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## The **SCHOOL TRAIN IN SCOTLAND!**

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New Series No. 163.

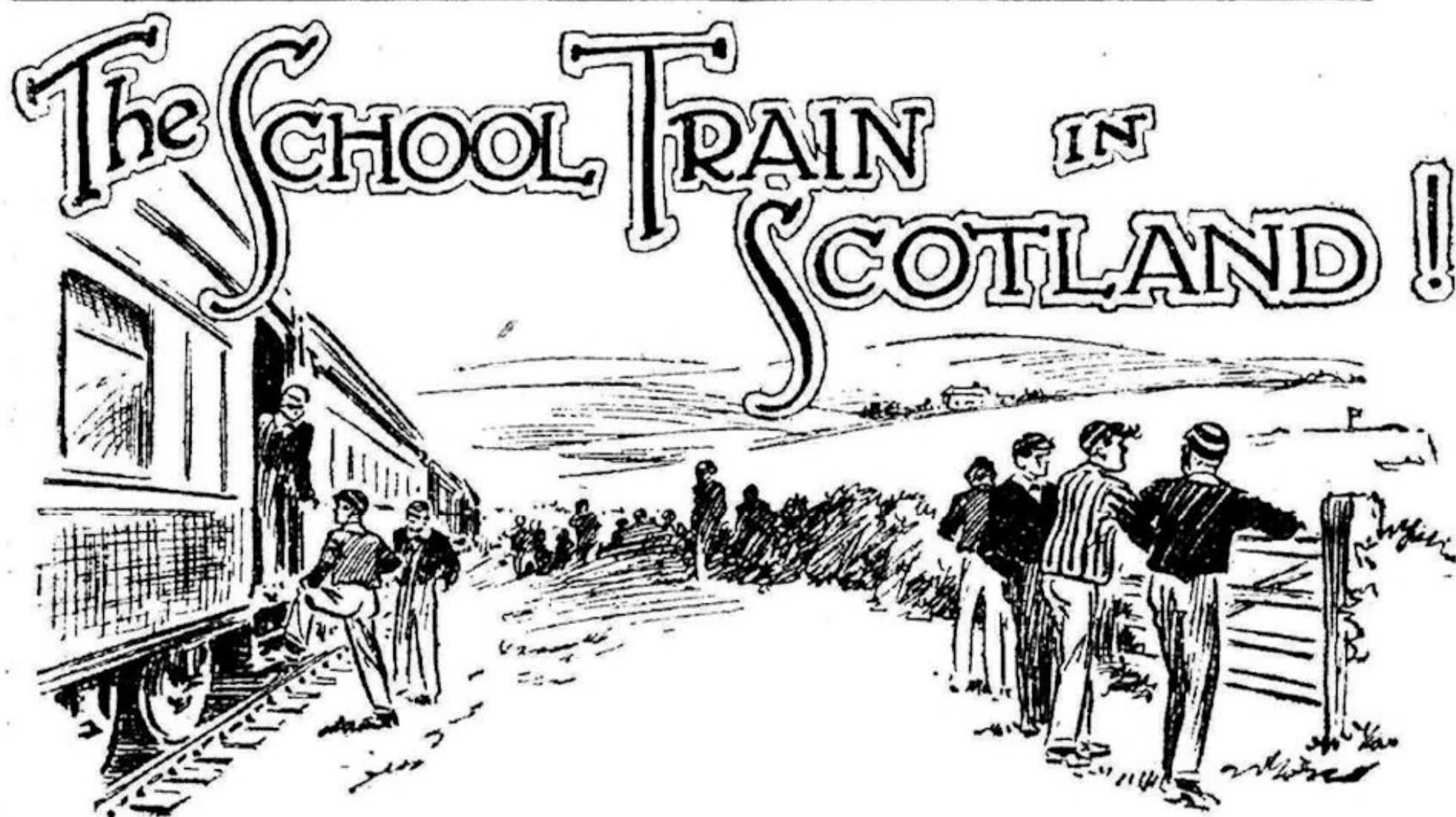
OUT ON WEDNESDAY.

June 15th, 1929.



"Look at the wording on that label!" exclaimed Church in amazement. Handforth looked, and when he saw the words "Arnold McClure" he, too, gave a start. "By George!" he gasped, and then turned to McClure. "I say, Mac, is this anything to do with you?"

Have You Told Your Pals About This Amazing School Adventure Series?



By EDWY SEARLES BROOKS

*Handforth & Co. in Edinburgh—and it's when they visit a pie-shop that all the excitement starts. Sounds strange, doesn't it, chums? But, then, the whole affair is strange, and that's why you'll enjoy reading this corking yarn.—ED.*

## CHAPTER 1.

### St. Frank's in Edinburgh!

“BY jingo! What a glorious picture!” said McClure, of the St. Frank's Remove.

“Rather!” agreed Handforth enthusiastically.

The chums of Study D were standing in Princes Street, Edinburgh, and they were looking towards the Castle. At least, Church and McClure were. Handforth's attention had wandered slightly.

He was, in fact, looking at an open motor-coach which was just gliding past in the sunshine, and which was filled with laughing Scottish lassies—evidently a special picnic party on its way home.

“By George, Mac, you're right!” he said. “One of the prettiest pictures I've ever seen!”

“Look at those buttresses,” said Church, pointing.

“Eh?”

“Those grim old walls——”

“Buttresses? Walls?” repeated Handforth, with a start. “What the dickens—— Oh, you mean the Castle! Bother the Castle!”

“You silly ass——” began Church.

“Leave him alone!” grinned McClure. “He was looking at all those girls in the motor-coach, Churchy. You know what an eye he's got for feminine beauty. My only hat! We shall have to put chains and padlocks on him in Scotland! He's bound to fall in love with lots of these Scots girls.”

Handforth turned red.

“I'm not falling in love with anybody!” he snapped. “But if you're going to tell me that that mouldy old Castle is a better picture than twenty or thirty laughing girls, then you're dotty!”

Nipper and Tregellis-West and Watson chuckled. Vivian Travers and Reggie Pitt grinned. They and quite a number of other St. Frank's juniors were in the group, and they had all been admiring the scenic splendours of Princes Street. It was well known, however, that Edward Oswald Handforth was totally incapable of appreciating any kind of landscape.

McClure, of course, had been right.

The picture was indeed a glorious one. There is, perhaps, no capital in Europe which possesses a finer thoroughfare than Edinburgh's Princes Street. The views of the Castle and the Old Town, across the gardens from the north side of Princes Street, are superb.

There were clubs, hotels, shops, and offices along that noble street, but only on one side. Opposite were the splendid gardens—not entirely unlike Piccadilly, in London. There were many fine buildings, including Robert Adam's masterpiece, the old Register House, or the Scottish Record Office. There were the National Gallery and the Royal Academy in full sight, and the wonderful Gothic Scott Monument.

Very few cities can reveal such a view as this. And Princes Street, too, is the shopping centre of Edinburgh, to say nothing of being the popular promenade. The St. Frank's fellows had naturally drifted there, after coming out of Waverley Station. They had already strolled down George Street, wide and imposing, and they had then come round by Charlotte Street and so into Princes Street.

**T**HE St. Frank's School Train had arrived in Edinburgh a couple of days ago, having come direct from Newcastle.

The fellows were in Scotland now, and they were intensely interested. Edinburgh had already given them many delights. For the majority of them it was a new experience, and Scotland's crag-throned capital had astonished them. Edinburgh is indeed a surprising city, with mountains near and afar off, with rocks and glens, and with the sea itself almost within hearing.

Parties of seniors and juniors had already been to the Castle, perched on the Rock of Edinburgh. They had been awed by the knowledge that this has been a place of grim strength for over a thousand years. One thousand three hundred years ago, Edwin of Northumbria gave it his name, and it was probably a stronghold even before then. The fellows had been interested in the oldest building in the Castle, the Chapel of St. Margaret, named after the Queen of Scotland who died there in 1093. The battlements of the Castle command a splendid view of the distant Highland hills, the Lothians, Fife, the sea, and the city.

In the Old Town, the schoolboys had found much to engross them, especially the very high houses. Built in the sixteenth century, and confined within the Flodden Wall, the city had had no room to expand, and so the houses had been erected to a great height.

Over the ridge runs the long street—that famous street which goes right from Edinburgh Castle to Holyrood. In one part it is called the Lawnmarket, in another the High Street, and in yet a third Canongate. It is, in a way, the backbone of the town.

There were many traditions and associations connected with Edinburgh which recalled their history lessons to the juniors' minds; the old Tolbooth, from which Porteous was dragged to his doom. How many prisoners, some noble, some mean, have climbed the steep staircase of the Tolbooth to face their death!

There was St. Giles', where Knox preached, and John Knox's house in the High Street, almost at the Netherbow. And as for Holyrood, this historic edifice proved of fascinating interest to all those fellows who had learned their history well. Holyrood, which had seen the brilliant Court of James the Fourth, the brief triumph of the White Rose in 1745, and the tragedy of Mary, Queen of Scots.

The travelling school had enjoyed every minute of their free time in and about Edinburgh. It was evening now, and most of them were thinking about getting back to the train, so that they would arrive in time for calling-over, for all the normal St. Frank's rules and regulations were in force. The fact that the school was touring made absolutely no difference to the routine.

Of particular interest to the St. Frank's boys had been Fettes College, the great Scottish public school, near Inverleith Park. Fettes is a noble pile, with everything up to date—laboratories, gymnasium, playing-fields, etc. There are four Houses at Fettes, and accommodation for about two hundred and fifty boys.

Yes, the St. Frank's crowd was certainly enjoying itself in Edinburgh!

**W**E shall have to be getting back," said Nipper, as he glanced at the clock tower of the North British Station Hotel. "Even as it is, we shall have a bit of a rush to get back in time for calling-over. Come on, you chaps!"

"No hurry," said Handforth, as Church and McClure urged him on. "Didn't we arrange to take in some grub? What about that feed for this evening? Let's find a confectioner's."

"That'll be easy," said Church. "Plenty of confectioners in Edinburgh. They call Scotland the land of cakes, don't they?"

"Fatty Little's having the time of his life," grinned McClure. "Says he's never seen such tuck before. It's a good thing he hasn't got an unlimited supply of pocket-money, or he'd explode!"

They turned out of Princes Street on their way to Waverley Station, and before long they were looking into the window of a splendid shop where food of every imaginable kind was displayed. It was necessary for the boys to go to the station, for they had to take a train to the little village of Kinlochty, some miles out.

In accordance with the usual custom, the School Train had not entered Edinburgh itself, but had been backed into a siding of a quiet stretch of the railway, where there was no possibility of any of the schoolboys running into danger.

It was naturally dangerous to "park" the train in the immediate vicinity of a busy station, if not impossible. So the train was generally left in an obscure, out-of-the-way siding a few miles away from the particular city that was being visited.

Kinlochty was a small, sleepy village, and the fellows had paid little or no attention to it. Every spare hour had been spent in or about Edinburgh itself.

"This'll do!" said Handforth, as he allowed his gaze to wander over the window show of good things. "By George! Look at that shortbread! Look at those pastries! Come on, my sons! We'll go in here!"

"Remember the train——" began McClure.

"If we miss it, we'll catch the next," said Handforth complacently. "And if old Pycraft kicks up a row, let him kick it. Who cares?"

"Here, I say!" ejaculated Church, in a startled voice. "Wait a minute! Look at this, Handy! You, too, Mac! Well, I'm blöwed!"

"What on earth's the matter?" asked Handforth, struck by Church's tone.

"Nothing's the matter, but isn't this a bit queer?" said Church.

He was farther along the window, pointing to some luscious-looking meat-pies. Handforth unconsciously licked his lips as he surveyed them.

"They don't look queer to me," he said. "What's the matter, you ass? We'll get some of these——"

"Bother the pies!" said Church. "Look at the label!"

"My only sainted aunt!" ejaculated McClure.

Handforth looked at the label—a big card which stood at the back of the big pile of pies. Then his eyes opened wider. For he read these words:

**"ARNOLD McCLURE'S CELEBRATED  
KINLOCHTY PIES."**

"Well I'm jiggered!" said Handforth.

"Rummy that the name should be just the same as Mac's—even to the first name," said Church. "Kinlochty, too. That's where we're parked. If we buy some of these pies, it'll be like carrying coals to Newcastle."

"But we're not going to Newcastle, ass!" said Handforth. "We've only just left Newcastle, in fact. And who's talking about coals?"

"Kinlochty," said McClure thoughtfully. "It's a funny thing, you chaps, but the name of that village struck me in a familiar sort of way when we first went there. This makes it even more peculiar. Not that there's anything in it. Arnold's a pretty common name, and I expect there's hundreds of McClures in Scotland."

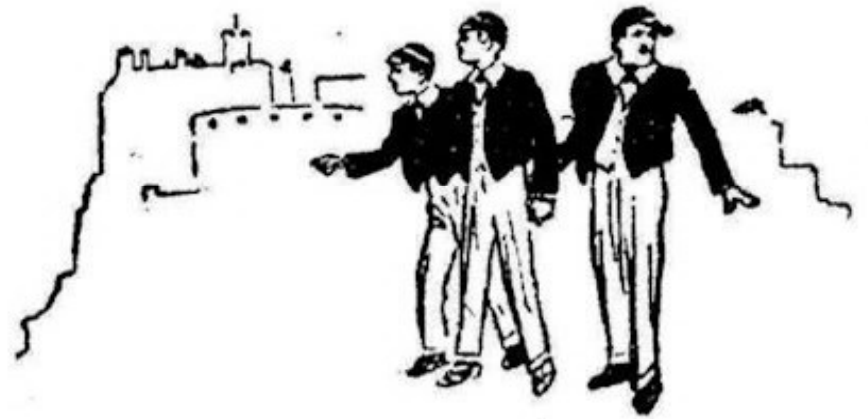
Handforth looked at his chum closely.

"I suppose this piemaker isn't a giddy relative of yours?" he asked suspiciously.

"Don't be a fathead!" said McClure. "I don't suppose this man is even remotely connected with my family. If it comes to that, I'm not even sure that I'm Scotch—although my ancestors were."

McClure was, indeed, so thoroughly English in every way that nobody had ever supposed him to be anything else.

"What about your people?" asked Handforth. "Haven't they got any connections



in Scotland? I mean, it's a bit queer, finding your name in an Edinburgh shop like this. Is Arnold your pater's name, too?"

"Yes, but that's nothing," said McClure. "My people have lived in the south of England all their lives, I believe. Anyhow, I've always lived there. Never been to Scotland before. Yet—yet—— Kinlochty!" he murmured. "Funny how that name seems to be familiar."

"You mean you've heard your people use it?"

"I think so," said Mac slowly. "But not for years and years now. You know how you get an impression, now and again, of something that happened when you were an infant of about four. You can't grasp it properly, although you remember it vaguely. And I'll swear I've heard the name of that village. Yet my people have always told me that I'm not really Scotch, and that the family has had no connection with Scotland for ages."

"In fact, you're really English?" asked Church.

"Yes, of course."

"I don't believe it!" said Handforth emphatically. "By George! There's something fishy about this, Churchy. Here's Mac's name—right in this window! His people have always told him that the family hasn't any connections in Scotland; and yet he remembers the name of Kinlochty. It wouldn't surprise me in the least to find that this piemaker is Mac's great uncle, or somebody like that."

"Oh, rot!" said McClure, grinning.

"Anyhow, I'm going to look into the matter!" said Handforth firmly. "There'll be no harm in making a few inquiries——"

"You hopeless idiot!" interrupted McClure. "You'd better not start any of your dotty investigations! You'll only get yourself into trouble. Besides, my name is common enough, and there's not the slightest

chance that this Kinlochty chap is connected with my family."

"We'll see," said Handforth calmly.

## CHAPTER 2.

### Handforth Gets Curious!

**T**HE School Train stood in all its blue splendour on a quiet, rural siding, overlooking the Kinlochty Golf Links. The picturesque valley stretched into the undulating distance, and the scene was peaceful and quiet. The village itself nestled about half a mile away, farther along the valley.

The School Train was even more isolated than usual, in fact, and the fellows were rather glad of this. Lessons were more peaceful, and during the off hours they felt that they had the place more or less to themselves. The atmosphere was very similar to the atmosphere of St. Frank's itself. The only houses within sight from the train were two or three low-roofed cottages near by, and a quaint old house which nestled among the trees bordering the golf links, farther away.

It was very peaceful that evening, after calling-over.

The juniors did their prep with the windows wide open, and with the calm evening air blowing in from across the golf course. Here and there players were leisurely going round. It was only a comparatively small links, and it was never crowded.

"Now, Mac, old son, I want to ask you a few questions," said Handforth firmly. "If you don't want to answer 'em, don't! I'm not the chap to pry into somebody else's private affairs. But if they're not private, there's no reason why you shouldn't answer me."

McClure grinned.

"Go ahead," he said. "I suppose you're still thinking about that pieman?"

"Of course."

"Well, there's no dark page in my family history that I know of," said Mac cheerfully. "Not that I should regard a pieman as a dark page. Good luck to him! Any chap who can make pies like that is worthy of a knighthood!"

And McClure licked his lips in recollection of the feed that had only recently finished in Study D.

"Yes, they were tophole," said Church enthusiastically. "It's a lucky thing they're made in Kinlochty. We can get a fresh supply to-morrow. Nobody's allowed in Edinburgh now until Saturday, so we shan't have another chance of buying any more from that place near Waverley Station."

"Blow the pies!" said Handforth, frowning. "It's a pity you chaps can't think of anything above your tummies! How about your people," he added bluntly. "If you haven't got any dark secrets, Mac, you might as well tell me everything. I want to investigate this case—"

"Oh, my hat! He's calling it a case now!" said McClure, glaring. "You silly chump! There's no need to make a mystery out of nothing. I tell you, it's only a coincidence—about that name."

"I'm not so sure of that," said Nipper, strolling up.

The chums of Study D were lounging over a gate, directly overlooking the golf links, the School Train being behind them. Here and there, also lounging about, were other groups of fellows, taking the air before locking-up. On the train, locking-up merely consisted of everybody getting aboard. After that hour, nobody was allowed off.

"I believe there's something in Handy's idea," continued Nipper thoughtfully. "We've heard all about that pishop, Mac—Handy can't keep a thing to himself, as you know—and it seems to me that this Kinlochty Arnold McClure might easily be a relation of yours."

"Well, what if he is?" asked Mac. "Even supposing it's a fact, does it matter? It's quite likely I've got some distant relatives in Scotland. But I shan't know them, and they won't know me, so what's the good of making any inquiries?"

"Well, of course, there's that about it," admitted Nipper. "Still, I should have thought you would have been interested."

McClure looked rather uncomfortable.

"I am, in a way," he said, "but I don't think I should like to make any inquiries. If my father didn't want me to know these things, there must have been a good reason for it. That's the way I look at it."

Nipper was inclined to agree with McClure's view, and he said no more. And just then it was time for locking-up, so everybody had to get on the train. Handforth, however, returned to the attack in Study D.

"It'll be bed-time soon," he said gruffly, "and I want to get this thing settled to-night. Look here, Mac, haven't you ever heard your people talk about Scotland?"

McClure frowned.

"I wish you wouldn't keep bothering," he said.

"You told me you had no dark secrets—"

"Well, they're not dark."

"Oh! That means there are some secrets?"

"Not exactly secrets, either," growled Mac. "But I'll admit that there's always been something—well, mysterious. I wasn't supposed to know, but I did know. You know how it is with a chap's people. They think they're keeping things from him, and he knows all the time. And because he thinks he shouldn't know, he lets his people think he doesn't."

Handforth nodded.

"I've had some," he said promptly. "It's just the same at home. My pater's always being as mysterious as the dickens, thinking that he's keeping things from me, yet I could tell him as much as he knows himself. Parents are rummy like that. I expect they're all the same."

"More or less," said Church, with a grin. "Well, there's something in my family that I'm not supposed to know," confessed McClure. "Nothing disgraceful, of course. But if it's all the same to you, Handy, I'd rather not talk about it."

"Rather not talk about it!" said Handforth blankly.

"Yes, if you don't mind."

"But—but——"

"Thanks, old man," said Mac, picking up a book.

**H**ANDFORTH was done. In face of that direct request, he couldn't very well pry into McClure's family affairs. But Mac's words had only served to whet his leader's appetite. Furthermore, he was now absolutely convinced that the Kinlochty pie-maker was, without question, a connection of McClure's family.

Handforth had a dark suspicion that pie-making was frowned upon by Mac's people, and it was for this reason that Kinlochty was a taboo subject. But Handforth soon dismissed this theory. It did not fit in with his knowledge of McClure's father and mother. He had met them many times, and knew them to be two of the nicest people imaginable.

They lived in quite a nice house in Richmond, and Mr. McClure also had a splendid country residence amongst the Surrey hills. Mac's father was a highly successful ship-builder, controlling thousands of tonnage, most of which was engaged in the mercantile business. The well-known McClure Line ran no passenger ships, but their cargo boats went out of the Thames to all quarters of the world.

Certainly neither Handforth nor Church had ever known Mac's people to go to Scotland for a holiday. Yet, in the face of McClure's strange silence, Handforth was beginning to suspect that his chum was pure Scottish. And it was so unusual for a Scotsman to be indifferent to his nationality that the thing became mysterious.

In McClure's case it was just the result of upbringing.

If Scotland had been a forbidden subject, if he had always been told that he was English and that he had no connection with Scotland, his attitude was understandable. But what of his father and mother? Why had they brought their son up in such a way?

And what was this secret? According to Mac, it wasn't a dark one, but it was a secret, nevertheless. Handforth's inquiring mind was clamouring to be satisfied.

"Look here, Mac!" he said grimly, as he took the book out of McClure's hand. "Just

a minute, my lad! You've told us there's nothing disgraceful in this secret, and yet you won't speak about it!"

"I'd rather not," replied McClure uncomfortably.

"Is that fair?" demanded Handforth, bristling with indignation. "You tell us so much, and then you dry up! That's not playing the game!"

"Oh, I say!" protested Mac, looking at Church.

"Well, you've naturally made us curious," said Church, reading Mac's inquiry.

"Not that you are obliged to say anything more," added Handforth, with a wave of his hand. "But if you want us to draw wrong conclusions, you can keep mum. I'll bet your people ran away from Scotland because the police were after 'em!"

"You silly idiot!" roared McClure wrathfully.

Handforth grinned.

"Well, you can't blame us for guessing——"

"As far as I know, my people were never in Scotland," growled Mac. "You've seen 'em. They don't talk Scotch, do they? And everybody knows that Scots people always keep their accent all their lives."

"That's because they want to keep it—they're proud of it—and good luck to 'em!" said Handforth. "But if they deliberately try to drop it, I suppose it's easy enough."

"Oh, rot!" grunted McClure. "I don't believe my people were ever in Scotland. And as you're so jolly persistent, I'll tell you the truth. I mean, I'll tell you the secret that my people think I don't know."

"I don't think we ought to hear it," said Church awkwardly. "Look here, Handy, this isn't playing the game—goading old

Mac into fishing the family skeleton out of his giddy cupboard!"

McClure turned red.

"You hopeless dummy!" he roared.

"There's no skeleton!"

"But you said——"

"There's nothing wonky about this secret!" snorted Mac.

"All right, then—go ahead and let's hear

it!" said Church, losing patience. "Never heard such a fuss over nothing!"

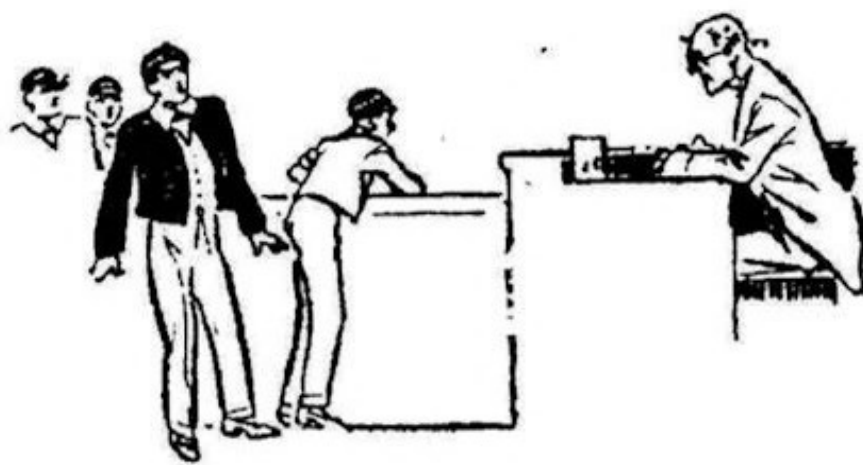
"My people have always kidded themselves that I know nothing about it—but they copped," said McClure defiantly.

Handforth's jaw dropped.

"Is that all?" he asked disgustedly.

"Isn't it enough?" asked Mac. "My pater had his marriage all fixed up by his parents, and he jibbed against it. He was in love with some other girl, and her people were against him. So one night they buzzed off; they had the minister all ready, and the old folks were diddled."

"Is that what you call a family secret?" asked Handforth tartly.



"This is more serious than it sounds," said McClure, becoming grave. "You see, my people thought that their respective parents would soon get over it, and forgive them. But that's where they were wrong. They weren't forgiven."

"Oh!"

"There was the most awful quarrel," continued Mac. "I think my pater's people disowned him—at least, my grandfather did—and never saw him again. Cut him right off, and acted as though he didn't exist. And although my pater tried to make it up, the old folks wouldn't hear of it. Of course, all this was before I was born. I never even saw my grandparents, and didn't know where they lived, or anything about them. The subject's always been forbidden in my home. When I've asked about such things, I've been shut up."

"H'm!" said Handforth. "So you don't even know where your grandparents live, even now?"

"They're dead," said McClure quietly.

"Oh, I say! Sorry, old man——"

"That's all right," smiled Mac. "No good my pretending to be grieved, or anything. They died only a year or two after the elopement—when I was about eleven months old. My pater was always cut up because he never succeeded in patching up the quarrel. Right to their deaths, his people refused to look at my mother. Rummy how some people get such prejudices. Goodness knows, my mother is one of the finest women breathing."

"The old folks wouldn't try to get to know her—that was the trouble, I expect," said Handforth. "There's nothing quite so frightful as the power of prejudice. By George! I wonder if that piemaker chap is a relation of yours? Perhaps your people eloped from this very village?"

"Oh, draw it mild!"

"Well, do you know where they lived before they were married?"

"No," admitted Mac, troubled. "I've often asked, but, as I've said, I was always told to dry up. You see, I wasn't supposed to know anything when I was a kid; and later on I sort of realised that it hurt my people to ask questions, so I didn't even ask."

"It was rotten not to have patched up the quarrel before the old people pegged out," put in Church. "I expect that's what hurt so much. Well, I hope Handy's satisfied now," he added, with a sniff. "It's a bit thick, getting you to dig up your family's ancient history like this."

"I'm awfully sorry——" began Handforth.

"My dear asses, it's nothing," laughed McClure. "I'm not ashamed to tell you that my people were so much in love with one another that they eloped. Jolly romantic, in my opinion. It served my grandfather right, for being such an obstinate old fogey."

"You shouldn't say that now," murmured Church.

"Sorry," said Mac. "But, you see, I don't even look upon him as a man who was ever anything to me—or to my father. I've never seen him, and everything I've heard about him has been—well, unpleasant. For goodness' sake, Handy, don't go any further with this piemman business!"

"Yes, but there might be something——"

"There's nothing," declared McClure. "I tell you, it's only a coincidence of names—just that, and nothing else."

"You said that the name of this village seemed familiar, somehow."

"Yes, that's queer, I'll admit," said Mac, looking thoughtful. "Of course, this piemman may be a relation of some kind—uncle, or fifth cousin, or something like that. Couldn't be an uncle, though, because I've never heard of my father having any brothers. Oh, do dry up!"

"Well, there goes the bell," yawned Church. "Bedtime, you chaps!"

And they went off to the Junior Dormitory Coach. Edward Oswald Handforth had dried up, but he was as determined as ever to pursue his "investigations."

### CHAPTER 3.

#### The Piemman!

**N**EXT day, being a Thursday, the school was kept at work morning and afternoon. But as soon as afternoon lessons were over, parties of fellows hastened off to take advantage of the free spell before calling-over.

Most of them went with Nipper to a neighbouring meadow, which had been secured for cricket practice. There was to be no match during this spell near Edinburgh, but practice was essential. Nipper had not yet forgotten the Junior Eleven's rather poor showing in Newcastle and Leeds.

"Coming with us, Handy?" asked Nipper, as he left the train with a bat tucked under his arm. "Or will you join us later?"

"I'll join you later," said Handforth. "Churchy and Mac and I are going into the village."

"Are we?" said Church and Mac.

"Yes!"

"First we've heard about it," said McClure. "I wish you wouldn't be so jolly free with your arrangements, Handy. I'd rather go along to the cricket field. And Church, I know, is keen on it."

"Rather," said Church. "I'm in the Eleven now, you know, and I can't afford to get slack——"

"None of us can afford to get slack," interrupted Handforth firmly. "But you're coming with me, my lads! Busy chaps have always got time for everything. It's only the slackers who are always too busy."

In order to save time, Church and McClure agreed to their leader's proposals, and very soon they were striding along the quiet road which led into the village of Kinlochty. There was nothing distinguished about the





“*Dinna ye come back!*” roared Mr. McClure. “*If ye do, maybe I’ll get really violent!*” Edward Oswald Handforth had an idea, as he slithered across the pavement to land with a jarring thud in the roadway, that the Scotsman was already violent!

place. It was a quiet, picturesque Scottish village, and looked very much the same as any village elsewhere.

“If you ask me, Scotland’s a bit of a fraud,” said Handforth, as they walked along.

“Better not let any of the local inhabitants hear you saying things like that,” grinned Church. “They’d pelt you with haggis—or tie you to a post, and torture you with bagpipes.”

“That’s just it!” said Handforth indignantly. “Bagpipes—where are they?”

“We haven’t heard any yet—and I’m not grumbling,” said Church.

“Here we are, in Scotland, and we haven’t seen any bagpipes!” sniffed Handforth. “And what about kilts? I expected to see everybody walking about in kilts with tartan plaid all over the place—”

“And people dancing over crossed swords, I suppose?” chuckled McClure. “And hefty chaps tossing the caber.”

“Tossing the which?”

“Caber,” explained Mac. “It’s a kind of pole—made of larch, I believe. They use it at the Highland sports—”

“Blow the Highland sports!” interrupted Handforth. “All I know is that we might just as well be in England. People walk ‘about in just the same kind of clothing as they do round Bellton. I’ve hardly seen a kilt since we got here.”

“It’s the fault of these Scottish comedians,” grinned Church. “They make everybody think that Scotch people wear kilts all the time. You might just as well expect to see Englishmen going about in rummy looking coats and flat top hats—like John Bull. People don’t ordinarily wear their national dress, you know.”

“Well, I’m disappointed,” said Handforth. “I think everybody in Scotland ought to wear kilts. I’ve a jolly good mind to wear some myself—just to set the example.”

Church and McClure grinned. By this time they had entered the village, and Handforth’s eagle eyes were searching for the pie establishment of Mr. Arnold McClure—Mac’s namesake. This was the first time that the juniors had penetrated so far into Kinlochty. The post office was at the near end, and they hadn’t been past it until now.

“Must be some mistake,” said Handforth,

at length. "By the look of that card in the Edinburgh shop window, you might think that Mr. McClure had a huge factory here. Yet I can't see—Hallo! What's this, though? By George! Run to earth!"

They had turned a bend in the road, and they now beheld a quaintly-gabled old building—an aged place, picturesque in the extreme. It was far and away better than any other establishment in Kinlochty. The shop was very low, with curious old windows, many of them with blobs in the middle of the panes. And over the front was the faded sign: "Arnold McClure."

"Here, I say!" protested Mac. "I didn't know you were bringing us—"

"We're going to buy some of those pies," interrupted Handforth. "Don't be such an ass! Half a dozen of our chaps are going in there now. Look at 'em—Boots and Christine and some more of those silly Fourth-Formers. If they can go in, so can we. I'm going to make inquiries—"

"No, you're not!" interrupted Mac grimly. "You can buy some pies if you like; but I'm blessed if I'll let you make any inquiries about me, or my people. Dash it, don't be so nosey!"

"Nosey!" gasped Handforth.

"That's what I said," retorted Mac indignantly.

Handforth was so startled by the accusation that he was at a loss to make any adequate reply.

**T**HE pie shop was one of those quaint old businesses which are to be found in many such country towns or villages. It was evidently an old-established house, and its proprietor had made little or no attempt to move with the times. The building was old-fashioned, the shop was old-fashioned, and the very way of dressing the window was old-fashioned. Everything about the place seemed to breathe of olden times. One might have expected to find such a shop in exactly the same condition in the reign of Charles the Second. Time, and all its hustle, had left this spot unchanged.

Yet it was by no means an unprosperous-looking business. It wasn't a mere village shop. There was something indefinably distinguished about it—something difficult to describe. Entering, one's arrival was announced by the jangling of a bell affixed to the door. Underfoot the stones were dazzlingly clean. Everything, in fact, was so extraordinarily clean that one's appetite was whetted on the instant. The delightful odour of fresh pastry and meats and spices was equally alluring.

Handforth & Co. found a number of other juniors ahead of them, and a smart young man, attired in white, was attending to them. This young man in white was the only modern note in the place. The

heavy, old-fashioned counter was laden with pies and cakes and pastries.

"Just wait here, you chaps," murmured Handforth. "I want to find out—Hallo! What's the matter with you, Mac?"

McClure was staring in a fixed gaze. Following the direction of his eyes, his chums found that he was looking at an elderly man who was seated in a little pay-box at the back of the shop. This man was bending over some papers, and he fitted in with his surroundings very appropriately. There was a quill pen behind his ear, there were steel-rimmed spectacles on his nose, and his clothing appeared to be old-fashioned.

McClure said nothing. He just stood transfixed, staring. His face was quite pale, and he seemed to be in a trance.

"What's the matter with you, Mac?" asked Church breathlessly.

"Wake up!" urged Handforth.

He gave McClure a shake, and Mac started and came to himself. Just then the old man at the back of the shop casually looked up, and glanced over the tops of his spectacles at the customers. His gaze passed lightly over Handforth & Co. without even pausing.

"Let's—let's get out," muttered McClure huskily.

"But we haven't got the pies—"

"Never mind the pies—let's get out!"

Somehow, Mac seemed to find it impossible to take his eyes from the old man. Yet this interest was very one-sided, for the old man had only given Mac one fleeting glance.

"Better go, Handy," whispered Church.

They went out, leaving the Fourth-Formers in charge. Two or three seniors brushed past them on the way in, and it was not until Handforth & Co. had proceeded some little distance along the street that McClure consented to a halt. He took a deep, deep breath, and his eyes were filled with bewilderment and incredulous wonder.

"Now," said Handforth, "what is it?"

"That old man!" muttered Mac.

"What about him?"

"He's my grandfather!"

"What?"

"He's my grandfather!" said McClure, in a low voice. "I couldn't be mistaken over a thing like this! I knew him on the instant! You were right about the name, Handy! I thought it was just coincidence—but now I know—"

"Here, cheese it!" said Handforth uncomfortably.

He and Church exchanged somewhat scared glances. McClure had told them that his grandfather was dead. Now he was saying—

"Pull yourself together, old man!" said Church, taking hold of McClure's arm. "I think we'd better go for a bit of a walk. You don't know what you're saying. You're imagining things—"

"I'm not," insisted McClure. "Do you think I don't know? The old man in that shop—and he's not so old, either—is my grandfather! I know it! There's not any doubt about it at all!"

"But your grandfather's dead!" gasped Handforth.

"Eh?"

"You told us——"

"Yes, I know," nodded Mac. "Until five minutes ago, I thought he was dead, too. I was always led to believe that he was dead—and my grandmother, too. My only hat! Perhaps she's alive!"

Handforth smiled.

"Mac, old son, you'll go dotty if you talk like this," he said earnestly. "For goodness' sake, pull yourself together! It's awful to hear you saying——"

"They must have fooled me," said McClure, without realising that he was interrupting, and speaking as though to himself. "When they made me believe that my grandfather was dead, they must have been deceiving me. And I've thought it ever since I was a kid—for as long as I can remember. My only hat! No wonder they didn't like to speak about my grandparents! What a terrible quarrel it must have been."

"But are you sure?" asked Church, staring. "After all, Mac, your people must be right. They wouldn't let you think——"

"I've seen my grandfather's photograph," broke in McClure. "He's different now of course—older and different in other ways. But it's the same man! I could tell during the first second. That Mr. Arnold McClure in the pie shop is my grandfather. He's alive! And all these years I've thought——"

The enormity of the discovery was so great that McClure was robbed of speech again. He could only stand there, staring straight in front of him. His eyes were burning, and his heart was thumping so hard that he half-expected his chums to comment upon the noise.

## CHAPTER 4.

### Handforth Means Well!

**E**DWARD OSWALD HANDFORTH was looking excited.

Ten minutes had elapsed, and by this time McClure was rather more composed. The thing which had seemed so staggering was now becoming more commonplace to his startled senses.

"Something's got to be done about this," said Handforth eagerly. "If you're really certain that the old boy is your grandfather——"

"He is," said Mac simply.

"But how can you prove——"

"I don't want any further proof," said McClure. "Quite apart from recognising him, I sort of know—inside me. It's a rummy thing and I can't quite explain it. But I know he's my grandfather. And now

that I've had time to think it out, it doesn't seem so staggering, either."

"It's pretty staggering to me," said Church.

"Yet think it out," went on Mac. "My father had a most dreadful quarrel with his people. The old man swore that he'd never see him again. If he came to him, he'd slam the door in his face."

"Then he couldn't help seeing him," said Handforth.

"You know what I mean," said Mac impatiently. "He wouldn't see him to make up the quarrel. I believe my pater did make one or two tries, but they were no good. All this happened, don't forget, either before I was born or when I was a tiny baby. Perhaps my father and the old man had an even worse quarrel. All I know is that I was told that my grandparents were dead."

"I expect your father was so bitter that he looked upon them as dead—and so you were always told that," said Handforth thoughtfully. "That's about the size of it, my lad. And here's your granddad here, in this very village! Alive and well—and looking as sprightly as a two-year-old. And he's never even seen you!"

"Never!" said Mac. "This is the first time I've ever been to Scotland. It'll show you how awful the quarrel must have been—from the mere fact that my people never brought me up here. They even denied themselves the pleasure of returning to their native land. Perhaps they were afraid that they might accidentally meet my grandfather. Quarrels like that are wicked, I think."

"But they're always happening," said Church. "They always have happened, and I suppose they always will. After all these years, though, I should think that the old boy would have been reconciled to the marriage."

"It's my father's fault," growled McClure. "If he had persisted, I daresay grandfather would have forgiven him. But that's just the point, you see. I expect my father considered that he had done nothing that required forgiveness."

"I've got it," said Handforth, with a nod. "I'll bet a term's pocket money that your grandfather insulted your mother's name—and your pater, naturally, never forgave him. And so it's gone on all these years. The one won't forgive the other—and *vice versa*."

"I suppose that's it," admitted McClure. "Just think of it! He looked right at me—and never guessed."

"Why should he?"

"Well, I mean, I'm his own flesh and blood——"

"You were just one of a crowd of school-boys," said Handforth. "He's never even seen your photograph—and for all you know he may not be aware of your existence. Perhaps your people never told him that they had a son?"

"I think they did," said McClure thoughtfully. "Not that it matters. We can't do

anything. I daren't go up to my grandfather and tell him who I am."

"Why not?"

"Well, I don't think it would be playing straight with my parents."

"Rats!" said Handforth bluntly. "If you get pally with the old boy, the chances are that he'll forgive everything. Then he'll apologise to your pater, and everything in the garden will be lovely. You go straight back to that shop, and tell him who you are."

"I daren't," said McClure, with a gulp.

"If you don't, I will."

"Steady, Handy," protested Church. "I don't think this ramheaded stuff will do any good. I think it's a ripping idea to seize this chance to patch up the old quarrel—but if it's going to be done it'll have to be done diplomatically. Your blundering methods won't be any good."

"My what?"

"Oh, don't make a fuss——"

"My blundering methods, eh?" roared Handforth indignantly. "I'll just show you, my son, that you're all wrong! I'll bet I'll have Old Man McClure eating out of my hand within two minutes!"

**H**ANDFORTH suddenly slapped his thigh.

"I've just thought of something," he said, looking at McClure with shining eyes. "By George! We've always suspected it, and now we know! You're Scotch, my son! One hundred per cent true blue Scottish."

"Yes, I suppose I am," said McClure, with a start.

"Good man!" went on Edward Oswald. "It's just as well for us to have a Scottish member of the Co. We shall have to look after our cash in future, Churchy. You know what these Scotch chaps are!"

"Idiot!" said McClure.

"We shall find him wearing indiarubber collars, to save the cost of the laundry," went on Handforth dryly. "He'll be like these Aberdonians we read of——"

"If you're asking for a thick ear, you ass, just say so!" snorted Mac.

"By George! Are you threatening *me*?" gasped Handforth.

"Yes, I am, you—you English ass!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled Church.

"Look here, we've had enough of this!" said Handforth, pulling himself together. "This is no time for cackling, or punching one another's noses. I'm going along to see Mr. McClure."

"Handy! Don't be such a cuckoo——" began Mac.

But Handforth had gone. He was running back at full speed, and he was out of sight before Church and McClure could even start to chase him. He had made up his mind to get this thing over and done with straight away. Handforth certainly meant well—but his chums were dubious.

Church said very little; he was still rather

dazed by the recent revelation. And McClure had such a lot to think about that he even forgot Handforth, and the latter's mission. Mac was trying to piece together all kinds of conversational remnants that he had heard in his childhood, and which he had since nearly forgotten.

**M**EANWHILE, Handforth strode straight into the shop, and he was exceedingly gratified to discover that not only was it free of customers, but that the young man in the white coat was no longer in evidence.

"Good egg!" murmured Handforth, striding across the stone-paved floor.

The elderly gentleman with the steel-rimmed spectacles was still in the little pay-box. He had been writing with the quill pen, but he looked up now, and prepared to speak.

"Just a minute, sir!" urged Handforth quickly. "Don't send for anybody. I'd like to have a word with you—in private."

"Oh, ye would?" said the other, giving Handforth a straight look. "Weel, and what is it ye're wanting?"

"Are you Mr. Arnold McClure, sir?"

"I am."

"Well, I'm a St. Frank's chap, sir—Handforth's my name," said Edward Oswald briskly. "Remove Form—Ancient House."

"Ay, I've heard about your School Train," said Mr. McClure, nodding. "I've seen it, too. It wasna my luck, when I was at school, to go about the country in such a way. But times have changed since then, I'm thinking."

Mr. McClure set himself out to be very pleasant. Being a business man, he probably realised that these schoolboys would patronise his establishment largely during their stay in Kinlochty.

Seen at close quarters, Mr. McClure was a straight-backed, vigorous man of perhaps sixty. Certainly no more. In no circumstances could Mr. McClure be called an old man; he appeared to be in the prime of life. During the past twenty years he had probably changed very little—merely a greying of the hair and the gathering of a few wrinkles round his eyes.

Handforth hardly knew how to proceed. Now that he was "on the job," he realised that it might not be advisable to blurt out the information that Mr. McClure's grandson was in Kinlochty at the moment. Far better approach warily.

And Handforth's ideas of approaching warily were somewhat peculiar.

"The name McClure isn't particularly common, is it, sir?" he asked.

"It's a grand old Scottish name," replied Mr. McClure promptly.

"Oh, rather! I once knew a chap named McClure," said Handforth. "Well, I know him now, as a matter of fact. One of the best chaps breathing. A bit obstinate now and again, and inclined to be 'nervy,' but

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one of the best, all the same. Lives down in the South of England."

Mr. McClure nodded.

"Ay, there are plenty of Scots in the south of England," he said. "And it's no sae strange that there should be a McClure doon there."

"This chap's never been to Scotland——"

"Weel, what about him?" broke in Mr. McClure impatiently. "I'll have ye know, laddie, that I'm a busy man. I'm glad to hae ye in my shop——"

"That's good!" interrupted Handforth. "Well, about this chap. I think it's very likely that he's a relation of yours."

Mr. McClure's expression changed; he gave Handforth a hard, sharp look.

"Ye're wrong!" he said curtly. "I've no relations in the sooth of England."

"But I think you have!" said Handforth. "It wouldn't surprise me in the least to find out that this chap is your grandson——"

Mr. McClure leapt to his feet, quivering

from head to foot. Handforth was so startled that he backed away.

"Here, I say——" he began.

"I have no grandson!" said Mr. McClure harshly. "I'll no hae ye coming into my shop——"

"You're wrong!" gasped Handforth, returning to the attack. "Look here, Mr. McClure! Don't be so jolly impatient! Haven't you got a son?"

"No!" thundered the other.

"Eh? But—but I thought——"

"I have no son—and no grandson!" broke in Mr. McClure fiercely. "I hae no doot that ye mean well, laddie, but ye'll oblige me by saying no more. My son ceased to be my son over fifteen years ago."

"But your grandson——"

"I tell ye I have no grandson!" snapped Mr. McClure. "I want to hear no more. Get ye gone, boy, before I lose my temper. It's nae business of yours, in any case."

If Handforth had been wise, he would have

cleared out on the spot. But Handforth, as everybody at St. Frank's knew, was a stickler.

"It's not fair to be so harsh and unfor- giving, sir," he said earnestly. "I mean, dash it, after all these years! You've prac- tically admitted to me that you really have a son and a grandson. Some quarrel, I sup- pose? Well, I'm pretty certain that this chap I know is your grandson. And you haven't even seen him—you don't even know him! Isn't it about time that you——"

"Stop!" shouted Mr. McClure furiously. "Get ye oot of my shop!"

"Oh, but——"

"And never come back!" panted Mr. McClure. "Once and for all, I tell ye that I have no grandson—no son. And if ye mention them to me again it will go badly with ye!"

Handforth stared indignantly. Such ob- stinacy as this angered him. Mr. McClure had admitted quite plainly that he was Mac's grandfather. And it seemed ridiculous to Handforth that this age-old quarrel should be allowed to continue. Here was Mac on the spot. Wouldn't it be the correct thing to bring the two together?

"If you'll listen to me a minute, sir, I'll tell you something that'll make you jump for joy!" said Handforth eagerly. "Your grandson——"

He was interrupted by a roar of rage from Mr. Arnold McClure. The old fellow dashed out of his little office, seized Handforth before the latter could dodge, and the next moment Handy was being whirled towards the shop door.

"Here, I say, what the dickens——" he began.

"Get ye gone!" panted Mr. McClure. "I'll hear no more!"

"But—but——"

"Mind, I'm telling ye!" said the Scotsman tensely. "Dinna ye come back, boy! If ye do, maybe I'll get really violent!"

Handforth had an idea that Mr. McClure was already violent. In any case, Handforth was pitched out of the shop with such effect that he slithered across the uneven pave- ment and lost his balance. As he sat down with a jarring thud in the road, the shop door closed with a slam.

Edward Oswald Handforth's mission had not been particularly successful!

## CHAPTER 5.

### Ways and Means!

"I KNEW it!" said Church bitterly.

From some little distance up the street they had observed Handforth's ignominious exit from the pie-shop. It was impossible to put a wrong construc- tion upon that exit. Without doubt, Hand- forth had been "chucked out."

"We were mad to let him go," said McClure. "I'll bet he's made things a lot worse."

"It's all very well to talk like that, but how could we prevent him?" asked Church. "When Handy gets an idea into his head, he's as stubborn as a whole pack of mules. Thank goodness none of the other fellows saw him biffed out. We shall be able to keep the matter to ourselves, anyhow."

They watched Handforth as he picked him- self up. For a moment he hesitated, as though he was contemplating the idea of charging back into the establishment. Then he apparently thought better of it, for he turned on his heel and came down the street towards his chums.

"It's true!" he said, as he halted.

"That he's really my grandfather?" asked Mac. "I could have told you that before you started. In fact, I did tell you. I sup- pose you made a hopeless hash of things?"

"The old boy is a regular fire-eater," said Handforth indignantly. "Wouldn't listen to a giddy word! As soon as I mentioned the word 'grandson,' he flew into a rage."

"I told you he would," said Mac.

"And he flew into a worse rage when I mentioned his son," continued Handforth. "By George! That must have been a pretty hefty quarrel in your family fifteen years ago!"

"Oh, my hat!" groaned McClure. "Haven't I already told you that it was a hefty quarrel? My grandfather never for- gave my father for running away and getting married. You know what some of these Scottish people are—they like their sons to marry whom *they* wish. And if a chap goes off and marries the wrong girl, there's trouble."

"But your mother wasn't the wrong girl!" said Handforth, staring.

"Of course she wasn't, idiot!" said Mac impatiently. "She was only wrong in my grandfather's eyes. My hat! How many more times must I explain it to you? I hope you'll leave the thing alone after this! You've only made things a lot worse than they already were."

**C**HURCH and McClure had no reason to change their opinion after Hand- forth had given them a graphic account of his interview with Mr. Arnold McClure. There was only one point which brought them a slight trace of con- solation.

"Well, thank goodness you didn't let my grandfather know that I'm in Kinlochty," said Mac, with relief. "He doesn't even know that I'm on the School Train, does he?"

"I purposely left him in the dark on that point," replied Handforth. "The old boy probably thinks that you're in the South of England. He doesn't know that you're a St. Frank's chap, or—or anything about you at all. He was so jolly obstinate that he wouldn't even allow me to get a word in edgeways. And now he's forbidden me to go into the shop again! So what can I do?"

"You'd better keep out," said McClure promptly. "You've made such a hash of it, Handy, that I daren't go near my grand father now."

"You were afraid to go near him, in any case," retorted Handforth.

"Well, it's impossible now," said Mac. "Absolutely out of the question. If my father has allowed all these years to pass without patching up the quarrel, it's better that I should let it stand."

"Rats!" said Handforth. "And it's like your nerve to tell me that I've made a mess of things. At any rate, I've proved that the old fellow is really your grandfather, haven't I?"

"You've proved something that I already knew!"

"Well, I've made it plain that the old fellow is obstinate," continued Handforth. "My hat! You ought to have seen him when I broached the subject! It's got to be our task, my sons, to tame him."

"What do you think he is—a wild animal?" asked McClure bitterly.

"He's pretty nearly as bad, by what I saw of him," replied Handforth. "It's all wrong! No man should be allowed to keep up a quarrel for so many years! What right has he to fly into a rage as soon as he hears your name, Mac—when he doesn't even know you? It's just prejudice—rotten prejudice! If only he can get to know you, he'll like you."

"That's quite true," said Church, nodding. "If only we can wear down the old boy's prejudice, we shall win. But the trouble is, how can it be done? He's only got to set eyes on you, and he'll want to slaughter you. He won't give himself a chance to get to know you."

"Of course he won't," agreed McClure. "So what's the use? Dash it, if my pater couldn't patch up the quarrel, it's pretty certain that I can't."

"It's not certain at all," retorted Handforth. "And I'm so interested in this affair that I'm going to go ahead with it—"

"But I don't want you to!" said Mac angrily. "I say, why can't you mind your own business—"

"This is my business," replied Handforth, with perfect serenity. "You're my chum, and it's my duty to look after you."

"But I don't want looking after!" roared Mac.

"I can't help that—I'm going to put this quarrel right," said Handforth. "And if I can't do it one way, I'll do it another!"

**A**FTER that ultimatum, Handforth condescended to visit the meadow where cricket practice was in progress. And as soon as Handforth had a bat in his hands, he forgot all about McClure and his family quarrels.

Something else occurred to take Handforth's mind off that subject, too. It was while Handforth was batting at the nets.

He drove a fast ball from Harry Gresham—drove it with tremendous strength, just beyond the bowler's reach. McClure, as it happened, was in the direct line of fire. McClure was supposed to be on the lookout for such balls; but McClure was apparently day-dreaming!

"Hi! Look out there!" yelled Gresham, in alarm.

Crash!

It all happened in a second. The cricket ball struck the unfortunate McClure on the side of the forehead—nearly on the temple, in fact. He simply toppled over like a nine-pin, and lay still.

"Great Scott!" ejaculated Handforth, throwing his bat down.

He ran like the wind; and other fellows were running, too. When Handforth arrived, he found Nipper on his knees, with McClure's head resting on the crook of his arm. Mac



was pale and still. On his forehead there was an ugly red mark, and there were already signs of swelling.

"Mac! Mac!" gasped Handforth. "Is he hurt? I didn't mean—"

"Don't get excited, Handy," interrupted Nipper. "It wasn't your fault. Mac should have been looking. It's a nasty crack, but I don't think it's serious. Gresham's getting some water— Ah, that's better! He's coming round already."

McClure opened his eyes, blinked, and tried to sit up.

"Crumbs! What happened?" he muttered. "My head— Oh, my hat! Go easy, Handy! Be careful with your silly fists! You nearly brained me—"

"It wasn't my fists!" interrupted Handforth indignantly. "It was a cricket ball!"

"Eh? Oh, yes!" said McClure confusedly. "I must have been dreaming. Everything seems to be going round, and— and— My word, but I feel groggy!"

"You'll be all right soon, old man," said Nipper. "Here's Gresham. Good! Let's have that water! Take a swig at this, Mac."

Mac gulped some of the water down, and Nipper proceeded to bathe the wound. The skin had not been broken, but there was a nasty bruise, and a big bump was appearing.

"You'd better chuck practice for to-night," said Nipper. "Take it easy, old man. Get back to the train, and have a lie down. I'll have a word with old Pycraft, and see if he won't let you off prep."

"Not likely," said McClure. "I'm not as groggy as all that. Dash it, I'm not a kid—to make a fuss over a bit of a knock."

**M**CCLURE insisted upon continuing with the practice, which was very plucky of him, for his head was aching abominably, and in spite of what he said he was feeling really groggy.

"Did you find out anything about the Arnold McClure in the village—the pie-maker?" asked Nipper. "Fancy us coming to the very village where your grandfather lives—and you didn't even know it. Was he pleased to see you?"

"He hasn't seen me," said McClure uncomfortably.

"But surely— Oh, I remember now," said Nipper. "There's something a bit unusual—"

"It's no secret," interrupted Handforth, joining them. "Years and years ago, Mac's father had a quarrel with the old boy, and they never made it up. So old McClure hasn't even seen Mac, and doesn't know him from Adam. Never even had a photograph, by what I can understand. And this silly ass won't go to his grandfather and show himself. It strikes me that this silly quarrel ought to be patched up."

"Well, quarrels are always better if they are patched up," agreed Nipper, smiling. "Misunderstandings are the curse of many a family. Still, if it's a private affair—"

"Private!" echoed McClure sarcastically. "There's a fat chance of it being private with Handy about! He's made up his mind—if you please—to put things right between my people and my grandfather. The fact that my pater hasn't been able to do it in the course of fifteen or sixteen years makes no difference to Handy whatever! You know what an optimist he is!"

"Optimist be blowed!" said Handforth. "This is a golden opportunity. Here we are in Scotland, and before we leave I intend to patch up this idiotic quarrel!"

"I'll tell you what," said Church briskly. "Be a sport, Nipper, and bring one or two chaps to Study D after we get back to the train. Travers and Reggie Pitt, say. We'll have a jaw about this affair, and see what we can do."

"Oh" said Handforth coldly. "What's the idea, you ass? Don't you think I'm capable of handling it?"

"That's just it," replied Church. "As you're so jolly determined to go ahead, I think it'll be as well for Nipper and Travers and Pitt to be in the wheeze."

McClure gave Church a grateful glance. Since Handforth was committed to this enterprise, it would indeed be advantageous to bring some of the prominent fellows of the Remove into the venture.

**N**IPPER gazed at Mr. Arnold McClure with considerable interest.

He was at the window of Study D, on the School Train. It was after "locking-up," and it was still quite light, for the June evening was fine and very warm. Some distance away, on the golf links, Mr. McClure was going round entirely on his own. Evidently, he was very keen on golf.

"Is that your grandfather?" asked Nipper, glancing at McClure.

"Yes."

"I've seen him two or three times," said Nipper. "He's always on the links, here—as regular as clockwork in the morning, and as regular as clockwork at night."

"How do you know?" asked Handforth. "We haven't been here long enough for you to talk about clockwork—"

"Perhaps not," smiled Nipper. "But I happened to be talking to one of the local inhabitants to-day, and he was telling me about old McClure—although he didn't mention his name. Only said that he was dotty on golf. He lives over in that quaint old house nestling in the trees," he added, pointing.

"Oh, does he?" said Mac. "I thought he lived at the shop."

"Evidently not," said Nipper. "He probably lived at the shop in his earlier days, but he has progressed since then, you know. I dare say he wants to be near the golf links, too."

"Dear old fellows, can't we make something of this?" asked Vivian Travers. "I mean, the idea, I take it, is to bring about a reconciliation, what? Well, since golf is Mr. McClure's pet hobby, why not take advantage of it?"

The conference was "on." Study D—as the little compartment was called—was packed. McClure was sitting near the open window, thoughtful and rather troubled. His head was bandaged, but he had forgotten his bruise. He was thinking of his grandfather—and of that bitter quarrel which had split his family for so many years.

It was all very well to talk of patching it up, but how could this miracle be brought about? Handforth was optimistic enough for anything; but McClure had a better knowledge of his grandfather's character.

Still, with so many fellows on the job, it would be rather a pity if something definite could not be accomplished.

## CHAPTER 6.

### Rough on Grandfather!

**M**R. ARNOLD McCLURE gripped his driver, and glanced keenly over the links towards the sixth green.

"Maybe I'll do it," he muttered hopefully.

It was Friday evening, and on the following day Mr. McClure was booked to appear in a match against one of the local champions—and golf, in that part of the





“Look out!” yelled somebody in alarm. But it was too late. McClure had been day-dreaming instead of attending to the cricket, and to do that when Handforth was batting was madness. The ball struck Mac on the side of the forehead, and toppled him over like a ninepin.

country, was of a very high standard. Mr. McClure was anxious to be at the very top of his form.

His eye was as steady as ever, and as he prepared to drive, his tall, erect figure revealed much suppleness.

It was rather close this evening, although there was not a cloud in the sky. Mr. McClure appeared to have the links to himself. There was scarcely a soul within sight—only one or two figures in the far distance, near the modest club-house. Just beyond the sixth green was Mr. McClure’s own residence.

Swish—click!

The drive was a perfect one, and the white ball went soaring over the links. It disappeared beyond a bunker, where there was some rising ground with patches of heather.

“The wee ball is on the green, or I’m no Scot!” murmured Mr. McClure delightedly.

He set off to see exactly what had become of the ball. His mind was fully concentrated upon golf. He had long since forgotten the incident of the previous evening, when Handforth had entered his shop. In fact, he had dismissed it during the same hour—for he had the impression that his grandson was in the South of England. It did not occur to him that the boy was a pupil of St. Frank’s, and that he was here,

on the School Train. In any case, it was a matter of no importance, for Mr. McClure considered that he had no grandson at all.

Arriving at the bunker, he made his way round the rising hillock and came within view of the sixth green. As he did so, a frown appeared upon his hard old features.

“Whist! What’s this?” he ejaculated indignantly.

He could see a figure lying on the green—on that well-kept turf! Mr. McClure went positively red with anger. This was too bad! Going to sleep on one of the greens of the golf links!

He hurried forward, determined to shake this intruder into activity, and to send him about his business. But as Mr. McClure drew nearer he beheld something that fairly startled him.

The figure was that of a boy, dressed in shabby tweeds. If he was sleeping, he had chosen a very awkward attitude, for he was sprawling on his back, with one leg crooked under him. And near him was Mr. McClure’s golf ball.

“Good heavens!” muttered Mr. McClure, breaking into a run.

He came to a halt against the still figure of the strange boy. And now he could see an ugly red mark on the boy’s forehead. Instantly, an obvious explanation leapt into Mr. McClure’s mind.

Was it not as clear as daylight that the boy had been struck by the golf ball—that it had knocked him unconscious? Mr. McClure did not blame himself for this catastrophe. He was not to know that the boy had been on the sixth green. In any case, the boy had had no right there, whoever he was. He was a stranger, as Mr. McClure could see at the first glance.

"Wake up, laddie—wake up!" he said hoarsely as he went down upon his knees. "Come! Ye're no sae bad as—"

He broke off, freshly startled by the limpness of the still form, and by the fact that the bruise on the boy's forehead was an ugly one. Mr. McClure had never realised that he had driven the ball so hard.

And the boy, peeping cautiously from under one of his eyelids, felt very conscience-stricken!

Of course, Arnold McClure was the boy. And that bruise on his forehead had not been caused by his grandfather's golf ball, but by the cricket ball of the previous evening. Its appearance had been greatly enhanced by a little touching up here and there. A slight smear of blood had made quite a big difference, and a little general make-up on McClure's face had given him a rather startling pallor.

It had been Nipper's idea—this dodge to get grandfather and grandson together.

Noticing that bandage on Mac's head, Nipper had thought of the wheeze. He knew that Mr. McClure would be on the links to-night, for he was always on the links on a fine evening. The rest had been easy—merely a matter of awaiting the best moment. Watching from cover, Nipper and Church and Handforth and some others had selected their time with care. And now there was absolutely nothing to show Mr. McClure that the boy was fully conscious, and that the whole thing was a put-up job.

Mac had strongly protested when the scheme had been outlined to him. He had declared that it was "too bad." In his opinion, it wasn't playing the game. But Nipper argued otherwise. If, through this simple subterfuge, a quarrel of fifteen years' standing could be patched up, then the end would justify the means. And whether the quarrel was patched up or not, there was really no harm in this little affair.

But as yet this was only the beginning.

Nipper had further developments in mind, and it was too risky to leave things to Mr. McClure's judgment. The dodge required some careful handling.

Before Mr. McClure could decide what action he should take, he heard a hail. Glancing round, he beheld a group of St. Frank's fellows, airily attired in flannels. They were approaching from the direction of the lane, which ran comparatively close to the green.

"Anything wrong there, sir?" asked one of the fellows.

"Yes, yes!" shouted Mr. McClure. "Come here! Maybe ye can help. There's been a wee bit of a mishap, I'm thinking."

The St. Frank's fellows came running up. There were six or seven of them, including Handforth, Church, Nipper, Travers, and Reggie Pitt.

"Great Scott!" ejaculated Handforth, staring at the figure on the ground. "What have you done, sir?"

"The boy must have been hit by my golf ball," explained Mr. McClure, with agitation. "I didna see him at all. The bunker was in the way. Even now I canna make oot how he came to be sae badly hit. I didna think the ball would have so much sting left in it."

"Well, sir, he seems to be in a pretty bad way," said Nipper, dropping on to his knees. "Wonder who he can be?" he added, glancing at the other fellows. "Have you chaps ever seen him before?"

"Let's have a look at him," said Reggie Pitt briskly.

It was noticeable that none of the juniors answered Nipper's question. But Mr. McClure was not aware of this. He gained the impression—as Nipper had intended—that the boy on the ground was a total stranger to these St. Frank's juniors.

They promptly took steps to bring him round. But McClure failed to come round. In spite of all their efforts, he remained as "unconscious" as ever.

"I'll tell you what!" said Handforth. "We'd better search his pockets—to find out who he is—then somebody will have to send a telegram to his people. Perhaps one of you other chaps had better telephone to a hospital—"

"Hoots, boy, what are ye saying?" asked Mr. McClure impatiently. "The laddie is no sae injured as all that! It's nothing but a knock."

"Oh, but we can't leave anything to chance, sir," said Nipper. "We'll see if we can find out who he is, anyhow."

Very gently, they went through the "unconscious" boy's pockets; but they found nothing except a crumpled story-book, a pocket-handkerchief without any mark or initials on it, a pocket-knife, and two coins to the total value of three-halfpence.

"Nothing," said Nipper, shaking his head. "Not a letter—not a pocket-book, or anything like that."

"Ye're making a muckle of a fuss over the lad," said Mr. McClure. "His injury canna be serious. The ball was at the end of its flight when it struck him, I hae no doot. I canna understand it at all. What was the laddie doin' on the green? Why didna he cry oot?"

"Did you shout 'Fore,' sir?" asked Church.

"There wasna the need," replied Mr. McClure. "I didna see the laddie."

"You didn't shout 'Fore,' sir?" said Handforth, staring. "Then it was entirely your own fault, sir!"

"Whisht, boy, ye dinna know what ye're saying—"

"But I do!" insisted Handforth. "All golfers shout 'Fore' before they make a drive. At least, they should do. Look what's happened because you failed! Look at this awful kosh the chap's got on the head! And there's nothing on him to show who he is, or where he came from."

"Don't you know him, sir?" asked Nipper, looking at the Scot.

"He's not a boy of these parts," said Mr. McClure.

Again the idea was impressed upon him that the injured boy was a stranger to these St. Frank's fellows.

"Well, we shall have to do something with him," said Nipper, looking round. "We can't allow him to remain like this. Where's the nearest house? Hallo! There's one over there! Let's carry him—"

"It's my hoose ye're looking at," said Mr. McClure.

"By Jove, that's lucky!" said Nipper. "We'll take him there, sir."

"It'll be a shock to Mrs. McClure, I'm thinking," said the old fellow dubiously. "Still, maybe ye're right. There's nae a hoose within a mile excepting mine, and it's just as weel that the laddie should be attended to."

"I think we'd better get a doctor, too, sir," said Reggie Pitt gravely.

"He doesna need a doctor for a wee hit on the head," replied Mr. McClure. "A little cold water will soon bring him round."



"Well, I hope it does, sir," said Nipper. "He doesn't look much like coming round now, anyhow."

**L**ITTLE did Mr. Arnold McClure realise that the whole thing was a put-up job. Left entirely to himself, Mr. McClure might have taken the apparently injured boy to his home. But the plotters of the Remove had not felt inclined to leave anything to chance. So they had "appeared" at the crucial moment, and they had suggested that the "unknown" should be taken to the nearest house.

At all events, it was one easy way of getting McClure safely under his grandfather's roof. Considering the bitterness of the old man, and considering how Handforth had fared the previous evening, there was little chance of getting McClure in in any other way. Certainly, his grandfather would not have admitted him had he known his identity.

After the juniors had lifted McClure up, and had carried him half-way to the house, Mac's grandfather was beginning to get really anxious. He had expected the boy to show signs of recovery long before this; but no signs were forthcoming. And although Mr. McClure did not blame himself in any way—the affair had been a pure accident—he was nevertheless deeply concerned. He had no reason to suspect that his golf ball had had nothing whatever to do with that bruise on the boy's forehead.

None of the schemers felt guilty of any wrongdoing. They knew that McClure's father and mother were two of the best, and that the ancient quarrel was largely owing to the old man's obstinacy and harshness. He thoroughly deserved this lesson. He had refused to see his grandson; he had remained hard and obdurate during all these years. Well, he was now having his grandson forced upon him. And perhaps, before very long, his prejudice would be destroyed. The Removites felt that they would be doing rather a splendid thing if only they could patch up this quarrel, which had lasted for so many years.

A little diplomacy, perhaps, would do the trick. And because diplomacy was needed, Edward Oswald Handforth had had the reins taken out of his grip!

## CHAPTER 7.

### Developing the Plot!

"**W**EEL, weel! What in the world is all this?"

Mrs. McClure spoke with alarm and consternation. She was standing in the open doorway of the house as the St. Frank's fellows came up, with Mr. McClure leading the way.

"Dinna ye excite yersel', Jean," said the old man. "It's no sae serious. A wee hit on the head."

"Poor laddie!" exclaimed his wife compassionately, as she came down the steps and looked at McClure. "I hae no doot he was hit by one of your golf balls?" she added, looking accusingly at her husband.

"It was nae fault of mine," protested Mr. McClure.

"We want to carry him indoors, ma'am, if we may," said Nipper, raising his cap. "If we can only bathe his head and give him some water—"

"Ay, bring him in!" interrupted the old lady. "Poor laddie! He looks awfu' pale!"

Mrs. McClure was a medium-sized, elderly lady, with nearly white hair. She seemed to be kindly and gentle, and the concern in her voice was eloquent.

There was quite a flutter for a few minutes. McClure was carried solemnly through the old-fashioned hall, and into the comfortably-furnished sitting-room. A scared-looking maid was summoned, and she brought water, basins and towels.

Mac, feeling very guilty, was gently placed in an old, comfortable lounge, and then his

grandmother lost no time in administering first aid. Her touch was gentle, and after a while McClure decided that it was about time for him to "recover." Yet he hesitated to make the first move—since he knew that the worst part of his ordeal was to come. He almost decided to throw it up; but he knew that Handforth and Church and Nipper and the others were relying upon him. He couldn't let them down.

After Mrs. McClure had bathed the injured forehead, there was a little anxiety amongst the plotters. Would the good lady detect that the injury had been received over twenty-four hours ago? Apparently she did not. Anyhow, Mrs. McClure made no comment to that effect. After the injury had been washed, it was seen to be a fairish bruise, but there was scarcely any swelling—as one might have expected. The swelling, of course, had gone down by this time.

"It's nae such a bad knock," said Mr. McClure, adjusting his steel-rimmed spectacles and gazing down at his grandson. "I canna understand why the laddie doesna come round. Maybe a wee drap of brandy would put some life into him."

"Ye'lli no give him any brandy, Arnold," said his wife curtly. "It's the doctor he's needing, and ye'd better be seeing about fetchin'—"

"Look, ma'am!" interrupted Handforth. "I saw his eyelids flicker just then. I believe he's coming round."

They watched anxiously. Sure enough, McClure was showing the first signs of recovery. His chums waited with some concern. McClure was something of an unknown quantity as an actor. Would he perform his part satisfactorily?

It was by no means an easy part. He knew that he was in the presence of his grandfather and grandmother; he knew, moreover, that they were totally unaware of his identity. It was a one-sided kind of business.

"Hallo!" muttered Mac, trying to get up. "Why, what—what— Where am I?" he added dazedly.

It wasn't badly done—and it wasn't particularly good, either. But it served all right, since the old folks suspected nothing.

"What's happened?" went on Mac, looking round in a dazed kind of way. "Hallo! I—I don't seem to remember—"

"There, there!" said Mrs. McClure gently. "Dinna ye worry yourself, lad. I'm glad to see ye with open eyes—and I doot not Mr. McClure is just as glad."

"Ay, so I am," grunted Mr. McClure.

"You'll be all right soon, old chap," said Nipper, patting McClure on the back. "Just a knock on the head, you know. I don't think it's particularly bad."

McClure looked at him as though he had never seen him before in his life.

"A knock on the head?" he repeated dully. "How? When? Who gave me a knock on the head?"

"It was a golf ball."

"A—a golf ball?" repeated Mac, as though bewildered afresh. "But how could a golf ball hit me?" He looked at the St. Frank's fellows in wonder. "Who are you?" he went on. "What are you doing here? And this lady, and this gentleman—"

He broke off and passed a hand wearily over his brow.

"Bravo!" murmured Nipper, under his breath. "Good stuff, this!"

"Come, come, laddie, don't ye remember?" asked Mr. McClure. "You were on the sixth green, and—"

"Green?" repeated Mac. "Oh! You mean golf? But it's funny, you know. I can't seem to—"

He broke off again, and looked round the room in that same dull way.

"Maybe ye'll tell us your name, and where you came fram?" put in Mr. McClure. Then, after we have seen that you are all right, we can set you on your way."

"Name?" said Mac, with a start. "My name? Where I come from? I—I— My name!" he burst out hoarsely.

"Surely you remember your name?" said Nipper.

"My name?" repeated Mac.

He sank back, his eyes registering complete stupefaction.

"My hat!" said Church, in an awed voice. "The poor kid has forgotten his own name! It must be that knock on the head, you know!"

"Don't you even know where you came from—or where you were going?" asked Handforth.

"Going?" said McClure, taking care to make no direct statement. "I wasn't going anywhere, was I? I mean, I can't think— Oh, why is everything so strange?" he went on, looking about the room. "I've never been here before. I don't know this house. It's all—all so rummy."

This was strictly true; McClure had never been in this house before, and it was certainly strange to him.

"He's lost his memory sure enough!" said Nipper, glancing at Mr. McClure. "It seems to be more serious than we thought, sir."

"Maybe I'd better give him a wee drop of brandy," said Mr. McClure, with agitation.

"Away with your brandy," said his wife impatiently. "The laddie will get even more confused if ye give him spirits. It's a doctor he needs, I'm thinking, Arnold. I told ye so before."

"I say!" broke in Reggie Pitt, as though he had suddenly thought of something. "We've got a doctor on our School Train, you know. It wouldn't take one of us long to hurry across the links and bring him back. How would that do, ma'am?"

"Away with ye," said Mrs. McClure promptly.

"Dr. Brett's a good sort, and he'll come like a shot," said Reggie, as he prepared to make for the door. "I'll be as quick as I can!"

He was off like a flash—before Mr. McClure could stop him. Not that the old fellow had any inclination to do so. Perhaps he thought that the idea was a good one—since the School Train's doctor would probably require no fee. Or perhaps Mr. McClure was rather afraid of his wife. It had been noticeable to the juniors, at all events, that he had been very subdued since Mrs. McClure had taken control.

"This is what comes of your golf, Arnold," she said accusingly. "If ye spent more time at hame, and less on the links, there'd be none of these mishaps."

"Whisht, woman, I'll no hae ye saying it was my fault," said Mr. McClure with some spirit. "It wasna possible for me to see the boy—"

"But you didn't shout 'fore,' sir," Handforth reminded him.

"You knocked the laddie doon, and we've got to see that he gets well," said Mrs. McClure firmly. "I'll no hae ye denying the responsibility, Arnold. Such a nice lad, too," she added, looking at her grandson, completely oblivious of his relationship to her. "A bonnie lad, indeed."

There was something very motherly—very kindly—about Mrs. McClure. She was cast in a different mould from her husband. Her face was lined, and when in repose it seemed as though a great sorrow had added to those wrinkles. The St. Frank's fellows could easily guess that Mrs. McClure had had nothing to do with that old quarrel. It was becoming quite plain, in fact, that the old man was the harsh one.

"Come, boy! Maybe ye can remember now," said Mr. McClure, touching Mac on the knee. "Surely ye can recall your own name? Where did ye come from? I havena seen ye before in these parts. Ye're not a native of Edinburgh county—or of Scotland, either, by the way ye talk."

"Scotland?" said McClure, in wonder. "Am I in Scotland?"

"Hoots, boy, where did ye think ye were?"

"It's all so strange in this room," replied Mac, looking scared. "And my name, too. Why can't I tell you my name? What is my name? If I'm in Scotland, how did I get here? And where was I going?"

"The doctor will come soon, lad," said Mrs. McClure gently. "Lay back and rest awhile."

McClure was only too willing to accept this advice; he closed his eyes and fell back on the lounge.

Mr. McClure had gone to the window, and he stood looking out over the links with a frown on his brow. This affair had developed in the most unpleasant way. He had been alarmed at first, but he had felt certain that the boy would quickly recover. Now that he had recovered, the lad didn't seem to know who he was! This was an ugly complication. What was Mr. McClure to do with him? He couldn't very well send him out into the approaching night in this condition.

The only alternative was to keep him here.

It certainly did not occur to Mr. McClure to suspect that the St. Frank's fellows were very well aware of the boy's identity. Indeed, the old man merely regarded them as chance passers-by, and he had been glad enough of their assistance, and was grateful to them for what they had done.

**D**R. BRETT arrived soon afterwards, and he was looking grave as he sat down beside his patient. McClure himself was feeling more nervous than ever.

Dr. Brett had only said a few words to Mr. and Mrs. McClure. He had adopted a strict professional air, and he examined McClure's injury with great care, and after that he tested Mac's pulse and applied a stethoscope to his chest.

"H'm!" said the doctor, at length. "Sound enough, I imagine."

"Ye no think the knock has injured him badly?" asked Mr. McClure quickly.

"Well, it's difficult to say," replied Dr. Brett, with caution. "As far as I can judge, there is no real injury at all—a mere bruise. The lad should be all right before long. But I understand that there is some talk of him having lost his memory?"

"That's what it seems like, sir," said Nipper.

"Well, I'd better not question him now," said the doctor, rising to his feet. "The best thing for the boy, I consider, is for him to be put straight to bed."

"Bed!" echoed Mr. McClure. "Here? In my hoose?"

"Where else?"

"But this lad is a stranger—"

"Stranger or no, here he stays," put in Mrs. McClure. "It was your golf ball which injured him, Arnold—and here he stays."

"The boy must not be moved on any consideration," said Dr. Brett gravely. "Put him straight to bed, and I will have another look at him to-morrow. There is no need for you to worry yourselves in the meantime. A sleep, perhaps, will do him a lot of good."

And with that Dr. Brett took his departure—rather hurriedly, in fact. Perhaps he did not want to be questioned too closely by Mr. McClure. He had passed his edict, and that was sufficient.

So it came about that McClure, of the St. Frank's Remove, was led gently up to bed by his grandmother in his grandfather's house!

## CHAPTER 8.

### Mac's New Home!

**W**ELL, I hope he's better in the morning, sir," said Nipper. He and the other St. Frank's juniors were just at the point of departing, and Mr. McClure himself was seeing them to the door.



“Go!” said Mr. McClure harshly. “Ye’re not wanted here!” He gave McClure a push, and the unfortunate lad went stumbling down the wet steps. He had been turned out of his grandfather’s house—turned out into the storm-swept night!

"I hope so, too, laddie," said the old fellow. "I canna imagine how the wee ball did him an injury. It's a mystery, I'm telling ye. I've played golf for nearly fifty years——"

"It's always difficult to understand how these things happen, sir," interrupted Nipper. "It'll be rather awkward if he's really lost his memory, won't it? I mean, you won't know what to do with him."

"He canna be in this condition for long," said Mr. McClure. "Nae doot there'll be inquiries for him, too. It willna do any good to worry."

"Of course it won't, sir," said Travers eagerly. "Take my advice, and sleep well. In the morning, he will probably be all serene. I take it, sir, that we may come in the morning and inquire?"

Mr. McClure hesitated.

"Why, of course," said Handforth. "You won't object, will you, sir?"

"Ye may come, if you please," said the old man grudgingly. "But I shallna be here unless ye're verra early."

He bade them good-night, and they crossed the lane and then went off over the links towards the School Train.

It was not until they were out of earshot that they spoke again.

"Well, that's that!" grinned Handforth. "I rather think we did it pretty well, eh?"

"Mac was fine!" said Church. "I don't think he'll give himself away before the morning now."

"No fear," said Nipper. "We've warned him to say nothing. If he's questioned, he'll pretend to be dull and silly."

"That'll be easy for him," said Handforth, nodding.

"Don't you believe it," said Nipper. "Mac's head is screwed on the right way—and he's proving it now more than he ever proved it before. By Jove! It'll be a feather in our caps, my lads, if we can bring about a reconciliation. It's rotten that Mac should be estranged from his grandfather in this way. I'll bet it's the old man's fault."

"Of course it is!" said Handforth. "He's a regular curmudgeon. You ought to have heard the way he railed on at me as soon as I mentioned his grandson."

"It's rather a pity you had that interview with him," said Nipper thoughtfully. "Not that it's done much harm. I don't think he twigged anything. I mean, he doesn't figure on any connection between that affair and this."

"Dr. Brett was a brick," grinned Church. "He played his part toppingly."

WHEN they got near the School Train, in the gathering dusk, they were met by Mr. Nelson Lee—who was, incidentally, the acting headmaster.

"Well?" he asked smilingly.

"Everything's O.K., sir," said Nipper. "McClure's been put to bed, and his grandfather and grandmother suspect nothing. They think he has lost his memory."

"I hope there were no falsehoods involved?" asked Lee dryly.

"Not a ghost of one, sir," grinned Nipper.



"Go!" said Mr. McClure harshly. "Ye're no afe lad went stumbling down the wet steps. H  
into the

He had previously told Nelson Lee all about the little plan—since it was quite impossible to work it without Nelson Lee's permission, and, indeed, his connivance. For unless he had been told there would have been some very keen inquiries about McClure's absence.

Nelson Lee had talked to McClure himself, and Mac had willingly told him all about the old quarrel at home, and how his grandparents had kept it up.

The schoolboy plotters felt all their misgivings vanish when Nelson Lee placed the seal of his approval on the plan. For Nelson Lee could see nothing against it; no harm could be done if it failed, and a whole lot of good would be accomplished if it succeeded. Nelson Lee, like Handforth, hated to think of that old quarrel being kept up until the old folks died. If Mac's presence

ing there is no falsehood involved," said Nelson Lee. "It will be a very fine thing if McClure can be restored to his grandparents—and, incidentally, if a family quarrel can be healed. Strictly speaking, I suppose, I should have forbidden you to take any part in this business. Perhaps I am inclined to be a little sentimental, however, and it will give me great pleasure if this scheme succeeds."

"I think it'll work all right, sir," said Nipper. "Anyhow, Mac's going to have a good go at it to-morrow. If only he can get well 'in' with his grandparents before they know his identity, perhaps they'll come round. I'm sure of Mrs. McClure, anyhow. It's the old man who might be the stumbling-block."

"If success comes before the train is due to move on to the next stopping-place, all well and good," said Nelson Lee. "But, of course, McClure cannot be left behind. And as the train will only be staying in Kinlochty for another day or two, it is very essential that success should come quickly."

"Leave it to us, sir," said Handforth cheerfully.

Only a few juniors knew of the wheeze. The occupants of the School Train, in general, were not informed. There was really no reason why everybody should be talking about it; indeed, it might even be risky.

For if rumours got about Mr. McClure would probably hear them, and then he would get to know the real truth—before the time was ripe.

Handforth and Church went to bed that night feeling very contented. Nipper and the other fellows "in the know" were happy, too. They hadn't the slightest doubt that McClure was being well looked after, and that he would wangle things all right on the morrow.

**M**CCLURE himself, however, was by no means so sure.

He slept well that night, after laying awake for a full hour pondering over the strange adventure which had just started. He experienced a thrill when he realised that he was in his grandparents' home.

His grandparents!

And all his life he had believed them to be dead! Even now, he couldn't quite get over the shock of it. When he awoke the next morning, to find the sun shining brilliantly in through his window, he really was bewildered and dazed. It took him some minutes to recollect exactly where he was. Then he jumped out of bed, looked over the sunlit golf links, and he drew a deep breath.

"My only topper!" he murmured. "I'm scared! What the dickens is going to



He gave McClure a push, and the unfortunate out of his grandfather's house—turned out it!

here, in Scotland, could bring about a re-union, then the School Train's visit to the North would have done something in addition to providing the fellows with first-hand geographical education.

"Now, boys, you must thoroughly understand that I only approve of this plan provid-





"Ay, and 'tis like him ye are, too. I noticed it last night. Can ye nae remember anything, laddie?"

Mac felt extremely uncomfortable.

"Oh, I say!" he muttered. "I—I— Perhaps I shall remember things before long, ma'am."

He had not bargained for this. Fooling the old man wasn't so bad; but when it came to his grandmother, he felt guilty of something unfair and dishonest. In fact, it wasn't in Mac's nature to keep it up.

Impulsively, on the spur of the moment, he bent forward and looked into the old lady's eyes. His own face was flushed, and he was breathing hard.

"I—I hope you'll forgive me, ma'am," he said huskily. "I haven't lost my memory at all. It—it was all a put-up job."

"What is it ye're saying?" asked Mrs. McClure, in wonder.

"I'm really a St. Frank's boy," replied Mac. "I'm from the School Train, you know.

Those fellows who were here last night are my chums. I wasn't hit on the head by Mr. McClure's golf ball at all—but by a cricket ball, two days ago. It was all a spoof—just to make my grandfather think—I—I mean—"

"Your—your grandfather?" broke in Mrs. McClure, turning pale.

"Yes!" muttered Mac. "My name's McClure—Arnold McClure. I'm—I'm really your grandson, and—and—"

"Didna I know it?" breathed the old lady, reaching forward, and clasped the startled boy into her arms.

## CHAPTER 9.

### Helping On The Good Work!

**T**HERE had been no hesitancy in Mrs. McClure's act. She just embraced her grandson as though she had known all along that this revelation was coming. For some moments she was silent, except for her heavy breathing.

When at last Mac succeeded in breaking away, he saw that his grandmother's eyes were filled with tears.

"Oh, I say!" he protested. "I'm most awfully sorry. I—I didn't mean—"

"My grandson!" she said, placing her hands upon his shoulder, and looking at him through her tear-dimmed eyes. "Ay, but ye're a bonnie lad—a bonnie, bonnie lad! May heaven forgive the old man for his harshness and his unforgiving bitterness!"

"I knew it was him, grandmother!" said McClure huskily. "As soon as I saw you, I knew jolly well that you couldn't have had a hand in it. My father and mother would

never speak much about you, and until I came to Edinburgh in the School Train, I thought that you were both dead. I thought that you had died years ago."

"It was hard—it was cruel to deceive ye so," said the old lady. "But maybe your parents were right, laddie. They knew how hard and unforgiving your grandfather's nature is. And maybe your father takes after him in that way."

"Dad has never seemed hard to me," replied Mac.

"Not hard with those he loves," replied his grandmother softly. "But I'm thinking there's nae love lost between your grandfather and your father. It was a bitter quarrel—a cruel, wicked quarrel—and sae unnecessary, too. For your mother was a sweet girl—as bonnie a lass as my boy could wish to marry."

"I'm awfully pleased to hear you say that, grandmother," whispered Mac.

"But she wasna the girl my husband selected," continued Mrs.

McClure, her voice becoming hard, "and so your father was turned oot and cast adrift. But tell me more about yourself, lad! It was a good idea of yours to fool the old man—"

"It wasn't my idea," protested Mac. "The chaps thought it out, you know—Handforth and Nipper and the others. I told them about everything, and they considered that it was pretty rotten that this old quarrel should be kept up. So they thought of this scheme to bring it to an end."

"Your friends are sensible boys, I'm thinking," said Mrs. McClure, nodding.

"Mr. Lee—he's our Head, you know—consented to it, so I felt quite comfortable," continued Mac. "And Dr. Brett, too—he agreed to lend a hand. I didn't mind fooling grandfather, but I couldn't keep it up with you—"

"And why the need?" she asked. "There's nae bitterness in my heart, laddie! It's the happiest day I've had for many a year. My grandson!" she added, looking at him again. "Ay, but ye're like your father! Why didna I know the truth at once?"

"You did know it, didn't you?"

"I thought I was only deluding myself," replied the old lady, gathering him into her arms again.

**M**CCLURE considered that this part of the business was entirely unnecessary, and he was glad enough when his grandmother had finished with her embraces. After that he gave her all the details; he told her exactly how the dodge had been worked.



"You see, the idea was to get me into my grandfather's house," explained Mac. "The fellows thought that when grandfather found that I was quite an ordinary sort of chap he would get to like me a bit, and then there wouldn't be any harm in my revealing the truth to him."

"Your grandfather is an obstinate old man," said Mrs. McClure, shaking her head. "Maybe he'll soften. During all these years he has refused to see your father—and your father, being obstinate, too, has never come."

"But why didn't you come down to the South of England—to see us?" asked Mac.

"It was always my dream," replied his grandmother. "But if I had done so, your grandfather would have never taken me back. Ay, he's as hard as that! So I have been living on hopes—and now I'm rewarded."

A tap sounded on the door, and Mrs. McClure went across the room and opened it. A neat maidservant was standing there.

"What is it, Jennie?"

"There's a number of lads frae the Skule Train doonstairs," replied the girl, rather scared. "I told them to gang awa', but they wouldna tak' any notice. I thought I'd better tell ye——"

"Let them come up, Jennie," said Mrs. McClure.

"Oh, ay, ma'am," replied the girl, hurrying off.

A minute later Handforth came striding into the bed-room—with Church and Nipper and Pitt and Travers.

"It's all right, you chaps," said Mac, at once. "I've told my grandmother the truth."

"Well, I'm jiggered!" said Handforth, in consternation. "You—you fathead! The whole thing's ruined now!"

"Steady, Handy!" said Nipper. "I don't think it's ruined. Look at Mrs. McClure. She's not very angry, is she? Good morning, ma'am."

"Good morning, ma'am," echoed the other fellows.

"Ye're clever laddies," said Mrs. McClure kindly. "I'm grateful to ye for what ye have done."

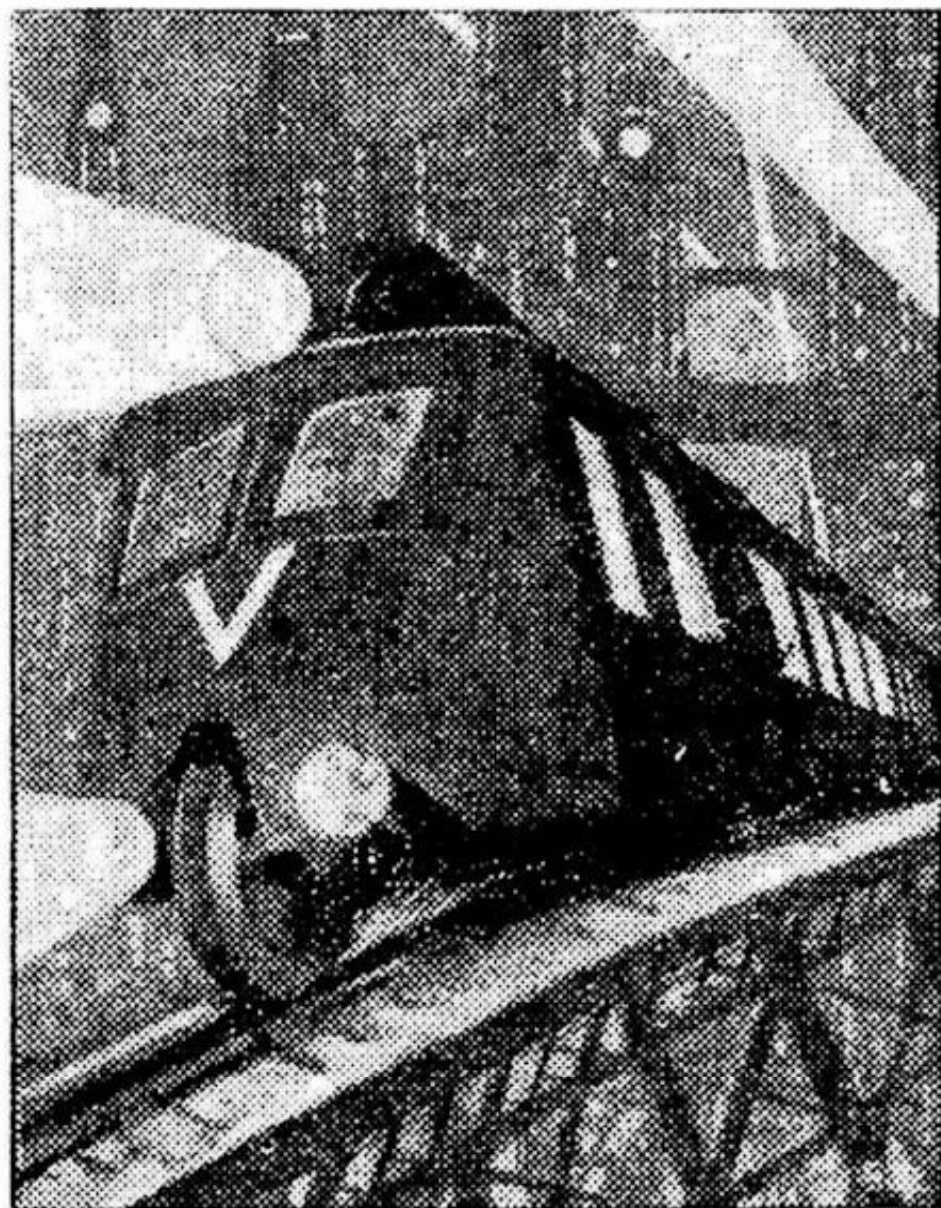
"My only hat!" said Handforth. "You—you mean——"

"My grandmother is with us, Handy," said Mac happily. "She's going to help us in the wheeze you know—and she thinks that my grandfather might soften a bit when he gets used to me."

"Well, he'll have to get used to you pretty quickly," said Handforth. "It's Saturday to-day, and the School Train is moving on Monday—perhaps to-morrow. So there isn't much time to waste."

"Oh, my hat!" said Church, in alarm. "Then—then we might be diddled, after all!"

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All the fellows were glad to find that Mrs. McClure was wholeheartedly in favour of the scheme. In fact, everything was going splendidly.

"The old man won't be back until this evening," said Mrs. McClure. "I'll have ye doonstairs, in the sitting-room," she went on, looking at Mac. "A quiet hour might make all the difference. And to-morrow, perhaps, I'll tell my husband who ye are."

"Well, let's hope he takes it in the right way," said Nipper. "We've done all that we can do, anyhow. It's up to Mac himself now."

**D**R. BRETT came during the morning—after the juniors had gone back to the train. The doctor, of course, was mightily pleased to know that it was no longer necessary for him to practise any deception.

"When Mr. McClure returns this evening," he said, "you had better tell him that the boy must remain here for another day, at least. Doctor's orders, you see?"

"I understand," said Mrs. McClure, smiling.

"If I may venture to make a suggestion," continued Dr. Brett, "I should think that it would be rather a good idea to play upon Mr. McClure's conscience."

"I doot if he has one," said the good lady.

"You could remind him that his own grandson is about the same age," said the doctor, "and then gradually lead up to the revelation in that way. It will get him accustomed to it—so that it won't be so much of a shock when it actually comes."

"Shock!" said Mrs. McClure bitterly. "He ought to be pleased to find that he has such a bonnie grandson. But I'll remember what ye say, doctor."

She made a great fuss of McClure during the day—such a fuss, indeed, that he became positively embarrassed. The secret could not be kept from any of the servants, of course—and, as a matter of fact, there was a good deal of rejoicing throughout the house. There was no fear that the servants would give the secret away to Mr. McClure, when he returned. They held him in too much dread.

It was very hot in the afternoon, and towards evening there was a dead calm, with a promise of thunder in the air. There was, indeed, something rather ominous in the atmosphere. Perhaps it was a portend of what was to come.

With the coming of dusk, great cloudbanks began gathering in the west, and there was more than one ominous rumble in the far distance. Not that Mrs. McClure took any notice of the weather conditions. She was anxiously awaiting the return of her husband.

Everything was in readiness. Mac was comfortably settled on the sitting-room couch, with a neat bandage round his head. It cannot be said that he was looking forward with much pleasure to the coming ordeal. He had adready grown to love his grand-

mother, but he was in mortal fear of his grandfather.

The very elements seemed to be conspiring against Mac. There was an electricity in the air which added to the tension of the whole situation.

To make matters worse, Mr. McClure was late in returning. He was expected at about eight o'clock, but there was no sign of him when this hour arrived. A premature darkness had descended, and the whole countryside was looking grim and forbidding.

"Nae doot he lost his train," said Mrs. McClure resignedly. "Weel, maybe we'd better keep supper waiting for him."

"Don't you think I'd better go to bed?" suggested McClure.

"And what good would that do?" replied his grandmother. "I want you here—I want your grandfather to get to know you. It's nae good you being in bed, laddie. Dinna ye be sae scared of your grandfather. He's nae such an ogre when he's rubbed the right way."

"Well, shall I pretend to be asleep—just for a bit?" asked Mac.

"Just sit where ye are, and leave the rest to me," replied the old lady gently. "He canna be long now. Maybe he lost the train, and is coming by 'bus. It's cheaper, anyway."

**I**T was well past nine before Mr. McClure arrived—and by then complete darkness had fallen, for the sky was crowded with dense masses of cloud. Lightning was playing now and again, and the rumbling thunder had grown more ominous, more threatening.

"It's going to be a bad night," said Mr. McClure bluntly, as his wife met him in the hall. "There's a big storm coming up, I'm thinking. But what of the boy? Is he still here?"

"Yes, Arnold, he's still here."

"And is there nae change?"

"Nae change at all," said Mrs. McClure calmly.

"Hoots, what are we to do?" muttered the old man. "We canna keep the boy in our hoose indefinitely. Have there been no inquiries for him? I scanned the newspapers to-day, but there doesna seem to be any boy missing. It's a worrying business, Jean."

"Not sae worrying after all, Arnold," replied his wife, as she led him into the sitting-room. "See, he looks better, does he not?"

Mr. McClure advanced into the room and gazed at Mac in the light of the old-fashioned oil lamp.

"Good-evening, sir," said Mac, hardly knowing what else to say.

"Can ye not remember who ye are?" asked Mr. McClure bluntly.

"Don't bother the lad," said his wife. "Sit ye doon at the table, Arnold. Supper's been waiting this hour past."

"I've had a busy day in Edinburgh," said Mr. McClure, as he sat down, keeping his gaze upon Mac. "I couldna get back by the ordinary train."

They started supper, and Mr. McClure could not help noticing the scared look on the face of the maidservant as she came in with the food. After she had gone, he glanced at his wife.

"And what's wrong with Jennie?" he said. "The lassie looks as though she's seen a ghost."

"There's naething wrong with her, Arnold," said the old lady. "Ye mustn't imagine things. Come, lad, pull your chair up. Ye're ready for supper?"

"Yes, thanks," said Mac.

And so, to the accompaniment of an occasional peal of thunder from outside, they commenced that fateful meal. There was nothing in Mr. McClure's demeanour to give Mac the slightest hope.

## CHAPTER 10.

### Thrown Out!

**B**OOM-BOOM!

An extra loud peal of thunder crashed out over the golf links and the heathland near by. The very house seemed to shake, and Mr. McClure glanced towards the window.

"A wild night," he commented.

"A wild night outside, but peace and love within," said Mrs. McClure quietly.

"I'm no sae sure," replied her husband. "It would be better, Jean, if we could find out the truth about this young lad——"

"Man, man, are ye blind?" exclaimed Mrs. McClure, with sudden vehemence.

Mac's heart jumped, and he stared open-eyed at his grandmother. Surely she wasn't going to reveal his identity now? Yet, in the next moment, he felt relieved. Anything was better than this suspense. Far better get it over and done with.

To tell the truth, Mrs. McClure had decided to take advantage of the wildness of the weather. Had it been a fine, tranquil evening, she might have delayed the disclosure. Her husband might well have turned the boy out into a calm summer's evening. But with thunder and lightning in the sky, and with rain descending in torrents, he would probably hesitate to take such a rash step. And perhaps the electricity in the air had affected the old lady's own nerves. She, too, felt that it would be better to end this ordeal.

"Blind, Jean?" repeated Mr. McClure. "What do ye mean?"

"Canna ye see who the boy is?" she replied. "Look agin, Arnold! Man—man, canna ye see your own flesh and blood?"

Mr. McClure rose to his feet, his face becoming suddenly pale.

"My own flesh and blood!" he ejaculated hoarsely. "Woman, ye don't mean—— Ay, it's true!"

He was staring at McClure so balefully that Mac leapt to his feet and backed away.

"Calm yourself, Arnold," said his wife, coming over and patting him on the arm. "It's no time for ye to get into one of your tempers. It's our own grandson, ye see. Our Arnold's little boy—his baby! Grown to a fine youth——"

"But I don't understand!" shouted the old man, his voice rising to a shrill pitch. "There's been trickery here!"

"It was only a harmless trick, after all," said Mrs. McClure. "Our grandson's friends wanted him to——"

"Ay, I might have known!" burst out the old man. "One of them came into my shop on Thursday and spoke of my grandson. Ye're right, Jean! I'm a blind old fool!"

His rage was rising rapidly, and Mac was feeling none too safe. His only chance was for Mrs. McClure to soothe the old man. If only his temper would subside quickly, then all would be well. Everything would depend upon the next minute.

"Outside!" shouted Mr. McClure thickly, as he pointed to the door. "Get ye gone from my hoose! I'll have nae son of my son under this roof!"

"Arnold, what are ye saying?" cried his wife. "It's a terrible night! Listen to the rain—to the thunder! Ye canna sent the boy oot——"

"I've been tricked!" thundered Mr. McClure. "Ay, and you've had a hand in the trickery, too, Jean! After all these years, do ye think I'm to be defied and flouted? Ye know well enough that I've no son—no grandson. They're dead to me! Get ye gone, boy! Either ye go oot of your own accord, or I'll throw ye oot!"

"Arnold—Arnold!" pleaded the old lady, alarm showing in her eyes now. "Do ye call yourself a Christian? Man—man, ye canna do this! It's your own flesh and blood—your own son's child! Have done with this bitterness and this unreasoning anger——"

"Silence, woman!" roared the old Scot. "Many years ago I made a vow, and I'm not to be turned from it by any of this trickery and——"

"But it's not my fault, grandfather!" shouted McClure, running forward. "I can't help being your grandson! And why should you be so angry with me? I've never done anything to hurt you or to offend you. It's not fair, sir! Why can't this old quarrel be healed——"

"I'll hae no speech with ye, boy!" interrupted Mr. McClure harshly. "Ye're no grandson of mine. Do ye understand? Get oot of this hoose!"

"But—but——"

"Ye entered by trickery, and ye're going by force!" raved the old man. "I'll not doot that ye're from the School Train, eh? Well, ye can get back there——"

"Yes, I'm a St. Frank's chap, sir!" panted McClure. "But I'd rather stay here to-night, if you don't mind. It's a goodish way to the train, and in the darkness and in this storm——"



McClure tumbled out of the truck, to find himself confronted by a suspicious-looking official. "Where am I?" asked the Removite. The official regarded him even more suspiciously. "Are ye telling me ye dinna ken it's Glasgow?" he said. McClure gave a gasp. In Glasgow, when the School Train was still at Edinburgh, stranded in Glasgow, with no money! What was he to do?

"Get ye gone!" stormed Mr. McClure.

He seemed to go into a paroxysm of fury. He reached forward, seized Mac by the coat-collar, and whirled him round towards the door. If only he could have controlled his anger at that moment, all might have been well. But he was in a blind fury, and hardly knew what he was doing. The one thought that throbbed in his brain was that he had been fooled—that his orders had been flouted. Years ago he had vowed that he would never look upon his son again—that he would never recognise his son's children. And here was this boy in his house—in his house by subterfuge! Well, he should go out!

"Arnold—Arnold!" begged Mrs. McClure. "Think what ye're doing! It's your own child's only——"

"That's why he's going out!" broke in Mr. McClure, as he wrenched open the door. "By heaven, I'm master here, and I'll hae ye know it!"

He fairly swept Mac down the hall, with Mrs. McClure clutching at his arm. But her efforts were useless. She could do nothing to turn him from his purpose.

He flung open the hall door, and a great gust of wind and rain came bursting in.

"Go!" wanted the old man.

"Granddad!" pleaded Mac, in a last effort. "Please—please don't be so hard! I thought it would be ripping if we could be friends, and—and if I could write to my dad and tell him that everything was all right. Just think what joy it would give him—and my mother, too——"

It was the mention of his mother, perhaps, which steeled the old man's heart again.

"Go!" he repeated thickly. "It was your mother who caused the quarrel. Go back to her, boy! Ye're not wanted here!"

He gave Mac a push, and the unfortunate boy went stumbling down the wet, slippery steps. He was hatless, and he was in no way clothed for the rigours of such a night. But Mac had his pride, too. He had been thrown out, and he wasn't going to beg to be let in again.

Recovering himself, he went down the garden path towards the gate. Already he was soaked to the skin, for the rain was coming down in blinding torrents.

A flash of lightning seared across the sky, and for a moment Mac's figure was revealed in that bluish, purple light.

"Come back! Come back!" came Mrs. McClure's anguished cry.

She forcibly pushed her husband aside, and ran down the steps and so on to the path.

But Mac had not heard, owing to the wind, and he was already going down the lane. Meanwhile, Mrs. McClure, running down the slippery wet path, had skidded. She staggered, lost her balance, and fell.

The old man came out and found her there, sprawling in the wetness and groaning slightly.

"Jean, what hae ye done?" muttered the old man, going down on his knees.

"What hae ye done, Arnold McClure?" said his wife brokenly. "Ay, but ye're a hard man—a cruel, heartless man!"

He picked her up in his arms, all his rage gone, stunned and shocked by this mishap to the wife who had stood by him through all the years. He carried her in, and, unaided, he took her upstairs to the bed-room.

Not that Mrs. McClure was badly hurt. She had collapsed mainly because her dreams had been shattered. The shock of it had been too much for her, and now she was faint and ill.

Her husband, pale and stricken, cursed his temper. But his obstinacy would not permit him to acknowledge that he had been at fault.

**A**ND Mac, out on the wind-swept golf links, was fighting his way towards the School Train.

He was feeling miserable and wretched. He had had such hopes, particularly when his grandmother had placed herself on his side. Now everything was ruined. It would be useless to go back. All the scheming had been for nothing. Mr. McClure's bitterness, his anger, was as virulent as ever.

"Oh, what's the use?" muttered the junior. "I might have known it. Didn't my father always tell me what a hard man my grandfather was? No wonder he led me to believe that grandfather was dead!"

Little did Mac realise at this moment that the events of that night were all to the good, for it had required this great shock to bring old Mr. McClure to his senses. At the moment, perhaps, he told himself that he was as firm as ever; but the night wasn't over yet.

Mac felt that it would be an easy matter for him to get to the School Train. He had only to cross the links. The train was on its siding just near Kinlochty. He could even see the light gleaming through the darkness now and again.

The thunder boomed and crashed, and now and again the lightning shot down with such alarming force that Mac was appalled.

He was in no little danger out here, on the open links, with the lightning searing down on every side. The storm was at its height, and the air was filled with the raging voice of the elements.

The wind shouted, howled, and screamed; the thunder boomed so tremendously that Mac was literally deafened. The air was so charged with electricity that every now and again there was a bluish thread of luminosity shimmering over the hillocks.

Mac trudged on, soaked to the skin, but

caring nothing. He would soon be in bed—in his own little berth on the train. It was rather rotten going back like this—admitting defeat. The fellows would be awfully cut up about it.

Well, it couldn't be helped. He and his grandmother had done their best.

The rain came hissing down with such tremendous violence that everything was blotted out. The darkness was inky. Try as he would, Mac could no longer see the lights of the School Train. The rain was so dense that it formed a kind of haze. It hissed down on the turf with the fury of a

**COMING NEXT WEEK!**



cloudburst. Mac was already ploughing through inches of water—plunging through flooded hollows.

Once, indeed, he only pulled himself up in the nick of time. What he had taken for a flooded stretch of turf was really a deep pond. It was not until he was up to his waist that he guessed the truth and backed out. He had a bit of a struggle, too, for his feet became entangled in the thick mud at the bottom of the pond.

In making his way round the pond, he completely lost his bearings—his sense of direction. He had been trying to walk in a straight line, so that he would hit the railway, but now he was baffled.

There was no landmark by which he could guide himself; there was absolutely nothing. He was hemmed in by the driving rain.

Even when the lightning flashed, he could see nothing—for his eyes were so blinded by the glare.

So he trudged on, trusting to luck.

But after an hour had elapsed, Mac began to get worried. The storm was raging as fiercely as ever. It seemed to be never-ending. True, the rain was not so violent, but it had left a kind of mist through which he could see no lights.

Occasionally a tree would loom up, or a hedge, and Mac would make his way round such obstructions. He soon became aware of the fact that he was no longer on the golf

came upon a steep, smooth hillside, after having climbed a fence. He recognised it as a railway cutting.

There, below him, were the rails—and some distance up the line he could see a twinkling red light.

"Oh, my hat!" he muttered. "I've found the railway, anyway!"

His troubles seemed to be over.

He scrambled down the embankment, and got on to the permanent way. Then he commenced trudging along, taking care to keep to the side, in case a train should come thundering along.

Unfortunately for McClure, he went in the wrong direction! It was an easy mistake to make, for it was a single line, and there was nothing to tell him which way he should go. He could only rely upon his sense of direction—and this had long since become warped.

He walked on and on, growing more and more weary.

Then, at last, his heart gave a jump. He saw some trucks on a siding. Some goods trucks! He knew, instinctively, that the School Train was not here. It was apparently an isolated siding, miles from any station. Perhaps there was a goods yard near by—or a factory.

At all events, Mac felt that he could go no further. In all his wanderings he had not seen a house or a cottage—or shelter of any kind.

But now his problem was solved.

He climbed into one of the trucks, crept under the waterproof tarpaulin, and found, to his joy, a big heap of empty sacks. In less than a minute he was underneath them, warm and comfortable. He fell asleep on the spot.

And so soundly did he sleep that he was not even aroused when the trucks bumped together and when they commenced moving!

## "ARCHIE'S LANCASHIRE LASS!"

For once in a way it is not Edward Oswald Handforth who falls for the charms of some fair maiden. This time Archie Glenthorne is the culprit.

And Archie in love is a perfect scream!

At Blackpool, for instance, when he sees Peggy Ann—that's the girl's name—bathing, he walks right into the sea, without knowing it, to wave to her!

Oh, yes, Archie is badly smitten—so badly smitten, indeed, that things become really serious and his chums of the Remove have to think out stunts to cure him!

There's a treat in store for you when you read this rollicking yarn next week, chums. Don't miss it on any account.

## "RIVALS OF THE RAMPANT!"

Look out for another gripping instalment of Stanton Hope's magnificent naval serial next Wednesday.

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links. Somehow, he had drifted off them, and appeared to be going over some wild heathland.

At length, the storm reduced its fury. The lightning grew less violent, and the thunder became more distant. The cloudbanks were rolling away, and here and there a star could be seen peeping out in the heavens.

And McClure, looking round him, felt scared. He was utterly weary and worn out from his long trudge. He was on the point of getting panic-stricken. Where was he? Where had he wandered?

To rest was out of the question, for the ground was so soaked by that great down-pour that it was flooded practically everywhere. And the night had turned chilly, too.

Then, to his supreme joy, he suddenly

## CHAPTER 11.

### Remorse!

"OH-HO! Sunday morning!" yawned Handforth.

The rising-bell had sounded throughout the Junior Coach on the School Train, and all the fellows were arousing themselves. It was a comforting thought—that this was Sunday morning. No lessons!

"Wonder how old Mac got on last night?" said Church.

"By George, yes!" ejaculated Handforth, springing into activity. "I'd forgotten Mac for the moment! Buck up, you chaps! Get your things on! We'll buzz over to the old man's house before brekker!"

"Just what I was thinking," nodded Church. "But don't speak so loud, you ass!"

However, it mattered little. Handforth had already spoken so much overnight that



everybody in the Remove and the Fourth knew of the affair. It had leaked out somehow—and the cause of the leakage was not very mysterious.

"They ought to give us another hour in bed this morning," remarked Reggie Pitt, as he tumbled out. "We lost a good hour during the night, owing to that giddy storm."

"Storm?" said Handforth. "It wasn't much."

"You were asleep when it really started," replied Reggie. "In fact, at times we weren't quite sure whether it was the storm causing all the disturbance, or your snoring."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Idiot!" said Handforth coldly. "Who says I snore?"

A perfect yell answered him. Everybody said that he snored.

"It was a pretty bad storm," said Nipper. "Look outside! Pools of water everywhere—even this morning. There was a tremendous amount of rain."

When they were dressed, about a dozen of them set off without delay across the golf links. Archie Glenthorne and Jimmy Potts and Boots and a few others thought that they would like to hear the latest about McClure, too.

It was fine this morning, with the sun shining brightly. The storm had blown all the saltriness away. The walk across the links was invigorating. When the fellows arrived at Mr. Arnold McClure's residence, nestling amidst the trees, they were in a glow.

But they had hardly opened the front gate before Mr. McClure himself appeared. He came striding down from the front door, and his hand was pointing outwards.

"Keep away from my hoose!" he ordered sternly. "I want none of ye young tricksters round here."

"Tricksters, sir!" echoed Nipper quickly.

"Ay, tricksters!" roared Mr. McClure. "I know the truth about what we've done. Ay, and I've sent my grandson away——"

"Your—your grandson!" yelled Handforth. "Then you know who he really is?"

"What are ye trying to do now?" asked Mr. McClure suspiciously, as he glared from one junior to another. "Didna the boy come to ye last night?"

"We haven't seen him!" said Nipper. "He didn't come to the School Train, if that's what you mean, sir."

"I feared it, Arnold!" cried Mrs. McClure, running down the garden path, and limping somewhat. "Oh, man! What hae ye done? The boy is lost! He didna return to the train!"

The boys exchanged alarmed glances.

"You surely didn't send your grandson away in the middle of that awful storm?" said Nipper.

Mr. McClure was silent.

"He did!" said his wife coldly. "He's a hard, cruel old man."

"Hoots, Jean, ye shouldna talk like that——"

"I will!" interrupted Mrs. McClure tragically. "What hae ye done, Arnold? Ye've sent our grandson oot into the night—and now he's lost! Maybe he's dead!"

She quickly told the St. Frank's fellows the whole truth—how her husband had pitched the unfortunate Mac out into the storm. She inquired anxiously—feverishly. Had they not seen the boy? Was it really true that he had not returned to the School Train?

"It must be true, ma'am," said Nipper. "I had a word with Mr. Lee before we started out, and he wished us luck. If your grandson had returned, Mr. Lee would have known about it. We've seen no sign of him at all."

"I don't see how he could have got back, anyhow," put in Handforth, with a glare at Mr. McClure. "In that terrible storm he lost himself. Goodness only knows where he is now!"

"Poor boy—poor laddie!" sobbed Mrs. McClure. "See what ye've done, Arnold! Oh, it's Heaven's punishment on ye for your cruelty and your harshness."

The old man was silent—for, in truth, he was stricken with remorse.

"Mac could easily have gone wrong during that storm," said Nipper, looking at the other fellows. "I expect he set out across the links, and lost track of the train. He might have wandered for miles. In that storm he could easily have blundered into a flood or something. Perhaps he just kept on until he gave up, exhausted."

"Well, he had no money on him," said Handforth. "Absolutely nothing! He hadn't any proper clothes, either!"

"The laddie was hatless—without overcoat, without waterproof," said Mrs. McClure tragically. "Oh, Arnold, what have ye done?"

"Look here, you chaps!" said Nipper briskly. "We shall have to search."

"Rather!" echoed the others.

"We'll get up some search-parties at once, ma'am," went on Nipper, turning to the old lady. "We'll tell Mr. Lee, and perhaps he'll do something, too. Come on, you fellows!"

They went off across the links at express speed.

UNEXPECTEDLY, dramatically, the affair had turned from comedy to drama—perhaps to tragedy! McClure had been sent out into the storm, and he had not arrived at the School Train! Where was he? What had become of him during the night?

Old McClure was stunned. He wandered about his garden, his face set and haggard. Remorse was now causing him intense agony.

The news he had just heard came as a dreadful shock. For the old man knew—better than anybody else, perhaps—that there was some wild country round here where any stranger could meet with disaster on a dark, rainy night.

Actually, however, there was no need for all this worry and anxiety and alarm.

McClure was safe enough—sleeping soundly amongst those old sacks in the goods truck.

It was the warmth which awakened him. The sun beating down upon that stretched tarpaulin made the interior of the truck as hot as an oven. When Mac awoke, he was fairly panting, and he found that his clothing was completely dry. And owing to the warmth of those sacks at the crucial time, he had come to no harm.

At first he was bewildered and startled: then, after he had pushed the sacks from him, he suddenly remembered. He fairly fought to get the tarpaulin clear, so that he could breathe in some cool air.

"Oh, well, things won't be so bad now," he told himself. "I've only got to walk down the line, and I shall soon find the School Train."

There came a thundering roar, and an express went hurtling past. A moment later another express went by—slower this time, and from the opposite direction. McClure experienced a shock. How could this be? Last night there had only been a single track here!

He thrust the tarpaulin aside, and stared about him, dumbfounded.

He could see a great vista of gleaming tracks, and all around there were houses and buildings and church steeples in the distance. A haze of smoke was rising from many chimneys. In fact, he knew perfectly well that he was in the heart of a great city!

"Great Scott!" he ejaculated. "The train must have gone while I was asleep! Where the dickens am I now?"

He leapt to the ground. A man appeared from behind one of the trucks further along the train, and stared at him suspiciously. Mac certainly looked a questionable character. His collar had vanished, and his clothing was wrinkled and rumpled and altogether disreputable. His shoes were smothered in mud—and the mud extended half-way up his legs. His hair was matted and tousled, and there were smears of mud on his face.

"What are ye doin' here, boy?" demanded the railway official.

"I—I just got off this train!" replied McClure. "I had a ride—I say, where am I? What town is this?"

"Are ye telling me that ye dinna know it's Glasgow?"

"Glasgow?" yelled Mac, aghast.

He did not like the look of the man. He suddenly took to his heels and bolted. He didn't stop until he had gone across some other sidings and had climbed a fence. Mac found himself in a rather squalid street, but he was glad enough to be off the railway. He lost no time in getting into a quarter where there was more traffic, and where he was less noticeable.

Glasgow!

So he had been brought to Glasgow in his sleep! What was he to do now?

It was so ridiculous. He decided that he had better send a telegram to Mr. Lee, and— Then he remembered that he hadn't any money. How could he send a telegram without any money?

He found that he was in a road called West Street. He went right along this until he came to some docks—and he found himself in close proximity to the mighty River Clyde. Wandering along, he crossed Jamaica Bridge, and finally got into Argyle Street.

He was rather awed by the tremendous size of Glasgow—the great streets, the tramway service, the general air of immensity. He had not believed that Glasgow was such a huge city.

Branching out of Argyle Street, he wandered into North Street, and so came to Charing Cross—which was very reminiscent of London. Not that the place itself was in any way like London's Charing Cross. But the name was so familiar.

He stood against the branch post-office, just underneath the Grand Hotel, and he again wondered what he should do.

He had noticed that one or two policemen had eyed him suspiciously—at least, so he thought. He was still bewildered by the size and the greatness of Glasgow. He failed to realise, perhaps, that Glasgow is the second largest city in Great Britain—second only to London itself.

And here he was, cut off from the School Train, shabby and grubby, without a penny in his pockets!

## CHAPTER 12.

### Father, Son, and Grandson!

AS far as the eye could see, in every direction, parties of St. Frank's fellows were searching the golf links and the neighbouring heathland.

It was midday now, and the search-parties had been out for a full hour.

The matter had become one in which Nelson Lee himself had been forced to move. McClure was a St. Frank's junior, and McClure was lost. So Lee, as the head-master in charge, had to act.

He acted with his usual decision and effectiveness. The whole school was requested to volunteer for service—and the whole school promptly complied. Seniors and juniors alike—all were formed into parties, and the search commenced.

In fact, the alarm got out far and wide, and the good people of Kinlochty also helped. There was a regular sensation. Old man McClure had pitched his grandson out into the night, and the boy was lost! Everybody expected that Mac's body would be found, sooner or later, lying in some ditch or under some clump of heather or furze.

Nelson Lee's first action had been to send a telegram to Mr. and Mrs. McClure, in Richmond, and before the search-parties had

got fairly under way, a reply had come from Mr. McClure saying that he and his wife were coming North at once. And as the matter was so urgent, they were not travelling by train, but by aeroplane.

The juniors, when they had commenced their harmless little trick, had never realised that it would lead to such a sensation as this!

The whole school searching the countryside—Mac's father and mother flying over England on their way northward—even the police spreading the news and organising a hunt of their own.

Mr. McClure, senior, was as keen as anybody now. His one obsession was to find the boy. Remorse had gripped him harder than ever, and he wanted to take Mac into his arms and ask his forgiveness. It was the shock of it which had brought about this dramatic, sudden change.

He himself was out on the links searching, searching; and he was one of the first to hear the dreadful piece of news that some deep impressions had been found near a pond. He hurried there at once, and found Handforth and Church and Nipper and some others standing about. A policeman was there, too, to say nothing of some Kinlochty folk. There was talk of dragging the pond, which was a very deep one.

"What have ye found?" asked Mr. McClure, his voice harsh with anxiety.

"Nothing much, sir," replied Nipper. "Only these footprints. They lead towards the pond; but it's difficult to tell exactly what happened. A lot of people think that Mac blundered into the pond in the darkness, and that—and that——"

"No, no, it canna be that!" muttered Mr. McClure.

Handforth himself was haggard. The possibility that his chum had got drowned was an appalling one. Old McClure turned aside, and his shoulders were drooping. It seemed that his punishment was complete.

**A**ND then, in the midst of all this tension, a telegram arrived. Nelson Lee was in the School Train at the time, and when he read the wire his face cleared. An expression of relief came into his eyes.

"Is it good news?" asked Mr. Pycraft, of the Remove.

"Very good news, Mr. Pycraft," said Lee. "McClure is quite safe—he's in Glasgow."

"I thought as much," said Mr. Pycraft. "All this fuss over nothing! Quite ridiculous!"

"I beg to differ, Mr. Pycraft," retorted Lee. "Until now we have had no indication that McClure was safe. Even now I cannot understand how he got to Glasgow. But we shall hear about it when he arrives."

Lee lost no time in getting busy. The telegram had arrived from one of the station-masters in Glasgow. McClure, it seemed, had thought of a good wheeze. Knowing himself to be stranded, he had gone to one

of the stations, where he had told his story. The stationmaster had been frankly sceptical, and had refused to let this suspicious-looking boy travel, without payment of fare, to Kinlochty. But he condescended to send an inquiry through to the School Train.

The official was somewhat astonished when a reply promptly came, instructing him to put the boy on the first available train to Kinlochty.

**W**HEN Nipper and Handforth and Church heard the news, they were overjoyed. And Nipper promptly asked Lee to say nothing to old man McClure.

"But why not?" asked Lee. "I really cannot agree to this, Nipper——"

"He deserves to be left in the dark for a bit longer, sir," urged Nipper. "It was all his fault, and he ought to be taught a lesson. Why not call in all the fellows, as though the hunt is abandoned?"

"Well, the hunt actually is abandoned," said Lee.

"Of course it is, sir," agreed Nipper. "But there's no reason why Mr. McClure should be told anything. Don't you think it will have a good effect on him when we get Mac all tidied up and dressed in his best, and then spring him on the old man suddenly? He won't have time to think it over, and he'll probably grab Mac, and everything will be O.K."

Nelson Lee chuckled.

"There's something in the idea," he agreed dryly. "All right, young 'uns! I'll agree. McClure, by the way, will be here by about two o'clock."

So word was sent round, and the search parties were called in—ostensibly to a meal. And Mr. Arnold McClure knew nothing; he still thought that his grandson was lost.

Handforth and Church and the other fellows waited eagerly, anxiously. They got all McClure's best things ready, so that he could be quickly rushed into them.

There was a lot in Nipper's argument. If Mr. McClure was told the truth now he would have plenty of time to feel relief—and to harden his heart again, perhaps. If he found out that there was really no cause for all this anxiety, he would have a revulsion of feeling. But if the boy was sprung upon him suddenly, the shock of seeing him alive and well might easily break the ice once and for all.

**T**HE next surprising event was the dramatic arrival of Mr. and Mrs. McClure—from Richmond.

The pilot of their machine, having been told of the urgency of the case, came straight to Kinlochty. Finding the golf links so handy, he landed there, practically within a hundred yards of old McClure's home. It was indeed a dramatic arrival.

Mr. McClure was a fine, tall man, no older than forty, and looking even younger. His wife was a smallish, sweet-looking lady, and

just at present her eyes were filled with wild fear.

"Where can we find out if there is any news?" she asked, as soon as her husband had helped her to the ground. "Oh, what a journey, Arnold! It seemed as though it would never end!"

"And yet we have travelled from London to Scotland in record time," said Mr. McClure quietly. "It's no good alarming yourself, dear. We shall find out something very quickly now. See, we are only a few yards away from my father's house!"

"Look!" murmured Mrs. McClure. "He's there! And your mother, too, Arnold! But where is my boy? Oh, if anything tragic has happened——"

She broke off, and her husband hurried her along over the moist turf. The old lady and the old gentleman were awaiting them at the garden gate. Nobody else was near just then. All the St. Frank's fellows had gone back to the School Train, and there were no search parties out on the links now.

"Mother!" ejaculated Mac's father, as he ran forward, and clasped the old lady in his arms.

It was noticeable that in this tense moment he took his mother into his clasp, and gave not a single glance at his father.

"Arnold, my boy—my son!" sobbed Mrs. McClure. "It's a moment I've been waiting for for years. And yet I didna want it to be like this."

"Is there no news of—of my son?"

"None—none!" sobbed the old lady. "Your father sent him away last night—into the storm——"

"If ye can find it in your heart, Arnold, will ye forgive me?" broke in the old man huskily. "Heaven knows I didna mean harm to the laddie!"

"I'm sure of that, father," said Mr. McClure, in a low voice.

For a moment they stood looking at one another, father and son, after having been estranged for fifteen or sixteen years. Then, with one accord, they moved nearer. They clasped hands, and finally they embraced.

"Look!" said Mac's mother suddenly. "There are some boys coming over the links."

"Maybe some of the schoolboys," said Mr. McClure dully. "They saw the aeroplane come down, and so they're curious. My dear, it was you whom I treated most unjustly. My son has forgiven me. It's too much to expect you——"

"If Arnold has forgiven you, so will I freely," said Mrs. McClure quietly. "I'll forgive you, father, for the wrong you have done us in the past. But if my boy has come to any harm, I shall never, never forgive——"

She broke off, her words seeming to choke in her throat. She was staring at those approaching juniors. Her face was flushed, and her eyes were shining.

"He's there!" she cried. "Arnold! My boy is there! Don't you see him?"

She and her husband ran forward. Sure

enough McClure, of the Remove, was in the midst of those St. Frank's fellows. Good old Mac, immaculately attired in Etons, and looking as hale and healthy as he had ever done in his life.

His mother seized him as he came running forward.

"It's all right, mum!" protested Mac. "I mean, all these chaps looking—— Oh, I say—— Oh, blow! What does it matter?" he went on recklessly, as he grabbed her, and hugged her closely. "Thank goodness everything's all right now! Isn't it absolutely ripping?"

AND after that, of course, there were explanations. Mac told how he had got to Glasgow and all the rest of it. He was as happy as a sand-boy, particularly when his grandfather asked his forgiveness.

That evening there were high times in the old man's house. Never before had the house been so brilliant, so gay. Lights were in every room. Laughter rang out in every quarter. Handforth and Church and Nipper and a number of other fellows had been invited.

Handforth, incidentally, was the cause of much hilarity earlier on. Ever since his arrival in Scotland he had been disappointed because he had seen nobody wearing kilts or blowing the bagpipes. And Handy, having decided that it was all wrong, had made up his mind to alter this state of affairs.

So he had gone to a shop and had purchased a full rig-out, complete with bagpipes. He had donned these and had then gone marching round the village of Kinlochty, much to everybody's amusement, and, at times, pain. For, while Handy no doubt made a "bonnie wee bairn," his playing of the bagpipes was not all that could be desired!

Now, at the party at McClure Senior's house, Handforth was as happy as could be, especially when it was time for the great celebration feast, in which, needless to say, McClure's famous pies figured largely.

It was quaint to realise that it was these very pies which had brought about this family reunion!

The happiest person of all, perhaps, was old Mrs. McClure, for she was the one who would benefit most from this reconciliation. Her dreams had come true, and she knew that hereafter her husband would be a changed man—a more kindly man. The iron had been cast out of his soul, so to speak.

The School Train's visit to Scotland had certainly been useful, and from this day onwards McClure was destined to be known as Handforth's Scottish chum!

THE END.

("Archie's Lancashire Lass!" is the title of next week's rollicking, long yarn, chums. It's one of the best in the series so far, and it will make you laugh and laugh—and then laugh! Order your copy NOW to save disappointment.)

# HOW TO JOIN THE LEAGUE

## ST. FRANK'S LEAGUE APPLICATION FORM No. 104.

## SECTION

A

## READER'S APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP.

I desire to become enrolled as a Member of THE ST. FRANK'S LEAGUE, and to qualify for all such benefits and privileges as are offered to Members of the League. I hereby declare that I have introduced "THE NELSON LEE LIBRARY" and THE ST. FRANK'S LEAGUE to one new reader, whose signature to certify this appears on second form attached hereto. Will you, therefore, kindly forward me Certificate of Enrolment with the Membership Number assigned to me, and Membership Badge.

## SECTION

B

## MEMBER'S APPLICATION FOR MEDAL AWARDS.

I, Member No..... (give Membership No.), hereby declare that I have introduced one more new reader, whose signature to certify this appears on second form attached hereto. This makes me ..... (state number of introductions up to date) introductions to my credit.

## SECTION

C

## NEW READER'S DECLARATION.

I hereby declare that I have been introduced by (give name of introducer) ..... to this issue of "THE NELSON LEE LIBRARY."

(FULL NAME).....

(ADDRESS).....

## INSTRUCTIONS.

**INSTRUCTIONS.—Reader Applying for Membership.** Cut out TWO complete Application Forms from Two copies of this week's issue of THE NELSON LEE LIBRARY. On one of the forms leave in Section A, crossing out Sections B and C. Then write clearly your full name and address at bottom of form. The second form is for your new reader, who fills in Section C, crosses out Sections A and B, and writes his name and address at bottom of form. Both forms are then pinned together, and sent to the Chief Officer, The St. Frank's League, c/o THE NELSON LEE LIBRARY, 5, Carmelite Street, London, E.C.4.

**Member Applying for Bronze Medal:** It will be necessary for you to obtain six new readers for this award. For each new reader TWO complete forms, bearing the same number, are needed. On one of the forms fill in Section B, crossing out Sections A and C, and write your name and address at bottom of form. The other form is for your new reader, who fills in Section C, crosses out Sections A and B, and writes his

name and address at the bottom of the form. Now pin both forms together and send them to the Chief Officer, as above. One new reader will then be registered against your name, and when six new readers have been registered, you will be sent the St. Frank's League bronze medal. There is nothing to prevent you from sending in forms for two or more new readers at once, providing that each pair of forms bears the same date and number.

Bronze medallists wishing to qualify for the silver medals can apply in the same way as for the bronze medal, filling in Section B. Every introduction they make will be credited to them, so that when they have secured the requisite number of readers they can exchange their bronze medal for a silver one.

These Application Forms can be posted for ½d., providing the envelope is not sealed and no letter is enclosed.

## A FEW OF THE ADVANTAGES OF JOINING THE LEAGUE.

You can write to fellow members living at home or in the most distant outposts of the Empire.

You are offered free advice on choosing a trade or calling, and on emigration to the colonies and dependencies.

If you want to form a sports or social club, you can do so amongst local members of the League.

You are offered free hints on holidays, whether walking, biking, or camping.

You can qualify for the various awards by promoting the growth of the League.

If you want help or information on any subject, you will find the Chief Officer ever ready to assist you.

## NOTICE!

The St. Frank's League has now attained such proportions that we are compelled to discontinue the offer of gold medals in connection therewith. The silver and bronze medals will still be available, however, as heretofore, to those who qualify for them in accordance with the rules.



E. S. BROOKS

# BETWEEN OURSELVES!

OUR AUTHOR CHATS WITH OUR READERS

*NOTE.—If any reader writes to me I shall be pleased to comment upon such remarks as are likely to interest the majority. All letters should be addressed, EDWY SEARLES BROOKS, c/o The Editor, THE NELSON LEE LIBRARY, The Fleetway House, Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4.*



THOS. G. MERCER

**N**O, you are not quite right—C. Rollins (Handsworth)—in saying that if a reader wishes to receive an answer from me he must write once a week for about a year before getting any reply. It is perfectly true that some readers write to me repeatedly before I answer them; but this is generally because their letters have contained nothing of general interest, or that other letters have had a prior claim upon my time. In many instances I have replied to readers absolutely by return—readers from whom I have never heard before. You see, it all depends upon circs. There's no question of luck about it. I don't just dive my hand into a pile, pick out any old one, and answer it, leaving the rest to whistle for their answers. Here are the Christian names of the masters you require—Mr. ROBERT Langton, Mr. AUSTIN Suncliffe, Mr. HAROLD Clifford—although Mr. Clifford is not at St. Frank's now. The occupants of Study No. 14 in the East House are: Julian Clifton and Robert Simmons. Studies Nos. 18, 19, and 20 are unoccupied.

\* \* \*

Very pleased to hear—Fred Bloomfield (Harlesden)—that in your exams. at school you chose the Old Paper for the subject of the composition "My Favourite Book," and that you got nine marks out of a possible ten for the composition. Evidently your Form-master is not one of the prejudiced kind; and I can assure you that there are lots and lots of schoolmasters who recommend their boys to read the Old Paper. This publication first saw the light on June 12, 1915. As for becoming a member of the St. Frank's League, you have only to fill in the League Form which appears on the opposite page. Read it through first and you will find full particulars of how to join.

\* \* \*

Juicy Lemon's Christian name—V. Leang (Earlsfield)—is Christopher. But it's such a mouthful that none of the fags ever use it. I'm afraid I can't give you the titles of Nos. 1 to 33 Old Series and Nos. 1 to 25 New Series. If I did, there wouldn't be

much room on this page for anything else. Your plan of St. Frank's is pretty good.

\* \* \*

Simon Kenmore hasn't exactly reformed—Rose Coleman (Canonbury)—but he is certainly much less of a rotter than he used to be. The fact is, he has been going very easy of late, doing his best to hide his light under a bushel. That's why very little has been heard of him. One of these days perhaps he'll break out again. You never know with fellows of his sort.

\* \* \*

"Nipper" is, of course, a nickname—Ronald Brown (Clapton)—the Junior Skipper's real name being Dick Hamilton.

\* \* \*

I'm glad—Percy Young (Edge Hill, Liverpool)—that you don't mind being scoffed at for reading "kids' yarns." Let 'em scoff! I wonder what they'd say if they found me reading fairy tales? I often do, you know. They're jolly interesting. I haven't read "Tanglewood Tales," but after what you have said, I shall certainly have to get them. Thanks for the tip.

\* \* \*

Here's your photo opposite mine this week—Thos. G. Mercer (Liverpool)—so you'll be able to send it round to your chums, as you desire.

\* \* \*

Jerry Dodd's people—H. J. McMahon (Broken Hill, Australia)—are natives of Bathurst, New South Wales, where they still live. The cattle station in Queensland (as I pointed out in the story) is not their real home.

ANOTHER ROUSING INSTALMENT OF OUR NEW NAVAL SERIAL, CHUMS!

# RIVALS of the RAMPANT!



By STANTON HOPE

## Busky in a Rage!

"COME, come, sonny," said the senior surgeon; "there's nothing to worry about. The extractions will be quite painless."

"That—the whatter!" hooted Busky.

"Those two front teeth must come out, and there are four back ones that need stopping badly."

"N-no," gurgled Busky, deathly pale. "I couldn't a-bear it! I ain't feeling well to-day. I—I—"

The senior dental officer turned to his colleagues.

"The boy must be suffering from a reaction after his splendid feat of yesterday aboard the ferry," he muttered. Then, addressing Busky again, he remarked, "Well, go and join up with the other new entries. We will deal with you later."

The young coward waited for no further hint, but struggled out of the chair, and at the same time a grinning, boyish face, surmounted by a shock of ginger hair, withdrew hastily from a window.

"The next lad," said the dental surgeon. Jack entered the chair, and, without wincing, endured a painful stopping of two of his molars.

"Bravo, son!" the senior dental surgeon said when the job was done. "You're made of the real stuff!"

When Jack joined up with the squad, he found those who had not suffered too

severely were scrubbing clothes in pails in a large wash-house. Petty Officer Teak had been called away to see one of the paymasters, and Busky Smith was having a quiet "mike" somewhere. The small boy with red hair, Tom Jones by name, who had left the dental surgery just before Busky, was leaning back on a form, his ginger head against the wall and giving a very excellent imitation of the coward's antics in the chair. "Yow! Yarooogh!" he gurgled. "I can't a-bear it! I ain't feeling well. Lemme alone!"

Some of those who had escaped serious hurt at the dentists' hands laughed uproariously.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Thus encouraged, "Ginger" Jones twisted and squirmed. From the extraordinary expressions he made, it seemed as though his

face were made of rubber.

"Look out, Ginger! Here he comes! He's got plenty o' pluck in some ways, remember!"

As Ginger got off the form, Busky strode into the wash-house, a sullen look on his rather coarse face.

"I heard you!" he said, addressing the squad in general. "Making fun of me, you were, just 'cause me nerves were a bit upset."

Then he strode furiously to Jack.

"What d'you mean by it?" he demanded fiercely.

"By what?" Jack asked.

Busky raised his fists threateningly.

*Good old Jack Gilbert! He's feeling in fine fettle, and he's having the time of his life on H.M.S. Rampant. In fact, there's only one thing that worries Jack now, and that's Clem Smith!*

"Why, comin' here and telling 'em a lot of lies about me," he exploded. "Jeering at me behind my back, eh! Telling 'em I was funky, I s'pose!"

Jack said quietly: "I've told them nothing."

"Liar!" Busky snapped.

Jack's eyes blazed, his hands went up.

Instantly Busky grabbed him by the throat, ripping his new flannel vest, and slammed him back hard against the white-washed wall, half-stunning him. The boys gasped; and Ginger Jones, in dismay, launched himself across the wash-house and gripped Busky's arm.

"Let him go!" yelled Ginger. "Jack Gilbert had nothing to do with it!"

"Yes, he did!" hooted Busky. "He was the last one in the surgery, and——"

"And I saw you, too," piped Ginger. "I was taking a quiz through the window, old son, and I showed these here other chaps what I saw. It was only a bit of fun."

With a wrench of his hands, Busky flung the half-dazed Jack Gilbert aside, and spun round in fury on the small, red-haired boy.

"You, was it!" he gurgled. And suddenly lashing out with his right, he knocked the little fellow senseless to the floor!

### Fighting Fury!

**T**HE new boys drew in their breaths simultaneously, so that it sounded like the suction of a pump.

In Busky's eyes showed a trace of fear as he stood over the inert form of the boy he had struck. Even to him there was something pathetic and frightening in that small, crumpled form; in the plaster-whiteness of the face, accentuated by the red hair that surmounted it, and the ugly, livid mark made by the impact of Busky's fist on the left side of the jaw.

"You—you brute!"

The hoarse exclamation was made by Jack Gilbert, who stood dazedly against the white-washed wall, his chest heaving.

The other lads, with less reason, were more dazed than Jack himself.

All were new arrivals at the Rampant naval training schools, and none had yet "found his feet." The unaccustomed confinement of barracks awed them; they were subdued by the feeling that the shadow of authority, as represented by Petty Officer Teak, was over them, even though they knew that the P.O. had been called away to the paymaster and was not likely to be back for a while.

Moreover, they were hypnotised by the prestige achieved by Busky Smith himself. On the previous day, Busky had been commended by the admiral himself for superb presence of mind and bravery in the ferry disaster; his name had been blazoned forth in the newspapers. It seemed incredible that the great Busky could play the common bully!

"There wasn't the need for that, Busky," protested one feebly. "It was only for a joke as Ginger was showing us how you acted in the dentist's chair."

The bully's anger welled up again.

"I can stand a joke with the best," he growled, "but I warn you, I won't have nobody spillin' a lot of lies about me."

He watched two of the lads drag Ginger into a more comfortable position on a pile of dirty clothes and douch his head with cold water. Then he turned as Jack suddenly lurched forward from the wash-house wall.

"Lies, d'you say!" spluttered Jack. "The kid was giving 'em the cast-iron truth! You haven't the pluck of a jellyfish!"

"What's that!" gulped Busky.

"You're a big, mouldy weed—a spineless wash-out!"

"Spike me! I—I'll——"

"Oh, you can brag all right!" hooted Jack, whose blood was well up. "Fact, if bragging wins medals in the Navy, you'll soon be shipping the V.C., the D.S.C., and the whole box o' tricks! Actually, you're only a cowardly hypocrite, and would shrivel like a dried eel if someone your own size stood up to you!"

### HOW THE STORY STARTED.

**JACK GILBERT**, a cheery youngster of some fifteen years, has his whole career changed in the course of one night. It happens when his rascally uncle, and his only living relative,

**LEW BONNER**, asks the boy to burgle a certain place. Jack refuses. A fight ensues, in which Bonner falls through a trapdoor, and is swept away by an underground stream—apparently to his doom. Jack thereupon decides to forget the sordid past and to start afresh. He tells his story to his only friend,

**BARNY MORLAND**, who takes him under his wing. Barny gets Jack to join H.M.S. Rampant, a naval training school at Porthaven, along with his—Barny's—nephew,

**CLEM SMITH**, a worthless individual, who hates Jack. Barny tells the boys that he intends to leave a sum of £2,000 to the one who acquits himself best in the Service. Crossing by ferry on the way back to the school, the boat on which the two boys are travelling collides with a steamer. Jack is horrified to see his uncle on this latter boat. The lad saves the ferry boat from sinking, but everybody thinks that Smith is responsible for the heroic action. Smith doesn't deny it, while Jack says nothing. At the Rampant, Smith—who is known as Busky—is looked upon as a hero, so, therefore, everybody is surprised when, on visiting the dentist's, he behaves like a coward.

(Now read on.)



The outburst took the wind completely from Busky's sails. He stood there, with his mouth gaping like a goldfish in a globe, among the other boys who were equally taken aback by the lashing denunciation of the burly lad they had lauded as a hero.

It was another crisis in Busky's early career in the Navy. His fear that Jack might denounce him further and tell the true story of the saving of the ferry, was swamped in the belief that no one would now credit the story. Busky had accepted the rôle of hero, and, willy-nilly, must play up to it.

"I'm a funk, am I?" he thundered. "I'd take on three like you, you scum of the slums, with one hand tied behind me!"

Yet again he shrank as, with a lightning movement, Jack stripped off his serge jumper and stood revealed with his blue-ribbed flannel vest surmounting his loose, belted trousers.

"Put 'em up!" snapped Jack.

The shifty eyes of Busky Smith roved round the wash-house.

He noted that young Ginger Jones was stirring, that there was expectancy in the looks of the other new entries.

Without troubling to remove his jumper, Busky pulled back the sleeves an inch or so and jerked a thumb towards the door.

"Keep a look-out for Teak," he ordered, "while I knock this cheeky cub flatter than a fourpenny plaice!"

A buzz of excitement sounded in the wash-house. Boylike, the new youngsters welcomed the prospect of a fight, while holding a sneaking sympathy with Jack.

And as the two rivals faced one another, the disparity between them appeared more marked than ever.

Busky, the son of a policeman, had inherited similar brawny muscles to those which had stood his father in good stead on many an occasion before he had met his untimely end. He had been well fed and nourished his whole life.

Which was more than Jack Gilbert had been during part of his life in the squalor of Brass Alley. There was latent muscle in Jack's lean frame, but it needed development, and his body wanted building up. His sole advantage—and that was a hidden one—was in his unquenchable pluck and fine fighting spirit which never in his life had accepted defeat until the last ounce of his limited physical strength was expended.

"Fight, would you?" exploded Busky. "Come on!"

Flailing his fists, he rushed at the boy he hated, intending to maintain his prestige by ending the fight with a few sledge-hammer blows.

But Jack had not fought bulky Bill Burke and the Brass Alley gang for nothing!

Down went his head, and as Busky's fists twice fanned his hair, he got home a brace of lightning jabs to the bully's ribs.

"Ow! Ouch!" gasped Busky.

"Snappy work!" applauded one of his new comrades.

The pain of the blows plus the applause of his new "shipmates," acted on Busky like the electric detonator of a gun on a cordite charge. With tigerish ferocity, he set about the work of destruction in grim earnest, slamming Jack back to the wall under an irresistible tornado of blows!

### Busky's Big Guns!

**T**HERE was something in this encounter like the collision between a battleship and a light cruiser. Like the battleship, Busky carried all the weight and heavy armament.

At close quarters the advantage of a cruiser's speed and nippiness is nullified by the heavier guns of the battleship.

Young Jack realised something of this. Driven back against the whitewashed wall, he made desperate efforts to extricate himself.

It was not easy. Busky threw his weight against him to hold him there, drew back his right fist and plunged it forward at his head.

Twice he struck blows, either of which would have battered Jack into unconsciousness had it got home. But each time, with lightning jerks of the head, Jack avoided the punishment, and Busky's fist smashed against the brickwork.

"Ouch! You swab!" gasped Busky.

Backward he reeled with a set of badly bruised knuckles, and Jack, following up, whipped in an uppercut which missed the point by a fraction of an inch, but landed on Busky's nose.

"Crumbs! Tapped his claret he has!"

"First blood to Jack! Wade in again, matey!"

Despite the memory of Busky's supposed heroism, the sporting boys lent vocal encouragement to the smaller lad.

Vainly, however, Jack tried to keep his more powerful foe at arm's length, and Busky, rushing in again, hammered by sheer weight through his defences and smashed him to the floor.

"Had enough?" panted Busky.

A ribbon of red trickled from Jack's lips in which he had set his teeth.

Not a word did he answer, but staggered up, the light of his unconquerable spirit still burning steadily in his eyes.

Busky smashed a fist to his neck, and Jack, standing his ground, retaliated with alternate right and left hooks which shook the bully.

It was toe-to-toe, hammer-and-tongs scrapping, with Jack growing weaker at every blow. His life in the squalor of Brass Alley had not fitted him for a physical struggle so severe as this.

Ginger Jones, partly recovered from his knock-out, strove to intervene, but was held back by two of the other boys.

"Pipe down!" panted Busky. "I—I'll slaughter him!"

By sheer weight of blows, he drove Jack round the wash-house; and Jack, in spite of his weakening strength, fought coolly and scientifically to hand back hooks, swings and jabs to every unguarded portion of the bully's body. If suffer defeat he must, he would at least go down with colours flying!

His pluck against the fearful odds made friends for him of all the onlookers. Even the boy who had been ordered to the door to keep cave, deserted his post to see the battle.

"Let up on him, you cowardly big skate!" he cried. "Tackle someone your own weight!"

"Watch that right of his, Jack!"

the ugly crimson marks of raw knuckles, the eyes glazed but still a-shine with a defiance that all the pounding of the bully's fists had been unable to quench.

He missed with a vicious left to the jaw, but sprawled Jack upon some washing with a clout on the chest.

Amid the silence that fell, broken only by the bully's heavy breathing, Jack lifted his tired and battered body from the floor. It was a sheer effort of will and grit of one who knew no more the meaning of the word defeat than did the great little Nelson of old!

He stood swaying, blindly seeking for Busky, and in his weakness scarce able to lift fists.

The pathos of it stuck to the hearts of all



A shadow darkened the doorway, and instinctively the boys glanced in that direction. The scrap between Jack and Busky Smith became forgotten, for there stood P. O. Teak. "Belay there! Tar me, can't I leave you for ten minutes without you've got to go fighting one another!" he bellowed angrily.

"Come over with your left, matey!"

"Sheer off, Busky, you've given him enough!"

Although Busky heard the last remark in the welter of advice hurled about the wash-house, he hammered away with relentless fury. As well might the boys have tried to plead with a savage grizzly to forego its prey!

"Take that—and that!" panted Busky.

Now he had Jack at his mercy. He saw the younger boy's face, deathly pale save for

except Busky, who swung his right back viciously.

Before the blow could fall, Ginger Jones flung himself between the pair.

"Pack up!" he yelled. "You've beaten him—ain't that enough!"

"Let me get at him!" breathed Busky hoarsely. "Out of my way or I'll 'out' you again as well!"

"Carry on!" challenged Ginger. "If you're still mindful to fight I'll take you on with the 'raw 'uns'—same as Jack!"

But at that precise moment the lads in the wash place became aware of an ominous shadow. Instinctively all turned toward the door, and framed there they saw the austere figure of Petty Officer Teak!

It was probable that the P.O. had seen something of the concluding stages of the fight and the gallantry of the younger boy as he had approached, although his footsteps had not been heard in the shindy which had been going on. His visage was stern and his bark rang out gruff as a St. Bernard's.

"Belay there! Tar me, can't I leave you for ten minutes without you falling out?—so fall in!"

The new entries, gawkish-looking in their unaccustomed uniforms of blue serge, shuffled into ragged line while the big-hearted Ginger Jones tried to act as a human prop for Jack, whose legs showed signs of crumpling under him.

"Fightin' eh, me hearties?" rumbled Teak. "What d'you mean by hammering a lad smaller than yourself, Smith?"

"M-me?" stuttered Busky. "I—that is he—I mean we——"

"Silence!" thundered Teak. "You'll find yourselves 'in the rattle' if you start these games, me lads! Fightin'!"—it was as though P.O. Teak was appalled at the mere thought of such a thing—"Fightin'! Remember, me lads, you're in the Navy now!"

"It wasn't Gilbert's fault," piped Ginger; "I really started it."

"Then I've a good mind to run you up afore the lieutenant, me lad!" snapped Teak. "Here, take that lad, Gilbert, and put his figurehead under a cold tap. And look at your face, Smith!"

The callous Busky rolled his eyes as though in a praiseworthy effort to accomplish this contortionist feat.

Before dismissing the class for further instruction in clothes-washing, Petty Officer Teak drew a vivid verbal picture of the pains and penalties that awaited the young sailor who so far forgot naval discipline as to scrap with "raw 'uns" during working hours. And the boys were duly impressed.

Meanwhile, Ginger Jones solaced Jack at the cold water tap.

"You steer clear of him, chum," Ginger advised; "you're neither his size nor weight. 'Sides, it's my turn to have a go at him next!"

"What's that?" mumbled Busky, as he also came to spruce up. "Want a dose of the same medicine, do you? All right—you wait!"

Although Jack, so much physically inferior to Busky, had got the worst of the encounter, he by no means accepted his rival's domination. To Jack—because he still had an ounce or two of strength left—that fight had been indecisive.

entries, Petty Officer Teak sought the solace of the P.O.'s mess. By the lash of his tongue in making the boys "jump to it," he had further impressed them with the enormity of fighting as an offence, and awed them into a proper respect for authority.

"Well, how's it been going, old man?" inquired a fellow P.O., who had been out instructing some of the advanced boys of the Rampant in boat pulling. "How have you been getting on with them would-be admirals of yours?"

"Slowly," returned Teak. "One or two of 'em had a bit of a scrap and have somewhat spoiled their youthful beauty, but they'll shake down. Now what about drifting round to the recreation-room for a game of snooker?"

### In the Night!

UNLIKE H.M.S. St. Vincent and other naval schools, Rampant used hammocks instead of beds for the boys in training.

Shortly after nine o'clock that night, when Petty Officer Teak was playing snooker in the P.O.'s recreation-room, all the hammocks in the small new entries' dormitory were occupied.

Most of the boys were glad to turn in at this early hour, eager to forget in sleep their recent visit to the naval dentists.

In two hammocks near to one another were the rivals, Jack Gilbert and Clement Smith, each re-reading a letter received from old Barny Morland, and which had been handed to them at tea-time.

With an impatient exclamation, Busky crumpled his into a ball and tossed it on the "deck," then reached for a well-thumbed twopenny publication, entitled "The Racing Greyhound." This he carefully folded and placed inside the covers of the Seamanship Manual, Vol. I, with which he had been issued. If P.O. Teak or anyone appeared at "lights out," it would give a better impression of zeal in his new calling.

In the nearby hammock, Jack re-read his own letter from Barny with swimming eyes. It had been written before the accounts of the ferry accident in Porthaven harbour had appeared in the newspapers.

"Dear Jack," ran the missive,—“I hope you and Clem are settling down all right. You will find it a bit strange at first, but I know you have got the grit to see it through.

"I wish I was as sure of Clem. I know, and you know, Jack, that he is a pretty weak character. That is why I was so anxious for him to join the Service, to get him pulled together. That is why I made the offer about my money, to make him keen as well as you.

"I am glad Clem has got you with him, Jack. Often I have worried about him and wished he'd got a bit less muscle and more character. Stand by him as if you were his

At the end of his day's work with the new

own brother. Wishing you the best of luck and success.—Your affectionate old pal.

“BARNY MORLAND.”

As Jack finished re-reading that letter, he was a deal nearer to tears than he had ever been since that time when he had been sent off to the reformatory school.

He who had never known a home except the wretched tenement in Brass Alley, felt more “home-sick” than any other boy in the dormitory. How he longed to see old Barny—that dear old pal of his—once again! He would have given all his prospects of a career in the Navy to have been whirled by some magic carpet to London and the old fire-float station where probably Barny was smoking a late pipe.

The mention in the letter about Clem Smith left him cold.

The glance he cast at Busky, now absorbed in the form of the best-known greyhounds in the country, was filled with bitterness. He had intended to play the game—to be on friendly terms with his rival—but Busky himself had made that impossible.

And small wonder, too, if Jack felt embittered. Two of his molars ached from the drills of the dentist; two others felt loose and uncomfortable from the cruder dentistry of Busky’s fists. His mouth was cut and swollen; one of his cheeks smarted under a strip of plaster, a swollen left ear throbbled to his every heart-beat.

To make matters worse, the officer on rounds had insisted on seeing the new enries’ kit, and his lynx eye had noted the tear in Jack’s vest made by Busky’s rough usage of him. The officer had been pungent, and in a few brisk sentences had reduced Jack to a feeling that he was so much rubbish encumbering the face of the earth.

The cleanliness, and orderliness of everything in the Rampant, proved further disquietening factors to Jack. Not that he was averse from cleanliness—far from it; no boy with his former sorry opportunities could have been more particular. But the whole atmosphere here was so different from what he had become accustomed to while living with his uncle, Lew Bonner, in Brass Alley.

“Crumbs,” moaned Jack to himself in the agony of his spirit. “I wish I could clear!”

A tear cut down his cheek from his swimming eyes, and angrily he brushed it away. Oh, for old Barny—a pal!

A hand reached out and clasped over his. The boy from the hammock on his left leaned out and spoke in a low tone to him.

“I say, Jack Gilbert, what d’you think about you and me becoming raggies?”

Jack blinked his eyes in an effort to remove all trace of the emotion which had possessed him, though he guessed that young Ginger Jones, who had stuck up for him in his fight with Busky, had realised something of his fed-up feeling.

“What d’you mean, Ginger?” he demanded, forcing a smile.

“Raggies? Why, pals, of course! That’s what they call ‘em in the Navy. If you fall out you ‘part brass rags,’ so they say.

Aye,” added Ginger Jones, with an air of authority. “I know a bit about the Navy, you see: my dad was a gunner’s mate—‘knocked out’ at Jutland, he was.”

Jack mumbled his sympathy, but Ginger rattled on unheeding of him.

“You see, the idea is that pals among bluejackets always share cleaning rags, polish, and so forth, which is why they call ‘em raggies.”

“Of course, I’d like to be pals,” smiled Jack.

“Good old Jack!” exclaimed Ginger. Then, lowering his tone, he confided: “D’you know, after the inspection by the old admiral yesterday, I thought I’d like to chum up with that chap you arrived here with—Busky, the fellow who put the ferry aground. There, thought I, is a chap anyone could be proud to have as a chum. But hang it, after his giddy leap off the deep end to-day, I’ve got no use for him. I like your style better—raggie.”

It was as though a fresh sea-breeze had blown into that dormitory, clearing some of the cobwebs from Jack’s throbbing brain. He had thought himself without a pal, but he had forgotten staunch little Ginger.

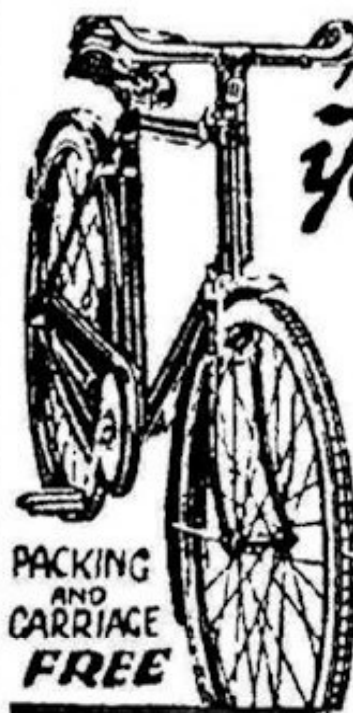
Aye, it was good to have a “raggie”!

A minute later the dormitory received a fatherly visit from P.O. Teak—who stood thirty points up in a half-finished snooker game—and then a bugle sounded and the electric lights went out, except one on the landing of the stone stairway.

Within fifteen minutes the dormitory was wrapped in sleep. Jack was as tired as most of the others, but for a while he remained awake, thinking over old Barny’s letter and the decent way in which young Ginger Jones had acted toward him.

He fell into a doze, but roused suddenly to the knowledge that another fellow was also awake. Busky Smith was stealthily climbing out of his hammock!

*(What’s Smith up to now? You can bet he’s bent on making mischief—and you can be sure, too, that Jack will have something to say in the matter. Don’t miss reading next week’s exciting instalment, chums!)*



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