-T. L. H., in Christian Register

**** Mr. Skinner's Skeleton.

By PHILIP BEAUFOY.

staff, we regret to inform you that both. we shall not require your services after this day month, the 27th prox. door. We shall, of course, be pleased to give you any testimonials you may desire in the future, and you have our best wishes for your subsequent career."

Kimber read the note three times before he was able to realize exactly keys feel for mere clerks. what it meant. At first he had believed that it was a sort of joke on the part of the correspondence clerk; the fellows were always having what they called a "game" with him, because he happened to be the oldest the desired effect. The man asked it had come. man in the office. He had reached the him to step inside, and inquired his critical age of forty-five and the in- name. verted values of the twentieth century demand that the last thing on earth to be respected shall be the dig- a few minutes on a very urgent matnity of age.

But, although, in the beginning, he as a jest, further observation proved that he was quite wrong. The note home." bore the signature of "James Skinner," the head of the firm, and even Dixon, the correspondence clerk, would hardly have had the audacity to forge that august gentleman's the door of which was open.

"So I'm to be kicked out," he murmured, "and I can guess the reason. they want, but my hair is going gray, and people don't refer to me any longer as that 'young fellow.' "

A feeling of violent resentment seized his soul, shutting out the mildcome later, of course, but just now he could only feel enraged. It was scandalous, brutal, altogether unjustifiable, he reflected. What right had they to use the best years of a man's saw that Skinner had entered the in your cupboard, and I happen to life and then fling him away on to room, the dust heap when the whim seized

office, whence the clerks had departed to their Saturday afternoon football or music hall. Jove, how attached he had become to the place! The clock, the dingy desks, the rickety tools-all these things were part of his life and had twined themselves working in any other room. It was my long service" true that he had often disliked the monotony of his toil, but now that there was the prospect of something the memory of that happy monotony with something like the gratified shiver with which the disturbed sleeper returns to the warmth of the sheets.

It was Skinner's doing, of course. (Kimber), and would never have suggested his removal. Skinner, however, was prejudiced in favor of young men; doubtless that trip to New York last year had developed his | tiently. prejudices. Often had he heard Skinner say that young blood was what the modern business man wanted. Yes, it was Skinner's doing, and a feeling of passionate resentment Skinner had entered the office at that moment, he would not have been answerable for what happened.

Suddenly he conceived the idea of house and demanding an interview. ployer. On Monday, at the office, it would be went to the house he could say his say undisturbed.

"Yes, I'll do it." he resolved, and. having brushed his hat and straightened his tie, he climbed on a 'bus going westward. His heart beat more swiftly than usual, but his face was calm. He was even able to listen with a vague interest to the conversation of two men who sat in front of him.

"Yes," said the elder of the two, "it's what I've always said. Every man has a skeleton in his cupboard. an, sometimes of a drunken father, sometimes of a lunatic brother. But there it is, and although he keeps the key of that cupbeard in his most carefully buttoned pocket, somebody steals the key at last. That's what anxiety and not impatience impelled happened to poor Bennett."

His companion acquiesced, and then attempted a feeble joke. This many things in twenty years. He led the conversation into a lighter dropped. On the brain of Kimber, however, the chance words had made an impression. A gleam came into his eyes and a spot of color glowed in his cheek. His mind worked with ing it nervously. A shade of pallor feverish energy.

The 'bus paused at Lancaster Gate. ment at the door, asking himself I daresay you will call to mind that for two persons to converse through whether he should check or ring, for there is a certain circumstance which a mile of space.

'Dear Sir," ran the letter, "owing | he was not used to visiting at "swagto the fact that we are making con- ger" houses. Eventually, with a

siderable reductions in our office touch of bravado, he resolved to do A man in quiet livery opened the

> "Is Mr. Skinner at home?" he asked, boldly.

The servant stared at him, guessing that he was from the office and accordingly favoring him with the contempt which all right minded flun-

"Don't know, I'm sure," he replied carelessly. "Then be good enough to inquire,"

said Kimber, sternly. The tone was brutal and produced

Kimber took out his card and

wrote on it: "May I see you, sir, for absurd statements?" ter?"

"You will please give this to Mr. had been inclined to regard the letter Skinner," he said. "I am sure he will consent to see me if he is at

The servant went away and returned a moment later.

"Just step in here and wait a bit," he observed, as he pointed to a room,

Kimber obeyed. There was a mirror on the mantelpiece. He walked to it and surveyed himself. Jove! I'm too old. That's it. Too old! I'm how wonderfully young and well he punctual, I'm quick, I'm everything looked. The years seemed to have rolled from him during the last ten minutes. The dominating impulse which had seized his brain had brightened his eyes and brought a glow to his cheek. He felt that he er sensation of sorrow. That would was ready to achieve anything. Anything!

"Er-what do you want, Kimber?" asked a voice, rousing him from his to the episode to show that I speak of reverie. Facing round abruptly, he what I know. The skeleton is locked

"I took the liberty of calling, sir, in reference to this letter," he replied He glanced around the deserted as he took the note from his pocket and handed it to his employer.

Skinner read the letter as though he was not aware of the contents.

"Well!" he said, as he returned it. "Well! What about it?"

"I have come here to ask you to rensider your decision, si into the routine of his days. Some-|swered, "and to tell you that I think how, he could not imagine himself you have no right to dismiss me after

"Indeed! Such things are done every day. You must excuse my saying so, but-er-you are getting a new and strange he shrank back into little too old for us. We want younger men."

"Yes, that is what I thought. But all the same, sir, I don't admit the justice of it. I can do everything that tive man." a younger person can do and perhaps The manager had always like him do it better. As to salary, I'm only getting a hundred a year, and I doubt if even a man half my age would take much less."

Skinner shuffled his feet impa-

"My good fellow," he said, "I really can't waste time arguing with agine, would be withdrawn also?" you about the ethics of commercial efficiency. I suppose I have a right to do as I choose in my own office. against the smooth faced, brutal head Now be sensible and take your gruel of the firm rose in Kimber's soul. If like a man, Otherwise I may change my mind about furnishing testimonials when you want them!"

Kimber realized that the hour had struck for action. He pulled himself going round to his chief's private together and approached his em-

"Mr. Skinner," he said, "you are impossible, for the stream of callers an ambitious man. I know that you was incessant, and at most he would have just been elected to a city combe able to snatch a few minutes only pany, and I believe that you contemof the busy man's time. But if he plate standing for Parliament at the next by-election."

Skinner stared at him as though he believed his clerk had suddenly gone mad.

"What the mischief has all that got to do with you and your dismis-

sal?" he asked, abruptly. "More than you think," replied Kimber, as he fixed his eyes upon the other man with a very acute glance, "much more. For you must remember, Mr. Skinner, that I have been in your office twenty years and that dur-Sometimes it's the skeleton of a wom- ing that time I have kept my eyes and ears open."

> "Well?" There was just a touch of uneasiness in the exciamation. Skinner again shuffled his feet, but this time

the mechanical action. "Well, an observant man can learn can learn other things besides matvein, and the subject of skeletons was | ters which concern the office. You understand?"

"What do you mean?" Skinner's hands were now engaged with his watch chain. He was twirl-

deepened in his heavy face, "I think," said the other man, He alighted, and walked swiftly to coolly, "you can guess what I mean. Westbourne Terrace, where the great I fon't want to hurt your feelings man lived. He hesitated for a mo- and to go into needless details. But mission of sound that it is possible

you would not like to be brought to light, either now or in the future. This is a very censorious country, Mr. Skinner, and people insist on their Parliamentary representatives having unspotted records, or, at least, records where the spots are decently covered up. Need I say more?"

Skinner did not reply for a moment. Then, with a sudden anger,

he burst out: "So you're going in for blackmail,

are you?" "Pardon me, but I'm doing nothing of the sort. I'm not asking for if I had liked, I could easily have you of the exposure which a few

words of mine would bring about." have sent for a policeman," muttered Housekeeping. Skinner.

"Hardly, for if so why don't you ring that bell now and call in a constable?" observed Kimber, triumphantly. "I can promise you that I Skinner, I doubt if you would have been foolish enough to ask for police assistance. There are cases where compromise is the best plan and the safest. This case is one of them."

The two men eyed each other, as though they were measuring their relative strengths. Kimber stood the gaze of his employer unflinchingly. Until that hour he had never dreamed that he possessed so much courage. The hour had called it forth, and lo.

"Now, look here," said Skinner, after a pause. "All this may be mere bluff. Where are your proofs of your

"The proofs," replied Kimber, calmly, "lie in the mouth of the person who confided to me the story.' Skinner swayed back, a slight foam on his lins.

"Great heavens!" he gasped, "then she-'

"Yes, she is still alive and very, very anxious to be kicking as well,' returned Kimber, quickly, "but as it happens she does not know exactly where to find you. I do. Now do you understand?"

Skinner sat down and buried his face in his hands.

"Confound you," he said, thickly, 'I thought it was all over and forgotten."

"Most men do comfort themselves with that belief," observed Kimber, "but they find out their mistake sooner or later. But, believe nie, Mr. Skinner. I have no wish to cause you any distress. I have merely referred have a key as well as you. That's all. But I don't want to use the key if I can help it."

A pause followed, during which various emotions throbbed through Skinner's poor, sordid little soul. Rage, fear and surprise held the high place there, and it was easy to see that the words of his clerk had produced a terrible impression.

The clock struck 4.

"I'm afraid," said Kimber, "that 'm taking up too much of your time.' "No, no, wait a moment." Kimber smiled and sat down again.

Presently his employer looked at him intently. "Mr. Kimber," he said, and the

fact that he used the word "Mr." struck the clerk as being significant. 'I suppose that you are not a vindic-

"I hope not."

"You cannot really have any grudge against me except that you think you have received an unjust dismissal."

"That is my only grievance." "Suppose that the dismissal were to be withdrawn, the grudge, I im-

"Of course!" A deep sigh of relief issued from Mr. Skinner's throat. He rase and | boiled. almost smiled.

"Then," he said, "you may consider yourself reinstated."

"Thank you very much, sir." Kimber reached for his hat and um-

brella and went toward the door.

"One moment," murmured Mr. Skinner, "you told me just now that you were getting a hundred a year. That is certainly not an inflated salary. I think I shall give you the charge of an additional department and raise the salary to £150."

Kimber bowed.

"Thank you very much, sir," he said again.

The contemptuous looking footman showed him out, wondering why the caller smiled so expansively as he went down the steps.

"I should like to know," reflected Kimber, as he climbed on his 'bus, 'what Skinner's skeleton really is." -Black and White.

Infant Mortality.

In connection with the awakening of public attention to the neglect and waste of infant life in the United Kingdom, it is satisfactory to note that the rate of infant mortality in England and Wales during 1907 did not exceed 118 per 1000 births registered. This rate was considerably below the rate recorded in any previous year since the commencement of civil registration in 1837 .- Lancet.

There are only 104 miles of street railway in England still holding to horse traction. There are sixty-four on which motive power is steam, twenty-five cable and four gas.

The conditions of the Arctic atmosphere are so favorable for the trans-



RHUBARB MARMALADE.

When rhubarb is plentiful, a good money. I'm asking for mere justice. preserve may be made by adding one All these years I've kept silent, when grated pineapple and five pounds of sugar to five pounds of rhubarb. wrung money from you by hinting to Place in preserving kettle on back of range until sugar is dissolved, then allow it to cook moderately for one "And had you done so I should hour. Pour into jars and seal .- Good

TURKEY STUFFING.

Boil sweet potatoes with skins on until tender, then peel and mash. To each pint add one teaspoon salt, shan't try to escape. But, really, Mr. | three shakes pepper, two tablespoons butter, three tablespoons sweet cream, one teaspoon sugar, one cup pecan tuts, chopped fine. Mix and fill turkey, but do not stuff too full, -New York World.

SOUTHERN POTATO SALAD.

Cut up as many cold boiled potatoes as desired with a generous amount of onions cut up fine and one or two stalks of celery cut up fine; mix all together into a large bowl. Cut up one pound of bacon in cubes and fry nice and brown. While that is frying mix one teaspoon of salt, one of mustard and one heaping tablespoon of sugar; mix with half a cup of warm water and add to bacon and fat; then add one cup of cider vinegar and mix with bacon, fat and all. Then pour over potatoes, onions and celery .- New York World.

PERFECT RICE.

Few housewives understand how to cook rice so that it puffs into a snowy mass, each kernel distinct. have found a way. First wash it thoroughly through several cold waters, rubbing the kernels between the hands. This is to remove all the loose flour on the outside of the grains. After the water runs clear, turn the rice into a colander, and drain; then put it into a deep stew pan, allowing one quart of boiling water to a cup of washed rice. Add a teaspoonful of salt, and allow it to come to a good boil. Cook steadily for twenty minutes, lifting the rice occasionally with a fork to prevent its sticking. Shake the kettle also for the same purpose, but never stir or mash with a spoon. Take it from the fire, pour off the water if any is left, and place it on the back of the stove, in the oven, or even over a pot of hot water until it finishes swelling. Cooked in this way you will find the rice plump, light and white, each grain distinct and separate.-New York Globe.



Put smail orange and small onion beside duck while roasting to improve flavor.

To successfully bake a pie crusi without its filling, line it with a paraffin paper and fill with uncooked

Enameled ware that become burned or discolored may be cleaned by rubbing with coarse salt and vine-

A teaspoonful of lemon juice to a quart of water will make rice white and keep the grains separate when If eggs are to be boiled hard have

the water boiling when the eggs are dropped in. This will prevent the yolks from turning dark. Warm your discolored earthenware or granite baking dishes well

then rub them with damp cornmeal It cleans without scratching. More coal is burned than neces sary by not closing the dampers

when the fire is not being used. In the same way gas is wasted or any kird of coal. In putting on the bands to skirts make them long enough to turn in

about an inch. Make the buttonhole in this, and being doubly strong it will not pull out. Never keep a person that has fainted in an erect or sitting position. Let him or her lie down and they will

usually come out of the faint without further assistance. When the pretty bunches and baskets of sweet-scented grass begin to lore their fragrance, plunge them for a moment into holling water and they will be again as aromatic as when first gathered. Dried lavender

may be similarly treated. For warmed over boiled potatoes cut them into dice and put into s buttered baking dish in alternate layers with grated cheese, bits of butter, pepper and salt. When the dish is full sprinkle the top with grated cheese, turn over it a cupfu! of milk or cream and bake for hall

In camp or at home, when the fire is slow of starting because of lack of shavings or otherwise, cut into some of the kindlings, making little slivers without separating the latter from the sticks. If the kindlings happer to be damp on the outside, the cuts will expose little dry places to the



I never saw the fairies

hard to be brave.

That sister reads about; I've looked around the orchard

And up the waterspout; I've peered within the coal-bin,

I've hunted through the garret,

And everywhere, I guess: I've climbed up all the apple-trees,

And searched the garden nooks; I think the only fairles are

Just those within the books.

-James P. Webber, in Youth's Com-

A BRAVE LITTLE COWARD.

The boys called Nannie a coward,

good many things, but it made her

One day father and the boys went

day there was to be a baseball game

boys began to gather. Some of them

they ate as they sat around on the

grass. Many of them were rough

glancing anxiously out of the window

roses were in full bloom, and oh, so

beautiful. Next Sabbath was Chil-

som was being treasured up to use in

All at once they saw a boy dart

Then Nannie came to the rescue.

At first mother did not like the

save the roses, and there were so

many people around that no harm

it was decided that she might do as

"You will be my private police-

She took the tall rosebush nearest

she stayed all the afternoon. For a

load of roses for the church, and Nan-

is a girl. In fact Tom began to see

SMOOTHING THE WAY.

which to have it sewed on. Don't

ma to find her needle already thread-

wanted to mend my ball. I'm sure I

think how poor Bridget has suffered

from her fall, and how the household

"Yes, auntie; and if I had wiped

up the water I had spilled this noon.

sister wouldn't have been obliged to

change her dress when she was in

such a hurry to get back to school;

but a fellow will have to keep pretty

wide awake to remember every time."

And with a thoughtful expression on

leisurely munching a banana as he

went, but apparently engaged in deep

thought. Reaching the sidewalk, he

threw down the banana skin, and pro-

ceeded on his way; but presently he

turned and looked hard at the yel-

low object lying on the pavement,

and then, quickly retracing his steps,

he picked it up and flung it far into

the road, where no one would be

likely to slip up on it .- Home Her-

A STRANGE RIDE.

"O, dear," sighed Bessie, "I can

never, never write my composition

to-night! Miss Barrow could not

have chosen a harder subject than

be a true story, she said."

has been inconvenienced."

man," said mother, "and you will be

ever suspect what you are doing."

across the yard and break off a great

decorating the church.

very brave, indeed.

the kittens with me."

she wished.

Oglevee.

next one."

Will, curiously.

next one then."

were all through."

rose. What shall we do?"

FAIRIES.

And searched mamma's clothes-press;

For the Younger Children.

are tired," he said, gently, "but I guess father can help you this time. I will tell you about the strangest ride that I ever took, and you can see

"Why, papa," cried Bessie, "did you ever take a strange ride?"

if it will do."

"Yes, indeed," her father answered, 'and you shall hear all about it. When I was a little boy I stayed out coasting all one fine winter day, and when night came I was so tired I could hardly eat my supper.

"Your grandma tucked me in my bed, and said, as she kissed me good and it is true that she was afraid of a night, 'I am afraid my little boy will go coasting in his sleep to-night." very unhappy to have the boys hold About 2 o'clock in the morning I such an opinion of her, and she tried | woke up, and where do you suppose I was? At the foot of the stairs in my mother's clothesbasket. My father away to stay a week. The very next and mother and my brothers and sisters stood round, looking at me anxin the vacant lots across the street, jously. I rubbed my eyes and rememand even before dinner the men and bered I had been dreaming that I was coasting. I must have jumped out of had walked from other towns and bed in my sleep, gone down stairs and had brought their lunches, which brought up the clothesbasket instead of my sled, got into it and coasted down the stairs, waking up the whole and rude, and Nannie's mother kept family, who were very much alarmed."

"Did you have any clothes on?" at the noisy crowds passing. The asked Bessie.

"I had on my night-dress, my little fur cap and my overshoes," laughed dren's Day, and every bud and blos- her father. "I felt decidedly foolish." "And it didn't hurt you any?" questioned Bessie.

"Not a bit," her father answered. 'People who walk in their sleep ofred rose. Sticking it into his buttonten escape uninjured where they hole he ran off laughing, as though would be severely hurt were they he thought he had done something awake."

Bessie got her block and pencil and "Oh, dear!" exclaimed the mother, began to write. "I'm afraid that they will take every

"Then that will do?" her father asked. "It is certainly a true story." "Yes, indeed," Bessie replied, "And "I'll stay out and watch them," she I don't believe anybody will have a said. "I won't be afraid if I can take composition just like mine, do you?" Christine Gleason.

plan, but Nannie was so anxious to BOYS AND GIRLS OF THE PAST. If you boys and girls had lived a entury ago, this is what would have could really come to her, and at last happened to you:

When you were babies you would have worn no nice, warm, comfortable undergarments. No; you would have worn low necked and short such a polite one that nobody will sleeved dresses, and have been kept in houses so cold you shivered. You would have cried, wouldn't you? the street for a playhouse, and there Well, that's what the babies did; but it didn't do any good. You would while, whenever a crowd of strange have been given a dose of bitter medboys passed her heart beat very hard icine instead of any warm clothes. for a minute, but she did not run The mothers and fathers were velvets and furs, but they didn't think such So it happened that on Children's things were good for babies-long Day there was a whole wheelbarrow

Long ago-just as soon as you nie was happy, and she was still hap- outgrew your first clothes-you pier when Tom whispered, "Say, I'm would have been dressed just like never going to call you a coward your parents. An old book tells us again." Tom kept his word this time. that a little tot of two years old was He learned for the first time that a dressed in this fashion: "Yellow girl need not be a coward even if she brocaded satin over a petticoat of crimson velvet. It touched the floor that there were many ways in which in front and trailed behind." How a boy could be a coward .- Laura M. would you enjoy a dress like this if you intended to go out coasting or skating or to fly a kite?

Boys were dressed just like their "Why, Auntie, I thought that you fathers-long ago-in doublets, leather breeches, fancy waistcoats, "So I am with my work," returned and, what do you think of this, boys? Aunt Carrie, as with a smile she went -after seven years of age all boys of on threading her needle. "I am only aristocratic families wore white wigs! trying to smooth the way for the School was most uninteresting. No kindergartens or play or music. The "Who, for instance?" questioned children were put at their lessons by the time they were two or three years "Well, supposing that just as papa old. At five they could read and is starting for business to-morrow write and answer correctly any quesmorning he discovers that he is about

tion in the Catechism. to lose a button from his coat, and he Long ago children had almost no can spare only about two minutes in toys. They were very few and very expensive. If a little girl and boy of you think it would be a relief to mam- that time could peep into a modern nursery and see its beautiful dolls and dishes, furniture, mechanical en-"Of course, for I shouldn't think gines, toys and books, they would

one could find that bit of an eye at surely think they were in fairyland. all if he were in a hurry. I had a Despite all these hardships, the dreadful time the other day when I children of long ago were happy. Let us not be sorry for them because should have been glad to be your their ways were different from ours; let us, rather, learn from them in-"Suppose again, Will, that whoever dustry, system, simplicity, orderlidropped that piece of wood upon the ness and piety. It is well to rememcellar steps had stopped to pick it up. ber the lines of Oliver Wendell remembering that some one else Holmes:

would be coming that way soon. Just Little of old we value here Wakes on the morn of its hundredth Without both looking and feeling

queer. -Washington Star.

WITH AN OBJECT.

Tim heiped his father in his house painting and decorating business. Usually the boy worked rather slowly, but his parent one day found him his boyish face, Will passed out of painting away with tremendous the house and toward the front gate, energy.

He paused a moment to investigate so strange a matter.

"What's come over ye?" he said. 'It ain't like you to work that fast." "Whist," said Tim. "Stand out o" the way and don't stop me. Ol'm sthrivin' to get through before the paint gives out."-Chums.

Newspaper Advertising the Best.

The newspaper is the best advertising medium, and the more we employ that and boycott the other the better for the community. Advertising devices and the bill-board are utterly hideous .- Professor Zueblin, in a Lecture 4t Boston.

this-'A Strange Ride.' And it must Creat opportunities exist in Spain Bessie's father heard her. "You for American farm implements.