"RAFFLES, THE AMATEUR CRACKSMAN"

By E. W. Hornung, Author of "The Shadow of the Rope," "The Rogue's March," Etc.

No. VIII. A Jubilee Present

known to the inquiring alien and the traveled American. A true Londoner, however. I myself had never heard of it

antil Raffles casually proposed a raid.

"The older I grow, Bunny, the less I think of your so-called precious stones.

When did they ever bring in half their market value in £ s. d.? There was the fortilitie cith we ever cracked together—

"And gold in our boots, and gold up the sleeves and legs of our suits! You have the together—

"And gold in our boots, and gold up the sleeves and legs of our suits! You have the together first little crib we ever cracked togetheryou with your innocent eyes shut. A thousand pounds that stuff was worth,

but how many hundreds did it actually fetch? The Ardagh emeralds weren't much better, old Lady Melrose's necklace was far worse, but that little lot the other night has about finished me. A cool hundred for goods priced well over four, and £25 to come off for bait, since we only got a tenner for the-ring I bought and paid for like an ass. I'll be shot if I ever touch a diamond again! Not if it was the Kohinoor; those few whacking stones are too well known, and to cut them up is to decrease their value by arithmetical retrogression. Besides, that brings you up against the Fence once more, and I'm done with the beggars for good and all. You talk about your editors and publishers, you literary swine! Barabbas was neither a robber nor a publisher, but a six-barred, barbed-wire, spike-topped Fence. What we really want is an In-corporated Society of Thieves, with some public-spirited old forger to run it for

s on business lines." Raffles attered these biasphemics under his breath, not. I am afraid, out of any but because we were taking a midnight miring on the roof after a whole day of fune in the little flat below. The stars shone overhead, the lights of London underneath, and between the tips of Raf-fles a cigarette of the old and only brand. I had sent in secret for a box of the best. The boon had arrived that night, and the foregoing speech was the first result. I could afford to ignore the insolent asides, however, where the apparent contention was so manifestly unsound.

"And how are you going to get rid of your gold?" said I, pertinently. "Nothing casier, my dear rabbit." "Is your Room of Gold a roomful of

Raffles laughed softly at my scorn 'No, Bunny, it's principally in the shape of archaic ornaments, whose value, I admit, is largely extrinsic. But gold is gold, from Phoenicia to Klondike, and if we cleared the room we should eventually

"I should melt it down into a nugget and bring it home from the U. S. A. to-

"And then?" "Make them pay up in hard cash across the counter of the Bank of England. And

you can make them."

That I knew, and so said nothing for a time, remaining a hostile though a silent critic, while we paced the cool black leads with our bare feet softly as cats.

"And how do you propose to get enough away," at length I asked, "to make it worth while?" "Ah, there you have it," said Raffles. to see what we can see. We might find some hiding place for a night; that, I am afraid, would be our only chance."

"Have you ever been there before?" "Not since they got the one good, portable place which I believe that they exhibit now. It's a long time since I read of it-I can't remember where-but I know they have got a gold cup of sorts worth several thousands. A number of the immorally rich clubbed together and richly immoral intend to snaffle it for ives. At any rate we might go and have a look at it, Bunny, don't you

When? When?" I asked like a quick-firing gun.

the better, while old Theobald's away on his honeymoon." Our medico had married the week be-

hie branch of it which consisted of Raf-fles-during his brief absence from town. There were reasons, delightfully obvious to us, why such a plan would have been highly unwise in Dr. Theobald. I, however, was sending his daily screeds and not a little enjoyment, "Well, then, when-when?" I began to

Tomorrow if you like,"

limitation was my one regret. We must do so, Bunny, before we

Very well," I sighed. "But temorrow And the morrow it really was

I saw the porter that night and, I still tink, bought his absolute allegiance for the second coin of the realm. My story, twever, invented by Raffles, was suffiently specious in itself. That sick gen tleman, Mr. Maturin (as I had to rememto call him), was really or apparently sickening for fresh air. Dr. Theobald the glorious weather lasted. I was myself convinced that no possible harm could come of the experiment Would the porter help me in so innocent and meritorious an intrigue? The man hesi-tated. I produced my half sovereign. The man was lost. And at 8:30 next morning, before the heat of the day, Raffles landau, which was to call for us at midday and wait until we came. The porter

the landau) from Harrod's stores for the It was little after 9 when we crawled together into the gardens; by half past my invalid had had enough, and out he trotted on my arm; a cab, a message to our coachman, a timely train to Baxter street, another cab, and we were at the British Museum-brisk pedestrians nownot very many minutes after the opening

downstairs, in a carrying-chair bired (like

assisted me to carry my invalid

It was one of those glowing days which will not be forgotten by many who were in town at the time. The Diamend Jubi-lee was upon us, the Queen's weather had already set in, Raffles, indeed, declared it was as hot as Italy and Australia put together; and certainly the short Summer nights gave the channels of wood and asphalt and the continents of brick and mortar but little time to cool. At the British Museum the pigeons were crooning among the shadows of the grimy colonnade, and the stalwart janitors the stalwart janitors looked less stalwart than usual, as ers going to their labor underneath the

"That's the room," said Raffles, who

tht. Come on, Bunny he led the way in could not understand until we came to the corridor leading to the Room of Gold, where he turned to me for a mo- he

(Copyright, 1905, by Charles Scribners Sons.) we should have to jump the gates. No, seum is probably well enough march, Bunny, whether you like it or

leave that to me, Bunny, and wait till you've tried two pairs of trousers sewn together at the foot! This is only a preliminary reconnoitre. And here we are. It is none of my business to describe the so-called Room of Gold, with which I, for one, was not a fittle disappointed. The glass cases, which both fill and line it, may contain unique examples of the goldsmith's art in times and places of which one heard quite enough in the course of one's classical education; but, from a professional point of view, I would as lief have the ransacking of a single window in the West End as the pick of all those spoils of Etruria and of ancient Greece. The gold may not be so soft as it appears, but it certainly be so soft as it appears, but it certainly looks as though you could bite off the business end of the spoons, and stop your own teeth in doing so. Nor should I care to be seen wearing one of the rings; but the greatest fraud of all (from the aforeanid standpoint) is assuredly that very cup of which Raffles had spoken.

er, he felt this himself. "Why, it's as thin as paper," said he, "and enameled like a middleaged lady of quality! But, by Jove, it's one of the most beautiful things I ever saw in my life, Bunny. I should like to have it for

look at it in that light. Underneath were the names of the plutocrats who had subscribed for this national gewgaw, and I fell to wondering where the £8000 came in, while Raffles devoured his twopenny guidebook as greedily as a schoolgiri with a zeal for culture.

with a zeal for culture.

"Those are scenes from the martyrdom of St. Agnes," said he " " translucent on relief " one of the finest specimens of its kind." I should think it was! Bunny, you Philistine, why can't you admire the thing for its own sake? It would be worth having only to live up to: There never was such rich enameling on such thin gold, and what a good scheme to hang the lid up over it, so that you can see how thin it is. I wonder if we could lift it, Bunny, by hook or

The madman seemed to think we had the room to ourselves. I knew better, but, like another madman, had let him but, like another madman, had let him ramble on unchecked. And here was a stoild Constable confronting us in the short tunic that they wear in Summer, his whistle on its chain, but no truncheon at his side. good-humored, perspiting face and a limp mustache. He looked sternly at Raffles and Raffles looked mer-rily at him.

things I ever saw in all my life."

The Constable's face had already relaxed, and now a grin peeped under the limp mustache. "I dare say there's many as feels like that, sir," said he.

piled the other between grim jest and stout earnest. Raffles studied his face; he was still watching Raffles, and I kept an eye on them both without putting in my

"You appear to be single-handed," observed Raffles. "Is that wise?"

One of the attendants sits there

Then where is he now?" Talking to another attendant just out-

We listened and we did hear them, but not just outside. In my own mind I even questioned whether they were in the coroutside the corridor.

cue who was here when we came in ursued Raffles.

the intelligent officer explaine

All at once, yet somehow not so sudenly as to excite suspicion, Raffles had why I could not for the life of me im-

"Lor' bless you, sir," said he, "I'm all "But you haven't even got a trunch-

see, sir, it's early as yet. In a few minutes these here rooms will fill up, and there's safety in numbers, as they say."

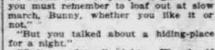
"It isn't often empty as long as this, "Mennwhile, what if my friend and I had been professional thieves? Why, we

"That you couldn't; leastways, not without bringing the whole place about Well, I shall write to the Times

the same. I'm a connoisseur in all this sort of thing, and I won't have unnecessary risks run with the nation's property. You said there was an attendant just outside, but he sounds to me as though he were at the other end of the corridor.

had bought the two-penny guide, as we studied it openly on the nearest bench; things in one glance. Raffles had stepped "No. 43 upstairs and sharp around to a few inches backward and stood poised with a long, methodical stride which I kind of light was breaking over the crass

cried, with a sudden clutch at the whistle chain on his chest. The whistle flew out, but it never reached his lips. the open street," said Raffles. There were a couple of sharp smacks, other-nting the stairs. I suppose we like double barrels discharged all but it in 20 seconds, but if we did simultaneously, and the man teeled You



for a night."
"Quite so-for all night. We should

its own sake, by all the gods!"

The thing has a little square case of plate glass all to itself at one end of the room. It may have been the thing of beauty that Raffles affected to consider it, but I for my part was in no mood to

"You'd better try, sir," said a dry voice

rily at him.

"Going to run me-in, officer?" said he.

"That would be a joke-my hat!"

"I didn't say as I was, sir," replied the policeman. "But that's queer talk for a geatleman like you, sir, in the British Museum!" And he wagged his helmet at my invalid, who had taken his airing in frock coat and top hat, the more readily to assume his present part.

"What!" cried Raffles, "simply saying to my friend that I'd like to lift the gold cup? Why, so I should, officer, so I should! I don't mind who hears me say so. It's one of the most beautiful things I ever saw in all my life."

Phactly: and I say what I feel, that's all," said Raffles airity. officer, is a valuable thing like this quite safe in a case like that?

The note of anxiety was capitally caught; it was at once personal and public-spirited, that of the enthusiastic savant, afraid for a national treasure which few appreciated as he did himself. And, to be sure, the three of us now had

but now they were gone.
"I'm not single-handed," said the officer, comfortably. "See that seat by the

ridor through which we had come. To me it sounded as though they were just You mean the fellow with the billiard

That wasn't a billiard cue! It was a "It ought to be a javelin," said Raffles The public treasure ought to be better guarded than this. I shall write to the

"Oh, it will fill up soon, will it?"
"Any minute now, sir."

For an instant we all three listened,



AN TO THE DOOR

against me so that I could not help start with the bare idea of finding a | Raffles would have been too absurd had after your own heart. I know where I catching him as he fell.

"Well done, Bunny! I've knocked him out-I've knocked him out! Run you to the door and see if the attendants have you pretended."

"It was to be the more reconnoiser derlying sincerity in his appreciation of any and every form of beauty which all

the door and see if the attendance have heard anything, and take them on if they Bunny." Mechanically I did as I was told. There was no time for thought, still less for remonstrance or reproach, though my surprise must have been even more complete than that of the constable before Raffles knocked the sense out of him. Even in my utter bewilderment, however, the instinctive caution of the real crimiself before a Pompetian freeco in the cor-

nor did they hear the dull crash which I heard even as I watched them out of the being tempted, nor yet for showing It was hot weather, as I have said, but the perspiration on my body seemed al-ready to have turned into a skin of ice. tion as that, Bunny. It was a chance ready to have turned into a skin of her tion a hundred thousand! We might go then I caught the faint reflection of my in a hundred thousand! We might go own face in the casing of the fresco, and there every day of our lives and never own face in the casing of the fresco, and there every day of our lives and never of again be the only outsiders in the hillard-marking John-

of him, when a single glance convinced the gods; not to have taken it would me that his pockets were as empty as his hands, and his mad outrage the most wanton and reckiess of his whole career. "Ah, very interesting, very interesting, but nothing to what they have in the museum at Naples or in Pompeli itself. You must go there some day, Bunny. I've a good mind to take you myself. Meanwhile—slow March—the beggar hasn't moved an eyelld. We may swing

And my knees knocked together as we came up to the chatting attendants. But Raffles must needs interrupt them to ask the way to the Prehistoric Saloon.

"At the top of the stairs." that way to the Egyptian part."

Posed by Kyrie Beliew

corner of each eye.

"A hundred and thirty-nine yards, wasn't it?" said Raffles, composedly, ignoring my remark. "Then it can't be more than a hundred and twenty nownot as much. Steady, Bunny, for Gorsake. It's slow march-for our lives!" There was this much management. the steps outside, and in we jumped,

We had turned into Bloomsbury street

Raffles shouting "Charing Cross!" for all

Where the devil are you driving us?" "I said King's Cross! Round you spin and drive like blazes or we miss our train! There's one to York at 10:35," added Raffles, as the trapdoor slammed. "We'll book there, Bunny, and then we'll slope through the subway to the Metropolitan, and so ground via Baker street and Earl's

And actually in half an hour he was seated once more in the hired carrying chair, while the porter and I staggered upstairs with my decreptit charge, for whose shattered strength even one hour in Kew Gardens had proved too we had got rid of the porter and were alone, at last, did I tell Raffles in the most nervous English at my command frankly and exactly what I thought of him and of his latest deed. Once started, moreover, I spoke as I have seldom spoken to living man, and Raf-fles, of all men, stood my abuse without a murmur, or, rather, he sat it out, too astounded even to take off his

"But it always was your internal way!" I was savagely concluding. "You make one plan and you tell me an-"Not today, Bunny, I swear!"
"You mean to tell me you really did

"Then why on earth go and do what

"The reason would be obvious to anyone but you," said Raffles, still with no unkindly scorn. "It was the temptation of a minute—the final im-pulse of the fraction of a second, when Roberto saw that I was tempted, and let me see that he saw it. It's not a thing I care to do, and I shan't be ridor, and there were the two attendants devil is alive. But a knockout shot still gossiping outside the further door, was the only chance for us then." You don't get run in for

"But I should have deserved running it frightened me into some semblance of again, with the billard-marking some semblance of again, with the billard-marking some myself as Raffles joined me with his room, with the billard-marking some hands in his pockets. But my fear and his practically out of earliest one hands in his pockets. But my fear and his practically out of earliest from and the same time. It was a gift from and the same time. It was a gift from the same time in the same time.

> "But you didn't take it," said L "You little smile with which Raffles shook his head, for it was one that he kept for those great moments of which our vocation is not devoid. All this time he had been wearing his hat tilt little over eyebrows no longer raised.

And now at last I knew where the gold cup was.
It stood for days upon his chimney plece, this costly trophy whose ancient history and final fate filled newspaper columns even in these days of jubiles Then we'll work round and for which the flower of Scotland low. Our Constable, we learned, had ential chat.
"I believe you're mad," I said bitterly ment that I brought him an evening paper with the news Raffles' spirits rose to a height inconsistent with his equable temperament, and as unusual in him as the sudden impulse upon which he had acted with such eff-God's The cup itself appealed to me no more than it had done before. Exquisite it might be, handsome it was, but light in the hand that the mere gold it would scarcely have poured three figures out of the melting pot. And struggle worth the what said Raffles but that he would struggle for freedom.

never melt it at all! "Taking it was an offense against the laws of the land, Bunny. That is nothing. But destroying it would be a crime against God and art, and may spitted on the vane of St. Mary Abbot's if I commit it!"

Talk such as this was unanswerable; indeed, the whole affair had passed the pale of useful comment, and the one course left to a practical person was joke. This was not a little enhanced by the newspaper reports, which de-scribed Raffles as a handsome youth and his unwilling accomplice as an older man of blackguardly appearance and low type.
"Hits us both off rather neatly, Bun-

shattered strength even one ny," said he. "But what none of them to kew Gardens had proved too do justice to is my dear cup. Look at Then, and not until then when it, only look at it, man! Was ever anything so rich and yet so chaste? St. Agnes must have had a pretty bad time, but it would be almost worth it ght of to go down to posterity in such enam-Once el upon such gold. And then the his-have tory of the thing. Do you realize that d Raf. it's 500 years old and has belonged to Henry VIII and to Elizabeth, among others? Bunny, when you have me cremated you can put my ashes yonder cup and lay us in the de-delved earth together."

"And meanwhile?"
"It is the joy of my heart, the light of my life, the delight of mine eye." And suppose other eyes catch sight

ou pretended."

any and every form of beauty which all
"There was no pretense about it, his nonsense could not conceal. And his infatuation for the cup was, as he dejoy of the average collector, that of show-Raffles and reason seemed to come to-gether again as suddenly as they had

parted company in the Room of Gold.

Arrangement Liebler Co. can place it after all! "Do you mean the cup?"

"Then I congratulate you."
"Thanks."

"Upon the recovery of your senses." "Thanks galore. But you've been con-sundedly unsympathetic about this thing. Bunny, and I don't think I shall tell yo

"Quite time enough," said I. "It will mean your letting me loose for n hour or two under cloud of this very night. Tomorrow's Sunday, the jubilee's Tuesday, and old Theobald's coming

"It doesn't much matter whether he's back or not if you go late enough." "I mustn't be late. They don't keep open. No, it's no use your asking any questions. Go out and buy me a big box of Huntley & Palmer's biscuits, any sort

you like, only they must be theirs, and absolutely the biggest box they sell." "My dear man!"
"No questions, Bunny; you do your part and I'll do mine."

Subtlety and success were in his face. It was enough for me, and I had done his extraordinary bidding within a quarter of an hour. In another minute Raffles had opened the box and tumbled all the biscuits into the nearest chair.

"Now newspapers!"
I fetched a pile. He bid the cup of gold a ridiculous farewell, wrapped it up in newspaper after newspaper, and finally packed it in the empty biscuit box.

"Now some brown paper. I don't want to be taken for the grocer's young man." A neat enough parcel it made when the string had been tied and the ends cut close. What was more difficult was to wrap up Raffles himself in such a way that even the porter could not recognize him if they came face to face at the cor-ner. And the sun was still up. But Raf-fies would go, and when he did I should not have known him myself.

He may have been an hour away. It was barely dusk when he returned and my first question referred to our danger-ous ally, the porter. Raffles had passed him unsuspected in going, but had man-aged to avoid him altogether on the re-turn journey, which he had completed by way of the other entrance and the root. I breathed again.

"And what have you done with the

"How much for? How much for?" "Let me think. I had a couple of cabe and the postage was a tenner, with ane other twopence for registration. Yes, 12 cost me exactly five-and-eight."

"It cost you? But what did you get for it, Raffies?" "Nothing, my boy." "Nothing!"

"Not a crimson cent."
"I am not surprised. I never thought it had a market value. I told you so in the beginning." I said irritably. "But what on earth have you done with the thing?"

"Sent it to the Queen."
"You haven't!"

Rogue is a word with various meanings, and Raffles had been one sort of Rogue ever since I had known him, but now for once he was the innocent variety, a great gray-haired child, running over with mer-

riment and mischief. "Well, I've sent it to Sir Arthur Bigge to present to her Majesty, with the loyal respects of the thief, if that will do for you," said Raffles. "I thought they might take too much stock of me at the G. P. O. if I addressed it to the sovereign herself. Yes, I drove over to St. Martin's-le-Grand with it, and I registered the box into the bargain. Do a thing properly if you do it at all."

"But why on earth," I groaned, "do such a thing at all?"
"My, dear Bunny, we have been reigned over for over 60 years by infinitely the finest monarch the world has ever seen. The world is taking the present oppor-

tunity of signifying the fact for all it is worth. Every nation is laying of its best at her royal feet, every class in the community is doing its little level-except ours. All I have done is to remove one reproach from our fraternity."

At this I came round, was infected with his spirits, called him the sportsman he always was and would be, and shook his daredevil hand in mine, but at the same time I still had my quaims. "Supposing they trace it to us?" said I.

"There's not much to catch hold of in a biscuit box by Huntley & Palmer," replied Raffles; "that was why I sent you for one. And I didn't write a word upon a sheet of paper which could possibly be traced. I simply printed two or three on a virginal postcard-another halfpenny to the hadwhich might have been bought at any postoffice in the kingdom. No, old chap, the G. P. O. was the one real danger; there was one detective I spotted for myself, and the sight of him has left me two, Bunny, if you please. Raffles was soon clinking his glass

against mine, "The Queen," said he, "God bless her!"

HE most beautiful thing I know of to certain spots in the robe and say: "O, | founded on the consent of the govaway your peace of mind. It is a pro- sequence from off Fate's spindle. moter of sweet sleep, an ald to diges-All art that lives is vitalized with a tion and a guarantee of good behavior.

A good way to drive love away is to be

It is only lite and love that give To lose one's self-respect is the

To have friends is a great gain, but

greatest calamity.

it does that.

habit.

to achieve an enemy is a distinction. Extremes equalize themselves; the pendulum swings as far this way as

In order to stand success you must be of very stern fiber, with all the gods on your side.

Strong men can well afford to be tivate silence. There is no fight worth making-no

Many bate, but few have a fine canacity for scorn. Their hate is so vehement that

Tobacco, strong drink and colum al-

ternately full and excite, soothe and ele-

struggle worth the while-save the

vate, but they always and forever de-The savings bank habit is different from the cab habit, and not so costly to your thinkery and wallet as the cigarette

Above all things you must be calm self-centered, never anxious, and be always ready to accept whatever the

Just how much discord is required in God's formula for a successful life, no one knows, but it must have a use, for No one can appreciate the beautiful

who has not a keen sense of humor, for the beautiful is the harmonious, and the laughable is the absence of fit adjust The life of every man is a seamless garment-its woof his thoughts, its warp

his deeds. When for him the roaring

loom of time stops and the thread i

spiritual essence; an essence that ever escapes the analyst, but which is felt and known by all who have hearts that The individual who has not known an

all-absorbing love has not the spiritual

vision that is a passport to Paradise. He forever yammers between the worlds, fit neither for heaven nor hell. Misery comes from lack of full, free The man who fights for freedom, fights

for the right of self-expression for

himself and others-and immortality lies in nothing else. No one knows a thing for sure until be ful work, and can gradually develop has told it to someone else. We deepen among the most of them a degree of impressions by recounting them, and to habitually suppress and repress the child self-supporting. when he wants to tell of the curious and wonderful things he has seen is to display

a two-by-four acumen, think-if you want a thing done it is reading, "Keep off the grass," prying posafest and best not to pick a publican. Heemen, and zealous ashbox inspectors Only busy men have time to do things. are insulting things to greet the gaze of The men who have good incomes and the little immigrants fresh from God. work little, are envied only by those Small wonder is it, as they grow up, with a mental impediment.

To divert, amuse and please the people is a necessity to the ruler, for power unkind conditions. But Nature underat the last is derived from the people, stands herself; the second generation,

is a savings-bank book-there why did he not leave them out?" not erned. If you would rule either a are no microbes in it to steal knowing that every action of man is a woman or a nation, you would better gain consent. To secure consent you must say "please," Run the list in your mind of the

names that are immortal and you will recall only those of men who have widened the horizon for other men; and that select number who are remem hered in infamy because they linked their names with greatness by doubting, denying, betraying and persecuting it-deathless through disgrace. I am positive that I can take, just as self-expression, and from nothing else. they come, iwenty-five or fifty Sing-Sing men, and by the Kindergarten Method

manage them, in a room alone, day after day, without arms or a guard, in a perfectly orderly and decent manner. I can teach them to-express themselves in usedeftness and skill that will make them

A city is no pince for children-nor grown-ups. Birds and children belong in the country. Paved streets, stone side-Men of leisure seldom have time to walks, smoke-begrimed houses, signs that they take to drugs and drink, seeking in these a respite from the rattle of wheels and the never-ending cramp of

Is the joy of the household, for without it no happiness can be complete. How sweet the picture of mother and babe, angels smile at and commend the thoughts and aspirations of the mother bending over the cradle. The ordeal through

which the expectant mother must pass, however, is so full of danger and suffering that she looks forward to the hour when she shall

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