POOR DOCUMENT

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RAFFLES, the AMATEUR CRACKSMAN.

NINE POINTS OF THE LAW

Fifth Story in the Absorbing Raffles Series

BY E. W. HORNUNG

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"Well," said Raffles, "what do you | "A certain risk is involved."

and this was it. Indeed, when I hunted "Then surely three heads will be bet- him up in town on the Tuesday night he I read the advertisement once more beter than two. I said I wanted that thou confessed as much in the most brazen

"What do you think?" said he. "Se-curity's that fellow Addenbrooke, the po-lice court lawyer, and he wants to see me fons et origo of the whole trouble. As curity's that fellow Addenbrooke, the police court lawyer, and he wants to see me finstanter!"

"Do you know him, then?"

"Merely by repute. I only hope he doesn't know me. He's the chap who got six weeks for sailing too close to the wind in the Sutton-Wilmer case; everybody wondered why he wasn't struck off have the finest collection of pictures in lawyer, and he wants to see me fons et origo of the whole trouble. As you know the son, you may know the father, too, at all events by reputation; and in that case I needen't tell you that he is a very peculiar man. He lives alone in a store house of treasures which no wind in the Sutton-Wilmer case; everybody wondered why he wasn't struck off have the finest collection of pictures in wind in the Sutton-Wilmer case; every-body wondered why he wasn't struck off the rolls. Instead of that he got a first-rate practice on the seamy side, and every blackguard with half a case takes it straight to Bennett Addenbrooke. He's probably the one man who would have the cheek to put in an advertisement like that, and the one man who could do it without exciting suspicion. It's simply in his line; but you may be sure there's something shady at the bottom of it. The odd thing is that I have long made up my mind to go to Addenbrooke myself if accidents should happen."

"And you're going to him now?"

"This minute," said Raffles, brushing his hat; "and so are you."

In a store house of treasures which no eyes but his ever beheld. He is said to have the finest collection of pictures in the south of England, though nobody ever sees them to judge; pictures, fiddles and furniture are his hobby, and he is undoubtedly very eccentric. Nor can one deny that there has been considerable eccentricity in his treatment of his son. For years Sir Bernard paid his debts, and the other day, without the slightest warning, not only refused to do so any more, but absolutely stopped the lad's allowance. Well, I'll tell you what has happened; but, first of all you must know, or you may remember, that I appeared for young Debenham in a little scrape he got into a year or two ago. I got him off all right, and Sir Bernard to have the finest collection of pictures in the south of England, though nobody ever sees them to judge; pictures, fiddes and furniture are his hobby, and he is undoubtedly very eccentric. Nor can one deny that there has been considerable eccentricity in his treatment of his son. For years Sir Bernard paid his debts, and the other day, without the slightest warning, not only refused to do so any more, but absolutely stopped the lad's allowance. Well, I'll tell you what has happened; but, first of all you must know, or yo

Then surely three heads will be better than two. I said I wanted that thousand pounds; my friend here wants the other. We are both cursedly hard up, and we go into this thing together or not at all. Must you have his name, too? I sholld give him my real one, Bunny."

Mr. Addenbrooke raised his eyebrows over the card I found for him; then he rodinary advertisement that ever got into print!"

Raffles smiled.

"The jacute of it. But the really original point is requiring applications by telegram to a telegraphic address! There's something in the fellow who thought of what, and something in his game; with one word he chokes off the million who answer an advertisement every daywhen they can raise the stamp. My anwars ocat me five both: but then I present that two. I said I wanted that thou confessed as much in the most brazen manner imaginable. But he wouldn't tell me who was the purchaser, and finding out took the rest of the week; but I did find out, and a nice time I've had of it ever since! Backward and forward between Esher and the Metropole, where the Queenslander is staying, sometimes twice a day; threats, offers, prayers, entreaties, not one of them a bit of good!" ("But," he confessed at last. "Yours is the first reply I have received; people who can afford to send long telegrams don't rush to the advertisements in the Daily Telegraph; but, on the other hand, I was not quite prepared to hear from men like yourselves. Candidly, and on onity is a clear to the stamp of men for me—men who be song to good clubs! I rather intended to appeal to the—er—adventurous classes."

"We are adventurers," said Raffles of the wold throw in a blank check if asked. He offered one to the Queenslander is taying, sometimes twice a day; threats, offers, prayers, entreaties, not one of them a bit of good!" ("But," a clear throm the Augustant two the throm the Augustant two the treatment of the dide find out, and a nice time I've had of it ever since! Backward and forward between Esher and the Metropole, where the Queenslander is ta

when they can raise the stamp. My answer cost me five bob; but then I prepared another."

"You don't mean to say that you've applied?"

"Rather," said Raffles. "I want two thousand pounds as much as any man."

"Put your own name?"

"Well—no, Bunny, I didn't. In point of fact I smell something interesting and illegal, and you know what a cautious chap I am. I signed myself Glasspool, care of Hickey, 38 Conduit street; that's my tailor, and after sending the wire I went round and told him what to expect. He promised to send the reply along the moment it came. I shouldn't be surprised if that's it!"

And he was gone before a double-knock on the outer door had done ringing through the rooms, to return next minute with an open telegram and a face full of news.

"What do you think?" said he. "Security's that fellow Addenbrooke, the pounds and work of the millegal and the content of the ment of the courter of the ment of the ment of the courter of the courter of the courter of the ment of the ment of the courter of the courter of the courter of the ment of the courter of the courter of the ment of the courter of the reply along the courter of the ment of the courter of the ment of the ment of the courter of the ment of the courter of the ment of the ment of the courter of the ment of the courter of the ment of the ment of the ment of the courter of the ment of the ment of the law?"

"It was magnificently said; the lawyer flower of the ment of the was devenued shrewelly. "At the offered one to the Queenslander, with care; the mother of the ment of the me

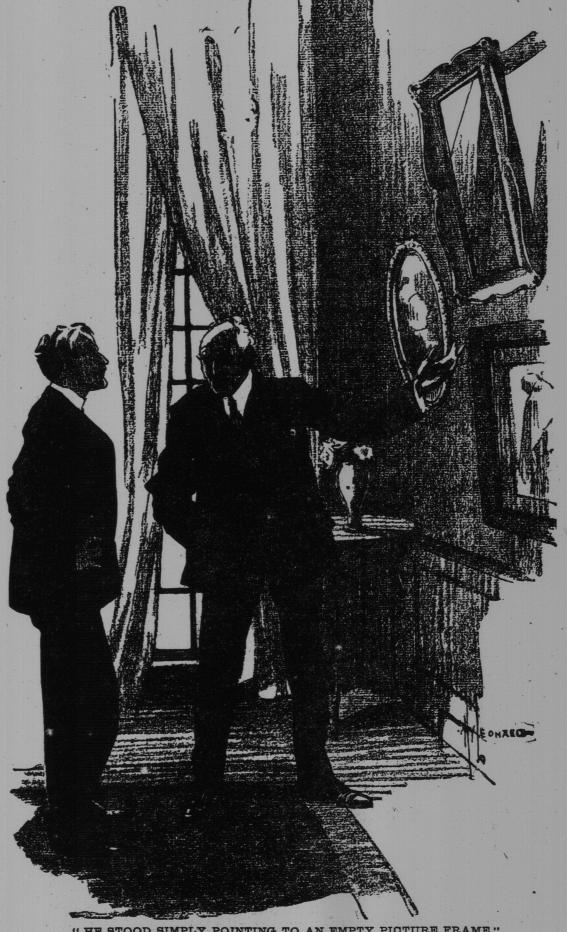
simply isn't worth it at the price. Double your stakes, and I for one am your man."

Addenbrooke wavered.
"Do you think you could bring it off?" "But you have no"-Well, hardly!"

"And you would really run the risk for four thousand pounds?"
Raffles looked at me. I nodded.
"We would," said he, "and blow the

pay," said Addenbrooke, growing firm.
"Then it's more than you can expect "Your are in earnest?"

"Say three thousand if you succeed!"
"Four is our figure, Mr. Addenbrooke."
"Then I think it should be nothing if



" HE STOOD SIMPLY POINTING TO AN EMPTY PICTURE FRAME"

host's. And I heard nothing more, though my ears were on the strain. But later, to my horror, when the waiter had finally withdrawn, Cragge himself sprang up and rushed to his bedroom without a word. I sat like stone till he returned.

"Thought I heard a door go," he said.

"Must have been mistaken * i inagination * * * gave me quite a turn. Raffles tell you priceless treasure I got in

It was the picture at last; up to this point I had kept him to Queensland and the making of his pile. I tried to get him back there now, but in vain. He was reminded of his great, ill-gotten possession. I said that Raffles had just mentioned it, and that set him off. With the confidential garrulity of a man who has dined too well, he plunged into his darling topic, and I looked past him at the clock. It was only a quarter to ten.

In common decency I could not go yet. So there I sat (we were still at port) and learnt what had originally fired my host's ambition to possess what he was pleased to call a "real, genuine, twin-screw, double-funnelled, copper-bottomed Old Master;" it was to "go one better" than some rival legislator of pictorial proclivities. But even an epitome of his monologue would be so much weariness; suffice it that it ended inevitably in the invitation I had dreaded all the evening.

"But you must see it. Next room. This learnt what had originally fired my host's "But you must see it. Next room. This

way."
"Isn't it packed up?" I inquired hastily.
"Lock and key. That's all."
"Pray don't trouble," I urged.
"Trouble be hanged!" said he. "Come

And all at once I saw that to resist him And all at once I saw that to resist him further would be to heap suspicion upon myself against the moment of impending discovery. I therefore followed him into his bedroom without further protest and suffered him first to show me the iron map-case, which stood in one corner; he took a crafty pride in this receptacle, and I thought he would never cease descanting on its innocent appearance and its Chubb's on its innocent appearance and its Chubb's lock. It seemed an interminable age before the key was in the latter. Then the ward clicked, and my pulse stood still.
"By Jove!" I cried next instant.

The canvas was in its place among the

"Thought it would knock you," said Craggs, drawing it out and unrolling it for my benefit. "Grand thing, ain't it? Wouldn't think it had been painted two hundred and thirty years? It has, though treat when he sees it; won't go bragging about his pictures much more. Why, this one's worth all the pictures in Colony o' Queeneland put together. Worth fifty thou-sand pounds, my boy—and I got it for

the mood for further confidences. My appearance checked him, and he rubbed his hands.

"how will old Johnson take it? Go out and hang himself to his own picture-rods,

at last. Struck speechless first by my re-lief, I continued silent from a very different cause. A new tangle of emotions tied my tongue. Raffles had failed—Raffles had failed! Could I not succeed? Was

it too late? Was there no way?

"So long," he said, taking a last look at the canvas before he rolled it up—"so long till we get to Brisbane."

The flutter I was in as he closed the "For the last time," he went on, as his

keys jingled back into his pocket. "It goes straight into the strong-room on board."

For the last time! If I could but send him out to Australia with only its legiti-

