THE BEST AND BRIGHTEST SCHOOL STORIES!

THE NELSON LEE Library And St Frank's Magazine.

2d

HANDY IS CLEAN BOWLED

From This Week's Story:—

A School Girl's word of Honour

A Magnificent Story of the Boys of St. Frank's and the Girls of the Moor View School.

No. 474. EVERY WEDNESDAY July 5. 1924.

A lady with a perambulator butted Handforth in the rear before he could be aware of it, and the next moment he staggered sideways and nearly knocked an old gentleman through the shop window.

A SCHOOLGIRL'S WORD OF HONOUR!

A ROUSING STORY OF THE BOYS OF ST. FRANK'S AND THE GIRLS OF MOOR VIEW SCHOOL

The Narrative Related by NIPPER and set down by

E. SEARLES BROOKS

The keenness shown by my readers in their letters for more about the Girls of Moor View School has encouraged our popular Author to introduce the fair pupils of Miss Bond's establishment more prominently than ever in the story you are about to read. It centres chiefly around the fascinating personality of Miss Irene Manners and the mystery concerning the Head's wife. A novel feature in this story is the description of the cricket match between the Girls of Moor View and the Boys of St. Frank's.

THE EDITOR.

CHAPTER I.

PUTTING HER FOOT DOWN.

IRENE MANNERS jumped lightly off her bicycle in Bannington High Street and placed the machine against the curb.

And just then, Handforth, of the Remove, emerged from the chemist's shop with a new packet of Kodak film, and stopped dead in the middle of the pavement.

"Good-evening, Miss Irene!" he said eagerly.

It was rather thoughtless of Handforth to halt so abruptly. A lady with a perambulator butted Handforth in the rear before he could be aware of it, and the next moment he staggered sideways, and nearly knocked an old gentleman through the shop window.

"Here, I say!" gasped Handforth. "What the dickens——"

"It was really your own fault, Ted," said Irene severely. "Why did you look so startled?"

"Well, I—I saw you, Miss Irene," said Handforth awkwardly.

"And am I so very dreadful?"

"Rather not!" declared Edward Oswald hastily. "As a matter of fact, you look so absolutely ripping that I was bowled over. I didn't expect to see you, either. Lovely evening, isn't it?"

They had drawn to the edge of the pavement now, and there was certainly some reason for Handforth's embarrassment. Irene Manners was his particular chum—in fact, the only girl friend he had. And on this bright summer evening she was looking unusually pretty and attractive in white. The sudden vision had made poor old Handy's brain reel.

"I don't see Church and McClure," remarked Irene, in surprise.

"Oh, the fatheads were keen on cricket, and wouldn't come with me," said Handforth. "As it happens, I'm jolly glad."

"But aren't you keen on cricket, too?" asked the schoolgirl.

"Rather! But I'm so well up in practice that I didn't need to put in any spell at the nets this evening," said Handforth modestly. "I say--er—are you—— That is—— I mean—er——"

"Well?" asked Irene smiling.

"Yes, rather!" said Handforth feebly.

"But what were you going to say?"

"Say? Oh, that?" faltered Handforth. "Nothing, Miss Irene—nothing at all! Only I was wondering if you were going back alone? I mean, we might ride——"

"Ride home together?" finished Irene,

helping him. "Why, of course! I shan't be more than five minutes in the shop. I want to buy a little bottle of scent for Marjorie's birthday present."

And she tripped lightly into the chemist's, leaving Handforth with a feeling that he was several kinds of an ass. After all, why on earth should he have been nervous in Irene's presence? Why had he faltered so much in asking her such a simple question? He leaned against his bicycle and glared at his feet with considerable intensity.

"I hope you can see 'em?" observed a well-known voice cheerfully.

Handforth started, and looked round.

"My only hat!" he said blankly. "Where did you spring from?"

"I didn't spring at all—I walked!" replied Willy Handforth, the leading light of the Third Form at St. Frank's. "What's wrong with your feet?"

"My feet?"

"Those whacking great things down there!" explained Willy, pointing.

Handforth turned red.

"I don't want any of your cheek!" he said darkly.

"Now I come to examine them carefully, they are a bit terrible," said Willy thoughtfully. "If you floated your shoes down the river, old man, they'd be mistaken for a couple of barges!"

"Why, you--you——"

"But joking aside, I just want to say——"

"Joking!" roared Handforth furiously. "Look here, you young bounder, unless you clear off this instant I'll biff you! I don't want you here—you give me a pain! Your face worries me. I always feel depressed when you come near!"

"That's because you don't like my beautiful habit of telling the truth," said Willy calmly. "I'm just off back to St. Frank's. Coming?"

"No!" snapped his major.

"Waiting for Irene, eh?"

"Irene?" repeated Handforth, as though he had never heard the name.

"You're jolly dense this evening," said his minor. "Irene! Your best girl, you know. Didn't she just go into the chemist's? If you like, I'll wait, and we'll all ride home together!"

Handforth nearly burst a blood-vessel.

"Oh, will we?" he said tensely. "Will we?"

"Why not?"

"Because I wouldn't have you with us for a thousand quid!" roared Handforth. "Two's company, and three's none! Clear off while you're safe! I'll give you ten seconds!"

"Well, there's no need to collect a crowd!" remarked Handforth minor. "Everybody's looking at us as it is. All right. I won't be a spoil-sport. I'll buzz off, and leave Irene to you, so that you can whisper sweet nothings to her on the way home."

"By George! You—you——"

"That'll be easy, because you always say nothing whatever you speak," went on Willy candidly. "But be careful, old man. These girls are jolly touchy, you know——"

Biff!

"Take that!" roared Handforth, exasperated beyond measure.

Willy went over backward, turning a complete somersault over Irene's bicycle, against which he had been standing. He fell in the gutter, but before he could rise, his major yanked him up by the seat of his trousers, and gave him a violent push.

"Now clear off!" hissed Handforth fiercely.

"Oh, Ted! You—you bully!"

Handforth whirled round, dismayed. Irene had come out of the shop, and was gazing at him with unutterable scorn. And Willy grinned in the most unsympathetic manner.

"Hear, hear, Miss Irene!" he said. "That's right—let him have it! Just look at the way he treated me in the public highway! So long! I think I'd better be going!"

And Willy, scenting further troubled, vanished.

"Thank goodness!" growled Handforth. "The fact is, Miss Irene, he cheeked me until——"

"Will you please pick my bicycle up?" asked Irene coldly.

Handforth did so with haste.

"The young beggar!" he said. "Willy knocked it over——"

"Thank you!" said the girl stiffly. "Good-evening, Handforth!"

"But—but we were going to ride home—— I—I thought——"

"I am very sorry if you should think such an absurd thing," interrupted Irene, with supreme iciness. "I saw you knock Willy down, and I think you are a brute. Please don't attempt to explain. And if you dare to follow me I will slap your face!"

And the girl twirled round with her chin high in the air.

CHAPTER II.

IRENE'S ADVENTURE.

HANDFORTH was utterly startled.

On one other celebrated occasion Irene had quarrelled with him, and that, too, had been on account of his impulsive habit of letting fly at the least provocation. It had been days before the girl had deigned to speak to him, and he had been in utter misery.

And now it was just the same again. She had even gone to the length of addressing him as "Handforth." And just because

he had treated Willy far more leniently than the young beggar deserved.

"I—I say, Miss Irene," he panted hurriedly. "You—you don't mean it, do you? I only biffed him because——"

He paused, for Irene had taken utterly no notice of him and was in the act of mounting her bicycle. The leader of Study D clutched at her sleeve in desperation.

"Oh, look here, Irene——" he began.

"How dare you!" asked the girl angrily. "Let me go at once!"

"But—but——"

"I don't want to speak to you again," interrupted Irene, pulling herself free, and preparing to start. "And remember what I said—if you follow me I shall be very, very angry."

She glided away, and Handforth stood looking after her retreating form as it threaded its way through the traffic of the old High Street. And Handy remained on the edge of the pavement like a statue.

He didn't move until Irene had vanished, and then he turned to his own machine with a sudden wild impulse.

"I won't take any notice of what she said!" he muttered. "I'll jolly well have this out—and put things right!"

But better sense prevailed, and he didn't go. Upon second thoughts he concluded that it would be far wiser to wait until the morrow, when Irene's anger would have subsided.

Handforth grimly decided upon his plans. He would take Willy with him, and he would make Willy confess that the whole incident had been his own fault. After that, Irene wouldn't keep up her present frozen attitude.

And Handforth, having come to this conclusion, mounted his machine and cycled down the High Street in order to accomplish one or two other errands, which he had decided to forsake previously.

In the meantime, Irene was on her way home, still very angry with Handforth for having acted so viciously. Being a girl, she couldn't understand the schoolboy point of view. She quite failed to appreciate that Willy himself took the whole thing in good part and wasn't a bit injured, either mentally or physically.

This was a sore point with Handforth. Girls were such duffers like that. They never would seem to understand that a chap can biff another chap and everything remain the same. Girls seemed to imagine that the very act of giving a fellow a black eye was a brutal business.

There was no question that Irene Manners was very annoyed with Edward Oswald. But by the time she was half-way home her feelings were not quite so antagonistic. She realised that Willy might have chipped his major; she knew he was a young terror. And she even began to feel a little regretful that she had treated Handforth so sharply.

But it would do him good; he must learn to get out of these violent habits. Irene was an optimist if she believed that her influence would have any permanent effect.

She had got to a point of the Bellton Road where it dipped into a little hollow, with a sharp hill just beyond. Down there it was very quiet and peaceful, and as there was no traffic about Irene seemed to be utterly alone.

The horizon was necessarily quite limited down in this dip, so even if there had been traffic on the road, it was not visible until it reached the top of either hill.

Irene was free-wheeling, but she started pedalling again, in preparation for the sharp rise. Something attracted her attention towards the left, where the meadows sloped gently down towards the River Stowe.

A figure was crossing along the footpath—the figure of a girl, attired in sombre dark clothes. And she seemed to be walking rather unsteadily. Irene thought very little of it, and kept pedalling.

She lost sight of the figure behind some intervening trees, but as she glanced round again, she saw the girl reach a stile. And Irene was rather startled when the figure faltered half-way over the stile, and then fell headlong to the ground on the other side. It was as though her collapse had been the result of a fainting fit.

"Whatever shall I do?" murmured Irene, jumping from her bicycle.

She paused for a moment, standing quite still, and staring at the distant stile. But there was no movement—no indication that the girl in black had recovered from her fall.

"Oh, how silly of me to forbid Ted to come!" murmured Irene, with vexation. "But how was I to know? I do hope somebody comes——"

She glanced up and down the road anxiously. But still there was no sign of life. And Irene promptly came to a decision. She remounted her machine, and rode swiftly into the hollow.

Here she pushed her bicycle through the hedge, left it concealed there, and ran quickly across the meadow. She arrived at the stile rather breathless, and fearful as to what she would find.

So she was not utterly startled when she saw the form of the girl in black stretched on the ground on the other side of the stile—still and silent. And the girl had fallen in a huddled heap.

In a moment, Irene was kneeling beside her.

"Are you hurt?" she asked breathlessly. "Oh, dear! Whatever can I do? Oh, thank goodness! I—I thought——"

She had caught sight of a distinct movement—she saw, in fact, that the other was breathing irregularly, and in a decidedly unnatural way. But she was certainly very much alive.

And this was enough for Irene. She seized the unfortunate girl by the shoulders, and

raised her head. The next second, she was staring at the pale, drawn face of the other with blank amazement.

"Why, it's—it's Mrs. Stokes!" exclaimed Irene, aloud.

She was so surprised that she could only stare for a moment. Mrs. Stokes! The pretty, young wife of Dr. Beverley Stokes, the youthful Headmaster of St. Frank's College!

There was nothing particularly remarkable in the fact that Mrs. Stokes should take a walk through these meadows—for, after all, the school was only a short distance away by cutting across the rustic footbridge, and then over the meadows. Neither was it strange that Mrs. Stokes should trip as she crossed the stile, and thus hurt herself.

But it certainly was singular that the wife of such a prominent man should be out and about dressed in the garb of a maidservant! For this was the truth.

Mrs. Stokes was wearing a flimsy, cheap cloak, and beneath this she was attired in the black alpaca dress and apron of the average maidservant, or lady's maid.

A small hat, with a veil attached, had fallen off in her tumble. And it was small wonder that Irene should feel such astonishment. What extraordinary freak had caused the attractive wife of Dr. Beverley Stokes to walk abroad in this get-up?

But Irene was not allowed to ponder very much, for Mrs. Stokes was moaning slightly. A brook gushed and rippled near by, and Irene remembered that cold water was perhaps the best remedy in a case like this.

She ran swiftly to the tiny stream, and returned with her cupped hands full of water. It was only a mere drop, but she sprinkled the water over Mrs. Stokes' face and forehead, and then hurried back for another supply.

She was greatly relieved, on returning, to find the Head's wife with her eyes open, staring uncomprehendingly about her.

She was so very different to her usual cheerful, sunny self, that Irene was feeling just a little frightened.

She had met Mrs. Stokes once or twice, and had liked her immensely—as, indeed, everybody did who came into contact with her. At St. Frank's, both Dr. and Mrs. Stokes were adored by all the fellows.

"I think I've seen you before, haven't I?" asked Mrs. Stokes suddenly.

"Yes, of course. "I'm Irene Manners.

"Oh, yes—from the Girl's School," murmured Mrs. Stokes. "Thank you so much for helping me like this. I shall be much better in a few minutes—especially if you get me a drop more water."

Irene went off at once, and after the patient had had a few sips of crystal water, she felt considerably better. A little colour returned to her cheeks. It was only her manner that alarmed Irene.

Her eyes were still wild—flashing about here and there, in a jerky unnatural way. She kept opening her mouth, as though to speak, but said nothing. And now and again her nostrils dilated as though she was suffering from some inward emotion.

And, once she was a little better, she simply couldn't keep still. She was either moving her head, or her hands, or her arms. Irene had never seen anybody quite so restless before.

"Are you—are you very ill, Mrs. Stokes?" asked the girl concernedly.

"No, no—of course not!" replied the other, with a sudden note of alarm. "This is nothing—just a little attack of faintness. Thank you so much for what you have done—but you need not wait any longer."

Irene shook her head.

"Oh, Mrs. Stokes, I couldn't leave you like this!" she protested. "I want you to let me help you home——"

"No, no, no!" broke in Mrs. Stokes, her voice rising with acute consternation—and without any apparent reason. "You can't—you mustn't! Please—please go! Oh, leave me alone—just leave me alone!"

Irene was more alarmed than ever. Her companion was getting hysterical, and suddenly, without the least reason or warning, she commenced sobbing convulsively.

"Oh, please tell me what is wrong," pleaded Irene softly.

Mrs. Stokes soon controlled herself.

"It's nothing—I'm feeling a little high-strung, that's all," she said. "And Miss—Miss——"

"My name's Irene."

"Please, Irene, say nothing about this to anybody," begged Mrs. Stokes, looking at Irene with her eyes aglow with fear and strange anxiety. "You won't, will you? Promise me that you won't say a word!"

"Of course I promise, but——"

"Nobody would understand—and there would be all sorts of talk," went on Mrs. Stokes quickly, "and that, that would be bad for my husband. Irene, please tell no-

CHAPTER III.

THE PROMISE.

"Oh, Mrs. Stokes, I'm so glad!" exclaimed Irene, as she dropped on her knees, forgetting all about the water she had been carrying. "Are you feeling better now?"

"I—I don't seem to remember—— Oh, yes!" murmured Mrs. Stokes, suddenly attempting to sit up. "It was the stile—I tripped, I believe—— And yet I don't think I did!" she added dully.

"I saw you," said Irene. "It seemed to me that you collapsed."

The Head's wife said nothing for a few moments. Her cheeks were very pale, and there was rather a wild look in her eyes.

body about this. Tell nobody at all—not even your own friends. Forget that you have seen me."

"Oh, Mrs. Stokes, I'm sure you're very unwell!" exclaimed Irene anxiously. "Do let me take you home——"

"No, no — you mustn't stay with me any longer!" interrupted the Head's wife. "I can't explain, but I wish you hadn't seen me like this. You—you may think it very peculiar——"

She paused, looking at her attire.

"Well, I did certainly think it rather strange," said Irene faintly.

"It's nothing much—nothing to worry yourself about," said Mrs. Stokes. "I am wearing my maid's clothing—just for this evening. I had to! I—I came out especially for——" She paused, in distress. "Oh, but I can't explain—and I do wish you'd go!"

"Oh, Ted! You—you bully!"
Handforth whirled round, dismayed. Irene had come out of the shop, and was gazing at him with unutterable scorn.

Irene was more puzzled than ever—and more frightened, too. Her companion was becoming more strange every minute in her talk and actions. And she went on in a wild sort of way, talking disjointedly.

Again and again, she pleaded with the schoolgirl to leave her. And so at last, although she felt that Mrs. Stokes needed her more than ever, Irene prepared to take her departure.

"I'll go, Mrs. Stokes, and I'll promise to say nothing about this to anybody," she said quietly. "But first of all you must let me see you on your feet, so that I know you are safe."

Mrs. Stokes rose unsteadily, and after taking a few paces she swayed and would have fallen but for Irene's presence. She stood there, supported by Irene, breathing hard.

"Oh, let me go—let me get to the river!" she cried wildly. "I must get to Yen! I must see him! He's waiting—waiting——"

"Please, Mrs. Stokes!" shouted Irene, distressed.

With an effort, Mrs. Stokes checked herself, and then she suddenly gave a quick, glad cry. Her eyes became fixed, her gaze bent upon something over Irene's shoulder.

"At last—at last!" muttered the Head's wife.

Irene turned quickly, and saw a stranger approaching—a small man, conventionally attired in white flannel trousers and a blue blazer adorned with gilt braid. Under his panama there was a dark, swarthy face.

"Do—do you know this gentleman?" asked Irene, in astonishment.

"Yes, yes! Tell him to hurry——"

Mrs. Stokes broke off, and nearly fell to the ground. And Irene, in great fear, turned her face to the stranger.

"Please come!" she shouted. "Help me! This—this lady is very unwell, and she seems to have been expecting you——"

"I come!" exclaimed the other, in crisp, alert tones. "I wait for Mrs. Stokes—she not come—so I come search. Velly good. Find her. Soon have Mrs. Stokes allee light."

With a masterful way, the Oriental gently lowered Mrs. Stokes to the ground, and propped her head on his bent knee. He removed a pocket medicine case, and inspected the contents.

"Water," he said, looking at Irene. "You fetch water, please?"

"Yes—how foolish of me to forget!" panted the girl.

She hurried off, and returned within a few moments. The Chinaman was looking calm and impassive, and Mrs. Stokes was quiet and still—breathing perfectly evenly.

"Soon better now," said the little man. "A little drop of water, and Mrs. Stokes be fine."

"Why, have you given her some medicine?" asked Irene, in surprise.

"Just a little—me clever like that," said the other.

Irene seemed to remember having seen him before, but in her agitated state she had not given the matter a thought. But now, her anxiety allayed somewhat, she had time to think.

And then she remembered.

It was this man—this little Chinese—who had met with such drastic treatment from Dr. Beverley Stokes one day during the previous week. Irene had witnessed the incident—she and her chums, with Archie Glenthorne, had seen the Head knock this Chinaman down, kick him into a heap, and then hurl him without compunction into a ditch of mud.

Irene had been very indignant at the time—she had, indeed, called Dr. Stokes a brute to his face. And here was this Oriental gentleman meeting the Head's wife in a manner which clearly indicated that they were acquainted.

It was very singular.

And Irene dimly understood that perhaps the Head had had some justification for his action. Somehow, it didn't seem right to the schoolgirl that this sinister-looking Chinaman should be friendly with Mrs. Stokes.

But it wasn't Irene's business, after all. And she wasn't an inquisitive girl. She wisely decided she had better be going. And just then the Chinaman looked up at her.

"You help me?" he asked. "Damp here. The lady not comfortable. Help me take her to river."

"Yes, of course," said Irene. "But won't it be more damp there?"

The yellow man shook his head, but said no more. Between them they helped Mrs. Stokes to her feet. Her former restlessness had completely vanished, and she was now exactly the opposite—listless, apathetic, and dull-eyed.

She offered no protest as she was led away. And soon afterwards Irene understood what the Chinaman had meant. For, passing round a clump of willows, they came within sight of the River Stowe.

And moored against the bank there was

a neat little motor-launch of the typical river variety—with enclosed cabins and tiny decks fore and aft. She was a pretty craft.

"Oh!" said Irene. "This is splendid. We'll be able to take Mrs. Stokes down the river, and land her quite near the school."

"Perhaps—but I think not so," said the Chinaman.

Irene didn't want to go on board, but the little man insisted. And in a short time Mrs. Stokes was made comfortable in the forward cabin. She was placed in a deep, cushioned chair, with a rug over her.

"Now we come away—just for little while," said the Chinaman. "She much better soon—few minutes. We talk, yes? You wait until Mrs. Stokes better?"

Irene hesitated.

"Why, yes," she said slowly. "I—I suppose so."

"Velly good—we sit next cabin," said the other. "You not come?" he added, as Irene hung back. "You not afraid of me?"

"Afraid!" said Irene scornfully. "How absurd!"

She walked into the adjoining cabin, and sat in one of the chairs opposite her host. There was still plenty of daylight, but it was a little gloomy in this enclosed cabin. The spot was in a kind of backwater, quiet and deserted. It seemed as if they were alone in the world.

Irene wasn't afraid, but she was anxious. The whole adventure was a puzzle to her—and she was deeply concerned for Mrs. Stokes. In addition, she knew that she had to be back at the Moor View School before locking up—or there would be awkward questions. And such questions she would be unable to answer, since she had promised Mrs. Stokes to say nothing of this affair.

In fact, the girl realised that her position might be extremely awkward if she dallied much longer. But she put aside all thoughts of herself—firmly and resolutely.

She must wait—wait until Mrs. Stokes could come with her. The thought of leaving the Head's wife made her shiver.

CHAPTER IV.

THE WHITE POWDERS.

IRENE'S companion softly chuckled.

"Why you frown?" he asked, bending slightly forward, and removing a cigarette from between his thin lips. "You think, eh? You think it very funny that Mrs. Stokes come here like this? You not understand what it means, yes?"

Irene looked at him boldly.

"There is no reason why I should understand," she replied. "It is not my business."

"Oh, so!" he exclaimed. "You most unusual girl! You not inquisitive? First girl I meet so. But I tell you things—whether you curious or not. You know so much—must know more."

"I am sure you needn't trouble," said Irene briefly.

"But you misunderstand—you form wrong implession, which bad," said the Chinaman. "Evely thing good—yet it looks not good. Me explain. I am Plofessor Yen Chung—gleat doctor. You understand?"

Irene looked at him with sudden interest.

"Really?" she said. "A professor—a doctor?"

"Yes," nodded the other. "I know Mrs. Stokes many years. I cure her of disease when quite young. She nearly die, and English doctors give her up. But I cure her. Now and again she suffer from effects—nervous, highly stlung, hystelical."

"Oh!" said the girl slowly.

"Mrs. Stokes only helped by me—no other doctor can ease her when these fits of high tension come," explained Professor Yen Chung. "But Dr. Stokes not like me; he say I'm no good. He velly angly because I come to see Mrs. Stokes. Pity she mally him—me lose good patient."

"Oh!" said Irene again.

It seemed to her that much had been explained that had hitherto been obscure. So this strange little Chinaman was a doctor, and Irene, who knew something about quacks, had an idea that he was a member of this latter fraternity.

In all probability, Mrs. Stokes was not really ill at all, but was merely highly strung, and subject to fits of hysteria—being, in fact, a victim of her own imagination—which is known nowadays as neurasthenia. At least, a large proportion of our present-day neurasthenic patients are merely troubled with "nerves" through the vividness of their own imaginations. If these people are rich, they are excellent victims for the medical quack.

And Professor Yen Chung had found an easy source of income in Mrs. Stokes, for her family was quite rich. Her marriage to Dr. Stokes had largely put an end to the Chinese physician's visits, for the Headmaster of St. Frank's was hardly the kind of man to encourage imposture.

And this was why he had dealt so drastically with the Oriental. And Mrs. Stokes, still highly strung, had fallen a victim to another of her imaginary spells of illness.

So she had arranged this meeting in secret with the professor—and this, too, afforded an explanation of the parlourmaid's dress that Mrs. Stokes was wearing.

A great deal became quite clear to Irene—at all events, she assumed it to be clear. And she looked at her companion with less mistrust and misgiving. He was probably a little rascal, but there was nothing very sinister about him.

"You think much, eh?" he asked, smiling.

"Well, yes," admitted Irene. "Do you think Mrs. Stokes will be better now?"

"Just a little longer—wait few minutes," said Yen Chung. "When she wake up she smile—happy and content. You see! Me the only man who can help her—me know her case."

"What did you do to make her sleep so peacefully?" asked Irene curiously.

The Oriental shook his head.

"You not understand," he replied. "But my cure is good. Velly good. Wait just two three minutes, and you see. You come from school, eh?" he added, glancing at Irene's badge. "Big school, where Mrs. Stokes' husband chief master?"

"Oh, no! St. Frank's is only for boys," replied Irene. "How absurd of you. It wouldn't be right for boys and girls to be at the same school together."

"No?" smiled the Professor. "In Amelica boys and girls always in same school. But not same here, no?"

"In England the girls' schools are always separate from the boys' schools," replied Irene, rather surprised that her companion didn't know this. "I think it is better, too. I belong to the Moor View School—just a little way from St. Frank's, you know."

"You got fiends—plenty girls you know?"

"Of course."

"So. I wonder if I help you?" asked Professor Yen Chung, stroking his chin thoughtfully. "You study much? And perhaps some of you get bad headaches from much reading and learning?"

Irene laughed.

"Headaches?" she repeated. "Well, I suppose we all have headaches at times—but the best cure is to get into the fresh air. Some of the girls take aspirin tablets, but Miss Bond greatly disapproves of them, because they're drugs—although she takes them herself, on the quiet."

"Bad, bad—velly bad!" said the Chinaman, shaking his head. "Dlugs! You take dlugs, and you do much harm. Flesh air good, but flesh air not always possible. Perhaps it raining, can no go out. So?"

"Yes, and sometimes there's no time to go out, even if it isn't raining," smiled Irene. "Work has got to be done, you know. Two or three of the girls have terrible headaches at times."

"I help them," said Professor Chung calmly.

"Oh, no! You mustn't come——" began Irene.

"No come—no want money," smiled the Chinaman. "You distlust me, eh? A pity—me only wishful to help. I not take money—I cure you headaches because it please me!"

He rose and went to a little cupboard. When he turned he was holding a small cardboard box. He opened it, and showed the contents to Irene—a number of carefully folded, tiny packets.

"Why, what are these?" asked the girl.

"Me show you," smiled Yen Chung.

He carefully opened one, and Irene saw a little dust of white powder.

"Swallow this with a little water—and headache go like magic," smiled the Chinaman. "Also toothache—tiredness—any illness. My powders, my own select, and harmless."

Irene looked at them with some doubt.

"Me show you," repeated Yen. "Seevelly good."

He swallowed the powder, laughed, and sat down again. Then he closed the box and offered it to the schoolgirl.

"A plesent from me," he said softly. "You take it?"

CHAPTER V.

THE MAGIC OF PROFESSOR YEN.

PROFESSOR YEN CHUNG chuckled as Irene hesitated.

"Why you not take powders?" he asked. "You afraid?"

"No—not exactly afraid," replied Irene slowly. "But it doesn't seem right—there's no reason why you should give me these powders——"

"Me like you—want to help you and your fiends," interrupted the Chinaman. "Take this box—I give it you. When you or your chums have headaches or feel tired—take one powder. Try them. I am frank. This is not a present, but an advertisement."

"Advertisement?" repeated Irene, in surprise.

"Yes; you don't understand?" he chuckled. "I explain. You tly these powders—they go soon. They so good, you and your chums want more. And then you pay. Good business. You understand? I want you to tly before you buy, as you say."

Irene understood, and laughed with relief and merriment.

"Oh, I see! Just a sample?" she smiled.

"Yes. And you want more—later."

"And how much will they be—if I do want some more?" asked the girl, accepting the joke in good part.

"I not tell you now—not good business," replied Yen Chung, shaking his head. "You see what headache powders do—then you understand. If you want more, come to me. I shall be here three day—four day—perhaps a week. And after that I let you know."

"It's very kind of you, but I really don't suppose I shall want any more of the powders," said Irene. "Of course, there are quite a lot of girls at the school, but they don't generally take drugs——"

"Dlugs?" repeated Professor Yen quickly. "No, no! Not so! My powders as harmless as eating the water-cress that grows by the side of the stleam! All good—all splendid for health. You tly—and see. And

remember—not breathe a word where you get them."

"Why not?"

"Better not," replied Chung. "Say it a seclet—girls want more, you get them from me. But don't say how you obtain powders. You plomise?"

"Of course I promise," laughed Irene lightly.

She was beginning to understand that this repulsive-looking little Chinaman was not the scoundrel she had suspected him of being. Just a quack doctor—anxious to make a little money. He was evidently an opportunist, too, for he had lost no time in taking advantage of Irene's presence.

They were still talking when a slight sound came from the adjoining cabin. Yen Chung got up quickly and entered. Irene rose, too, but didn't follow. She had no wish to intrude.

She heard a low murmur of voices, and gathered that the little Chinaman was explaining matters to Mrs. Stokes. This was actually the case, and a few minutes later the Head's wife entered.

"I want to thank you very sincerely for your great kindness, Irene," she said quietly. "I don't know what you must have thought of me. I was overwrought——"

"Please don't worry yourself," Mrs. Stokes," put in Irene quickly. "Professor Yen has told me all about it, and I'm awfully pleased to see you looking so much better. It's—it's marvellous! You are quite changed!"

Mrs. Stokes smiled.

"The professor is the most wonderful man in the world!" she said enthusiastically. "Now that you know all this, I can speak freely—I was reluctant to do so earlier, because I was afraid you wouldn't understand. My only sorrow is that Dr. Stokes has formed such a wrong impression of the professor."

Almost immediately afterwards they took their departure—Professor Yen shaking them gravely by the hand and bidding them a respectful, deferential adieu.

Irene was quite startled.

She had expected to see Mrs. Stokes a little better, but the actual difference was little short of miraculous.

Instead of the pale, drawn cheeks, there were cheeks that radiated with health and vigour. Instead of the wild eyes and the strained, unnatural expression, Mrs. Stokes was now looking cheerful, radiant, and her eyes were perfectly tranquil.

She was, in fact, years younger in appearance—a pretty, laughing girl. And all this had been accomplished in a very brief space of time by the little Chinaman! It was hardly surprising that Irene was stunned by this example of his power.

"But, Mrs. Stokes, how in the world did the professor do this?" asked Irene. "It's like magic! I thought you would be ill for hours and hours. And yet you seem in better health than I have seen you before."

Mrs. Stokes nodded quite calmly.

"That is the professor's secret," she replied. "I haven't the faintest idea how he effects his cures, but he is the most marvellous man that I have ever known. It is a pity there is such a prejudice against him. Irene, you won't breathe a word of what has happened to anybody, will you?"

"No, of course not," replied Irene. "I can understand everything now. And you can be quite certain, Mrs. Stokes, that I'll be very tactful."

"That's nice of you, dear," said the Head's wife, with obvious relief. "And it makes me so comfortable to know that I can absolutely rely upon your word of honour. You see, it may be very awkward for me if my husband gets to know, because his prejudice is most acute."

Irene didn't pretend to understand everything thoroughly, and she really didn't care. After all, the affair had started alarmingly, but had ended in rather a tame fashion. This was what she thought. The girl would have been startled if she had known the actual truth!

She had other things to think about, too. It was getting late, and she was a little anxious. Owing to her delay, she would reach the Moor View School late for locking up, and then there would have to be explanations. So she parted with Mrs. Stokes as soon as possible.

The Head's wife had declared her intention of making her way across the meadows—taking a short cut to the school. But Irene had her bicycle to think of. And so, after saying good-night, she hurried back to the lane, and found her machine quite untouched.

As she rode speedily along, she reviewed the recent happenings, and more than once frowned in a puzzled way. She didn't altogether like this flagrant act of deception. It didn't seem quite honest to her frank, open nature that Mrs. Stokes should venture out dressed as a parlourmaid—in fact, disguised.

And whatever the attainments of Professor Yen Chung, it seemed to Irene that Mrs. Stokes was not playing the game in meeting the man secretly, and against her husband's wishes.

But, after all, it was a trifle.

There was no harm in it—no crime of any kind. And perhaps Dr. Stokes was not quite such a fine sportsman as the St. Frank's fellows believed. And so, thinking in this way, Irene arrived at the Moor View School, breathless, hot, but perfectly collected.

She was admitted by the housekeeper—this good lady regarding her with severe disapproval. But she was prevented from asking any questions by the sudden arrival of Miss Charlotte Bond.

"You are very late, Miss Manners!" she

said stiffly. "Perhaps you will be good enough to explain yourself, young lady."

"I was detained, Miss Bond," replied Irene.

"Detained! Indeed, by whom?"

Irene hesitated.

"I would rather not say, if you don't mind," she replied quietly.

The headmistress looked at her closely. Miss Bond was a kindly old soul, and she looked after her pupils with a motherly care. And she greatly disliked them to have any secrets from her, and she had a horror of the girls getting up to secret mischief. Miss Bond, to be exact, regarded the proximity of St. Frank's as highly undesirable.

She was quite ready to excuse any girl for being late, if the girl was ready to give a reasonable excuse. And Miss Bond was easily capable of detecting a fib. But it is to be feared that she would have preferred a fib to a blank refusal to explain.

"Come, Miss Manners!" she said sharply. "I can't allow this! You would rather not explain? Nonsense! I insist upon knowing why you are late. Do you understand—I insist?"

Irene remembered her faithful promise to Mrs. Stokes, and she realised fully, for the first time, that the consequences might be serious for her. But she had given her pledge, and that was enough.

"I am very sorry, Miss Bond, but I have nothing to say," she said quietly.

"This is not like you, Irene!" said the headmistress, suddenly dropping her formal tone and becoming anxious. "Come, child, don't be silly! You are not the girl to get into any scrape, I am sure! Let me know why you are so late."

"Please, Miss Bond, ask me no more questions," said Irene awkwardly.

"Oh, very well!" snapped Miss Bond, losing patience. "Very well, Miss Manners! Since you are so obstinate, I shall place you in detention for the next three days as a punishment for this disobedience! Go indoors at once, wretched child!"

Irene went in, dismayed. The first fruit of her promise was decidedly bitter!

CHAPTER VI.

A SURPRISE FOR THE HEAD.

DR. BEVERLEY STOKES glanced at his watch, and then walked to the window of his study. He looked out upon the Triangle, and saw that the dusk was gathering rapidly. But the evening was still hot and close, and many juniors were out in the open.

Glancing upwards, the Head saw round the angle of the old building, and he took great interest in one particular window. It was the window of his wife's private sitting-room, and, like most of the others, it was wide open. For indoors the heat was rather stifling.

Dr. Stokes smiled as he caught sight of his wife sitting by the window. He could see her shimmering silk evening-gown, her graceful arm, and the leaves of a magazine as she idly turned them.

Mrs. Stokes had been there for quite a long time, and this was by no means the first time that Dr. Stokes had taken a look. Indeed, it might have seemed that he was actually keeping watch over her.

She had told him that her head was bad, and that she was going to spend a quiet evening in her own room, in an easy-chair before the window. And she had kept her word to the letter.

Certainly the Head suspected no trickery. Everything looked so obvious—there was not the slightest hint of duplicity. He was glad that she had spent a quiet evening, for she had been very restless and agitated of late. At tea-time, indeed, Mrs. Stokes' drawn and haggard appearance had given her husband acute anxiety.

"She'll be better for this," he murmured. "There's nothing like fresh air—that was why I was so pleased when I got this appointment. Poor little Joyce! I hope she'll pull round completely, sooner or later."

If the Head had spoken these thoughts aloud, and if any of the fellows had heard them, they might have wondered. For there certainly seemed no reason to assume that Mrs. Stokes was other than normal. It was true that she had been strange in her manner just once or twice, but nobody thought anything of that.

If Dr. Stokes had wanted a shock, he could have got one by strolling round to the rear of the school at about this time. For Mrs. Stokes was hurrying in. But perhaps the Head would not have detected her, after all, for she was cleverly disguised.

Her maid's uniform, and the light cloak, were sufficient to deceive anybody, and the veil over her face almost completely concealed her features. To her relief, she met nobody as she crossed the yard, and she entered the building by means of a side door.

With swift footsteps she went upstairs, ran lightly along the dim corridors until she arrived at her own sitting-room.

Tat-tap! Tap, tap, tap!

Mrs. Stokes gave five clear knocks, with a pause after the second. And then she waited in a fever of impatience, glancing up and down the corridor. But the door was unlocked swiftly, and she slipped inside.

"Oh, thank goodness I'm back, Marie!" she said softly. "Tell me—quickly! Has anything happened? Has Dr. Stokes been? Has——"

"No, mam, nobody's been at all," replied the girl. "But I've been rare anxious,

mam! I thought you was coming back over half an hour ago."

I meant to, Marie, but I came over dreadfully ill," explained Mrs. Stokes. "But never mind—it doesn't matter at all. And now we must change—and the quicker the better."

Marie was Mrs. Stokes' maid—her own personal servant. And, as such, she apparently shared her mistress' confidence. The girl was simple and honest, and she didn't understand this strange procedure at all. But she loved Mrs. Stokes, and trusted her in a simple and faithful way.

She was just about the same size as her mistress, and she was attired in one of Mrs. Stokes' evening gowns. It was not surprising that the Head had been deceived! For, sitting in that chair by the window—always taking care to keep her face averted from view—the girl had looked exactly like her mistress.

During the next eight or ten minutes hardly a word was spoken, for Mrs. Stokes and her maid were busily changing. But as the Head's wife was making a few final adjustments to her hair, Marie stood back—now in her correct uniform—and looked on wonderingly.

"I can't understand it, ma'am," she said. "You went out from her looking dreadful ill, and now you're just wonderful!"

"Didn't I tell you so, Marie?" smiled Mrs. Stokes. "You see how necessary it was for me to receive the treatment from Professor Yen. But that is our secret, Marie, and nobody else must know."

"I won't say a word, ma'am—you can trust me," said Marie stoutly. "If that queer little yellow man can make you as well as this, he's a real magician—that's what he is!"

In a few minutes Mrs. Stokes was ready, and then she went downstairs. All her anxiety was gone now. She had been absent from the school for nearly two hours, and yet nobody knew of it except Marie. Even the Head himself was completely duped.

Downstairs, in the hall, Mrs. Stokes came face to face with her husband. He paused, looking at her in delighted astonishment.

"Why, Joyce, I thought you'd gone to bed!" he said gladly.

"No, I was feeling so much better that I——"

"Better!" echoed the Head. "Why, darling, you're absolutely changed! I might almost think——"

He paused, and then laughed.

"No, that's impossible," he went on. "There's no question of your having received any of that medicine you used to be so fond of, eh? It's the fresh air, Joyce—it's the clear, country atmosphere that's worked this miracle. I am more pleased than ever that I brought you from London."

Somehow, Mrs. Stokes didn't feel like answering. There was a guilty look on her face, and she was thankful that the hall was dim. But she was soon herself again.

And when they passed outside, to stroll in the garden, Dr. Stokes saw that his wife was radiant with health and happiness. And he himself changed rapidly. He had been looking harassed and worried of late—which was totally foreign to his real nature.

But now he bucked up wonderfully, and he looked upon this particular evening as one of the happiest he could remember. And Mrs. Stokes was glad—glad that she had saved him from any further worry.

For he would certainly not have been so joyful had he known the exact facts—had he known the reason for his wife's remarkable change. For one moment he had had a suspicion, but had dismissed it.

And what was the actual meaning of all this mystery? Was Mrs. Stokes merely a victim of nerves, imagining that she suffered from ills that were non-existent?

Or was there something deeper—something more sinister?

CHAPTER VII.

ARCHIE, THE MESSENGER.

"REVENGE! That's what we want, my son—revenge!"

John Busterfield Boots, of the College House, made that remark as he strolled across the Triangle and joined a group of other juniors.

"You sound like a member of the Black Hand!" I smiled. "And what's the particular grievance this time? Who do you want to strike down in your august fury?"

"You!" replied Boots. "You, and the Ancient House generally! Last week you fellows gave us a frightful licking—and this week we're going to reverse things."

"Are you?" growled Handforth. "Who's been telling you fairy tales? The College House can never lick us! Why, our cricket's so much better than yours that you'll soon have to grovel and lick our giddy boots!"

Buster grinned.

"We won't lick your boots—we'll lick you!" he retorted. "Cricket's an uncertain game, and Christine has got his men into fine form to-day. So look out for squalls!"

It was the following afternoon, a half-holiday. And the weather promised to keep fine for the inter-House match that had been arranged for the Junior School.

It wasn't at all an important match, but the juniors took very keen interest in it. The Head, too, had promised to attend—he was, in fact acting as one of the umpires.

Dr. Stokes was no ordinary Headmaster. He entered into the pleasures and sports of the fellows as keenly as though he were a boy himself. And he had such an air of genial familiarly that most of the juniors looked upon him as just one of themselves.

Christine and Co., of the College House, badly wanted to win, for they had suffered a severe defeat at the hands of the Ancient House a week previously. It was now a good opportunity to have a fitting revenge.

The day was hot in the extreme, the sun blazing down out of a cloudless sky. The air positively quivered with the sultry heat, and the atmosphere was filled with the hum and bustle of insect life.

Indeed, it was far cooler indoors than out. And the prospect of running after a cricket ball made some of the juniors quail. There can be such a thing as having the weather too fine, even for cricket.

"Hallo, Archie! Playing to-day?" asked Buster Boots, as Archie Glenthorne lounged up.

"Good gad, no!" replied Archie. "My dear old potato, the tissues absolutely wouldn't stand it. I mean to say, this bally heat is so frightfully frightful that all a chappie can do is to ooze away by gradual degrees into a dashed shadow!"

"Lazy beggar!" said Handforth sternly. "Cricket's just what you need to put life into you! You ought to do a bit of fielding, my son! Leather-chasing is just the exercise for slackers!"

"I hate to disagree, old tulip, but kindly let me observe that the suggestion is prepos.," said Archie. "Dash it, I haven't recovered from morning lessons yet! The only possible solution to the old problem is to take several yards of reviving treatment."

"In a hammock, I suppose?" grinned Church.

"I must confess the suggestion intrigues me," admitted Archie thoughtfully. "A hammock, what? A hammock, with plenty of cushions and things," he went on dreamily. "A sound scheme, methinks! But, laddie, it has one fairly ghastly drawback."

"There's no hammock?" chuckled Boots.

"Well, that, of course, is somewhat unfortunate; but I was thinking of the bally flies," said Archie. "I mean to say, these priceless creatures appear to thrive on the old heat! They absolutely whizz about with cartloads of pep, and all that sort of stuff! And the wasps, what? It's frightfully awkward when a wasp sits on a chappie's nose, and proceeds to wake him up with two or three inches of sting material!"

"Yes, that's about the only thing that would wake you up!" agreed Church.

"However, I don't intend to give the nasty blighters a chance," said Archie firmly. "Go to your cricket, dear old souls, and may my blessing be upon you! Personally, I prefer to stagger indoors, and take a small amount of ease on the good old study lounge—surrounded by sundry supplies of lime-juice, iced lemonade, and so forth."

And Archie lounged off elegantly and with every appearance of collapsing on the way.

"It wouldn't be a bad idea to pull him round the playing-fields on the end of a rope, but we should get more exercise than Archie," said Handforth. "As for him fielding, the batsman could easily score twenty runs before Archie even picked up the giddy ball!"

Ten minutes later the match had started, and the players didn't notice the heat so much once they were fairly out in it. As for Archie Glenthorne, he made himself very comfortable in his own study—which was, indeed, comparatively cool.

For some little time Phipps hovered round with iced drinks, and Archie finally got rid of the valet by dispatching him to Bannington on a perfectly unnecessary errand.

And the languid junior sank back on the lounge to while away the afternoon in slumber. But he hadn't obtained more than ten of his famous "forty winks" before a tap sounded on the door.

There was no answer, and so the visitor walked in. It turned out to be Mrs. Stokes, and she was looking fresh and cool in white muslin. It was really astonishing how unaffected by the heat she seemed.

"Ahem!" she coughed discreetly.

"Eh? I mean—— What ho!" murmured Archie, greatly embarrassed, as he sprang to his feet. "Oddslife, Mrs. Stokes, you positively made me jump like a bally stag at bay! Kindly forgive me for slumbering, don't you know."

"I think I ought to ask you to forgive me for disturbing you," smiled Mrs. Stokes. "But I want you to do me a little favour, and I thought this a good opportunity to catch you alone."

"Oh, rather!" said Archie. "Dash it all, Mrs. Stokes, how is that you're so pricelessly cool? I frequently notice that girls look absolutely like chunks of ice on the hottest day!"

Mrs. Stokes laughed.

"I expect it's all a secret connected with flimsy clothing and face powder," she smiled. "But I don't want to disturb you for long, Archie. Do you remember taking a letter for me one evening last week?"

Archie looked at her with sudden shrewdness.

"Rather! You mean to the chappie by the stile?"

"Yes. I'd like you to take him another note, Archie."

The genial ass of the Remove had needed no reminder of that little incident. At the time, he had been somewhat perturbed. He had felt an uneasy sensation of guilt because he had assisted the Head's wife in an affair that was obviously secretive.

But there seemed to be nothing sinister this time.

"You've only got to say the word, dear lady, and I'm absolutely at your service!" exclaimed Archie gallantly. "Kindly push over the old missive, and I will proceed to flow forth——"

"Here is the letter, but I don't want you to take it now," interrupted Mrs. Stokes.

"The gentleman won't be there until eight o'clock this evening—so will you promise to deliver it at that hour?"

"I'll be positively on the spot," declared Archie. "You can rely on me, Mrs. Stokes, to the good old limit! I gather that you want me to display a few chunks of discretion?"

"Thank you for being so thoughtful," said Mrs. Stokes. "Yes, please, keep it quite to yourself, Archie. One day, before long, I'll explain everything, and then you'll understand."

She gave him one of her sweetest smiles, and departed. Her attitude with Archie was not especially assumed. Like the Head himself, Mrs. Stokes was on the most chummy terms with all the juniors.

"Gadzooks and what not!" murmured Archie, as he sat down on the end of the table. "I mean to say, this life is getting too frightfully strenuous! If there's one bally thing I hate worse than another bally thing it is to keep secrets! They strike me as being near the old edge!"

He carefully stowed the letter away, after noting that the envelope wes blank except for the two words, "By Hand." And then he suddenly started. A worried expressiou crept over his face.

"Oddslife! The dear old thing didn't mention if I had to wait for a bally answer!" he murmured. "I say, how absolutely frosty! I'm dashed if I know what to do!"

He paced up and down for a few moments, and finally decided that the gentleman at the stile would soon let him know if an answer was to be delivered.

Presumably there was none, or Mrs. Stokes would have mentioned it. However, Archie was disturbed, and further sleep was out of the question. Shouts floating in through his window, accompanied by the "clack" of bat and ball, persuaded him to don his blazer, and sally forth.

"We'll take a glance at the old cricketers, what?" he asked himself. "A dashed fag, of course, but possibly the spectacle will soothe the tissues and restore the nerves! What ho!"

Archie sauntered towards Little Side, and he braced up to such an extent that his languor left him like a cloak and he became brisk, active, and positively eager.

But it wasn't the cricket that had wrought such a change. As a matter of fact, he had caught sight of Marjorie Temple of the Moor View School. And Archie regarded Marjorie as the most priceless girl of the whole collection.

She was standing near the ropes with Irene Manners and Doris Berkeley. The three girls were all in white, and looked very refreshing against the hot, baked turf. They were keenly interested in the cricket.

Just as Archie was about to approach, a roar went up from the crowd. Jerry Dodd had just hit the leather with supreme skill, sending it soaring high aloft—but out of reach of all the fieldsmen. The batsmen didn't even run, for the ball was seen to be dropping beyond the boundary.

"Oh, well hit!"

"Look out, you girls!"

"Hi! Mind that ball——"

The descending ball, in fact, was coming right down near the Moor View girls. Irene's eyes sparkled as she glanced quickly upwards. With delightful coolness she ran a couple of paces, leapt lightly into the air, and caught the hurtling cricket ball cleanly and accurately.

Then she returned it to the pitch, hurling it high into the air with the practised skill of a professional cricketer!

CHAPTER VIII.

SURPRISING THE NATIVES.

"OUT!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, well caught!"

The juniors, in fact, were completely startled. Irene's cool performance had taken everybody completely by surprise. She had acted as though she had been playing cricket for years. There had been not the slightest indication of flurry or panic. And the very way in which she had returned the ball was eloquent in itself.

"Well, I'm jiggered!" said Handforth, delighted beyond words. "Did you see that, you chaps? Did you see Miss Irene make that catch? I always knew she was jolly clever, but I thought girls were duffers at cricket! She's wonderful!"

"Better go and tell her so!" suggested Church. "It wouldn't be a bad idea to make friends with her again! Nowadays, Irene won't even look at you!"

"If you want a black eye, Walter Church ——"

"Are we playing cricket or is it a boxing match?" I broke in tartly. "Don't interrupt the game, Handy!"

Jerry Dodd and Tregellis-West continued batting, and I strolled over to the spot where Irene and Co. were standing, and congratulated her heartily upon her smart catch.

"Don't be silly!" laughed Irene. "It didn't count. I'm not playing in the match and, anyhow, it was outside the boundary."

"Absolutely!" put in Archie. "But that makes no difference, dear girl! The catch was positively a catch, if you know what I mean, and I'm dashed if I can understand it!"

"I am sorry you think me such a duffer, Archie," laughed Irene.

"I think I've got to apologise, too," I put in, before Archie could reply. "I'd no idea you knew anything about the game, Miss Irene. Can you really play?"

"Of course I can," replied the girl. "I'm the captain of our Eleven!"

"You're what?" I gasped.

"You might think we were just children, by the way he talks!" put in Doris, indignantly. "Look here, Nipper, we can play cricket as well as you boys! We've been playing for weeks—Irene's been making us practice like Trojans! And we're not such duffers, anyhow."

"I'm awfully sorry," I smiled. "I'll tell you what. If Christine is agreeable, I'd like you to take the place of our next batsman, Miss Irene. Then we can see what you can do."

Irene's eyes sparkled, but she shook her head.

"Oh, no! I won't spoil your game——"

"No fear of that," I put in. "We're in a safe position, and it doesn't matter if you get bowled in the first over. Besides, you made such a brilliant catch that I'd like to see your batting."

Irene glanced at the field.

"Christine is bowling dreadfully swiftly," she said dubiously. "But still, I'm game to try! Thanks, Nipper! I do hope you won't all think I'm too brazen, though."

"We all think you're a sportsman!" declared Handforth enthusiastically.

Irene looked at him with a cold eye.

"Thank—you!" she said, turning her back frigidly.

Handforth went as red as a beetroot, and looked utterly miserable. He had been hoping against hope that Irene would relent, and be friendly with him again. But his treatment of Willy in the Bannington High Street had left her cold and unfriendly.

Fortunately, Handforth didn't attempt to pursue his cause. Had he done so he would have been more hopelessly out of favour than ever. For Irene was only human, and obstinacy was one of her little failings.

She seemed quite cool and calm at the prospect of batting for the Ancient House. Everybody soon knew about it, and Bob Christine yelled with laughter when he gave his consent.

"Who is she taking the place of?" he asked, grinning.

"Myself," I replied promptly.

"Fine! I was expecting you to make forty or fifty off your own bat!" said Bob. "But you know what you're up to, you bounder!" he added ruefully. "We shall have all our work cut out to equal your score."

"That's why I'm playing Irene," I said blandly.

This wasn't exactly complimentary to the young lady, but as she didn't hear it, no harm was done. The whole thing was looked upon as a joke, and both teams were chuckling over the fun that was to come.

The match, in any case, was only a minor fixture, and runs were not of any great importance—particularly as the Fossils were in a safe position. Christine was quite glad, because it would mean one less to deal with, for he assumed that Irene wouldn't last a couple of minutes—particularly against his own bowling. And Christine was justified in this belief, as he was a bowler of remarkable skill.

Irene went in as soon as Sir Montie was dismissed—which happened after another five minutes of play. She disdained any leg-guards at first, but we insisted.

And so a shout of cheers and laughter went up as Irene walked to the wicket. It was such an unusual thing for a girl to be actually on Little Side that crowds of spectators were drawn to the spot.

The Head entered into the spirit of the joke as heartily as anybody. He had been acting as umpire, according to his promise, and had been thoroughly enjoying himself.

"You'll have to look out for yourself, young lady," he said smilingly. "Master Christine is a tricky bowler."

"I daresay I shall make a terrible hash of it, Dr. Stokes," said Irene. "But isn't it just lovely?"

"I hope you'll think so all the time!" chuckled the Head.

Rather to everybody's surprise, Irene handled her bat naturally and skilfully. She took up her position before the wicket without a trace of nervousness, and with a resolute set to her pretty face. She looked very dainty and refreshing, and it really seemed too bad to make a laughing stock of her in this way. But boys are proverbially cruel.

"Look out!" sang out Christine, with a chuckle.

He treated her as though she were a little child, and the first ball he sent down was slow and simple—and the crowd grinned with appreciation.

Clack!

Irene's bat swept round, and the leather went hissing boundarywards as clean as a whistle. The next second Irene and Jerry Dodd were running between the wickets.

"By jings! That was fine!" panted Jerry, as they passed.

"Hurrah!"

"Well hit!"

"Good for you, Miss Irene!"

"My only hat!" gasped Christine. "She hits like a proper player!"

Two runs were scored, and the next ball that Christine sent down was not quite so easy. He put a cunning spin on to it, intending to secure Irene's leg stump—and thus show her quite plainly that it was like her nerve to knock his bowling about!

Clack!

This time it was a really superb hit—the

contact of bat and ball being hardly audible. It was just a soft kind of click, and the leather went hurtling away towards the pavilion—a boundary!

"Well, I'm hanged!" roared Christine blankly.

And he was not the only amazed one on the field. Irene herself was startlingly calm—and there was even a look of grimness in her eye. She was showing them whether she was content to be made a laughing-stock of or not!

Christine was out of patience, and he sent down a regular stinger—which Irene deftly tipped, to send it whizzing into the slips beyond reach of the fieldsmen. And after that, with the whole crowd looking on in dumbfounded surprise, she stood up to Christine's bowling for ten solid minutes—and scored twenty-seven runs!

At this point, she was caught out, and she carried her bat to the pavilion amid thunderous and continuous applause. And Bob Christine was just as generous as the others—his admiration for Irene's playing was unbounded. He had treated her as a joke—but she wasn't a joke.

"Wonderful, Miss Irene!" I declared enthusiastically as she came up. "I say, do all you girls play cricket like this?"

Irene looked at me squarely.

"Well, we all play cricket," she replied, "and as captain of the Moor View team, I'd like to challenge the Remove to a match on Saturday afternoon."

"Done!" I declared promptly. "It's a fixture!"

CHAPTER IX.

THE UNFORESEEN.

FOR the rest of the afternoon and evening the one topic of conversation was Irene's extraordinary display, and the challenge to play the St. Frank's Junior Eleven.

The thing was utterly unheard of—without precedent in the whole history of St. Frank's. A girls' team against the Remove! It was startling, but the forthcoming match had the complete approval of Dr. Stokes.

With his usual unconventionality the Head declared that a cricket match against a girls' team was all to the good of sport in general. He liked to see it, and with girls playing so many sporting games nowadays, it was only natural that Irene and Co. should be in the fashion.

Some of the fellows were a little dubious. Members of the Fifth talked about dignity, and made sage observations to the effect that "this sort of thing wouldn't do the school much good." However, these high and mighty fellows were in the minority.

Doubt was also expressed regarding Miss Bond—and not without reason; for the Headmistress of the Moor View School would

In a moment Irene was kneeling beside her.

"Are you hurt?" she asked breathlessly. "Oh dear! What ever can I do? Oh, thank goodness! I—I thought——"

almost certainly put her foot down heavily on the whole proposition. But Dr. Stokes, with a twinkle in his eye, had promised to get round Miss Bond.

Archie Glenthorne was all agog that evening

He admired Irene's extraordinary prowess, but he had felt pained that Marjorie Temple was not just as good—for Archie had a particularly soft spot for Marjorie.

And then Irene had given him a little whisper—informing him, in fact, that Marjorie was the Moor View School's crack bowler. And Archie was now bubbling with impatience for Saturday afternoon to arrive.

He was so interested in the forthcoming match that he nearly forgot his promise to Mrs. Stokes. It wasn't until a quarter-to-eight that the memory of that letter came back to him.

"Gadzooks!" he ejaculated, in the middle of the common-room. "Laddies, I must fly! I must whizz forth."

"Who cares?" growled Handforth. "You can whizz—and please forget to come back!"

Handforth was not in the best of humours. His unfortunate tiff with Irene was still on. Edward Oswald himself had tried time after time to settle matters, but the girl had rebuffed him. It made Handforth particularly depressed because he was fairly aching with anxiety to congratulate Irene in the way she deserved.

When Archie got outside he glanced up at the old clock, and could see through the twilight that the time was just ten minutes to eight. He was relieved. He could be at the stile in heaps of time. It was growing quite dusk, for the sky was heavily over-

clouded—although there was no indication of rain.

Archie was thinking of Mrs. Stokes again. He didn't mind performing this little errand, he was, in fact, only too willing to go to any length of trouble for the Head's charming wife.

But he didn't like the secrecy—his frank, open nature revolted against this obvious plotting. He was rather horrified, to tell the truth, that such a priceless girl as Mrs. Stokes should send letters in secret to a foreign bounder who daren't come to the school—but who lurked in the dusk at the old stile.

Archie was thinking in this way, and had got about half-way down the lane when a particularly disreputable caravan drew his attention. It was almost upon him—a dusty, grimy, ugly-looking vehicle, smothered with wickerwork chairs and baskets. This ramshackle caravan was drawn by a bony horse that seemed badly in need of a long rest. Two disreputable-looking individuals were walking in the road, one on either side of the horse—and Archie wondered if they were doing this in order to hold the horse up in case of need.

Seated in front of the caravan was a large and squat person of the feminine gender—in fact, an extremely greasy-looking woman, attending to the squalling needs of a disgustingly dirty child.

"Oddslife!" murmured Archie. "Gipsies!"

This was not a very brilliant deduction, but an obvious one. And the gipsies were about as villainous looking a lot as Archie had ever had the misfortune to see. His supreme elegance was almost regal in comparison to these nomads.

It didn't give Archie much pleasure when he saw the two men come to a halt, the caravan continuing its progress. Both the gipsies were powerful, hulking-looking ruffians, and they stood in the centre of the lane as Archie was about to pass. Instinctively the junior prepared himself for trouble. It occurred to him that the lane was practically deserted at this hour.

"Like to buy a nice brace o' white mice, young gent?" asked one of the gipsies, producing a box from his pocket. "You can 'ave 'em for five bob—just as a bargain!"

"Thanks all the same, old companion, but white mice, dash it, don't appeal to me in the least," said Archie. "Jolly decent of you to make the old offer, but——"

"You can 'ave 'em for three bob!" said the gipsy generously.

"Absolutely not! In fact, I refuse——"

"Well maybe you'll give us a bob or two for luck?" asked the other man. "Come on, young gent—fork out!"

Archie drew himself back stiffly.

"You poisonous ruffians!" he exclaimed. "Are you daring to threaten me, by gad? I refuse to give you a dashed penny! I regard you as a pair of unclean blighters——"

"Don't mess about, Bill—grab him!" muttered one of the men. "It won't take us more than 'arf-a-minute."

With one accord the two brutes hurled themselves at Archie. The elegant junior had been holding Mrs. Stokes' precious letter in his hand, and this was knocked flying in the first second—to fall in the grass beside the lane—and Archie had no time to even think about its fate.

He was, indeed, extremely busy.

And the two gipsies found that this dandified, foppish youth was not quite such an easy victim after all. Archie hit out with expert skill, judgment and force. His science was astonishing.

The gipsies believed that they could give him one smash, and floor him. But they couldn't get near him at all—his footwork was perfect and, before his attackers could realise it, he had delivered half-a-dozen stinging, powerful blows.

"Rescue, St. Frank's!" shouted Archie breathlessly. "Tally-ho! Help, and all that sort of thing! Take that, dash you!"

"Crikey! The kid's a regular young demon!" gasped one of the men, adding a string of foul language.

And he and his companion threw themselves upon Archie with such brute force that all the junior's skill was of no avail. Safety only lay in precipitate flight—and Archie never fled. Throughout the long history of the Glenthornes they had never retreated. It wasn't in the Glenthorne blood to show the white feather.

"You absolute rotters!" gasped Archie, as he was swept off his feet. "You'll dashed well go to gaol for this——"

"Go through his pockets, an' be quick!" gasped one of the gipsies.

A quick sound of footsteps came from the rear, and Archie was delighted to see the form of Dr. Beverley Stokes loom up.

Crash!

The first gipsy went over with a jarring thud that shook every bone in his body. The second rascal didn't wait—he gave one yelp of fear, and ran for his life.

"I say, that was frightfully decent of you, sir!" panted Archie, as he staggered to his feet. "The absolute beasts were about to rob me, don't you know. Thanks awfully, sir."

"Nonsense," laughed the Head. "I was taking a stroll in the meadow, and I heard your shout. Fine specimens!" he added, as he glanced up the lane. "No more pluck than—— Hallo! What's this?"

The second gipsy had picked himself up, and had bolted—the Head making no effort to stop him. It was better to let these petty criminals go. But Dr. Stokes' attention was attracted by something white gleaming in the tall grass. He picked it up—and Archie Glenthorne gave a sudden gasp.

"I say, sir, that's mine!" he protested.

"A letter, eh?" smiled the Head. "Well, here you are, Glenthorne. It's a good thing you didn't lose it——"

He broke off abruptly, and stared hard at

the letter. Archie felt his heart sinking into his boots. That letter had been given to him by the Head's wife—and she had charged him to faithfully deliver it. And the very manner of her giving him the letter had proved that this thing was being done without her husband's knowledge.

And by sheer chance the letter had fallen into Dr. Stokes' hands.

"Yes, sir, that's mine!" said Archie eagerly. "Kindly pass it over, dear old thing! I—I mean——"

"Was this given to you by Mrs. Stokes?" demanded the Head bluntly.

He faced Archie squarely, a sudden grim, intense light in his eye. Glenthorne was horribly uncomfortable.

"Dash it all, I'd rather not answer," he replied.

"Thank you, Glenthorne—you have answered," said Dr. Stokes quietly. "I will keep this letter——"

"Good gad! But you can't, sir!" shouted Archie. "I—I mean, I promised to deliver —— Look here, sir——"

"Where were you going to deliver this letter?" asked the Head sharply.

Archie, in utter misery, remained silent.

And Dr. Stokes, thrusting the missive into his pocket, turned on his heel and walked away—leaving the junior absolutely thunderstruck. He realised, of course, that Dr. Stokes had recognised the handwriting.

The Head went straight across the Triangle, entered his own house, and locked himself in his study. He tore open the envelope without compunction, and a perfectly blank sheet of paper dropped out—with two £5 notes tucked in between. The Head unfolded them, and sat gazing straight before him for a full minute.

Then, with tightening lips, he unlocked a drawer and produced a little cash box. From this he took a sheaf of five-pound notes and compared the numbers with those on the two out of Mrs. Stokes' letter.

They were the same series! And the Head knew perfectly well that these two fivers were the identical notes that he had given to his wife an hour or so earlier for housekeeping expenses.

He sat there like a statue—his face drawn and pale.

CHAPTER X.

IN GREAT DEMAND!

IRENE MANNERS came to a sudden halt as she walked out of the gateway of the Moor View School. A frown appeared on her pretty face, and her eyes flashed with suddenly kindled anger.

"I say, Miss Irene—just a minute——"

Handforth ran up anxiously and breathlessly. He was accompanied by his minor, who seemed to be rather amused. Willy was taking things philosophically.

He had been commanded to come on this errand by his elder brother—under pain of swift and diabolical punishment if he resisted. Handforth had, in fact, plainly stated that Willy would be slaughtered in cold blood unless he "came quietly." In order to save a lot of trouble, the hero of the Third had consented.

"I say, Miss Irene, don't keep it up!" pleaded Handforth, looking at the girl's face with acute anxiety. "I'm awfully sorry if I offended you in any way——"

"I think you acted like a brute!" interrupted Irene, coldly. "I've told you many times that I hate bullying—and yet you deliberately knocked your poor little brother down and treated him worse than a dog! I'm ashamed of you, Ted—I think you are a cruel bully!"

"But—but——"

"And I don't want to speak to you again!" added Irene firmly.

"What's all the arguing about?" inquired Willy, lounging up. "Are you wild with him because he biffed me, Miss Irene? Are you giving him the icy eye because he gave me one or two sloshes?"

"He treated you brutally, you poor little fellow!" said Irene.

Willy went red.

"Here, chuck it!" he protested. "Who's a poor little fellow? As a matter of fact, I asked for trouble that evening in Bannington High Street. And if you hadn't turned up at that minute, Miss Irene, I should have knocked Ted flying! He didn't bully me—he couldn't! I should hope I'm capable of looking after myself!"

Irene stared at him in astonishment.

"Have you forgiven him?" she asked. "Are you friends again?"

"Oh, my hat!" said Willy, in disgust. "I think all girls must have about two grains of brain! I thought you were an exception, Miss Irene, but you're just as bad as the rest! Can't Ted and I quarrel without you talking about bullying? For two pins I'll lay this fathead flat!"

Handforth gave a gulp, but said nothing—it would rather spoil matters if he punished Willy, as the cheeky young rotter deserved.

"Oh, Willy, I'm surprised at you!" said Irene, shocked. "I had no idea you were such an arrogant child!"

"Who's a child?" hooted Willy, indignantly.

He gave her one glare, turned round, and strode off. As though to show his supreme indifference, he thrust his hands into his trousers pockets, proceeded to whistle shrilly, and to progress by means of a sideways shuffle. For some extraordinary reason, he seemed to prefer this to walking.

"Well!" said Irene, taking a deep breath.

"That's the kind of young beggar he is!" said Handforth bitterly. "Perhaps you can sympathise a bit now, Miss Irene! He always

treats me like that—only ten times worse! It does him good to have a drubbing down now and again!"

"Oh, dear! I believe I treated you rather unfairly, Ted," said Irene, with concern. "But it's no excuse for you to say that Willy is exasperating. Still, I forgive you."

"Oh, thanks awfully!" said Handforth, with intense relief. "My hat! I'm feeling all dizzy—I've been so worried! My head's throbbing like a giddy steam-engine."

"Does it ache much?" asked Irene anxiously.

"Horribly!" moaned Handforth, in a feeble voice.

It must be confessed that this was more or less of a trick, for Handforth wanted to gain sympathy. He gained it—but in a rather more practical form than he had anticipated.

For Irene unfastened her little bag, and took out a small paper packet--just a tiny folded scrap. She placed it in Handforth's ample palm.

"What—what's this?" asked the junior blankly.

"A powder."

"A powder?"

"Yes."

"But what on earth for?" asked Handforth in astonishment.

"To cure your headache, of course," smiled Irene. "They're simply wonderful—ten minutes after taking it, you'll be as well as ever, and you'll feel ever so brisk and jolly."

"Don't you take it, old man!" said Willy severely. "Headache powders are rotten! I'm surprised at you, Miss Irene."

Handforth turned, breathing hard.

"I thought you'd gone!" he said thickly.

"So did I—but I came back," explained his minor. "I just wanted to say that it's getting a bit late, and if you two go for a walk or anything, you'll both lose count of all time, and miss your suppers. After all, you can't live on love and fresh air!"

"You--you——"

"Don't take any notice of him, Ted—he's a terribly cheeky boy!" said Irene, thankful that the dusk hid her blushes. "Well, are you going to take this powder? They're perfectly harmless, but wonderful in their effect. Do take it, Ted."

"Oh, all right," said Handforth, slipping it in his pocket. "I'll take it when I get back. But I don't believe in these headache cures! I don't like you having 'em, Miss Irene."

"You silly! I don't have them as a rule," laughed the girl. "But these are something special. And I must be going now, because Miss Bond will be cross. It's getting quite late."

She bade them good-night, and tripped in. It was just as well that she closed the door at once, or she might have heard sundry yelps from the roadway, accompanied by scuffling sounds. Handforth returned to St. Frank's alone. Willy returned later—dragging himself wearily and painfully.

Within the Moor View School, Irene had gone to her study and was already at her prep. But she hadn't been there long before Marjorie and Doris came in, accompanied by another girl.

"Got another of those wonderful powders of yours, Renie?" asked the latter.

"Yes, but they're running short, Joan," said Irene. "Do you really need one tonight?"

"I've got a perfectly revolting headache," replied Joan languidly.

"Oh, all right—here you are."

She handed one of the powders to the other girl, who departed.

"Cat!" remarked Doris frankly. "I'll bet she hasn't a headache at all! She's jealous—always is! We can't have anything unless Joan Tarrant goes green with envy!"

But it was an undoubted fact that those headache powders of Irene's were extraordinarily effective. She had found them so herself, and many of the other girls were also enthusiastic about them. The fame of the powders had spread through the entire school—but all in secret, since Irene had impressed upon the others the fact that nobody was to know.

But, somehow, some of the talk had leaked out, and Miss Bond had got to hear of these remarkable headache cures. And when the Headmistress suddenly came upon Joan Tarrant in the act of taking the powder, she seized it and demanded to know where it came from.

"I got it from Irene," said the girl sullenly.

"Indeed! I shall see Miss Manners at once!" exclaimed the Headmistress tartly. "This is perfectly scandalous! I allow no girls to take these ridiculous powders! They are most harmful--most pernicious!"

"They're not so bad as aspirin, Miss Bond!" protested Joan.

"I forbid aspirin—unless ordered by the doctor—too!"

"But you take them yourself——"

"Don't dare to bandy words with me, child!" snapped Miss Bond, in slight confusion. "And come with me at once!"

She sailed majestically to Irene's study, and burst in like a miniature tornado.

"Where," she demanded, "did you get these powders?"

Irene looked up from her work, and saw the position.

"I'm sorry, Miss Bond, but I can't tell you," she replied quietly. "But I can assure you they're perfectly harmless. They're guaranteed to be made without any kind of drugs."

Miss Bond sniffed.

"And do you believe that preposterous story, Miss Manners?" she asked tartly. "I suspect these powders are very harmful indeed! And if you have any more of them, you must give them to me."

"Very well," said Irene.

She delivered up her last little packet.

"Is this all you have?" asked the Headmistress suspiciously.

"Yes, Miss Bond."

"Very well! You will probably hear more of this, young lady!" said Miss Bond. "I always treat my girls kindly and considerately. But I must put my foot down firmly on anything of this nature. If I find you have been introducing harmful drugs into the school, I shall deal with you severely, and I insist upon knowing which shop you bought them from."

"I didn't buy them at all," said Irene.

"Oh, indeed!" exclaimed Miss Bond. "Then who gave them to you?"

"I promised not to tell, and I can't possibly break my word," replied Irene quietly. "I'm sorry, Miss Bond, but you wouldn't have me break a promise, would you?"

The Headmistress said nothing further—but strode out of the room, and closed the door with unnecessary violence. And neither she nor the girls realised what the ultimate result of this little incident was to be.

CHAPTER XI.

THE FAILURE.

PHIPPS tapped discreetly on the door of Archie's study, and entered. He found his young master sitting on the edge of the lounge, in an unusually comfortless attitude. As a rule, Archie lolled about in the most languid ease. To see him sitting on the corner of anything was rather startling.

"Will there be any further requirements this evening, sir?" asked Phipps.

Archie didn't move a hair, but sat like a waxen image.

"Ahem! Begging your pardon, sir," said Phipps softly.

"Eh? What?" Archie turned his head, and gave Phipps a glassy stare. "Go away!" he said feebly.

The valet looked at the junior with concern.

"Is anything the matter, sir?" he asked, stepping forward. "I trust you are not unwell, Master Archie?"

"Kindly ooze forth, and allow the young master to pass away in peace!" murmured Archie sorrowfully. "It may come as a dashed frightful shock to you, old lad, but I am near the old precipice. In other words, kindly gaze at me and observe the signs of rapid death!"

"Really, sir, you startle me——"

"Flow forth upon your ways, old lad—I'm dying!"

"Really, sir?"

"Absolutely!" said Archie. "For me, Phipps, the world has ceased to exist. You are now casting your eye upon a chappie who has spent his good old span, as it were. I should like, Phipps, to have a few geraniums planted on the old grave!"

Phipps failed to take Archie seriously.

"I can see that something is very wrong, sir," he said firmly. "You have had a shock. If you will confide in me, sir, I have no doubt the matter can be adjusted."

Archie shook his head sadly.

"I'll admit, old chappie, that you can do most things in that line; but this is beyond you," he said. "So please leave me alone, and refrain from bothering me until the welcome release arrives. I can't tell you anything, Phipps—I'm pledged to secrecy."

"In that case, sir, I will leave you," said Phipps.

He glided silently out of the room—with the firm intention of returning very shortly with a hot cup of tea. He knew, from past experience, that a cup of the "good old brew" usually worked wonders with Archie.

Left alone, the elegant junior rose to his feet, and slowly paced up and down the study. He was utterly miserable. He accused himself of betraying the trust that Mrs. Stokes had charged him with. He was a failure—he had made a horrible mess of things.

In coming to this conclusion, Archie was most unjust to himself, for the letter had fallen into the Head's hands by sheer accident, by a misadventure which Archie could not possibly have foreseen or guarded against.

But he didn't look at it in this light. He only knew that he had been instructed to deliver the letter to the man at the stile, and that the letter had fallen into the hands of the very man who was not even supposed to know of its existence.

And Archie was so miserable and depressed that he really did feel that the end of all things had come.

"Well, there's only one thing to be done," he decided at length. "I must go to Mrs. Stokes, and bally well own up! I shall probably get the bird; but I've got to do the honourable thing. The Glenthornes always do."

He braced himself up, pulled his shoulders back, and strode to the door. Then he went outside, and hovered about in the vicinity of the Head's house—trusting that he would catch sight of Mrs. Stokes.

He even ventured into the Head's private garden, and prowled about for some time, trying to decide what he should do. And his period of anxiety was brought to an end by the sudden and unexpected appearance of Mrs. Stokes herself.

Archie gave a little gasp and ran up.

"I say, Mrs. Stokes, I'm most frightfully sorry——" he began.

"You are referring to the letter?" smiled the Head's wife, looking at him with an expression of amused good-humour. "Well, Archie, what of it? Bless me, you look quite startled!"

Archie tried to speak, but there seemed to be something in his throat. He absolutely hated giving her such a staggering blow. Her very light-hearted happiness was

ample proof that she believed the letter to have been delivered. Archie thought he had never seen her looking prettier or more charming.

"Well, young man?" she said chaffingly.

"Oh, I say!" panted Archie. "I mean, this is simply foul! The—the fact is, dear lady, something has absolutely gone frightfully and fearfully wrong. That—that letter ——"

"You needn't be so mysterious about it!" laughed the Head's wife.

"But—but I didn't deliver it!" gasped Archie, getting out the dreadful news in a gulp. "I dropped the bally thing, and—and Dr. Stokes staggered out of the offing and seized it!"

Mrs. Stokes nodded.

"Yes, of course! I know," she smiled.

Archie nearly fainted.

"You—you know?" he bleated, clutching at a rose-tree for support.

"You silly boy! The Head told me himself, not twenty minutes ago," laughed Mrs. Stokes. "I declare you've been worrying about it! You shouldn't, Archie. It's only a trifle."

"But—but——" Archie paused, his relief being more than he could stand at the moment. "Then everything is all serene, and all that?"

Mrs. Stokes nodded.

"Everything is perfectly nice and cheerful," she said lightly. "So just go back to your study, Archie, and forget the whole incident. Oh, and let me thank you again for being such a dear boy!"

She smiled very sweetly upon him, shook hands, and Archie went back into the Triangle with new life surging through the old tissues, as he described it. He was a changed being when he burst blithely into his study—to find Phipps waiting calmly with a cup of tea.

But there was one thing Archie didn't know.

He hadn't the faintest idea how much it had cost Mrs. Stokes to appear happy and care-free five minutes earlier! He hadn't the faintest idea what it had cost her to act her part, so that he would be freed from worry!

CHAPTER XII.

MISS BOND IS SUSPICIOUS.

MISS CHARLOTTE BOND examined the powder with an eagle eye.

"I am sure it looks harmless enough, but you can never tell," she said, stirring the powder with the end of a penholder. "What do you make of it, Miss Perry?"

The two women were in the Headmistress's private room at the Moor View School. It was morning, and Miss Bond had said nothing about the seized headache powder until now. Miss Perry, the under-mistress, was puzzled, for her superior had not explained matters yet.

"I am sure I don't know, Miss Bond," she replied. "It looks to me like one of those headache powders."

"Of course it is!" said the Headmistress tartly. "I took this from Joan Tarrant last night, just as she was about to swallow it. There's something very suspicious going on, Miss Perry."

The other lady looked incredulous.

"I am sure I don't know what you mean, Miss Bond," she replied. "This looks just like one of the ordinary headache powders, except for the paper. We can't possibly prevent the girls taking powders if they want to. I find aspirin very helpful——"

"We're not talking about aspirin, Miss Perry," broke in the Headmistress. "In any case, I strongly disapprove of all these treatments. Healthy, growing girls need fresh air—not these rubbishy things! And I want to question you closely, if you don't mind."

Miss Perry waited, rather impatient. Privately, she considered that her superior was making a perfectly absurd fuss over a trivial matter that wasn't worth a minute's attention.

"Tell me, Miss Perry—have you heard anything particularly startling about these new headache powders?" asked Miss Bond. "Have the girls mentioned to you that they are wonderful?"

"Well, yes, they seem to be quite extraordinary," admitted the other.

"In what way?"

"I haven't actually spoken to the girls point-blank, but I understand that Miss Manners is the girl who had the supply," answered Miss Perry. "And several of the others have hinted that these particular powders have a miraculous effect."

"Indeed?"

"I don't quite believe it, of course, but I have been given to understand that just one powder drives all headache away in a few minutes, and leaves the patient with a clear head, and a most remarkable sense of happiness and exhilaration," said the under-mistress. "In fact, most of the girls are quite excited about the remedy."

The Headmistress pursed her lips.

"I don't like it, Miss Perry—I don't like it," she said thoughtfully. "This has all happened within the last few days. Try and cast your mind back. We know that several girls have taken aspirin and other headache cures in the past. Have they ever discussed such remedies with you?"

"At times, yes," said the other.

"And what was the average opinion?"

"Well, that such powders were not particularly efficacious," admitted Miss Perry. "Several of the girls have declared that they are no good at all."

Miss Bond sat upright in her chair.

"Then there is something very wrong!" she declared firmly. "The aspirin and the usual chemists' powders have had no par-

ticular effect, as you have proved. Yet these other powders—which Miss Manners refuses to explain—have such remarkable properties that the whole school is talking about them. I must certainly seek some advice, Miss Perry."

"But what do you suspect?" asked Miss Perry curiously.

"I don't know. I daren't suspect anything," replied the Headmistress. "It's all very distressing, and I think I shall question Miss Manners again. Do you mind fetching her here at once?"

Miss Perry went off, and soon returned with Irene, but in response to all Miss Bond's questioning, Irene refused to divulge how and where she had procured these powders. The girl was, in fact, extremely embarrassed.

A whole mystery was being made of this affair, and yet it was a trifle! And she couldn't explain, and put a stop to this ridiculous farce because she had given her word of honour to Mrs. Stokes.

It would have been such a simple thing to explain the affair, but she could not do so without implicating the wife of the Headmaster of St. Frank's. And so Irene remained silent.

And this, of course, seemed a highly suspicious circumstance. Not unnaturally, Miss Bond at once inferred that Irene knew a great deal more about the powders than she would admit, and this very secrecy hinted at something sinister.

"I am very disappointed, Miss Manners, that you should be so obstinate," said the Headmistress, at length. "Your character is good—one of the best in the school. And it is so unlike you to behave in this foolish fashion. Why don't you tell me?"

"I am sorry, Miss Bond, but I cannot," replied Irene firmly.

"You are either very foolish or very wicked—one or the other!" snapped Miss Bond. "It is all the more surprising, because you have never displayed any indications of either failing. If I discover anything harmful about these powers, I shall deal with you with the utmost severity, since it is perfectly clear that you know everything, and that you introduced these powders deliberately and with your eyes wide open. You may go!"

Irene went, secretly alarmed, but far more angered. It seemed to her that Miss Bond was making an absurd, unnecessary fuss over nothing.

Later in the day the Headmistress sallied out, and walked down towards the village. She had made up her mind. She would submit the powder to the Bellton chemist, and get him to make an analysis.

But just as she was passing St. Frank's, Nelson Lee appeared. He raised his hat politely, and they passed a few commonplace remarks concerning the weather. And as Lee was walking the same way, they fell into pace. Miss Bond was rather thoughtful.

With delightful coolness Irene ran a couple of paces, leapt lightly into the air, and caught the hurtling cricket ball cleanly and accurately.

Here was an opportunity she had not hoped for.

"I wonder, Mr. Lee, if you would do me a great favour?" asked Miss Bond, after a short pause.

"You have my promise, before I know what the favour is," replied Lee smilingly.

"I dare say you'll laugh at me, but that cannot be helped," said the Headmistress. "Perhaps I am too strict with my girls, but I would rather be that way than too lenient. I have been worried this last day or two about some headache powders which one of my girls has introduced to the school, and I have one of the powders here."

"What particular brand is it?" asked the Housemaster detective.

"That's just it! I cannot find out," replied Miss Bond. "They were brought into the school by Irene Manners, and they are not any known proprietary remedy. And the girl positively refuses to divulge her source of supply."

Miss Bond went into further details, and Lee listened with growing interest. Indeed, it seemed that he was very keen on the matter, for his eyes had taken on a grim expression.

"I am very glad I met you, Miss Bond," he said frankly. "As you say, the circumstances are suspicious, but everything depends upon the nature of the powder. I will analyse it for you with pleasure, and let you have my report within a day or two."

Miss Bond was delighted, and the matter was left at that.

What would be the result of this inquiry? A fiasco, or a sensation?

CHAPTER XIII.

GIRLS VERSUS BOYS.

"THEN I'm not playing?" asked Jerry Dodd.

"No, I'm giving you a rest," I replied. "Handforth isn't playing either, or Christine. The fact is, I feel inclined to give some of the Reserves a trial."

"Rot!" growled Handforth. "I was particularly keen on this match against Irene and Co."

"But, my dear fellow, you don't seem to understand the subtlety of my scheme," I said diplomatically. "What will happen if we field our regular eleven? Why, unless we deliberately play badly—and that isn't to be thought of—we'll whack the girl's team hollow, and they'll simply be a laughing-stock."

"By George, yes!" said Handforth blankly.

"Even with half Reserves in the team, we shall give the girls a good game, and whack them by a nice little majority," I went on. "Then they'll have put up what seems to be a good show, and everything will be all serene, and everybody happy."

"A jolly sensible decision," declared Bob Christine, nodding.

"As for you playing, Handy, old man, it isn't to be thought of," I said. "You'd make victory certain, and then you'd have the defeat of the girls' team on your own head. Irene wouldn't speak to you again!"

The thought made Handforth go pale.

"I—I hadn't looked at it like that!" he admitted. "We don't want to make the girls look small, do we? All right; I'll stand down."

He failed to observe the smiles that went round, for he had taken my suggestion that his play would make victory certain quite seriously. It was always an easy matter to pull Handy's leg.

We were on Little Side, and it was Saturday afternoon. A cool, unfriendly day, but quite fine. In some ways it was ideal for cricket, for there was no dazzling sun, and one could be active without undue exertion.

The match was regarded as a freak, and crowds of fellows turned out to watch. Half the Fifth had already turned up, and quite a few members of the Sixth were lounging near by, apparently interested in practice on Big Side, but really waiting for the junior match to commence.

Irene and Co. turned up looking very business-like, carrying their own cricket-bags, and all of them attired in white, as though they were about to play tennis.

"Here we are!" said Irene brightly. "Not late, I hope?"

"Rather not!" replied Handforth, seizing her bag. "I say, why on earth didn't you tell us? We'd have come along and carried your bags for you."

"Certainly not!" replied Irene. "We are meeting you on equal terms—just as one cricket team against another. For this afternoon you've got to forget that we're girls, and treat us as an ordinary eleven."

Everybody grinned. Irene and Co. were looking so charming that the thought of looking upon them as anything else but girls was amusing. They saw the smiles, and Irene frowned.

"Look here, this isn't fair!" she protested. "You all look upon this match as just a piece of fun! Don't deny it, because it's true. And I expect you've filled your team with reserves, and given them instructions to treat us lightly?"

"Well, let's begin," I said hastily.

"Isn't that true?" demanded Irene firmly.

"Well, in a way——"

"Then I won't have it!" declared the girl. "I'm the captain of the Moor View team, and I refuse to play unless you boys take us seriously!"

I admired her complete frankness.

"All right, Miss Irene; have it your own way," I said briskly. "Handforth, get ready! You, too, Christine—and you, Monlie

—and you, De Valerie! We'll play our full team, by Jove!"

"Splendid!" said Irene, her eyes sparkling. "If we're going to be beaten, we'll be beaten fairly and squarely. We're certainly not going to have you boys letting us down lightly, and then laughing afterwards. We'd rather be licked out and out!"

"Hear, hear!" said the other girls.

"By George, you're sportsmen!" said Handforth enthusiastically.

And so, soon afterwards, play commenced. And even greater interest was now taken in the match. It was generally acknowledged that the girls had asked for trouble; but they were plucky, anyway. And there was general delight when the Remove went into the field and the girls opened the batting. Everybody was anxious to see Irene and Co. in the field, but it was the batting that counted.

I played two reserves in place of Jerry Dodd and Christine, the latter having decided to stand down, after all. These two were the best pair in the Junior Eleven, and with them included, the game would indeed have been a farce.

In spite of what Irene had said, I put Tregellis-West and Yorke on the bowling, both being fair, but by no means brilliant. And the first "batsmen" were Marjorie Temple and Tessa Love.

"Show 'em what you can do, Tessa!" grinned Johnny Onions of the Remove. "Don't get bowled for a duck!"

Tessa waved her hand and smiled.

Nobody had forgotten her wonderful performance in the famous Onions Circus owned by Johnny's father. And as she was Johnny's adopted sister, he was naturally keenly interested.

"Good!" said Handforth. "They're off!"

The first ball of the game had been played, and, surprisingly enough, two runs were scored from it. Tessa handled her bat with ease and precision, and tapped the leather away with quiet confidence.

A roar of applause went up, accompanied by much laughter. The spectators simply wouldn't take the game seriously.

But as the minutes sped on the fellows began to rub their eyes, and the laughs began to subside. At the end of half an hour only one member of Irene's team had been dismissed! This was Marjorie, who was caught out at twenty-three—her own score being nine. And this, for a girl, was considered phenomenally good.

But Tessa was going as strong as ever, and was presently joined by Doris Berkeley. Doris proved within a very few minutes that her play was characteristic of herself.

She was a merry, jokey little soul, full of vim and tremendous vitality. And her batting was just the same. She was a kind of feminine Handforth—utterly reckless, plucky, and ready to take any chance.

And a perfect roar of enthusiasm went up when Doris brought the bat round with a terrific swing and knocked Sir Montie to the boundary.

"Hurrah!"

"Well played!"

"Go it, girls! You'll win yet!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Doris continued to show St. Frank's that this game was quite a serious affair, and before she was finally caught out she ran up a quick, spectacular score of twenty-five. This was indeed a staggering innings for a mere girl!

And the total now stood at sixty-two. I began to scratch my head a bit. Sixty-two runs for two wickets! And we were playing against schoolgirls! Perhaps it wouldn't have been such a bad idea if Jerry had played, after all.

Irene came next, and she and Tessa continued the remarkable performance, Tessa being immovable. She wasn't spectacular, but safe. She only hit when there was a good chance of a run. Otherwise, she was simply content to protect her wicket.

Irene was cheered loudly as she faced the bowling. We had seen a sample of her work before, and were now prepared for some interesting batting. We had made the mistake of assuming that she was the only member of the team who could bat.

We had no knowledge of the fact that Irene had been coaching her team for weeks and weeks—with the ultimate idea of playing against the Remove! And it was quite like her to spring the thing at the last minute.

I relieved Tregellis-West at the bowling, and tried my hardest to dismiss Irene. But she was ready, and although she was prevented from making any big hits, she kept her wicket intact and scored steadily.

Tessa went soon afterwards, amid rousing cheers. She had fallen a victim to one of my swiftest. And Tessa's departure was the signal for a kind of collapse.

Irene made the score jump up at times, but the other girls were dismissed in a regular succession. But this was nothing to be surprised at. Many a professional team meets with the same fate. County cricketers are quite apt to collapse without any reason or warning.

But when the score stood at eighty-seven for eight wickets there was a stand, Joan Tarrant proving the stumbling block. She didn't score a single run, but when it came to stonewalling she was a revelation.

In the meantime Irene scored quickly, methodically, and with a serene calmness that invoked general admiration. She was set, and even I couldn't do anything to upset her.

All the onlookers were as keen as mustard now, positive that this was a perfectly serious game. The laughs had died away. The girls were no longer treated as a joke.

Irene Manners had proved that she and her chums were genuine cricketers!

CHAPTER XIV.

LAST MAN IN!

"HURRAH!"

"Oh, well played!"

"Splendid, Miss Irene! Well played!"

Little Side resounded with hearty cheers. The Moor View School innings was over, and Irene Manners was thirty-three not out! And the total score to the credit of the girls was the quite remarkable figure of 114.

The Junior Eleven, of course, was confident of equalling this score in a very short time. We had plenty of first-class batsmen, and the bowling was not likely to be particularly strong. In fact, I was confident of beating the Moor View girls by a margin of four or five wickets.

But even so they had given us a game—a serious game. This was not merely a bit of fooling, just for the sake of amusement. Irene and Co. had definitely established their right to play against St. Frank's.

Handforth and Tommy Watson opened for St. Frank's.

And I noticed that the spectators were now almost doubled—practically the entire Fifth being on the scene, and a good proportion of the Sixth. It was strange how these fellows expressed such contempt for girls—and how they were attracted to the scene like steel to a magnet!

Little Side looked unusually bright and attractive with the white clothed girls instead of the customary schoolboys. Such a team as this had never before taken the field.

Marjorie Temple sent down the first ball of the over, and Handforth faced her. Archie Glenthorne was looking on with such alertness and keen interest that everybody near him was surprised. They hadn't seen Archie so wide awake for weeks.

"There she goes!" said Jerry Dodd. "By jings! I like the look of that run! Over-arm, too—just look at that swing——"

Crash!

Handforth's wicket lay in fragments, and the crowd gasped.

"How's that?"

"Out!" said the umpire cheerfully.

"But—but I didn't touch the ball!" roared Handforth, in confusion. "I—I mean —— My only hat! Am I out?"

"You certainly are!" chuckled the umpire.

Handforth carried his bat to the pavilion in a bemused kind of way. Out! Clean bowled for a duck! And by a girl! Edward Oswald wouldn't have been a bit surprised if the pavilion had suddenly turned over on its back.

"She's a terror!" he gasped. "Who says a girl can't bowl fast?"

It was regarded as a fluke, of course—Handforth being famous for his recklessness. The next man in was De Valerie, and he was a little more successful against Marjorie's bowling.

But there was no question as to her remarkable cleverness.

She bowled over-arm, in the usual way, and her delivery was swift and deadly. And she knew a few tricks, too—as the batsmen discovered to their cost.

For the score had only reached 22 when Marjorie bagged another victim. This was De Valerie, who was hopelessly deceived by a ball that seemed to break in the most exquisite manner for scoring a boundary. Instead, the leather soared upwards high into the sky.

"Catch!" roared the crowd.

Doris Berkeley was running, and she halted easily, waiting for the ball to drop. There was a breathless hush during those few seconds. Nobody expected Doris to make the catch—for girls are proverbially duffers at catching a ball.

But Doris upset all the theorists.

She made as pretty a catch as anybody could wish to see—and gripped the leather with a clean neatness which told of weeks of practice.

"Out!"

"Oh, well caught!"

The Remove was not feeling quite so confident now—although defeat was looked upon as the remotest thing in the world. Still, anything is possible in cricket—as more than one county eleven has proved before to-day.

It must not be supposed that Marjorie Temple was the only good bowler. There were others. At first, the batsmen laughed, and accepted the bowling with cheerful grins.

For Marjorie was the only fast bowler. The others were slow. And their deliveries seemed preposterously easy—but were, in point of fact, very difficult to judge.

Over-confidence had a good deal to do with the collapse that started after the dismissal of De Valerie.

The juniors all suffered from the same complaint. The bowling looked so easy that the batsman let themselves go except when they were facing Marjorie.

Consequently, there were many disasters.

Tregellis-West, for example, thought he could easily score a boundary from a slow, well-pitched ball which seemed to be breaking favourably. But the worst of these slow balls was that they so easily deceived a fellow. Before Montie could be aware of it, the leather rolled leisurely under his bat, and he swiped at nothing—carelessly getting out of his crease.

The wicket-keeper caught the ball neatly, and the next second she sent it crashing into the wicket.

"How's that?" she cried triumphantly.

"Out!" said the umpire.

"Begad!" gasped Sir Montie. "Stumped!"

The next man in remained only for three minutes, being clean bowled after this period. And so it went on. A rot had set

in—and nobody could possibly find a reason. But the explanation was the simplest in the world. The batsmen were quite unused to this kind of bowling, and before they could get settled to it, they were either bowled, or tricked into skying the ball for a catch.

But the score was creeping up.

Already it was 89—for five wickets. This was serious enough, of course, but there was still plenty of time to recover. But batsman after batsman came out, and the Remove began to get dismayed.

There were only two wickets left when the score passed the century, and at 106 the last man went in—Boots—and I was at the other wicket. I had been batting for about fifteen vitality. They saw a chance of snatching the victory from us—and if they could do so it would be the greatest triumph imaginable.

Buster played very cautiously, and the next over was a maiden. Then I got the bowling again, and I went all out for runs.

Clack!

I hit a nice two, although I had expected to get three. But these girls were so clever at fielding that the leather was returned with remarkable speed and precision.

And before long the score was 111. Three runs to equalise—four to win! I played with the utmost caution. And soon I sent the leather away for another two—bringing

Archie was delighted to see the form of Dr. Stokes loom up. Crash! The first gipsy went over with a jarring thud that shook every bone in his body.

minutes, and had run up a nice little score of 23, and was just feeling set.

And I was comfortable about winning now. We only needed eight runs to draw, and nine to win. And Buster was a safe batsman—particularly when he was required to be. He knew that he could leave me to get the runs.

All the same, the match was turning out to be uncomfortably close, and nobody regarded the girls with amusement now. They were certainly a force to be reckoned with!

As for Irene and Co., they were all on tip-toe—eager, intent, and full to the brim with the total up to 113. Fateful number! The crowds were now watching with breathless attention.

The next ball would probably mean victory for the Remove—and it seemed ridiculous that we should have to actually fight for it. Marjorie sent down a swift delivery, and I swung my bat round, and opened my shoulders to the drive.

"Oh, well hit!"

"Boundary—boundary!"

"Remove wins!"

The ball had gone high for what seemed to be a certain boundary—but Boots and I were running, taking no chances. We were

certain of running two, and that meant victory.

But Irene Manners was running, too, and the spectators watched with sudden awed interest. The ball was falling just within the boundary, and Irene was running as fleet as a hare.

She leapt sideways and upwards, clutched at the descending ball, and held it. The next second, she recovered her equilibrium, and then shot the leather skywards.

"Out!"

"Oh, well caught!"

"Bravo, Miss Irene!"

I dropped my bat, and stared.

"Well, if this isn't the limit!" I said grimly. "Whacked—by one run! Licked by a team of schoolgirls! Will somebody please jump on my head and wake me up?"

But it was no dream—as I knew well enough. Irene and Co. had won in a clean, brilliant game. And they had beaten the Junior Eleven at St. Frank's College! The affair was the sensation of the term. But, somehow, the Remove didn't feel belittled.

As for the Moor View girls, they were congratulated on all sides, and Irene Manners was the happiest girl of all. She little knew what dreadful events were in store for her! To-day she was happy—but to-morrow she was destined to find herself in a tangle of hopeless trouble. And all this, just because she had given her word of honour!

But it's another story, so I shall have to deal with it—next week!

THE END.

Editorial Announcement

My dear Readers,

In this week's story you will notice that the author has brought you into closer touch with the leading characters of the Moor View School. Ever since the young ladies of Miss Bond's School first appeared in the chronicles of St. Frank's, hundreds of enthusiastic readers, both boys and girls, have written asking to know more about them.

POPULAR WITH BOYS AND GIRLS.

At first I was a little dubious of introducing girls into our stories, for an editor has to be cautious when embarking on something new. It is common knowledge, however, that the most popular of boys' stories are read by girls as well as boys, and that the NELSON LEE LIBRARY is no exception to this rule is abundantly proved by the contents of my postbag. Now, it occurred to the author, and I share his view, that a story combining the introduction of boys and girls could not fail to be popular with both sections of my readers, if only because it would add variety and open up a larger field for future development in our stories.

TELL YOUR FRIENDS!

It is now up to you, my boy and girl readers, to show your appreciation of these stories by making them known among all your friends. I shall be glad to hear your opinion of the story you have just read, and what you think of Irene's unfortunate predicament, in which she has to face a serious ordeal rather than break a promise she has made to Mrs. Beverley Stokes.

THE ROBBER OF THE REMOVE!

The consequences of Irene's determination to keep her word will be described in next week's story, together with another mystery, which concerns chiefly the Boys of St. Frank's. This story, called "THE ROBBER OF THE REMOVE!" is also linked up with the strange behaviour of the new Head's wife.

THE COMPETITION RESULTS.

I regret not being able to publish all the names of successful winners of consolation prizes in the Characters' Names Competition. They will appear, however, along with the Correct Solution, in our next issue. The large number of successful competitors is an eloquent testimony to the great popularity of this contest. Although the original prize was only £1, the total cost of the 247 prizes awarded has exceeded this figure many times over. I am now thinking out another competition to be run in connection with our coming Summer Holiday Stories. If you have any suggestions to make, my chums, just drop me a line.

Your sincere friend,
THE EDITOR.

MY AMERICAN NOTE-BOOK

By the Author of our St Frank's Stories.

No. 31. THE FIRST GLIMPSE OF THE MIGHTY WEST.

IT was about nine o'clock on Monday morning when we arrived in Kansas City, and having finished breakfast just before this I took the opportunity to get off the train and stretch my legs. We only had a quarter of an hour's stop, and then we were due to carry on, and travel right through the State of Kansas from East to West.

Kansas City itself is not one city, but really two. There are, in fact, two distinct towns by this name—Kansas City, Missouri, the most important, and Kansas City, Kansas, the smaller. And both cities are situated at the extreme Eastern border of Kansas State. We should, therefore, be travelling completely across Kansas until after ten o'clock at night—when the train would enter Colorado.

In this little article I am going to deal with the journey through Kansas. Being a visitor, and on my first trip across America, I was naturally intensely interested, and spent most of my time on the observation-car.

I won't say much about Kansas City, because there's really very little to say. It is a big town, and an important one. But, so far as scenery goes, there's not much to write about.

I took my seat on the rear platform of the observation car, filled with delightful anticipation as soon as we pulled out on the day's journey. Remember, this was my first day on any observation-car, and I was therefore as eager and keen as any schoolboy.

I was prepared to enthuse over the glorious scenery that I had read so much about in the railway booklets. I am not saying they boasted about Kansas scenery, but here we were getting out into the West, and I was ready, with both eyes open, to see everything within seeing distance.

And I might as well say at once that I frequently fell asleep during the course of the morning—not because the motion of the train was lulling, but because the landscape was so positively uninteresting that, frankly, I got fed up with it. That's putting it plainly.

For me to describe the scenery is not only difficult, but a matter of sheer impossibility—for the very simple reason that there is no scenery to describe. Under no stretch of imagination can you call a dead flat landscape scenery. As for the towns, they were certainly the most deadly uninteresting spots I have ever seen.

Perhaps I had better make a small attempt to transfer the picture on to this page. I don't suppose I shall succeed, but there's nothing like trying.

On either side of the railway track we passed through vast regions of agricultural country. Not the kind of agricultural country we know in Great Britain, with hedges and meadows, and so forth, but a perfectly flat, uninteresting vista of enormous fields and precious little else. In fact, whenever I fell asleep, I never knew how long I had been dozing, because the view was always precisely the same whenever I woke up.

For example, I could drop off to sleep when passing one town, and wake up when passing the next—and could quite easily think it was the same "city." For one is exactly the same as the other—and about as dreary as a desert island in the midst of a wide expanse of ocean.

These towns are just straggling collections of wooden shacks and houses dumped close to the railway line. Sometimes there were trees, but very seldom. And the whole day was so monotonous that I rather longed for the darkness to come to hide it all up. Yet I didn't want to leave the observation car in case, by some miracle, something interesting hove into view.

Needless to say, I was perfectly correct in my assumption that nothing of staggering moment would loom up. Even the main road was more or less of a joke. For miles this road—a State highway, mind you—runs parallel with the railway.

Try and picture a miry looking mud track, with an occasional Ford churning along through it like a traction engine, and you will get a glimpse of the main Kansas State highway—or one of them. Being Springtime, the frosts had gone, and the roads had had no time to dry up. So perhaps the time was rather unfavourable from a tourist's point of view.

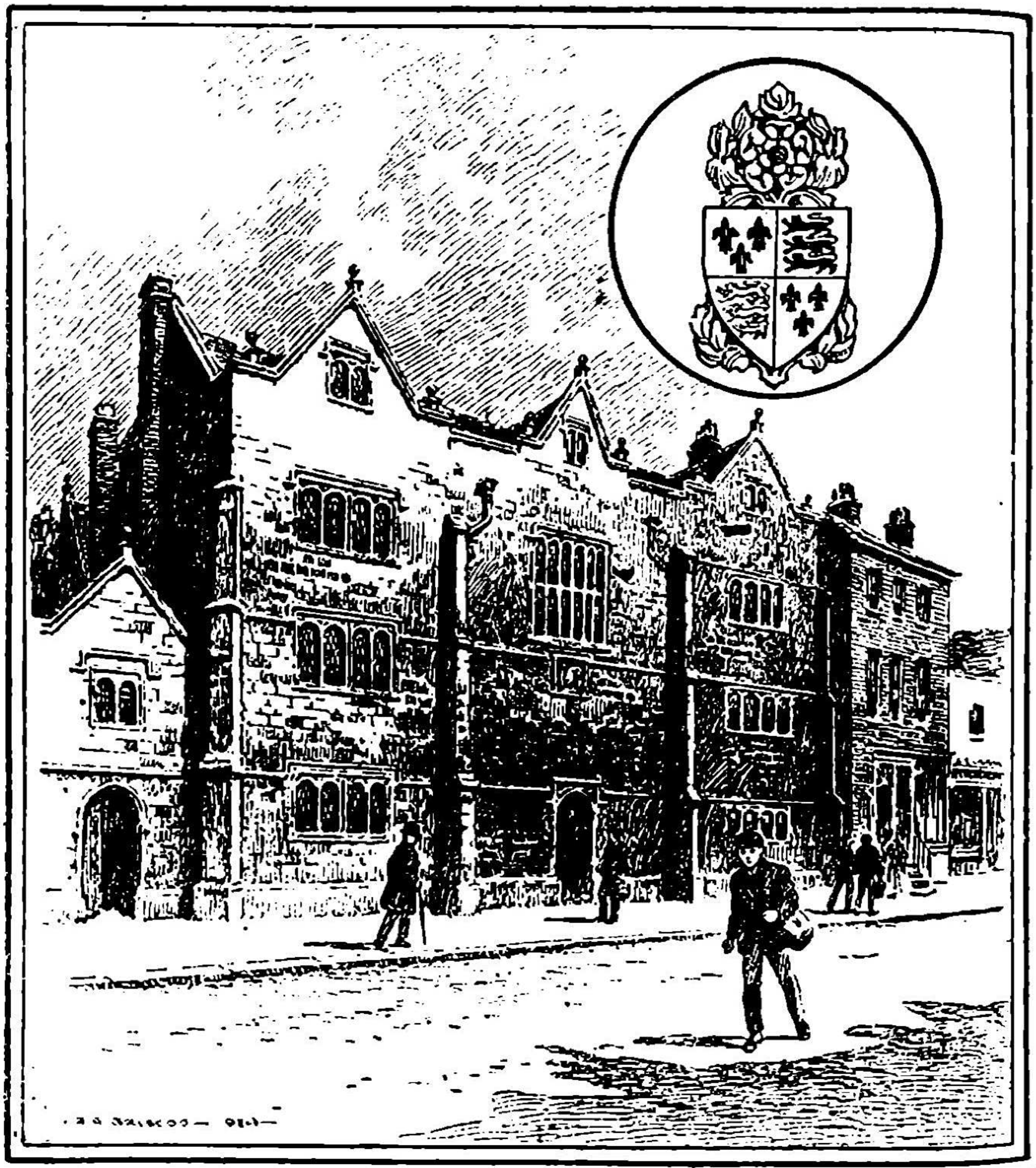
My first glimpse of the West was hardly promising. I went to bed that night praying for something more picturesque on the morrow. And Colorado and New Mexico certainly sounded like the real thing.

Next Week: "Through Colorado and New Mexico."

OUR PUBLIC SCHOOLS.

SPECIAL SERIES OF ART SKETCHES BY MR. E. E. BRISCOE.

No. 34. ROYAL GRAMMAR SCHOOL (Guildford).



This fine old school was founded in 1509, and in 1550 was granted a Royal Charter by King Edward VI. Situated in Guildford High Street, it is a very picturesque building and forms one of the chief attractions of Old Guildford. There are some 350 scholars divided into four houses, Hamonde's, Nettle's, Beckingham and Austin's. The school has an O.T.C. and a large troop of Boy Scouts. In the Great War 52 Old Boys laid down their lives, and a beautiful memorial, designed by an Old Boy, has been erected to their memory. In the school museum are preserved the original Charter granted by Edward VI and many other old records. The school magazine, "The Guildfordian," which appears at the end of each term, is an excellently produced periodical and a credit to all concerned with it. The school colours are red, green and white.

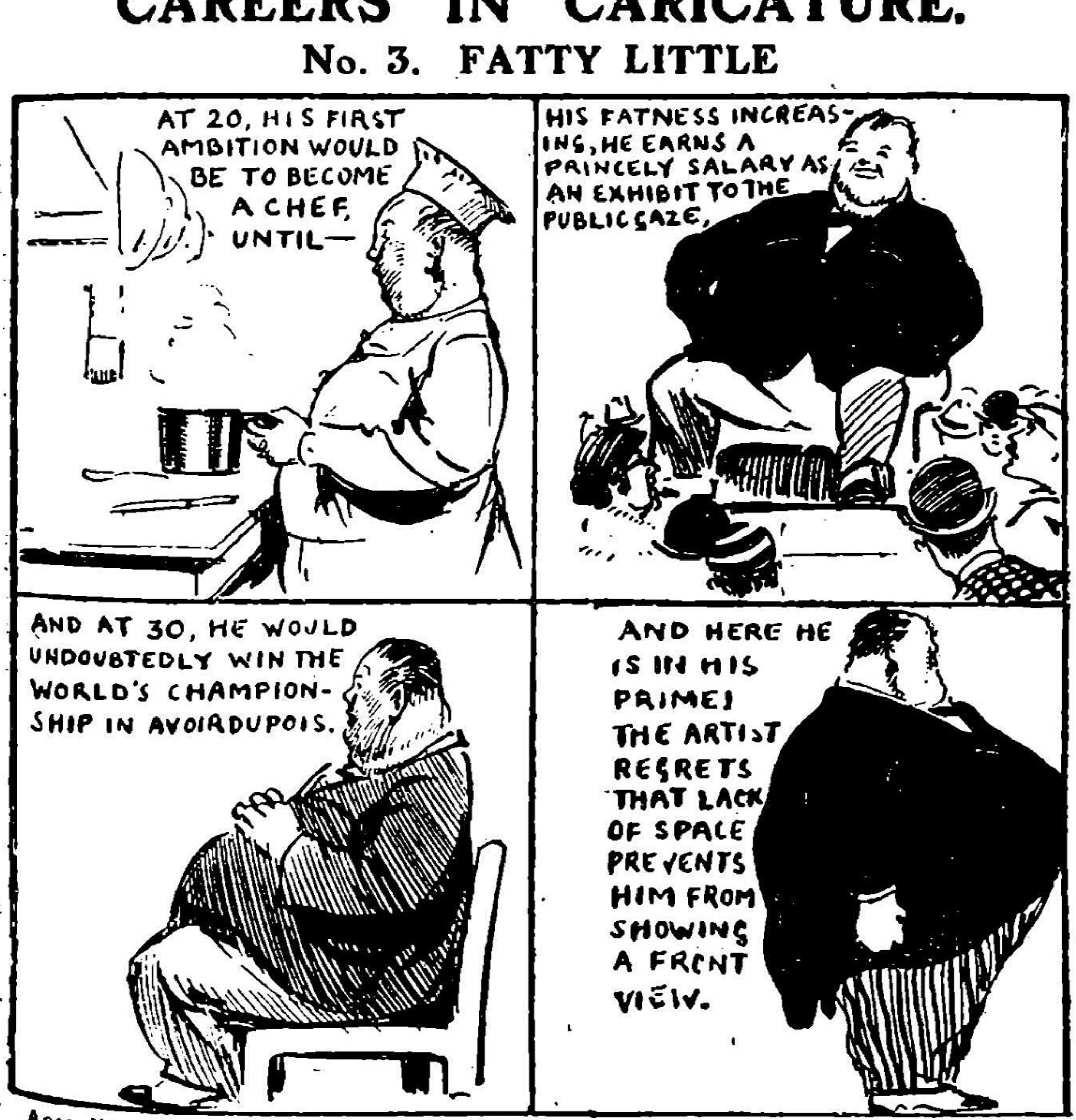
No. 32. Vol. 2. Edited by Nipper. July 5, 1924.

St. Frank's Magazine

CONSILIO ET ANIMIS

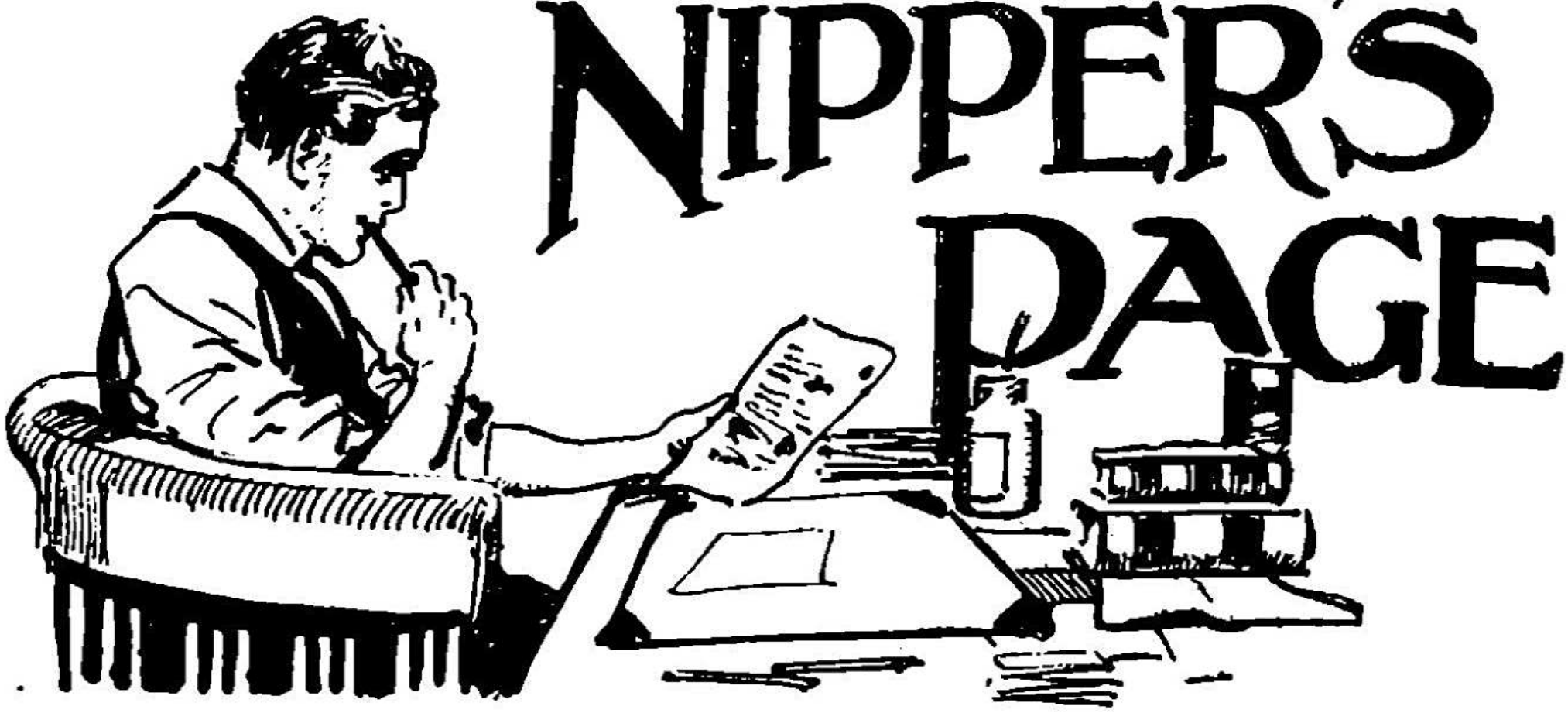
CAREERS IN CARICATURE.

No. 3. FATTY LITTLE



According to our artist, Fatty's growing bulk and weight in years to come will limit the sphere of his future activities. —THE EDITOR.

NIPPER'S PAGE



Editorial Office,
Study C,
St. Frank's.

My dear Chums,

On the last page of this issue you will find a list of the successful competitors in the Characters' Names Competition. There are 247 names, to be exact, and to each of these chums I am presenting a consolation prize. I must make the next competition a little more difficult.

TRACKETT GRIM.

It will be noticed that there is no story this week about our Famous Incriminator. Personally, I think our old friend and his youthful assistant will be missed, but Handforth does not agree.

At least, he refuses to do his usual yarn. It seems that many chaps have been saying rather nasty things about Handy's weekly stories, and the leader of Study D is a little upset.

He must be a little upset I think, because he threw an inkpot at me when I went into his study the other day. After that he tried to hit me over the head with a chair.

When Church and McClure came to my rescue he hurled the table at them, and and after that he picked up the fire-irons and was about to arm himself with them. But luckily he was only a little upset and we calmed him down at that point. I am very glad he was not really badly upset!

He might have thrown the study at us!

WHY HANDY IS CROSS!

The explanation of Handy's attitude seems to be that he is annoyed that people do not think all his detective stories are works of genius. Several boys have written letters suggesting that the author of the said yarns would not be out of place in Bedlam!

They say the stories are absolutely rotten and that the author does not know what he is writing about.

This, of course, did not please Handy.

I am not surprised! Fancy suggesting that he does not know what he is writing about! It is quite possible that some readers are a bit vague as to what his stuff is about.

But that is a very different thing from saying that the author himself is in the same position.

APOLOGIES WANTED!

The result of all this was that Handy refused to do any more of his celebrated stories till he received an apology from the readers who had insulted his intelligence by scoffing at Trackett Grim.

I told him that it was only a very small minority that scoffed, but Handy only sniffed.

"I don't care," he shouted. "I tell you that the Mag. jolly well depends on Trackett Grim. You just leave out my yarns and you'll see that no one will read it! I'm not the kind of chap who boasts, but I know which are the best contributions to the Mag."

I tried to persuade him to sit down and write another story, but he was adamant. In other words he was as obstinate as a mule. He refused to put pen to paper till he had received apologies from those who had said nasty things about his stories.

So there the matter rests. Handy is distinctly huffy. But, between you and me, I think we shall see more of his yarns before very long.

Meanwhile anyone who cares to send in apologies is at liberty to do so!

Your old chum,
NIPPER.

CASUAL CONVERSATIONS

Imagined by CHARLIE TALMADGE

No. I.—A CRICKET DEFEAT.

1. IN THE PREFECTS' ROOM.

FENTON: It's no good grumbling now—we've been beaten on our own ground by an innings and twenty-seven runs!

MORROW: Ghastly!

FENTON: Of course, the weather was against us. We seemed to have rotten luck with the showers. All the advantage went to Helmford. I expect the juniors are making a confounded song about this.

WILSON: Better let me hear them!

FENTON: Oh, well, we can't expect anything else. It's a horrible smack, to be licked so thoroughly. It wouldn't have been so bad if that last shower hadn't ruined the wicket.

MORROW: Yes, we can thank the weather for this fiasco.

CARLILE: Oh, rather!

MILLS: Nothing but the weather, of course.

FENTON: Yes, I suppose we had rotten luck. All the same, I shall have to buck the First Eleven up pretty vigorously. Parry's bowling was rotten, and I never expected you to be out for a duck, Morrow.

MORROW: I like that! How on earth could I help it, with the wicket so churned up that the ball pitched anywhere and everywhere? Don't be so infernally unreasonable, old man!

FENTON: Oh, well! We won't argue.

(They continue arguing).

2. IN THE JUNIOR PASSAGE.

HANDFORTH: What did I tell you?

CHURCH: Blessed if I know!

MCCLURE: What did you tell us about what?

HANDFORTH: About the match on Big Side this afternoon. Didn't I say that the First Eleven was a wash-out, and that they'd be whacked by a clear innings?

CHURCH: I don't remember it! I thought you said the First was in tip-top form, and would show these Helmford swankers how to play cricket.

HANDFORTH: Rot! Your memory's as bad as ever, you ass! The First lost the match because they can't play cricket for toffee!

MCCLURE: They don't!

HANDFORTH: Don't what?

MCCLURE: Play cricket for toffee—they play for points.

CHURCH: Ha, ha, ha!

HANDFORTH (glaring): You cackling fatheads! I suppose you call that funny? I tell you, the First can't play cricket for nuts! I offered to give Fenton some advice, but he wouldn't take it. And look at the result!

CHURCH: It might have been worse—if he'd taken your advice!

WATSON: Now, then! No scrapping here! Lend a hand, you chaps! Separate these idiots!

BOOTS: What's the argument about?

MCCLURE: Cricket! Handy says the First Eleven can't play for nuts.

BOOTS: He's right—they can't! They've been licked in the most horrible way. Of course, they blamed the weather, but that's all Tommy rot. They must find some excuse, poor beggars!

HANDFORTH: The Upper School is going to the dogs!

(Discussion continues).

3. IN THE FAGGERY.

CHUBBY: Heard the latest?

WILLY: What about?

CHUBBY: Cricket. The First Eleven was whacked——

WILLY: Blow the First Eleven!

JUICY: But it's a disgrace, you know. Everybody's talking——

WILLY: Let 'em talk—who cares? And clear off, and don't interrupt me while I'm pinning these butterflies in my specimen case! They're a darned lot more important than the First Eleven!

(The First Eleven tragedy is forgotten.)

IN REPLY TO YOURS

Correspondence Answered by UNCLE EDWARD

(NOTE.—Readers of the NELSON LEE LIBRARY can write to me, and I will reply on this page. But don't expect an answer for a week or two, owing to the delays in printing. Address your letters or postcards to UNCLE EDWARD, c/o The Editor, The NELSON LEE LIBRARY, The Fleetway House, Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4.—UNCLE EDWARD.)

F. A., YORK: I've given your thanks to Archie, as you ask, for his number of the Mag.—although I can't understand why anybody should thank him for that rotten frost! There's no accounting for tastes! Lots of people said my number of the Mag. was awful—which only shows that good writing is never appreciated. Can I tell you which is the best bicycle oil? Well, I always get mine from Old Sharpe, the ironmonger, in Bellton. You can't do better than that, so I advise you to buy your oil from him.

F. W. S., SWINDON: My Author's Licence is an imaginary thing, you duffer—you can't get it from the Post Office, like a Dog Licence. Of course I'm a born detective. If I wasn't, how could I think of the Trackett Grim plots? And why shouldn't I be a Big Game Hunter, too? Don't you think Nelson Lee ever goes exploring?

JOAN ROUTLEDGE: Yes, I think it's a good idea to have the Moor View girls in our stories. As you say, it gives you girls more of a share in the general interest. I don't think Nipper can spare room for that Correspondence Exchange you suggest. You don't know how pleased I am that the Trackett Grim yarns buck you up when you're low spirited. Yes, Fatty's recipes are too awful for words, and I'm glad you agree with me.

ETHEL A JOWSEY, SCARBOROUGH: Oh, I say! Fancy you sending me a kiss like that! I'm awfully embarrassed, you know, because I'm a shy chap, really. I'm blessed if you're not another one! You think my stories funny! I think everybody must misunderstand me. And you think Willy's got more brain than I have? Well, you are a silly id—— Oh, crumbs! You're a girl, so I can't tell you what I think of your opinion. That idea of yours about a couplet is a corker—but, unfortunately, it's too late, as the "Familiar Phrases" have finished. But we might use it later on.

THE SLASHING LIEUTENANT: Thanks for your suggestions and ideas. But it isn't really my department, so I've passed on your letter to Nipper, and perhaps you'll notice some changes. Good luck, old son.

AN OLD READER, IPSWICH: I'm surprised you don't know why the wall of the Remove passage is damaged opposite Study D. It's because Church and McClure are always flying out so hurriedly—generally with my assistance from the rear. I've got to keep order, you know.

R. S. HACKNEY: You're quite right, old chap—at least, I assume you're a chap. Ernest Lawrence was a kind of professional boxer at one time—but only just for the sport of it, you know. And he's capable of whacking Nipper any day, I'll bet. But if it comes to fighting, I'm ready to take them on, with or without gloves, whenever they like.

LESLIE R. HILL, HIGHBURY: Thanks for your sensible, well-written letter and the photograph. My hat! You're as tall as Clarence Fellowe! And a lot better looking than that ass. You're a reader from No. 1 of the "N.L.L.," eh? That's great. I think I like Irene better than Tessa, but Tessa's a jolly nice girl, too. So you're another chap who thinks that Trackett Grim is comic! It's too bad—when I'm such a serious fellow, too. Of course, Archie is a funny fathead. We all know that. I don't agree that the College House is Top Dog. Not likely! Ancient House for ever! I'll find out those heights, etc., some time this week, and reply to you again in next week's Mag. So look out for it, old son.

A REGULAR READER (Ealing): This is in answer to you, Miss May, and not to the Northampton chap. This is the worst of choosing such a simple disguise for your name. Thanks for all your nice remarks about the Magazine, and about the chaps. I told Somerton what you said about his

untidy ways, and how they appealed to you, and he grinned like the dickens. Some of these fellows are dotty, you know. I've asked Tommy Watson which girl he admires, and the fathead wanted to fight me. The idiot didn't know I was only asking him the question to oblige you. Anyhow, I can't reply, because he flares up like anything when I mention girls. He's a shy bounder. I'm pleased that you like Willy, because he's my brother, but I can't quite agree with you. He always makes me wild. I haven't had time to ask the fellows all those questions about their favourite pastimes and ages, but I'll do so this week, and give you another reply-space in the next issue of the Mag. Yes, of course I'm going to Wembley, and I shall naturally take heaps of cash with me. What's the matter with your Latin? The words on our school badge—"Consilio et Animis"—mean "By Wisdom and Courage." I hope you've got plenty of both.

C EMBERSON (Stratford): If I knew your full address, I'd come along the first time I visited London and biff you on the nose! The idea of saying that I show off! And in front of Miss Irene, too! Still, I forgive you, and put it down to your sense of humour. But don't try to be funny again, my lad, or I'll be on your track. Don't forget I'm a detective!

DOROTHY: You see, although you said you made up your mind to be one of the first to write to me, a good many others were ahead of you. But what you lacked in speed, you easily make up for in everything else. In fact, your letter is one of the most charming I have ever had, and thanks awfully for it. I'm tremendously pleased because you like the Trackett Grim stories so much. Is it really a fact that I'm popular with all the girls you know? Of course, there's something about me that the chaps never appreciate, but the girls seem to like. I expect it's because I'm so jolly big and strong, and always ready to biff a fellow for being a rotter. I don't know about those photographs you ask for, because I'm not really the Editor. Still, I'll put it to Nipper and see what he says. I'm glad you are such a regular reader, and hope everybody is as staunch as you are to the Old Paper. So you think Edgar Sopp is clever? I suppose he is in a way, but you only know him by his Fables. He's not such a bad sort personally. Both Nipper and Reggie Pitt are jolly good chaps—but, as you know, Reggie is away at present, so I can't tell him what you say. From your description of yourself, you must be a jolly nice girl—a lot better than my sister Ena, anyhow. She's a terror. I'm sure you're just as pretty as Irene, only you're too modest to say so. And you like Willy? You are quite right when you say he's cheeky. For example, when I told him that you said you'd like to hug him, he asked me for your address! And when I told him I couldn't give it to him, he told me to tell you that he's quite agreeable. And if that isn't cheeky, what is? Of course you can call me Ted—I like it. Well, you asked for a nice long reply, and I think you've got one.

C. W. D. (Walthamstow): Another one asking for a Portrait Gallery! I shall really have to talk to Nipper seriously about this, and get him to arrange something definite. After all, he's the Editor, and he ought to do what the readers want. That's a ripping idea of yours to print four every week, with the names and ages underneath. I shouldn't be surprised if we adopt it. I'll do as you say, and catch Nipper in a good humour. That'll be easy, because he's always in a good humour, and he's one of the best of chaps. And I shall naturally tell him that the suggestion is yours.

CAUTIOUS INQUIRER (Edinburgh): Good man! The one chap I've been longing to hear from! I'd like to shake hands, old son! You're the first fellow who's really appreciated the Trackett Grim stories as they ought to be appreciated. As you say, they're quite serious, and I'm glad you understand this. But that bit was in your P.S., so I'm putting the cart before the horse. Glad that you have followed my advice about curing warts, etc., and that you are grateful for the results. Irene is ripping—she always is. One of the best girls under the sun—and at night-time, under the moon. There's no fear of you incurring my displeasure. I think you're one of the best.

DOBIE, VIOLET AND HARRY (Eastbourne): Nipper thinks that those little contributions of yours are jolly clever, and I shouldn't be a bit surprised if he prints them in the Mag. one week when he's got room. Look out, anyhow.

MISS VIOLET E. A. P., BRENTWOOD: Please look out for your reply next week. Your letter is so nice that I don't want to cramp my reply into a few words. You aren't disappointed, are you?

J. STACK, BALHAM: Sorry, but I'm cramped for room. I'll reply fully next week to your letter.

AN ANONYMOUS GIRL READER: The Editor gave me your letter, and as I haven't got any room left, I'll reply to it next week, if you don't mind.

NOTE.—No more space this week, and another big batch of letters just arrived. Will reply to all the following next week: WILLIAM RIGBY, CLARA W., A. R. TINGEY, ALAN POLLOCK, BISCUIT, MAY, A. FEARN, A READER, A. FIELD, A. H. F., SWEETSTUFF, TUBBY, and STANLEY BECK.

UNCLE EDWARD.

St Frank's Magazine

On Anything and Everything

:: The King of Games ::

By HUBERT JARROW

IT is my intention to say a few words about cricket, because this game is quite topical just now, and is generally regarded as a popular pastime. So I am going to make a few general remarks on the subject. That, I mean, is what I am going to do.

Cricket is a game that calls for all sorts of energy. I mean to say, these chaps who write in the papers about cricket being dead—these grumblers who declare that cricket is a back number, and all that sort of thing. What we have to do is to pull ourselves together, gather our wits, and make a stern opposition.

Because, why not? After all, cricket is a game that has been pretty foully run down. When you actually get on the pitch it isn't so slow as it seems. I mean, there's the batsman, for example, standing at the old crease with the willow in his grasp, and down comes the ball. Of course, he can't see it. It simply whizzes by and hurtles away at just about the velocity of a cannon-ball. And this, mind you, is supposed to be a slow game. It's all very well for these critics to be critical, but if they had a game or two, they might not have such hard things to say about cricket.

I don't think I've actually seen one, but crickets are something like grasshoppers. So it's quite possible that during a game you have cricket in the centre of the field and thousands of crickets all round the field. And that, I mean, is an interesting thought. There they are, jumping about in the grass, and making all sorts of funny sounds. And it is reputed that these crickets even chirp on the hearth.

I believe in always having a clean hearth in the study. Some fellows litter theirs up with paper and pencil sharpenings and bits of string, and all sorts of odds and ends. And this, after all, looks untidy. I don't agree with these slovenly habits. The chaps ought to be more painstaking.

Of course, Church and McClure are very painstaking. They take pain in quite regular doses, because Handforth absolutely insists upon administering it in bulk. And, actually, he delivers the next dose before the previous dose has properly done its work.

I can't say that I agree with work at this time of the year. Here we are in May, and all the trees are blossoming forth, and the sun is shining, and the good old open air calls for us to venture out. I mean, it's too bad for us to be hemmed into the class-room, swotting away at lessons, when we should much prefer to be on the playing-fields or on the river. I can't help feeling that this discipline is somewhat tainted with slavery.

Slavery is nothing like it used to be. In the good old days, vast slabs of the population existed under slavery, and they knew it. I mean, these poor beggars were slaves, and they lived fairly peacefully, and hadn't any real worries at all. But nowadays the same slabs of the population are just as much slaves as ever they were, but they don't realise it. And that's a lot worse. Because in these enlightened times we ought to be—well, enlightened.

But these Governments of to-day do absolutely as they like with the public, and unless we look out the Governments of the future will positively wipe us off the face of the earth altogether. It's queer how these politicians promise all sorts of things before getting into Parliament, and then forget about them afterwards. It only shows that you can't trust anybody, and they all seem to be tarred with the same brush. What I mean is, they don't play the game.

And the game ought to be played. And I insist that cricket is one of the fastest and most health-giving pastimes——"

(You've left it until too late, old man. Any further remarks of yours on the subject of Cricket must be left over until the latter part of your manuscript is re-written. Somehow it got destroyed. —ED., St. Frank's Magazine.)

REGGIE PITT'S AFRICAN :: LETTER ::

In his letter this week, Reggie Pitt gives a delightful pen-picture of Kano, the City of Mud, where the expedition party are making their final preparations for their trip into the Great Sahara.—THE EDITOR.

Kano, Northern Nigeria.

Dear Old Nipper,

This makes the fourth dispatch, doesn't it? We're in Kano still, as I hinted we should be in my last letter. Dorrie and Sir Crawford have been pretty busy buying camels, and getting ready for our desert trip.

These details don't interest Jack and I, of course, and so we've been having a good old look round the city. I only wish I could give you an adequate picture of the place. In a way, it's one of the most extraordinary towns I have ever seen in my life—and I've seen a few, as you know, although I'm getting on for ninety.

There's something mystical about Kano—something which impresses us with the atmosphere of age. And the place is so queerly built, too—everything of hard, sun-baked mud.

It's a Hausa centre of commerce and activity, and the population is not far short of eighty or ninety thousand, I'm told. And for a native city that's biggish, I should imagine.

The entire city is surrounded by the great walls of Kano, and they were built, I have no doubt, as defensive measures against possible invaders.

In the past, tribal wars were the order of the day--a kind of continual picnic, in fact. And so they protected Kano in a manner that left no doubt as to its effectiveness.

There are over seven square miles of crowded streets and mud dwellings within the walls, and these great ramparts completely surround the town.

I tell you, it's a colossal affair, this wall, and Jack and I have been fairly staggered. The walls are forty feet wide at the base, if you please, and they're over thirty feet high. And at the top the parapet has got regular openings, with a ledge on the inner side running entirely round the city.

This ledge was provided for the accommodation of archers, the defenders of the city, in times of stress. And the loopholes, of course, were used for the cheerful pastime of loosing off a few rounds of arrows and similar delightful birthday presents.

The ramparts of Kano are about eleven miles in circumference, and there are at least thirteen entrances. And the wall is so wide at the base that the entrance gaps are just like tunnels.

Jack and I strolled in through one of these tunnels in the late afternoon, Dorrie having informed us that this was about the best time of the day for sightseeing. And, my word, he was right!

It was fairly cool at that hour, after the terrific heat of the earlier afternoon, and the natives were just getting busy. You mustn't think that the inhabitants out here ignore the heat because they've been brought up to it. No, my son. They do practically nothing in the middle of the day, and it's only in the evening that Kano gets really busy.

Things begin to liven up with a vengeance then, and the markets fill with eager merchants and throngs of buyers. The place is a humming hive of industry, and I could write reams about it. But there's not much room in the Mag., as I know, so I shall have to be brief.

It's interesting to see the gown-clad Hausa merchants arriving with their wares—some driving oxen, others urging on laden donkeys. And men and women will carry great baskets of goods on their heads.

The food-stalls in the markets are full of maize, beans, guinea-corn, millet, and all that sort of stuff. And you can get onions and tomatoes and sugar-canes galore. Jack and I gave the meat market a wide berth, though, because we could *niff* it about half a mile off, and Dorrie had warned us not to go near unless we provided ourselves with eau-de-Cologne. But I understand that you can buy heaps of good quality beef and mutton.

The crowds here are tremendous, all jostling along on the dusty roads, and everybody seems to be in the best of humours. As for the dwellings—— Hallo! I've got to stop here, haven't I? It's no good sending more than you can deal with in one dispatch, so I'll ring off until the next mail.

Cheerio! Everybody all serene—hope you and the lads of the village are the same.

Yours, as always,

REGGIE.

TRAVEL TALES.

By An Old Boy

(Lord Dorrimore's Weekly Trifle)

No. 5.—THE BUSHMASTER.

THE bushmaster is a large snake of South America. It is deadly poisonous, but of the most exquisite beauty. Its skin glistens with lovely prismatic colours—ever changing, when alive, but they soon fade after death.

As I was anxious to secure one of these, I offered a reward to some negroes if they would find me one. A day or two afterwards, one of them brought me word that they had found one. On going to its lair by some fallen tree-trunks, I found it to be a young one. It was about ten feet long, but very slim of body compared with what it would be when full-grown. In other words, I realised that he wasn't strong enough to break my arm, or injure my body, if he should take it into his head to coil himself around me. So I went down on one knee, seized his tail with my left hand, and held my hat in my right hand like a shield.

The snake turned on me fiercely, and came at me open-mouthed, hissing. He came within two feet of my face, and then I drove my right fist, with all the force I could muster, full into his jaws. This stunned him, and before he knew where he was I seized his throat with both hands in such a way that he couldn't bite. Finding it impossible to do so, he coiled his ten feet of writhing carcase around my body, which I didn't mind a bit. He gave me a good squeezing, certainly—and bruised me a bit so that I felt sore for days after—but he broke no bones.

In this way, I marched off with the snake as my prize. An old nigger who accompanied me, helped me to skin it afterwards, and I was able to treat the hide in such a way as to preserve its superb colouring.

POTTED PESSIMISM

This Week's Josh

By CUTTLE (The Porter)

No. 5.—STARVATION ON THE WAY.

THERE was a lot of talking and grumbling about food being dear. Why was food dear? Ask me! It was because tradesmen as deal in food was always putting their heads together to keep it dear. Why was they anxious to keep it dear? Ask me! Because if it was cheap they wouldn't make such big profits.

And if I was a dealer in food, would I bring the prices down? Not likely! I'd make food four times the price what it is now. Why? Because I was human, and all of us was trying to get all we can.

And I'd only be a bit in advance of all the other tradesmen. For let me sound a solemn warning. Prices was going higher and higher, and there won't be no stopping them.

There was bad times coming—bad times for everybody—and most of all for schoolboys. And why was this? Ask me! Because when food goes up, the schoolboys was hit the hardest. Which was good.

These here profiteers was just getting in their stride, and everything will soon be so dear that folks will die of starvation in their thousands—while the tradesmen gets fat.

Now what ought to be done with profiteers of that sort? Ask me! I know. They ought to be given these here honours, and made into lords and dukes. That's what ought to be done. Profiteers was what we need—especially if they makes hundreds and millions of schoolboys and other folks die off like green flies before a syringe of disinfectant.

There was too many people on earth, so the more that dies the better!

The world was in a bad way, and until half the people was killed off what hope was there for the rest? And these here profiteers was the men for the job—seeing as they're making prices so high that living will soon be impossible.

ESOPP'S FABLES

By EDGAR SOPP, of the Fifth.

No 30. THE FABLE OF THE ILL-GOTTEN POCKET MONEY.

BEHOLD, I have discovered that the Eternal Problem of the schoolboy is how to get enough Pocket Money, how to prevent it wasting quickly away, and how to Replenish it after it has gone. And there be those among Schoolboys who will resort to Questionable Methods to reline their pockets. Now among those scholars at the Famous College of St. Frank's who were known as Removites there was one Teddy Long, who had gained an Evil Reputation as the

BIGGEST LIAR IN THE SCHOOL.

And the said Teddy Long was in a Chronic state of Impecuniosity, suffering perpetually from the lack of Pence and Shillings, so that he was often at his Wits' End to know what to do. In such condition was he on a certain half-holiday, when he did lounge about the Triangle with a very Wry Face. He was Wrestling within himself with the Problem of

HOW TO RAISE HALF-A-CROWN.

And he did observe approaching him the Swell of St. Frank's, one Archie Glenthorne to wit, and thereupon an Evil Thought did enter into his heart. Archie did breezily ask him why he was of so Woeful a Countenance, and bade him to dashed well Cheer Up, for that boys should never be down in the Dumps. And Teddy made cunning reply that he was Much Distressed by reason of the Danger which threatened one Marjorie Temple, well knowing that towards this Sprightly Girl Archie did

CHERISH A TENDER FEELING.

Whereupon Archie did display Much Solicitude, and did press for further particulars. And Teddy assured him that but an hour agone he had heard Marjorie assailed with Foul Abuse by one Lumpy Bill, who had made as if to Attack Her, but that he, Teddy Long, did withstand him, and that they did fight Long and Hard, the victory being with him, and that Lumpy Bill did Sneak Away while Miss Marjorie got safely

BACK TO THE MOOR VIEW SCHOOL.

And Teddy did add that he lost half-a-crown in the tussle, which he could ill afford, as it was his whole stock of Pocket Money. And Archie did express Much Concern, and thereupon he lavishly Whacked Out, not half-a-crown, but Five of the Best. And Long grabbed the Coveted Cash, and bolted speedily. And Archie gazed after him with Much Suspicion, knowing his character. And forthwith he Staggered on his way, saying unto himself that he would Question Miss Marjorie on the matter when he next should Meet Her. The which he did, and did learn from her that the story was an Invention of Teddy Long. And then did Archie call him

A FOUL YOUNG BLIGHTER.

And he did vow that never again should Teddy have a Groat of his. For all which Teddy Cared Nothing, nor for Archie's Hard Words, which he said did Break no Bones. Lo, a good hiding would have been a different matter, but Archie did vote this to be Too Much Fag. Thus did Teddy Long gain Five Shillings and for Evermore lose the prospect of Touching Archie again.

MORAL: IT IS BETTER TO HAVE NO MONEY IN YOUR POCKET THAN TO OBTAIN IT BY SHADY METHODS.

TUBBS ON THE TUB.

Our Weekly Speech

By TUBBS, the Page-boy.

No. 5.—WHAT I THINKS ABOUT CRICKET.

YOU can talk about cricket bein' this, an' cricket bein' that, but, in my opinion, the game ain't all what it's cracked up to be. It ain't like football, for example, which starts at half-past two, an' finishes in less than two hours, includin' 'alf-time.

An' when you goes to see a game o' football, you sees it. It don't matter if it rains cats an' dogs, the game's played, an' if you don't mind gettin' wet through, you can see it all, an' get your money's worth.

But what about this 'ere cricket? As far as I can see, it's a funny sort o' business, without no start, an' without no end.

It's bad enough 'ere, at St. Frank's, where many a match lasts for five or six 'ours. I tell you, it ain't a real game at all—it's nothin' but exercise for them what plays.

I don't s'pose you'll take any notice o' me, seein' as I'm only a page-boy. But just you listen a minute. I've got some good ideas, I 'ave! Cricket ought to be played like football, but, seein' as it's a summer game, it could be a bit longer. See? An hour o' play' then 'alf-time, an' then another hour. If it was kep' to a fixed time like that, folks would come in their thousands to watch the matches. An' rain ought to be ignored. I don't see why cricket shouldn't be played durin' a thunderstorm, come to that.

All you need do is to send one side in to bat for the first hour, each player 'avin' five minutes at the wicket, to show what 'e could do. If 'e's bowled or caught out afore 'is five minutes is up, then 'is innin's is finished.

In the second 'alf, the other side would go in, accordin' to my scheme—an' the side what made the most runs would win the game. An' if these ain't sensible suggestions, I don't know what is!

Anyhow, them's my ideas of 'ow to brighten cricket!

WORDY WISDOM

Tangled Tosh - By Timothy Tucker

No. 5.—THE INCOMPREHENSIBILITY OF METAPHYSICS.

NOW, my comrades, what are metaphysics? What but the science which pertains to the essential and inward nature of things, the inventory of all that is given us by pure reason, which is epistemology; which is concerned with the nature of being as being, which is ontology.

METAPHYSICS ARE ABSTRACTIONS or modes thought of as objects, and spoken of as if they were things; abstruse philosophy. Do you follow me? Or am I wasting my wonderful knowledge on unappreciative featherbrains? Let me proceed, comrades, and make myself lucid—let me give you further facts. This which we are discussing is a body of doctrine, abstract and abstruse, resting upon presumption, and not on induction, and was formerly.

APPROPRIATED TO PNEUMATOLOGY, but is now held to apply to all branches of human knowledge and general reasoning. Metaphysics embraces the phenomenalistic theory of unitary experience, the voluntarism of the human will, the actualistic theory of soul, and the psychological theory of parallelism. It deals with psychical elements, sensations, and feelings, which all exist in a psychical compound. Do you understand all this, my comrades?

NO, NEITHER DO I!

Which reminds me of the Scotsman, who said: "I ken weel enough what metapheesics is. When the party who listens disna ken what the party who speaks means, and when the party who speaks disna ken what he means himsel', that's metapheesics, mon." And that, let me tell you, is the position of——

(Sorry, old son. No more space.—EDITOR).

PEEPS INTO PEPYS' DIARY.

By GUY PEPYS of the Remove.

MONDAY.—It hath been said that this day is oft-times described as Blue Monday. A wise saying with which I heartily agree. To the class-room for morning lessons, cheery and on good terms with my neighbours. Misfortune dogged me, for I was unhappy enough to upset my inkwell over my lesson books, thereby earning a severe and uncalled-for reprimand from Mr. Crowell. Many heartless titters from my companions, which I did deem scurvy. And my best waistcoat badly spotted, a point which concerns me sorely. At noon I did dispatch it to the cleaners, and am exercised in mind as to the charge which will be ultimately made. Some of these people are robbers, as I do think. And my money none too plentiful at best of times. A further disaster this evening, I breaking the glass of my trusty watch. Have resolved to cease the rash but pleasant pastime of sliding down the balustrade. A costly folly, as I now do realise.

TUESDAY.—I to the village before breakfast. Greatly angered by the unreasonable attitude of the watchmaker. It seemeth that my ticker did stop during the night, and I greatly worried. A mere trifle, as I do realise, but being ignorant of watches, I am but a pawn in the hands of the repairer. And he to say that my watch requireth a complete cleaning, and the cost to be five shillings. Home, despondent and angered. But my spirits did revive to find a letter awaiting me. A ten-shilling note within, Heaven be praised.

WEDNESDAY.—A pleasant day. Very warm and sunny, and I invited to a picnic by Archie Glentherne. Did partake of sandwiches and beef-patties galore, to say nothing of cream-buns and such like delicacies. May I be forgiven for this gluttony! Would fain have eaten more, but certain interior rumblings deterred me—a timely warning, as I do believe. I fear me I was covetous of Archie's new shoes, these being far beyond my own means. Did write home, describing the shoes minutely, and asking for such a pair to be dispatched forthwith. But I do fear I shall be disappointed. Pleased this day by the appearance of a new number of the Magazine, which did afford me much amusement.

THURSDAY.—This day, to my pain and mortification, I did receive a black eye, the swelling of which concerns me mightily. I fear mo I shall be unfit for my labours on the morrow, but appalled at the idea of being placed in the sanatorium. For they do tell me that once within that place, I shall not get my liberty again for a whole week. A sorry prospect, indeed, so I do hope and pray my disfigurement will not be too unsightly.

FRIDAY.—I to tea with the headmaster this day, a great honour which I do highly esteem. Dr. Stokes a mighty nice gentleman, and his good lady vastly sweet to look upon, and to converse with. I do think Dr. Stokes a brick, and so different from most headmasters. And he to ask no awkward questions concerning my disfigurement, which has greatly improved, may Nipper be praised! For it was he who doctored me late last night, to my everlasting gratitude. Anxious for the morrow, and hoping to hear good news from home, in reply to my urgent letter.

SATURDAY.—A parcel for me by post, containing shoes which delight me much. Not comparable to Archie's, as I did fear, but welcome, nevertheless. In the Triangle at mid-day, wearing my new shoes with much pleasure. Did attract general attention, all gazing upon me as I strolled. But later finding a black smudge on my nose, I did wonder if it was this or my new shoes which did attract the attention. On the whole, a none too excellent week, but the thoughts of the approaching holidays do cheer me and make all things bright.

"Characters' Names" Competition

In this competition two hundred and forty-seven competitors sent in correct solutions, so that division amongst them of the amount offered was practically impossible. The cash has therefore been increased for the purchase of handsome ever-pointed pocket pencils, which are being sent to the following winners:

J. W. Alexander, 86, Mansel St., Swansea; Stanley Allen, 207, New North Rd., Islington; Frederick Allen, 7, Rivers St., Ipswich; John Almgill, Soil Hill End Farm, Holmfield, Halifax; Cyril E. Ambler, 47, Carr St., Leeds; Miss N. L. Andrews, 6, Belgrave Rd., Leicester; D. E. Andrews, 6, Belgrave Rd., Leicester; A. Arbury, Churchmead House, Datchet, Windsor; Harold Back, 12, Westmount Terr., Dover; G. D. Bailey, 6, Cecil Terr., Park Rd., Bowes Park, N.11.; Victor Barton, 125, Friargate, Preston, Lancs.; R. Baylis, 20, Longwall St., Oxford; K. W. Beecroft, 17, St, George's Rd., Hull; H. J. Beere, 7, Arundel Place, Kemp Town, Brighton; W. Beesley, 20, Shelgate Rd., Battersea, S.W.11; C. Beeston, Wyre Common, Cleobury Mortimer, Kidderminster; Doris Bergh, 33, Ellesmere Rd., Chiswick, W.4; J. Bettson, Broomfields, Kingstone, Uttoxeter; H. Bird, Cadnam, nr., Southampton; Miss I. Bishop, 30, The Broadway, West Ealing; John Blud, 61, Broadway, Shifnal, Salop; J. H. Boardman, 30, Taylor's Rd., Stretford, Manchester; K. Borson, 4, Orchard Grove, Chalfont St. Peter, Bucks.; A. C. Boron, 46, Cricklade Rd., Upper Stratton, nr., Swindon; J. Bower, 117, South St., Walworth, S.E.; Herbert C. Bowyer, Aylesford, nr., Maidstone; A. Bradley, 45, Henrietta St., Bulwell, Nottingham; Wilfred Braybrooke. Lower Green, Ickleford; R. Breakspear, Pinkney Park., Malmesbury, Wilts.; W. Bristow, Old House Lane, Kings Langley, Herts.; F. J. Britt, 4, Back Mount, Vernon Green, Liverpool; R. Broady, 26, New Cottages, Port Clarence, Middlesbro'; George Bruce, 154, Brighton Rd., Gateshead-on-Tyne; Lawrence W. Bullman, 39, Spalding Rd., Nottingham; Alex. Butler, 51, Albion Rd., Stoke Newington, N. 16; William Caley, 11, Belgravia Rd., Onchan, I.O.M.; William Campbell, Scaniport, Inverness; F. J, Cant, 199, Northwold Rd., Clapton, E.5; George Carter, 6, Duke St., Varley St., Miles Platting, M/c.; C. Chapman, 6, Rosedale Rd., Forest Gate, E.7; S. Chatfield, 226, Derby Rd., Southampton; A. C. Chesswell, 14, Agincourt Rd., Portsmouth; E. H. Clee, 166, Askew Rd., Shepherd's Bush, W. 13; E. W. Clifford, 3, Penderell Rd., Hounslow, Middx.; Harry Collings, 5a, Cross St., Middleton, M/c.; Irene Collins, 5, St. Leonards Terr., Hove, Sussex; F. Connor, Hillside Cottage, Brundall, Norfolk; James Cook, 21, Rook St., Poplar, E.14; W. Cooper, 23, Boundary Lane, S.E.6; A. Cooper, Curd Hall, Coggeshall, Essex; E. Costello, 4, Una House, Prince of Wales Rd., Kentish Town, N.W.5; Robert Coulter, 5, Glossop St., Hyde Park, Leeds; H. A. Crick, 83, North Rd., Bishopston, Bristol; Cyril F. Crowe, 31a, Harrow Rd., Barking, Essex; C. Cullum, Hazeldene, Three Mile Cross, nr. Reading, Berks.; G. Darbon, Mill Gate Cottages, West Drayton, Middx.; T. Gilbert Davies, 35, Cowbridge Rd., Cardiff; Paul De Jardin, 28, Grand Rue, Bourg la Reine (Seine), France; C. Denman, 16, Raleigh Rd., Richmond, Surrey; Alan Denniss, South Reston, Louth, Lincs.; M. De Ulrich, 73, Bd. Gambetta, Nice, France; James J. Dippie, 14, Avenue Terr., Sunderland; Wm. E. Downing, New St., Little Eaton, nr. Derby; A. Dubbins, 5, Russel Grove, Brixton; Leonard Dunn, Lilly Farm, Barnstaple, N. Devon; C. W. Edwards, 3, Junction St., Ancoats, Manchester; James Egan, 8. Gladstone St., Walsall; W. A. Ellingham, 94, Asplins Rd., Tottenham, N.17; J. Elliott, 52, Sims Row, High St., Clifton, Bristol; Rodney F. Elsworch, Montana, Mansfield Rd., Parkstone, Dorset; Reginald Evans, 44, Orbain Rd., Fulham, S.W.6; Glynne Evans, Mount Pleasant, Surgery Rd., Blaina; C. L. Everett, 30, Queen's Rd., Spalding, Lincs.; D. Farnham, Hoo Rd., Mippershall, Shefford, Beds.; James Finlay, 51, Back Tennant St., Hibburn-on-Tyne; R. Ford, 12, Argyle Rd., Sevenoaks, Kent; D. Forsyth, 11, Alpha Drive, Rock Ferry, Cheshire; S. Freeman, 16, Eldon Rd., Lower Edmonton, N.9; W. Fry, 21, Hilldrop Rd., Bromley, Kent; Eric Furnell, 84, Algernon Rd., Lewisham, S.E.; Lawrence Garrett, 20, Page St., Castle Rd., Nottingham; L. Gerald, 40, Russell St., Brighton; G. Gladwin, Cwm Mill House, Mardy, Abergavenny, Mon.; Robt. Gleed, Pumping Station, Old Sodbury, Glos.; F. E. Goddard, 118, Sarsfeld Rd., Balham, S.W.12; G. Goldsmith, 13, Eversholt St., Mornington Cres., N.W.1; Frank H. Goodson, 26, Park Rd., Tring, Herts.; W. Graham, 1, Claremont Rd., Leytonstone, E.11; L. Griffiths, 42, Elmsleigh Rd., East Hill, Wandsworth, S.W.18; Winston Grime, 18, Curzon Ave., Victoria Park, Manchester; Mrs. F. Hallour, 34, Hurford St., Mile End, E.1; N. R. Halton, Park Gate, Coniston, Lancs.; Ian J. Hamilton, Church St., Ramelton, Co. Donegal; W. S. Hannel, 22, Burnham Rd., St. Albans, Herts.; J. B. Harding, 54, Pollards Hill, East Norbury, S.W.16; Percy Harley, The Limes, Perry Park Rd., Blackheath, Staffs.; E. Harmes, 26, Station Rd., Icklingboro', Northants; Joseph Harris, 8, Church Lane, Cradley; J. Harris, 39, Dymoch St., Fulham, S.W.6; A. Harris, 32, High St., Kingswinford, nr. Dudley; C. Hawdon, 35, Holles St., Grimsby, Lincs.;

May Hayman, 44, Quainton St., Neasden, N.W.10; D. J. Healey, 20, Herbert Docks, Cardiff; Arthur Hesketh, 27, Butterfield St., Walton, Liverpool; W. R. Heywood, Cable Nook, Ogden Rd., Bramhall; Horace S. Heaton, 195, Firhill Rd., Bellingham, S.E.6; Norman Higginson, 54, Bute St., Moston, Manchester; William Hillier, 14, Marlborough Rd., Old Kent Rd., S.E.1; William Hiscoe, 230, Stockwell Rd., Brixton; Wilfred J. Hiscox, 36, Elton Rd., Bishopston, Bristol; Horace J. Hodgkin, 147, Frindsbury Rd., nr. Rochester, Kent; A. R. Holland, 39, Glenthorn Rd., Newcastle-on-Tyne; H. Holman, 5, Corporation St., Islington, N.7; Thos. Hooper, 10, Penny St., Weymouth; Eric Hudson, 22, Portobello St., Holderness Rd., Hull; E. G. Hughes, 26, St. George's Ave., Higher Tranmere; Horace Humphries, 10, Sandy Lane, Tettenhall, Wolverhampton; Carrie Hutton, 73, Mount St., Eccleshill, Bradford, Yorks.; Fred Ingham, 22, Bempton Place, Gt. Horton, Bradford; Paul Jeavons, 31, Tubb's Rd., Harlesden, N.W.10; W. F. Jemmett, 14, Cobham Rd., Wood Green, N.22; Miss I. Johns, 56, School Rd., Tilehurst, Reading; E. G. Jolley, 10, Baddow Rd., Chelmsford; Ivor W. Jones, School House, Morfa, Bychan, Portmadoc, N. Wales; Henry J. Jones, 48, Tennyson St., Sth. Lambeth, S.W.8; Leslie Jones, 10, Weston Lane, Great Birmingham; Ed. Jones, 11, Rectory Rd., Burnley, Lancs.; Frank Keeling, 148, Hanley Rd., Finsbury Park, N.4; Francis Kelly, Drumcondra House, Dargle Rd., Bray, Ireland; David Kerr, 66, Lambhill St., Plantation, Glasgow; W. E. Kimnell, 60, Alexandra St., Ladywood, Birmingham; T. Langley, Mere Side, Soham, Cambs.; J. Latham, 170, Gt. Tichfield St., Oxford St., W.1; Wm. Leech, 27, Gurney St., Walworth, S.E.17; Wm. Liddle, John St., Stromness, Orkney Isles, Scotland; A. Liggins, 163, Narrow Lane, Coventry; L. Littlechild, 43, Colebrook Rd., High Brooms, Tunbridge Wells; J. Longhurst, 16, Meon Rd., Acton, W.3; Jack Lord, 6, Bk. Kid St., Middleton, Lancs.; A. Louch, 113, Elmers End Rd., Beckenham, Kent; James W. Lowe, 19, Bretby Rd., Newhall, nr. Burton-on-Trent; A. Lugg, 200, The Grove, Stratford, E.15; Denis McLoughlin, 7, William St., New Ross, Co. Wexford; Wm. Marples, Miner's Arms, Eyam Via, Sheffield; P. A. Marshall, 44, Catford Hill, Catford, S.E.6; Leonard Martin, 30, Willoughby St., Beeston, Notts.; D. Massey, 32, Royston Ave., Egremont, Cheshire; Miss E. Medcalf, "Oakville," Salt Hill, Slough; Victor Meek, 67, Park Rd., Blackpool; F. J. Meekcom, 65, Alkham Rd., Stoke Newington, N.16; Francis J. Melotte, Men's Ward, Royal N.O. Hospital, 234, Great Portland St., W.; John Meritt, Bangor Rd., Holywood, Co. Down, Ulster; T. H. Middleton, 157, Philadelphia Lane, Norwich; Reginald Moore, 89, Aston St., Birmingham; William Morley, 4, Gwaelodygarth, Merthyr Tydfil; C. Munckton, 38, Finsbury Park Rd., N.4; A. J. Mustard, 54, South St., Walsall; G. B. Newbery, 111b. High St., London, W.1; May Newman, 29, Wearside Rd., Lewisham, S.E.13; John Nicholson, 101, Neville Rd., E.7; J. C. Northfield, 61d, Brisbane St., Camberwell, S.E.5; Jack S. Nuttall, 13, Berlin Rd., Edgeley Park, Stockport; J. Odell, Bell Inn, Marston, nr. Ampthill, Beds.; H. Oleska, 52, Clissold Rd., Stoke Newington, N.16; Wilfred H. Orbell, 42, Redhill St., Regent's Park, N.W.1; Alfred Owens, 12, Green Edge, Nettleton, Golear, Huddersfield; W. Palethorpe, 336, Albert Rd., North Woolwich, E.16; Leslie Parker, Gibfield Lane, Belper, Derby; William Parker, 53, Hazelwood Rd., Walthamstow, E; E. J. Payne, jnr., 49, Brenton St., Dingle, Liverpool; J. Peacock, 23, Sandhurst Rd., Harehills, Leeds; E. G. Penny, 31, Lower Broad St., Dagenham, Essex; James R. Phillips, 48, Morningside Drive, Edinburgh; G. E. Porteous, 192, Mackintosh Place, Cardiff; Edward Pridmore, 33, St. James' Rd., Forest Lane, Stratford, E.15; S. J. Prior, 31, Pensons Gdns., St. Ebbes, Oxford; William Rattray, Osborne House, Clyde St., Kirn, Argyleshire; Mary, E. Reeves, 19, Milton Rd., Cowes, I.O.W.; C. E. Reynolds, 15, St. George's Lane, Canterbury, Kent; E. Rice, 28, Winslade Rd., Brixton, S.W.2; Annie Richards, Milford St., Saundersfoot; G. W. Richardson, 127, Ferry St., Burton-on-Trent; A. Riley, 9, Laurel Rd., Leicester; L. Robbins, 55, Church Rd., Mitcham, Surrey; G. E. Roberts, 58, Altenburg Gdns., Lavender Hill, S.W.11; Miss E. Robertson, 26, Crabtree Lane, Pitsmoor, Sheffield; E. G. Robinson, "Westward Ho," Holloway, Runcorn; E. Rogers, 76, Adelaide St., Fleetwood; V. Rogers, 52, Fabian St., St. Thomas, Swansea; F. Rose, 107, Sandon Rd., Stafford; Eugene Roux, "Longwood Cott," Kenley, Surrey; Patrick Ryan, Moyderwell, Tralee, Co. Kerry, Ireland; William Salter, 18, Leighton Rd., Knowle, Bristol; Charles E. Sarel, 27, Broad St., Dagenham, Essex; John C. Sauer, 92a, Hackford Rd., N. Brixton, S.W.9; F. R. Serle, 222, Fishponds Rd., Eastville, Bristol; Frank Sheath, 15, Sussex Square, Kemp Town, Brighton; Crissie Sinclair, 156, West St., Glasgow, S.S.; Harry Singleton, 25, Lonsdale St., Middlesbrough; Arthur Smith, 9, St. Clair Villas, Oldcourt, Bray, Co. Wicklow, Ireland; Frank Smith, 258, Markhouse Rd., Leyton, E.10; Arthur Smith, 12, Morton Rd., Exmouth, Devon; Philip Smithies, Whamlelgh, Sowood, Stainland, Halifax; John Smout, Bentley, nr. Bridgnorth, Salop; Norman Stevenson, 6, Daisy St., Leeds; F. J. Stirling, 102, Rolt St., Deptford, S.E.8; G. J. Stratton, 3, Alleck St., Pentonville Rd., N.1; George Stromier, 10, Nithsdale Drive, Strathbungo, Glasgow; Miss E. Sullivan, 14, The Broadway, Crouch End, N.8.

(Owing to lack of space, the names of other successful contributors and results will be published next week.)

Printed and Published every Wednesday by the Proprietors, the Amalgamated Press (1922), Ltd., The Fleetway House, Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4. Advertisement Offices, The Fleetway House, Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4. Registered for transmission by Canadian magazine post. Subscription Rates: Inland and Abroad, 11/- per annum; 5/6 for six months. Sole Agents for South Africa: The Central News Agency, Limited. Sole Agents for Australia and New Zealand: Messrs. Gordon & Gotch, Limited and for Canada: The Imperial News Co. (Canada), Limited.