

## 2 THE COTTAGE ON THE FELLS

had given him his first impetus towards the law.

There is no manner of doubt in the world that housebreaking is the most romantic of the professions; after housebreaking, the profession that helps the housebreaker to escape the law.

A great criminal lawyer, with his armful of briefs, was the pictured objective towards which Richard Hellie had set his face; he had been called to the Bar eighteen months now, and his only client up to this had been a dog thief (*item*, convicted).

"I suppose there are," replied Comyns, "but there's one thing I can, the gangway is going, so long—"

He dashed down the gangway, the hawsers were cast off, and the screw churned the steel grey waters of the harbour.

Hellier stood with his hands in his overcoat pockets, watching the boat as she passed from sight, and wishing that he was Comyns.

Comyns was handsome, Comyns was wealthy. His father made bicycle lamps and motor horns in Wolverhampton, his grandfather had been a platelayer. He belonged to one of those families that go up in the world. Hellier belonged to one of the families that go down. When Comyns' grandfather had been laying plate, Hellier's had been eating off it. But the plate of the Helliers' had vanished as