is on the trail of a crook. The eyes miss nothing and the mind never forgets a face or an incident that is worth remembering.

It has been said of Joe Smith that "he would charge hell with a bucket of water." Unquestionably he would, if there was anybody in hell he wanted to get—and he probably wouldn't bother about the bucket, at that. If he has any nerves at all they are never in evidence. Nothing ever disturbs him. He is as unmoved in the presence of death, or the sudden prospect of it, as he is when viewing the weather.

With nothing at all in the way of mercy for habitual criminals, Joe Smith has gone to great lengths—even to the extent of putting his personal guarantee back of them—to get another chance for first offenders when he was convinced

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that they were naturally honest and wished to live within the law.

How old he is, in calendar years, nobody knows. Joe himself professes not to know, nor care. When questioned he mentions the fact that he has had twenty-nine candles on his birthday cake at every anniversary for quite some time. He declares he will never have any more. So since nothing can persuade him to take a calendar seriously, save as an aid to the fixing of some day and date in which he is at the moment interested, that appears to end it. Assuredly, so far as his soul and his spirit are concerned he is still young.

Captain Smith was born in the famous old Tam o'Shanter hotel in Liverpool, then owned and managed by his father. There his destiny was shaped. His mother came from Ireland. His father, who was born in Brazil, was a man of the world and knew his way around; a good mixer and a shrewd observer. He had close and cordial relations with the heads of the Liverpool police, whose headquarters were close by, and also with many of the Inspectors from Scotland Yard, who came over from London frequently on important cases. The

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advice and assistance of the elder Smith were sought after and the Tam o'Shanter was, in effect, an unofficial police headquarters and the scene of all of the Police Department banquets and other festivities.

It was in this atmosphere that young Joe grew up, and it was as seductive to him as it would have been to any normal boy. Uniforms and authority always carry a strong appeal for small boys and young women, and they had all of that effect on the child Joseph. He enjoyed youthful comradeship with many detectives, but his greatest heroes were the big men from "The Yard," as Scotland Yard is known the world over. They trotted him on their knees from the time he could toddle around and told him delightful stories. As he grew older they told him detective stories, perhaps embellished a bit to give the thrills he demanded. He was fascinated by the cases which they discussed with his father while they worked on them. It was not long until, when he was not in school or busy with his studies, he was deeply engaged in solving mysterious crimes, real and imaginary.

"It was in this way," says Joe, "that I got my

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early training—and early is the right word, for it really started before I could talk plainly. In this way, too, I learned that it is a sin to be garrulous; I was early cautioned that I must never repeat anything I heard or was told concerning police affairs. And I never did. After my friends from The Yard had satisfied themselves that I used my eyes and my mind more than my tongue they began to use my feet to run around and pick up bits of information for them, at first in little things and then in more important matters. There were things a boy could do and places he could go, apparently through idle curiosity, without attracting any attention, whereas a strange man would instantly have aroused suspicion. Without being noticed in any serious way I followed many men for hours at a time and was able to give the Inspectors information about their habits and haunts which they said was helpful."

At first Joe's reports were checked up by older men; but they were always verified and it was not long before the men from Scotland Yard were calling him "The Boy Detective"—at first humorously and then in earnest. While still a youth he

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had his first real taste of blood in connection with the murder of a school master named Fluke, who was found dead in his home only a block away from where Joe lived. The detectives stationed him behind a pillar of a house in the rear of the scene of the crime and he spent long hours there watching for some suspicious sign. Nothing developed, but his keen and intelligent interest, and the artfulness with which he kept himself under cover, aroused the admiration of the officers in charge of the case.

The Fluke murder was one mystery that the British police never solved but the investigation lasted long enough for the seed that had been planted in young Joe's breast to germinate and produce deep roots and a sturdy growth. Though still only a volunteer, and without any official connection with the Police Department, the men from The Yard were pleased to avail themselves of his assistance in the famous case of Mrs. Florence Maybrick, an American woman who was charged with the murder of her husband, Dr. James Maybrick, a wealthy resident of Liverpool. Her trial developed into a national sensation and her con-

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viction produced a great deal of international comment. Sir Charles Russell, one of the most brilliant criminal lawyers in England, conducted the defense.

It was contended by the prosecution that Mrs. Maybrick killed her husband in a most cold-blooded way by mixing arsenic with his food and literally watching him die. She obtained the arsenic, it was alleged, by extracting it from a poisonous paper that was then in use for killing flies. Against the urgent advice of her counsel Mrs. Maybrick insisted on addressing the jury. She claimed her husband was addicted to the use of arsenic and admitted that she had innocently given him an overdose of the poison in response to his insistent pleading for it. The jury was unconvinced. She was found guilty and sentenced to death.

Some of the evidence against her had been circumstantial. There were so many public protests against hanging a woman that within a few weeks her sentence was commuted to penal servitude for life. She was released in 1905, after having served sixteen years in prison, and returned to the United States. Her case came into the pub-

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lic eye again in November, 1928, when it was reported in a press dispatch from Paris that she had been left $750,000 under the will of Walter Thomas Burrell, an Englishman who lived in France. It was said that Mrs. Maybrick was then living in Florida and that she proposed to use some of her fortune in presenting to the British government some new facts connected with the murder case.

Though he was not called as a witness against her, Joe Smith gave the Scotland Yard men valuable aid in building up their case against Mrs. Maybrick. Later on he attended the sale of the Maybrick effects at their mansion in an exclusive suburb of Liverpool, adjoining the estate of Sir Andrew Barclay Walker, one of the richest brewers in England. Dr. Maybrick had one of the largest and finest wine cellars in the country and it had been expected that there would be some lively bidding for its choicest contents. However, there had been so much talk about arsenic at the murder trial that the staid Britishers would have none of it at any price. The seals on the bottles were intact but the prospective purchasers were taking no

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chances. All of the liquor had to be sold at private sale for a trifle of its value.

The death of Joe's father, about this time, threatened for a while to direct his activities into other and more prosaic lines. James Amer, the largest cab owner in Liverpool, and Joseph Walton, a wholesale wine merchant, were appointed guardians for Joe and his brother. Mr. Walton's son was a King's Counsel, an eminence sought by most British lawyers, and he wished Joe to be educated for the bar. But Joe had other ideas and ambitions. Mr. Walton argued strongly, but in vain, for the dignity of the legal profession. He was certain that Joe would be successful in it. Being a barrister did not appeal to Joe at all; there were too many counsellors and lawyers in England, he contended, and not enough good detectives—and he knew he would make a good detective when he grew up. Besides, a barrister never had any adventures—and he wanted excitement. Joe's paternal grandfather, with all of a grandfather's admiration for his independent spirit and his self-reliance, finally sided with him and helped

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him to win the fight. A detective he would be, and a detective he became.

His first case, in which he realized his ambition by becoming a part of the Scotland Yard organization, still further whetted his appetite for mystery and adventure. It involved the running down of Frederica de Furneaux, England's most famous male impersonator up to that time and an unusually clever forger. As a woman, she lived quietly, with one maid, on a fashionable residence street in Liverpool. She was the first bobbed hair woman of Joe's acquaintance, but when she was not playing her male part she wore a wig. She posed as a widow from South America with sufficient income to maintain herself in comfort. The reserve with which she surrounded herself quite suited the British mind and the fact that she made no friends among her neighbors was accounted for by her pretended inability to speak more than a few words of English.

At night, however, on occasion, she was a very different person. Dressed as a man, she would slip out of a rear entrance and take a night train for London, where she posed as Lord Arthur Clin-

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ton. The real Lord Arthur Clinton had died some years before, but his death had been forgotten; there were so many Lords in England that one more or less did not make much difference, unless he managed to build up a reputation for himself.

Under her assumed name and character, Miss de Furneaux maintained an apartment in an exclusive section in London and moved in the highest circles, where she was warmly welcomed. She was about five feet and ten inches tall, with black hair and eyes, and she dressed the part as perfectly as she played it. Though she was a consummate actor in her male rôle, there was always something effeminate about her. But as the general run of her men companions had the same appearance this defect escaped attention. On several occasions she was invited to affairs given by the Prince of Wales, later King Edward VII. She associated only with the nobility and people of prominence and wealth. She made amorous advances to women indiscriminately and many were the jealousies she created in high circles with her flashing eyes and her insouciant manner. She was a clever conversationalist and a talented musician. She was a bril-

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liant figure at every function she attended, and was much sought after as a guest who would add life and gayety to any party.

The bogus Lord Clinton, with her small hands and the natural light touch of a woman, which she had perfected until it was no heavier than a breath of air, was an extremely artful thief in addition to possessing her singular aptitude at forging signatures that spelled much money. Where she had acquired her proficiency in wily ways was never learned, but she had been well schooled. Her campaign was planned and executed with all of the skill of a rarely gifted crook.

She did not make a dishonest move until her position had been established beyond question with the aristocrats among whom she moved. Then women guests began to miss valuable jewels which had been removed from their necks or arms or corsages so lightly that often their disappearance was not noticed for hours. Similarly, diamond-studded watches and cigarette cases and well-filled wallets were unaccountably missed from male pockets. In many cases it was at first supposed the valuables had simply been lost but the most careful

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search failed to bring them to light. Some of her wealthy men friends, with whose signature Frederica had become familiar during her long period of preparation, began to find forged checks for large amounts in their monthly bank statements. Most of the victims carried such large balances, and the forgeries were so cleverly executed, that they escaped detection for a long time.

The continued disappearance of jewels and other valuables finally convinced the losers that a remarkably smart thief was operating in England's smartest society. At last the successive robberies became a scandal, but a purely private one —for in those days the aristocrats of London did not mourn on the housetops over their losses and until the case finally was cleared up there was no publicity about it.

From time to time many wholly innocent men, and some of the women, fell under suspicion. But for a long while there was never so much as a sidelong glance at the much-admired Lord Clinton, whose gay spirits were dampened only when his fine sensibilities were outraged by the latest of the series of thefts. In order to keep pace with

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events, and set himself still further apart from those who might be candidates for suspicion, he had his own wallet stolen one evening. His concern over his own loss was trifling as compared with his distress over the jewels, worth many times as much, that were stolen from his lady friends.

Frederica was all nerve, and surpassingly smart. Her cheerful unconcern was a mask for a mind that worked with methodical precision in all things. She neglected none of the little details that often are overlooked by ordinary, or even high-class crooks, and result in their detection. She never committed more than one robbery at one party, so there could be no comparing of notes, which might have brought disaster; and many functions passed off without anything of value being missed. And she never bothered with wall-flowers: the women whose jewels she lifted were always among the most popular of the guests and were in the arms of many men during the evening, in dancing and otherwise.

In the apartments with which she was most familiar, and in which she was most at home, she

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had secret hiding places. Here she deposited her loot at the first opportunity after it came into her hands, and recovered it just before leaving. For other contingencies she had cunningly devised hidden pockets in her clothes, at points where the lines of her feminine figure contributed to their concealment to an extent that made their discovery practically impossible. Consequently, when some guest rather hysterically announced that she, or he, had been robbed, Frederica was one of the first to offer to submit to a search, if she did not herself suggest a general search of all of those present, as she sometimes did.

These intermittent but never ending robberies continued for more than a year and the value of the stolen jewels and forged checks ran far up into thousands of pounds before the finger of suspicion was pointed, ever so gingerly at first, in the right direction. Scotland Yard had some of its shrewdest detectives working on the case for months but they were unable to make any progress. Finally one of the Chief Inspectors, who had known Joe Smith from his boyhood and was familiar with the workings of his keenly analytical mind, asked him

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to take a hand in the investigation, which was being conducted with the utmost secrecy on account of the social and political prominence of the people involved.

Following the rule to which he always has adhered, Joe studied the case calmly and coldly from every angle before making a move. He figured that the stolen jewels probably were being pawned, as such an artistic and aristocratic thief would not do business with a professional "fence"—there are very few "fences" in England, anyway, on account of the close police surveillance, and they deal only with thieves who are well known to them, from whom they exact a heavy toll. They would not be disposed of in London, where all of the pawnshops were constantly under close observation, so why not Liverpool?

Joe went to work on that theory, and after weeks of patient watching, he found some of the missing jewels in a Liverpool pawnshop. They had been pledged by a tall young woman, with black hair and eyes, named Mrs. George Robinson and living at such and such an address, which was in a part of the city remote from where Frederica

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resided. There was no Mrs. Robinson nor anyone answering her description at the address she had given the pawnbroker, who reported that she was expensively dressed and had all of the appearance of being a lady. She had recited a plausible hard-luck story as her reason for pawning the jewels.

This gave Captain Smith his first intimation that the thief might be a woman posing as a man; or else the jewels were pawned by the wife or sweetheart of the thief. But, without being able to explain why, he inclined toward the male impersonator idea. That was one of his uncanny hunches. So he set himself to watch the night trains from Liverpool to London. After another long wait he finally spotted a tall, rather slender, effeminate looking young man who corresponded with the mental picture he had formed of the person he was after. Joe rode on the same train with the imitation young man to London, followed him to his apartment, found that he moved in the exclusive circles in which the robberies were being committed, and in due course trailed him back to Liverpool and to his home, where he discovered that the supposed he was really a she.

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Satisfied that he was on the right track, Joe reported to Scotland Yard and thereafter Frederica de Furneaux in Liverpool and Lord Arthur Clinton in London was under ceaseless observation. She was shadowed for weeks before an arrest was made, for the case was too important to permit any possible chance of a mistake. Other robberies were committed, and the detectives followed Frederica when she pawned the jewels. They were close at her heels when she cashed checks she had forged. Then, with the case against her complete in every detail, she was taken into custody. Her arrest caused a great sensation, as did her trial, on account of the startlingly novel ways in which she had worked and the prominence of her victims. Captain Smith was one of the chief witnesses for the prosecution.

It happened that on the same day when he testified against her he was a witness in another court in another case involving stolen jewels, on which he had worked after pointing the way to the detection of Miss de Furneaux. The owner of a hotel near the Everton Coffee House had died suddenly and had been attended by a man who claimed to

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be a physician. Gaining the confidence of the family in this way, the bogus doctor seduced the widow's daughter and then induced her to steal her mother's jewelry and run away with him. Captain Smith was largely instrumental in running him down.

Both Frederica and the seducer were convicted and each was sent to prison for twenty years.

The remarkable detective ability displayed by Captain Smith in these cases won high praise from "The Yard" and brought about his prompt assignment to another unusually puzzling case, in which two "mobs" of brilliant scoundrels were playing the races on a sure-thing basis and throwing many bookmakers into bankruptcy.

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CHAPTER II

A CLEVER RACING SWINDLE

THE "sport of kings" has long been popular with the British and betting on the races is their favorite form of speculation. In the famous annual turf classics that have been run for generations the winning horse carries a fortune to the holder of the ticket bearing his number in the sweepstakes. Even on the ordinary day to day events with overnight entries, which are of little consequence as compared with the Derby or the Suburban, for instance, the wagers run into very large amounts. More money is won and lost on the English race tracks than is ever played in the stock market by the general public.

The British have no laws against public betting such as have been passed in many parts of the United States. The bookmakers, or professional bettors on the races, are recognized as men who are engaged in a legitimate business and are there-

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fore entitled to police protection. So it was that Joe Smith was set to work on two cases that demanded all of his shrewdness and kept him thrillingly occupied for many months. In the end he uncovered one of the cleverest swindles ever perpetrated in England.

For a long time the bookmakers had been sustaining heavy losses. It was not unusual for them to lose some money on one race, or on several in close succession under exceptional conditions, but their losses were persistent and continually increasing in size. Their winnings on many races were wiped out and large holes made in their bankrolls by their losses on a few, in which, as it was finally brought out, they had no chance to win. In widely scattered places thousands of pounds would be wagered on a winning horse only a few moments before the result was announced. This gave the layers no time to round out their books by lengthening the odds on the other horses in the race and they were forced to take their losses. Many bookmakers were compelled to retire from the field by the steady drain and only the richest and strongest survived. They were sure they were

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being tricked but were wholly in the dark as to the method.

Scotland Yard was appealed to and some of its best detectives spent worrisome weeks on the case without discovering a single clue that might point the way to a possible solution of the problem. Their failure made the mystery more puzzling and added to the dismay of the bookmakers, who concluded that they were dealing with a remarkably adroit and resourceful gang of swindlers. They all saw ruin staring them in the face if the operations of the raiders were continued long enough. The "Yard," too, was chagrined over its inability to unearth anything on which to hang a definite suspicion.

Joe Smith had the advantage of being a newcomer, whereas the older Scotland Yard men were either known to the crooks, or tipped themselves off by their professional manner. Given a free hand, Joe went about the matter in his most thorough and methodical fashion. He first acquainted himself with all of the facts and studied the case from every angle. Then he cut himself off entirely from all communication with the Yard,

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to avoid even a remote possibility of arousing the suspicion of the men he was after. With an unlimited expense account, he became a devout follower of the races. He assumed the rôle of a young man of good breeding and an adventurous disposition, with sufficient income to live well and gamble a little. He provided himself with a well-known prizefighter as a bodyguard, not because he needed a bodyguard, but because he knew this connection would imply that he had sportive inclinations, and might be open to almost any sort of interesting proposition. His bodyguard, of course, had no idea that Smith was not all that he pretended to be.

He established himself in a comfortable apartment, in a section largely populated by sporting people of means; as things went along, he gave some gay parties. There was a quiet show of comfortable wealth without any ostentation. He was a genial host, and where his money came from was nobody's business. Any discreet and indirect inquiries along that line from his new friends were met with a raised eyebrow or a quiet smile. On more intimate acquaintance he had always a

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ready story to suit the occasion, and his explanations invariably checked up and satisfied inquisitive minds.

Some days he would attend the races, watch the betting and make bets himself. That was done largely to acquire familiarity with the horses and surround himself with the right atmosphere, for it was not at the tracks that the robberies were being committed, though the information came from there. Most of his afternoons were spent in the poolrooms and sporting clubs in which the bookmakers were being mulcted. In these places he would send his bodyguard to make his bets while he studied the bettors. He was always the gentleman of leisure; never hurried but every minute alert and watchful without seeming to be more than casually concerned in what was going on around him. He appeared to make no effort to form new acquaintances, though he was easily engaged in conversation.

During weeks of observation he succeeded in creating the impression that he knew what he was about at all times, but he attended to his own business and expected other people to do the same.

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Giving no sign that he was greatly interested in them, he was particularly watchful of men who made large bets after the horses had gone to the post. These he studied carefully for weeks, until he had spotted a few who never put down a wager until just before the race was run.

These men did not buy tickets on every race, but when they did bet there was a smoothness and rapidity about their movements noticeable to an eye trained to observe off-guard gestures. They always watched the ticker tape on which the names of the horses and riders were sent out just before each race was run. When the list was complete, they either turned away from it with a complete lack of interest or immediately put down a large wager. This created in Joe Smith's mind the first vague idea that the ticker tape might be carrying some information that only the initiated could understand. This impression gradually became a conviction, and he went to work on this line.

He carelessly tore off strips of the tape, absentmindedly stuck them in his pocket when no one was looking and pored over them in the privacy of his room. For a long while he found nothing

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he could interpret, or to which he could attach any hidden meaning, but he patiently continued his studies and eventually the light dawned on him. He discovered the key to the ingenious code and knew just how the most profitable of the two sure-thing games was being worked. However, he did not make an immediate report of his success. In his opinion the bookmakers could much better afford to sustain some additional losses, which would not be long continued, than to have him leave the case unfinished, with the end definitely in sight. And to have let anyone else know what he had found would have upset his whole plan.

With his work more than half done, he then turned his attention to the other swindle and was in a fair way to work that out when he came into possession of all the information he was after, as a duly accredited member of the gang. His solution of the ticker tape code opened the way to his admission into the crooked circle much sooner than would have been possible without this convincing evidence of his shrewdness. He grew friendly with some of the leaders, and told them that he knew how they were working the tape. He con-

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veyed this startling information with a casual air, as if he had known it for a long time.

The chief crooks were amazed by this revelation, though not so much as they might have been if their new friend had not already found favor with them. They regarded him as a smart unscrupulous chap who might be useful to them; and were considering him as a candidate for membership in the group if he continued to stand up under further observation. Any fear that he might be a detective playing a clever part had long ago disappeared from the minds of most of the important men in the organization, for he had not made a single false move; and the fact that there had been no leak, following his discovery of their carefully guarded secret, nor any sign of trouble from it, eliminated the last vestige of doubt that might have lingered with any member of the gang.

They agreed among themselves that his quiet ways had fooled them a bit and that he was even smarter than they had thought. This, they said, was final evidence of his desirability as a member. He must join them or disappear in the river with a smashed head—the gang's method of re-

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moving its enemies—for no living man could be trusted with their secret who was not one of them. Joe took the long chance, in the belief that they would end by accepting him. The thought of another murder did not disturb them, but in this case they saw that such a crime would deprive them of an exceedingly clever ally, whose keen brain could be used to their mutual advantage. So they declared the detective a full-fledged member of the gang and gave him their complete confidence.

After that the rest was easy for Joe. Being fully informed in the technical points of the swindle, he needed only to learn some of the details in the minor sure-thing game, identify the leaders and their subordinates and his report to Scotland Yard would be complete. They could make a wholesale clean-up.

To the ordinary observer there was nothing to arouse suspicion in either the manner or the actions of these men whom Joe met around the poolrooms. They appeared to be men of wealth and considerable culture and made no show of themselves. They worked in twos and threes and were continually moving around. One pair or trio would

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be in one club or poolroom one day and in another one the next afternoon. They were so adroit in their operations that the only man who gave them more than passing notice was Joe Smith. He adopted their plan of circulating around and found the same men playing the races in the same way in many different places. This required many weeks of close observation, but he had a distinct feeling that he was on the right track and believed he was making headway.

From the moment of his first suspicion, to the end, the details of his procedure were interesting. Without appearing to watch them, he began to cultivate the men he was watching. Convinced of their real shrewdness, and knowing they looked askance at anyone who tried to engage them in prolonged conversation, he was obliged to be most discreet. His whole manner was ingenuous and friendly without being at all forward. He first found occasion to exchange a few passing remarks with three or four of them and established a nodding acquaintance. For a time he did nothing more.

Gradually their casual comments became a little

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more extended and finally, without any apparent effort to force himself on them, he began to joke with them about their winnings and his own losses. The suspects were disposed to be offish at first but slowly they developed something of a liking for the quiet, good-natured stranger who laughed over his bad selections, was always ready to take another chance with the ponies and never asked any prying questions. His frank and open ways disarmed them.

Pleased with the progress he was making, Smith was much too smart to rush things. Their acquaintance grew closer in a perfectly natural way. He waited a long while before he found an opening through which to develop it on a more intimate basis. Then he met two of the men he knew best one afternoon in a poolroom not far from where he lived. While they were chatting after the last race had been run, Joe suggested that they step around to his apartment for dinner. It seemed to be an entirely spontaneous invitation as if the thought had occurred to him while they were talking over the day's events; though it was pre-

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cisely the situation Smith had been trying to create in just that way for weeks.

The invitation was accepted as pleasantly as it had been offered; the two sharpers had no idea they were opening the way to their own downfall. They found that their host lived like the gentleman he appeared to be; he knew how a good dinner should be served. During the evening they chatted about many things, with enough talk about the horses to convince the guests that their host was quite wise in the ways of race tracks and past performances. He showed no concern at their persistent winnings and did not make even a jovial reference to them.

They talked about the Aintree track at Liverpool, the scene of the Grand National, which is the most famous steeplechase in the world, and of the charms of the Chester racing park, beautifully situated on the River Dee, not far from where Smith was born and brought up. Vague hints dropped here and there accounted for his frequent visits to Liverpool, where he spent many days pursuing one end of his investigation, and he intimated that he did not prolong his stays there

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because his relations with the police were none too friendly. He left the cause to the imagination of his new acquaintances. They shrewdly attached much importance to the fact that he knew all about the inner workings of Vine's Hotel, which was the largest gambling house and poolroom in Liverpool, covering a whole city block.

The courtesy of this little dinner party was soon returned by one of Joe Smith's guests and he was introduced to several additional members of the gang whom he had seen many times in different poolrooms. Other similar social affairs followed and the circle of cronies was gradually extended. They all lived well, with their own valets and servants, dressed always in the height of fashion and spent money freely.

In public they were suave gentlemen; but behind their own doors, and with the veneer stripped off as acquaintance progressed, they showed themselves to be cold-blooded and ruthless bandits. Many of the leaders were members of good families who had been disowned by their parents when they persisted in the path of dishonesty. Their subordinates came from a much lower grade of

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society and were desperate men who would hesitate at no crime that promised a rich return. After he had been admitted to membership Joe trailed around with them until he was thoroughly familiar with their workings and knew all of the men of any consequence in the organization. If he had ever been suspected even slightly, his life would not have been worth a farthing, but he played his part so well that even after the gang had been broken up the members of it did not know who was responsible for their exposure.

"There really were two gangs," said Captain Smith, "the Liverpool Mob and the London Mob, but they were closely allied and worked together much of the time. The Liverpool Mob worked chiefly in Liverpool, and preyed on the bookmakers through their district runners. The big bookmakers divided the city into districts and had agents, known as 'runners' who covered the fields to which they were assigned, taking bets from people who had not time or did not find it convenient to visit the poolrooms.

"These runners operated something like the collectors for our industrial life insurance com-

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panies. Each one had his own circuit of public houses, or saloons, stores and houses. They went over their beats frequently and were well known. Many of their clients stopped them in the street and handed them their bets. In big races like the Derby, the City and Suburban Handicap, the Gold Cup or the Lincoln Handicap, where there would be betting for days and weeks in advance, the runners carried sheets showing the odds on the different horses, which often were changed from day to day, but on the ordinary races of the day, wagers were made with the understanding that they would be settled at the 'starting price' at the track, or the opening price as we would call it.

"The Liverpool Mob worked with two very different inks, which were brand new at the time. One of them, clear and distinct to start with, faded out quickly and so completely that it left no trace. The other was invisible when it was written but came out a brilliant black when exposed to a little heat.

"After the first race had been run and the winner was known, one of the Mob would hand a bookmaker's runner a five or ten pound note, cor-

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responding to $25 or $50 in our money, with a slip of paper on which was written his name and, we will say, 'Queen—S. P.' Queen was entered in the third race, which had not yet been run. 'S. P.' stood for starting price. This was written in the ink that faded. On the same slip 'Bully—S. P.' had been written in the invisible ink. Bully had already won his race, of course.

"The runner would look at the slip to verify the name of the horse and the race and the amount of the bet, stuff the piece of paper in one pocket and the money in another and go on his way. The heat of his body brought out the name of the horse that had been written with the invisible ink and the other disappeared.

"Simple enough when you know how it was done, but the scheme was so novel and the secret was so religiously guarded that it took a long time to dig it out. The runners did not go over all of the slips of paper they had collected during the day until the races were over and then they had so many of them that they did not notice that some of them had undergone a change. Nor was there any way of detecting it. The bookmakers

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shifted their odds about in all sorts of ways but they continued to lose money heavily. They believed they were up against some kind of a brace game but were completely in the dark as to how it was being worked. There was nothing for them to do but pay off on the winning tickets or go out of business. It was impossible to distinguish the phony tickets from the good ones, and bookmakers who 'welshed' were beaten up by the gang on dark nights and thrown in the river to drown. Some good men disappeared in that manner while others went broke and quit the game.

"The Mob did not confine themselves to Liverpool though they had their headquarters there. They also operated in London, Birmingham, Manchester, Newmarket and Chester, all of which cities had racing and plenty of facilities for betting. Two or three men would work in each district and they would often put down their sure-thing bets after the first and second races and sometimes, if they were very greedy, after the third as well.

"All of the gangsters paid a goodly part of their winnings, or robberies, to the leaders, who sup-

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plied them with the inks they used and assigned them to the territory they were to work. They were constantly shifted around from one district to another to avoid suspicion. The whole game was well systematized and the organization was managed with an efficiency that would have made a success of any business. Any members of the gang who failed to obey orders, or were strongly suspected of holding out on the bosses, met the same fate as the bookmakers who did not pay their losses.

"The London Mob had a much more elaborate system for beating the races," Joe Smith went on, "and let me say right here that it is possible to beat them only through trickery of some kind. This mob was made up of men of much better blood, though no higher principles, than the other gang. It was headed by Fred Sadler, as clever and unscrupulous a crook as England has ever produced but quite the gentleman in manner.

"In those days the racing news was sent out over a ticker system which was operated from a central station at the track. The reports were printed on a narrow strip of paper, after the style of the

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stock quotation ticker used in this country, though the instruments then in service did not operate nearly so rapidly. There were tickers in every sporting club and poolroom, of which there were a great many in London and Liverpool, with some of the other large cities well represented, and in many public houses. Some of the sporting clubs were very exclusive but in most of them membership was open to any man of good appearance who could pay the entrance fee. The Mob had many of its members scattered through these sporting clubs.

"Last minute scratches were frequent and for the information of bookmakers and bettors the rules required that a list of the horses in every race, and their riders, be sent out just before the horses went to the post. They were transmitted over the tape in this manner:

"RUNNERS, 3RD RACE: LORD JIM, Werner; MADCAP, Jones; HOT TIP, Wilkins; and so on through the list.

"Out of this perfectly innocent situation, which seemed proof against dishonesty, Fred Sadler's keen mind evolved an exceedingly clever con-

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spiracy that netted him and his fellows millions of dollars. His principal partner was the man at the track who sent out the reports over the ticker.

"With a large field of horses and a quick start, it frequently happened that the race had been run by the time the name of the last horse and jockey appeared on the tape. In such a situation, if the winner was the fourth horse in the list the man who was operating the ticker would print 'RUNS' on the tape immediately after the names of the last horse and rider. If the fifth horse won he would print 'RUNRS.' If the winner was the sixth horse he would add 'RUNNRS' and if the seventh horse was first under the wire 'RUNNERS' would be spelled out in full.

"There was no need for this additional word, whether in full or in contracted form, but it attracted no attention, outside of the conspirators, as it was assumed the operator was simply killing time and emphasizing the conclusion of the list of racers. When the final word was contracted it was supposed the horses had started before he finished it. Then would follow a brief description of the race, with the positions of the con-

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tenders at the start and at the quarters, and, finally, the name of the winner.

"This gave the members of the Mob time to get their bets down after the name of the winner had been tipped off to them by the number of letters in the added word. Thus, whenever a race was won by the fourth, fifth, sixth or seventh horse, in the order in which they appeared on the tape, and when the race was finished in time for the flash to be sent out at the conclusion of the list, the Sadlerites made their sure-thing bets. Their loot was continuous and enormous, as they had men working in all of the big sporting clubs and poolrooms.

"They were smart enough not to overplay their hand. They did not have to, for their percentage was heavy enough to suit any crook. The man who operated the ticker was, of course, in full view of the track. He knew all of the horses and did not have to wait until the winner had been officially announced before sending out the flash. When the conditions were favorable, or could be made so without attracting attention, he would delay the sending out of the list of racers until the horses

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were on their way to the post. Then, with a quick getaway, the situation was made to order for him, as he could dawdle over sending out the list or speed it up, as the occasion demanded.

"With the methods and members of the two Mobs established it was easy to put an end to their robberies. But there were no arrests, no prosecutions and not a word of publicity about it. Betting on the races had become so widespread that it was being much talked about as a national evil, with many prominent people agitating for laws against it. The bookmakers were fearful of adding fuel to what was becoming a flame by calling attention to their enormous losses. They knew that if the facts became known a great many people would feel that any business that could stand such a tremendous drain must have been operating at an excessive profit on the basis of unfair odds to the public. So the bookmakers were well satisfied to plug the holes through which their wealth had been running away and let it go at that.

"Unfortunately, any serious thought of punishment for the murders that had been committed by the gang was out of the quesion. I knew who

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the murderers were, either from their admissions to me, or through statements made by other members of the Mobs, but it would have been impossible to establish their guilt in court. If they had been arrested and tried, those who had boasted to me of their crimes would have repudiated their informal confessions, and in the cases where I had only hearsay evidence, however clear and convincing to me, my informants would have denied everything. It would have been my word against the sworn testimony of a lot of professional perjurers, with no chance of proving their perjury. So those crimes were necessarily added to the short list of mysterious murders that Scotland Yard has never solved publicly, though, as usual, the Yard knew all of the guilty parties. However, as most of the murdered men were traitorous members of the gang there was no great loss to society.

"Strangely enough," continued Joe Smith, "one of the biggest of the bookmakers was a man named Fry, whom I knew well. When I was a boy he and a man named Ellings had a linen store opposite the Tam o'Shanter hotel, in Liverpool. Ell-

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ings died and Fry took up the racing game and became one of the richest bookmakers in England. Though I often saw him and talked with him during the months I was working on the case, he never suspected that I was interested in it or that I had any hand in saving him from bankruptcy.

"Fred Sadler, who really was the brains behind both Mobs, and their directing genius, devoted his brilliantly distorted mind to other dishonest lines, after his gang was broken up. He was often in trouble with the police, for he was closely watched after that. The last report I had about him said that he had become angry with a waiter and stuck a knife through him. The man did not die, but Sadler was sent to prison and I think he died there."

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CHAPTER III

THE GUEST IS ALWAYS RIGHT

JOE SMITH'S elder brother had come to New York while Joe was working on the Frederica de Furneaux case and the reports he sent back of the new world appealed strongly to Joe's vivid imagination. So, with peace and prosperity restored to the bookmakers, he gave up his connection with Scotland Yard, despite the protests of the Inspectors with whom he had worked, and joined his brother.

The first thing he did on his arrival in New York, after looking the city over and pronouncing it good, was to apply for American citizenship, which he secured in the shortest possible time. His next step, naturally, was to get acquainted with the police. That was easy, as his brother was a neighbor and friend of John Flood, then Chief Inspector of the New York Police Department. His brother had told Flood of Joe's connection with

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Scotland Yard and something of his remarkable experiences and the unusual ability and courage he had displayed in the work. Naturally, the story lost nothing in a proud brother's telling, but in essentials it was not exaggerated. The Chief Inspector, who was himself a relentless manhunter and always on the lookout for capable operatives, gave young Smith a warm welcome.

They had many talks about British criminals and the methods of Scotland Yard as compared with American ways of dealing with crooks. After fully satisfying himself as to Joe's character and resourcefulness, Flood took him to his office and introduced him to Charlie Heidelberg, Detective Sergeant at Police Headquarters. The Inspector told the Sergeant enough about Smith's record with Scotland Yard, and his own estimate of him, to give him a good start. The result was that almost before he knew his way around in New York Joe was chasing lawbreakers under the direction of Heidelberg, and his work was so successful that the two soon became fast friends.

Joe sent to England for his wife and bought a home in Flushing, Long Island. As that suburb

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was not then, as it is now, a part of Greater New York, he was made a special Deputy Sheriff in Queens County, to give him what authority he might need.

In Joe Smith's first important case in New York City he proved his genius for simplifying mysteries, and took another step toward fame. A big department store on Sixth Avenue near 23rd Street, in what was then the heart of the retail shopping district, reported that costly objects of art had been disappearing for months, until the loss became something to worry about. The thief took only the most valuable things, indicating that he was a good judge of art as well as an expert shoplifter.

For a long while the regular store detective had devoted most of his time to watching the department that was being robbed, but without discovering a clue. The Police Department was then called on for help. Charlie Heidelberg, Detective Sergeant at Police Headquarters, assigned Joe Smith to the case.

When he first visited the store to look over the ground, Joe Smith was told at once that the one

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man, aside from the owners, about whom he need give himself no concern was the manager of the department that was being looted. This man, the management told him, had been with them for years and had their complete confidence. But every other employee of the store might be regarded as a possible thief.

Joe observed things quietly for a day or two, and noticed that the manager who was considered above suspicion allowed all of his clerks to go to lunch at the same time and was alone in his department during the noon hour. The trustful management explained that business was so slack at that time, the manager could handle it himself, and he preferred to go to lunch when the restaurant was less crowded than it was during the rush hour.

"That did not look so good to me," said Joe. "The fact that the owners of the store believed this man to be far above any shadow of suspicion had the effect of attracting my attention to him. I felt that he might stand a good bit of watching. His exalted standing with the management made no difference to me. I went into the case with a

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perfectly open mind, and I soon found myself especially interested in this particular man. I formed a theory about him and proceeded to try it out, without giving any hint of my idea or intention to the management.

"On the third day I packed a bag, ran into the store and rushed up to the art department during the lunch hour. The manager was alone, as usual. I explained that I was in a great hurry, as I was leaving on a ship that was sailing for England that afternoon, and had almost forgotten a present I wished to take with me. I was on my way to the pier and had only a few minutes in which to make a selection. With the help of the manager I picked out an article that was priced at $9.50, handed him a $10 bill, told him to give the change to one of his clerks, as I had not time to wait for it, and rushed out.

"Pretty soon I was back again, but the suspected man did not see me. I found he had not reported the sale he had made to me. I was not surprised. As he was leaving the store that evening, and after he was on the sidewalk, I tapped him on the shoulder and asked him to return. I took

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him into a private office and searched him, in spite of his indignant protests. In one of his pockets I found the ten dollar bill I had given him, which, of course, I had marked. We had an argument that was quite heated on his part but at the end of it he confessed that he was the thief. He took me to his apartment where he had about $10,000 worth of art objects he had stolen. This represented only a part of his stealings, for he had been selling expensive things to dealers for months at his home, and he had also failed to turn in a great deal of money that he received for sales when he was alone in the department.

"The owners of the store were glad enough to have the systematic robberies stopped, but they were so annoyed over having them pinned on the man they had trusted that they kicked about paying my expense account, amounting to something like thirteen dollars for three days' work. They showed their resentment in that way, and by refusing to prosecute the thief. Human nature works like that, sometimes—and human nature is a factor that you must know something about if

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you expect to have any success in dealing with criminals."

Soon after this case had been cleared up, Police Headquarters was requested to assign a detective to the Waldorf-Astoria, then the newest and largest hotel in New York. A systematic series of robberies had occurred recently, and the management was much concerned. The cigar humidors and wine cellars of the Waldorf were famous in those days, for this was long before prohibition was dreamed of, even by Wayne B. Wheeler. They were the largest and most valuable in the city. Both of them were being steadily depleted. The most expensive cigars, and choicest wines, were constantly disappearing, despite the most careful watchfulness of their rightful owners. They appeared to vanish into thin air. The losses were running into many thousands of dollars, and the thieves left no clue. Furthermore, there were many complaints from guests that their baggage was being plundered. These latter complaints caused the greatest anxiety of all, for the management realized that they could not go on without seri-

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ously damaging the reputation of the hotel before it was well started.

Here was a task that would suit Joe Smith to perfection, and Charlie Heidelberg recommended him for the job. Smith called at the Waldorf, in response to an invitation, and met the late George C. Boldt, the proprietor, and Thomas Hilliard, manager. They took him into a private office and gave him all of the details connected with the troubles they were having.

"The whole case is in your hands," said Mr. Boldt, at the end of the interview. "We give you carte blanche, with no limit as to either time or expenses."

It did not take Joe a great while to discover that the wines and cigars were being stolen by the men in charge of the humidors and wine cellars. Supervision over the hotel's stores was then not nearly so strict as it soon afterward became; there were many loose ends that the new House Detective gathered together and tied securely in square knots. Aided by outside confederates who shared in the loot, the two men in charge of the humidors and wine cellars found it easy to smug-

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