

THE EMPIRE ENLARGED LIBRARY

THE POPULAR NEW STORY BOOK

Vol. 1 (New Series), No. 15.



THE DARK LANTERN

A THRILLING NEW STORY.
A Tale of CHARLES PEACE, showing the Baneful Influence of Bad Companionship on a Young Boy, and the Result of Weakness of Character Coupled with a Clever but Distorted Mind.

In Her Person.
THUMP! thump! thump!
"Mercy on me!" cried the woman at the wash-tub.
"What's that?"
Mrs. Peace trembled in every limb. The sound came from an adjoining room, and this room had no window, and only a door opening from the kitchen in which she was now standing. The room was not much bigger than a lumber closet, and she had been in it five minutes before. There was nothing amiss then.
"It's a warning!" she cried, in quivering tones. "Something's happened to my boy. I always felt it would, and the time's come. Charles's not like other lads. He goes his own way. I don't know what he does, and he never tells me. He's so—so strange, and—"
Another startling noise, this time from the front door, but none the less alarming. Whoever was knocking meant to come in. Mrs. Peace heard a pompous, authoritative voice call out!
"Unlock the door, or we'll break it open."
"Wait a minute, please," implored Mrs. Peace. "I'm hurrying as fast as I can."
"Look sharp, then!" came the quick response.
Poor Mrs. Peace was terribly bewildered. She wanted to satisfy herself about the strange sound from the next room, but she dared not keep the impetuous visitor waiting. Not that she thought he would vary out his throat of breaking in. It could only be a joke—one of the neighbours, perhaps, who wanted to frighten her.
Wiping the soap-suds from her hands and arming the dew back the bolts. The caller was very impatient, and did not give her time to lift the latch. The door was pushed, and a policeman's bulldog barked in her face, almost blinding her for a second. A fat police-sergeant and a lanky constable strode into the room, round the walls, ceiling, and floor. Both men were breathing hard, as if they'd run very fast. Fat Sergeant Tabbs especially.
"Why didn't you"—puff, puff!—"open the"—puff, puff!—"door directly we knocked? That's a clue, Pike," he added, in an undertone, to his subordinate.
"Right, you are, sergeant," responded the lean constable.
"I opened it as soon as I could," said Mrs. Peace faintly.
"Well, well, where's the boy who you"—puff, puff!—"ran in here just now, eh?"
"What boy? I've seen no boy!" rejoined Mrs. Peace, shaking in her shoes.
"She pretends she hasn't seen a

boy—that's a clue, too, Pike," whispered the sergeant importantly.
"Now, then, woman, don't tell me any falsehoods! You'd better own up, or it'll be the worse for you!"
"But I've nothing to own up to. I don't know what you're talking about," wailed the woman.
"We'll see to that. Keep an eye on her, Pike, while I search the place."
Mrs. Peace sank into a chair, overcome with fright. Those mysterious warning sounds had come in vain. The boy wanted by the policeman could be no other than her Charles. What had he been doing? She had often thought he had some queer friends, but he had never done anything wrong, so far as she knew.
Meanwhile, Sergeant Tabbs had opened the door leading into the little room. His bulldog showed a couple of lines stretched from side to side, and wet clothes hanging. Mrs. Peace used the room as a sort of drying-ground. Her cottage at the bottom of a narrow alley near Angel Road, Stepfield, had no back yard. The dust and the water-butt were in the alley itself close to the front door.
"I'll bet the woman's one of the gang," thought the sergeant. "I saw the little beggar turn the corner and dive into the alley. He couldn't have come into any place but this. There's no other cottage, and if that ain't a clue, I don't know what it is."
The fat sergeant pushed his way between the clothes; excepting a clothes-basket, there was no article to be seen. Sergeant Tabbs, with a quick effort, squatted on his haunches, nearly bursting his belt in so doing, in front of the small fireplace, let the lantern glare on the stove, and looked up at the chimney.
"Humph!" he grunted. "No much bigger than a rabbit-hole. A squirrel might crawl up, but not this boy! No clue there!"
Puffing and blowing, the sergeant returned to the kitchen. There was the upper part yet to be searched. He groped his way up a rickety narrow staircase, and Mrs. Peace could hear his heavy footsteps overhead. Presently he came down, looking very disgraced.
"Any other rooms besides those two upstairs?" he asked.
"No; if there was, I suppose you'd find 'em," returned Mrs. Peace.
She was beginning to pluck up courage now that the sergeant had found nothing. Of course, Charles wasn't in the place. How could he be? Well—well, she didn't know what to think. The boy had always been such a puzzle to her. If it were really "waxed" by the police, and chance to come in—while the officers were in the cottage!

Charles was hiding from the police in the chimney.

See this new story

A New and Interesting School Story for All.

THE RIVALS OF ST WODES.



A New School Tale by Charles Hamilton Author of The Rivals of St Kats.

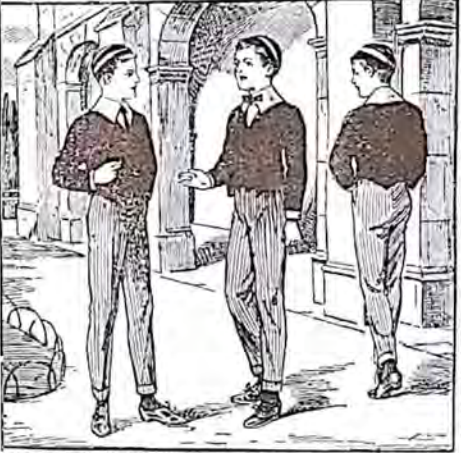
WHAT HAS TAKEN PLACE.

Dick Penwyn, a sturdy Cornish lad, attending a County Council school, obtains a scholarship for St. Wode's. He arrives at the great public school full of doubts as to how he will be received by its future schoolfellows. To his delight and amazement he is received with open arms, six juniors, led by Blagden, the Fourth Form captain, meeting him at the station in the pouring rain. The truth is that Blagden & Co. take Pen for young Lord Lovell, who is expected to arrive that day, but Dick had no idea of this. The arrival of the real Lord Lovell, however, puts a different complexion on matters, and Blagden comes out in his true colours. Lord Lovell is taken up by Crawcour & Co. of the Fifth, and this causes resentment against him in the Fourth. In the dormitory the first night, Lovell is teased in a blunder, and only Penwyn raises his voice against the proceeding. The raggers then turn their attention to the Cornish lad, and attempt to give him "creeker-stamp parade." "I shall not move," says Pen hardily.

a mood for criticising a fellow who treated him even with common civility. Tabber, in cold water, on a winter's morning, was not a pastime much indulged in by the St. Wode's juniors. But Dick Penwyn enjoyed it, and he felt all the better when he dressed in the dormitory afterwards. Riding was going as he drove, and the juniors were slowly and unwillingly turning out. Blagden looked at the Cornish lad with a frown. "Early rise, with force," he remarked. "I suppose he's used to taking round milk before going to the Council school in the morning, or something of the sort. He, he, he!" "Nothing to be ashamed of in that," said Penwyn. "You'd be too jolly jolly to get up and do it." "Nor to the class that has to wash, apparently," said Newcombe as Blagden put on his collar, after giving his face the merest of a dash. And there was a laugh at Blagden's expense, and Blagden turned very red. His assumption of superiority was certainly somewhat annoying, considering that Pen had looked after a matter of course, and that Blagden had hardly washed himself at all. Pen made no reply to any of Blagden's remarks. He felt that if he answered every sneering remark that was made to him, or at him, he would never have done his lesson with care. He finished dressing quietly and left the dormitory. He was the first to see Newcombe was still combing his hair. Newcombe

mark. He swung out of the dormitory. A bitter spite against the viscount was burning in Blagden's breast. The more keenly he had desired to chum up with the viscount, the more bitterly he felt his failure and the ridicule it had brought upon him. He was quite keen enough to see that he never could be a friend of Lord Lovell's. And as he had nothing to gain by being subservient to his lordship, the next best thing was to show a rugged independence. Lord Lovell had strolled out into the quadrangle in the fresh, cold morning air. He was looking for the scholarship boy. Pen was in the quadrangle alone. A few early juniors were punting a fencer about, but they did not speak to Pen. Lovell crossed over to the Cornish lad. Pen saw that the viscount intended to speak, and he nodded and greeted him with a cheery smile. "I want to speak to you, you know," Lovell remarked. "Your name, Pendragon, isn't it—or was it Penwyn?" "Penwyn," said Dick, smiling. "Oh, yes, that's it; I'm always forgetting names. My name's Bunny to my friends. The fellows always call me Bunny. I'm sure I don't know why. I'd like you to call me Bunny." "I was almost," Pen said. "I want to thank you for sticking up for me as you did last night," said Lovell. "It was deuced plucky of you, and all that, you know; so

ship's simplicity was evident. He did not seem to be able to understand in the least what Pen was trying to explain to him. "What do you all have?" said the fellows here and there, "and how very poor, that I can't go to the Council school, and they say so on me." "Jove!" "You'll get on bad terms with a good fellow with you, and you'll stand!" "Oh, I understand that!" "You're not a bit!" "It may be a bit of difference to your comfort here, but it's of no consequence." "My dear Penwyn, that's all right. I like you, and if you like us, we'll chum up with you, and you'll be quiet." "By Jove," said Lovell, "I don't think that chap that would like to chum up with a fellow like you. I don't know whether you were educated at the Council school, or not, but I'm sure you are," said Lovell. "It's all the same to me." "I don't want you to think I'm ashamed of it," said Pen. "There's nothing to be ashamed of in it—only a silly duffer." "I should be horribly pleased to be acquainted with a fellow like you," said Lovell. "And don't think I've forgotten you just to mention it. I don't refer to you here, and it's only a common name here, and I hoped it would be different; but you can see for yourself how things have gone." "I know you stood by me like a brick, and you were friend of the choice." Dick took the viscount's hand, and he should be only too glad to chum up with you. "I was thinking I should be horribly pleased to be acquainted with a fellow like you." "Call me Bunny, old sport; my friends do." "Bunny, then?" "Oh, here you are!" "It was Blagden's abominable voice." The bully of the Fourth stood up to them, with a black scowl on his face. "Now, then, you young rascals, you're going through it," he claimed. "Jove!" "Pen stepped quietly in front of him. "Hands off!" he said calmly. Blagden gave him a furious look. "Are you going to interfere with my business?" he said. "Yes, you'll have to stand up for me before you touch Lovell!" Blagden clenched his hands miserably, but the viscount raised his fist in the common room at a previous day restrained him from obeying his impulse to beat down upon the Cornish lad with heavy fist.



"I think I should like to be your friend, you know," said Lord Lovell. "What do you say?" "I should like it," said Pen. "Then give us your flipper," said his lordship, holding out his hand.

Pen Makes a Friend! DICK PENWYN was first up in the Fourth Form dormitory in the morning. He was accustomed to early rising in his old home in Cornwall, where his first glance out of the window in the morning fell upon the blue, rolling Atlantic. Things were very different here. He stood and looked round him. Rising-bed had not yet come, and the juniors were mostly still asleep. Newcombe sat up in his bed and yawned. "Hello, young shaver!" he exclaimed. "You're up, eh?" "Yes," said Pen. "Morning wash, or tubber?" "You look as if you were!" "For what?" he asked. "Tubber." "What's that?" "What do you mean by tubber?" Pen asked, puzzled. Newcombe laughed. "Morning wash," he explained. "Oh, I see!" "We call it tubber here," said Newcombe. "Once upon a time, so long ago, the kids used to wash here in big wooden tubs. That was in the old time, of course, about a hundred years ago. We've got a jolly fine set of bath-rooms now—not enough to go round, of course, but school ever has enough for that. We take our turns for tubber; but if you get up early enough, and care to bath in cold water, you're always sure of it. See!" "I always have a cold bath," said Pen. Newcombe nodded. "It's good for you if you're strong, anyway," he said. "You look as strong as a horse. You must be, to put up a fight, as you did last night. Look here, I'll get up now, if you like, and we'll go to tubber." "Thank you!" Newcombe turned out. He put on his boots, and a big towel round his pyjamas, and nothing else, and left his dormitory. Dick Penwyn followed him in, exclaiming, "He was kindly susceptible to the kindness of Newcombe, and if there was a faint trace of patronage in Newcombe's manner, Pen did not notice it. He was not in

was rather given to being specially nice in his appearance. "Jove, you know!" Lord Lovell remarked, addressing nobody in particular. "That's not a bad chap, you know. He stood up for me, didn't you see?" "Oh, shut up!" growled Blagden. "Low cad, by Jove!" said his lordship. The juniors chuckled. Lovell seemed to ignore the fact that he was expressing his frank opinion to a fellow who was big enough to eat him. The viscount left the dormitory while Blagden was still considering what he should do to him. "I'll smash that loping cad," said Blagden, looking after his lordship. "I'll show him that he can't swank over us just because he's a master!" "I haven't seen him swank yet," said Raks. "Oh, you go and eat coke!" "You're a decent kid," said Pen. "I hope so. But—but I'm not like the rest of the fellows here," said Dick abruptly, and with cheeks growing red. "No; you've got more pluck than most of them, by Jove, you know! What?" "I don't mean that! Look here, I don't say any more here like the other fellows," Pen explained. "I've come here on a scholarship." "Jolly clever, isn't it?" said Lovell admiringly. "I wouldn't do that, you know." Pen smiled. "I'm jolly decent of you to put it that way," he said; "but, you see, it—it makes a difference to my position here." "Does it?" "Yes, it was educated in the first place at a Council school." "Pen burst into a laugh. His lord-

fact, levelly. What? I think I should like to be your friend, you know. What do you say? We're both new fellows here, and there seems to be a lot of rough play about. What?" "I should like it," said Pen. His lordship held out his hand. "Then give us your flipper," he said. Dick hesitated. "Look here," he said. "I suppose you don't know who I am, Lord Lovell. I'd better explain." Lovell looked surprised. "You've just told me," he said. "Your name's Penwyn, isn't it?" "I mean the kind of fellow I am." "You're a decent kid." "I hope so. But—but I'm not like the rest of the fellows here," said Dick abruptly, and with cheeks growing red. "No; you've got more pluck than most of them, by Jove, you know! What?" "I don't mean that! Look here, I don't say any more here like the other fellows," Pen explained. "I've come here on a scholarship." "Jolly clever, isn't it?" said Lovell admiringly. "I wouldn't do that, you know." Pen smiled. "I'm jolly decent of you to put it that way," he said; "but, you see, it—it makes a difference to my position here." "Does it?" "Yes, it was educated in the first place at a Council school." "Pen burst into a laugh. His lord-

Bunny's Champion. LORD LOVELL looked from side to side. He said to himself, Lovell was not to be reckoned as he had already shown. He had no brain did not work quickly. He did not know who he was, and he had been brought up to regard himself as something of a fellow here. Things were to be done. He was in the least surprised at Pen's lack of his quarrel upon himself. It was quite a natural order of things. Lovell's mind was clear. Blagden fixed his eyes on the viscount. "Will you get aside?" he said, between his teeth. "No, I won't." "I'm not quarrelling with you; I'm going for Lovell." "You're not!" said Pen calmly. "Tackle a chap your own size!" "You're not!" said Blagden contemptuously. "I'm Lovell's taller than you are," said "Jove," Pen remarked. "I'm jolly decent of you to put it that way," he said; "but, you see, it—it makes a difference to my position here." "Does it?" "Yes, it was educated in the first place at a Council school." "Pen burst into a laugh. His lord-

ship's simplicity was evident. He did not seem to be able to understand in the least what Pen was trying to explain to him. "What do you all have?" said the fellows here and there, "and how very poor, that I can't go to the Council school, and they say so on me." "Jove!" "You'll get on bad terms with a good fellow with you, and you'll stand!" "Oh, I understand that!" "You're not a bit!" "It may be a bit of difference to your comfort here, but it's of no consequence." "My dear Penwyn, that's all right. I like you, and if you like us, we'll chum up with you, and you'll be quiet." "By Jove," said Lovell, "I don't think that chap that would like to chum up with a fellow like you. I don't know whether you were educated at the Council school, or not, but I'm sure you are," said Lovell. "It's all the same to me." "I don't want you to think I'm ashamed of it," said Pen. "There's nothing to be ashamed of in it—only a silly duffer." "I should be horribly pleased to be acquainted with a fellow like you," said Lovell. "And don't think I've forgotten you just to mention it. I don't refer to you here, and it's only a common name here, and I hoped it would be different; but you can see for yourself how things have gone." "I know you stood by me like a brick, and you were friend of the choice." Dick took the viscount's hand, and he should be only too glad to chum up with you. "I was thinking I should be horribly pleased to be acquainted with a fellow like you." "Call me Bunny, old sport; my friends do." "Bunny, then?" "Oh, here you are!" "It was Blagden's abominable voice." The bully of the Fourth stood up to them, with a black scowl on his face. "Now, then, you young rascals, you're going through it," he claimed. "Jove!" "Pen stepped quietly in front of him. "Hands off!" he said calmly. Blagden gave him a furious look. "Are you going to interfere with my business?" he said. "Yes, you'll have to stand up for me before you touch Lovell!" Blagden clenched his hands miserably, but the viscount raised his fist in the common room at a previous day restrained him from obeying his impulse to beat down upon the Cornish lad with heavy fist.

THE BROAD ARROW.

...the points of the ...

...the ...

...the ...

...the ...

...the ...

...the ...

...the ...

...the ...

...the ...

...the ...

...the ...

...the ...

...the ...

...the ...

...the ...

...the ...

...the ...

A Favourite with All.

COUSIN ETHEL'S SCHOOLDAYS

A TALE OF TOM MERRY'S CHUM

BY MARTIN CLIFFORD

Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, of St. ...

(Read on from here).

Forbidden Sweets.

"I CAME for a parcel," said Ethel, blushing, as she entered.

"Is there a parcel, Miss Ethel Cleveland, Mrs. Filby?"

"There seems to be nothing else this afternoon, ma'am," she said.

"Ink," ejaculated Miss Penfold.

"Yes, ma'am."

Mrs. Filby pushed forward a large brown-paper parcel.

Miss Penfold looked at it in amazement.

It was labelled "Ink," but it did not bear the remotest resemblance to the shape of an ink-bottle.

"Dear me!" said Miss Penfold. "Have you been ordering a large quantity of ink, Ethel?"

"No," stammered Ethel.

"There must be a large quantity here—at least a gallon jar," said the head-mistress of St. Freda's.

"May I take it, please?" said Ethel timidly.

"Stay a moment. If you did not order a quantity of ink, there must be some mistake," said Miss Penfold, with a puzzled look.

"Miss Cleveland's name is written on it, ma'am," said Mrs. Filby.

"Yes, but there must be some mistake, as Ethel has not ordered the ink. Indeed, what use should a gallon or more of ink be to a girl?"

She knew that as soon as the wrappings were unfolded, boxes of sweets would be revealed, which it was against the rules for the girls to smuggle into St. Freda's.

She was hoping against hope that something would happen to Miss Penfold away before the contents of the packet were finally revealed.

"Do you mind the knots difficult, Ethel?" said Miss Penfold.

"Here they are, miss," said Mrs. Filby.

"Thank you," stammered Ethel. She cut the string despatchedly.

There was no help for it now. She threw open the brown paper, and disclosed two large cardboard boxes.

One of them was labelled "Chocolates," and the other "Mixed."

Miss Penfold looked at them, and her eyes seemed to grow large and round with amazement.

She smiled at the girls, and Ethel, who had been so nervous, now looked quite at ease.

...something would happen to Miss Penfold away before the contents of the packet were finally revealed.

"Do you mind the knots difficult, Ethel?" said Miss Penfold.

"Here they are, miss," said Mrs. Filby.

"Thank you," stammered Ethel. She cut the string despatchedly.

There was no help for it now. She threw open the brown paper, and disclosed two large cardboard boxes.

One of them was labelled "Chocolates," and the other "Mixed."

Miss Penfold looked at them, and her eyes seemed to grow large and round with amazement.

She smiled at the girls, and Ethel, who had been so nervous, now looked quite at ease.

...the ...

...the ...

...the ...

...the ...

...the ...

...the ...

...the ...

...the ...

...the ...

...the ...

...the ...

...the ...

...the ...

...the ...

...the ...

...the ...

...the ...

...the ...

...the ...

...the ...

Penfold quietly. "You must know that it is not right to have things smuggled into St. Freda's in this way. You are ordered to make up-chances to a certain extent at the school shop, but anything of this sort is quite forbidden."

"I—I know," stammered Ethel. Miss Penfold's face grew very severe.

"Has your father done it all the time, Ethel?"

"Please explain."

"It was not I who ordered these things," said Ethel, seeing that the whole story must come out now.

"Oh, I see! Without your knowledge, Ethel? That alters the case completely, of course."

"Without my knowledge at the time they were ordered, certainly," said Ethel. "I was told they were coming, that is all, when it was too late to stop them."

"They were real in kindness, but very thoughtless," said Ethel. "I did not know what to do when I heard they were being sent. There were other things, too—ginger-bread and cakes—"

"And who sent them?"

"Ethel was silent."

"You see, Ethel, this is really a smuggling trick, and if a relation of yours has been so foolish as to

...the ...

...the ...

...the ...

...the ...

...the ...

...the ...

...the ...

...the ...

...the ...

...the ...

...the ...

...the ...

...the ...

...the ...

...the ...

...the ...

...the ...

...the ...

...the ...

...the ...

...the ...

"Yes," said Ethel, hanging her head.

"The lad I saw in the train the day you came to St. Freda's, who recommended you, if I remember rightly, to put rats in my hatbox if I should not meet with your approval as head-mistress?" said Miss Penfold.

"Yes."

"Well, I am sure the lad had no intention of being disrespectful to me either in that case or in this," said Miss Penfold. "I shall not take any notice of the matter, Ethel; but you must write home and tell him that there must be nothing of the sort again. Or if you are seeing him soon, you may tell him."

"Thank you so much, Miss Penfold."

"Not at all."

"And the sweets?" said Ethel hesitatingly. "Shall I leave them here?"

"They must be confiscated," said Miss Penfold, with a nod. "You may leave them here, Ethel."

"Yes, Miss Penfold."

And Ethel, glad to escape so cleverly from the housekeeper's room, Dolores met her in the passage.

"What is the matter?" she asked, noticing Ethel's flushed cheeks.

"Dolores laughed softly."

"The ridiculous boy!" she exclaimed. "But he has a kind heart, Ethel. I like your cousin very much."

"He has a very kind heart," said Ethel. "But he will get me into trouble if he is not more careful. I shall write to him."

"No need to do that—you can see him."

"I like you mean, Dolores?"

"Look!"

Dolores unfolded her hand and showed a stone with a note tied round it. "Miss Ethel Cleveland" was scrawled on the note in pencil.

Cousin Ethel looked at it in amazement.

"Where did you get that, Dolores?" she asked.

"It was pitched over the wall into the garden from the road."

Ethel looked distressed.

"Oh, dear! Is it foolish fellow?"

"He is very mysterious," agreed Dolores. "I came to look for you, when I picked it up. It is fortunate that Miss Terrell did not find it. She might have imagined that you were receiving messages from a boy outside the school."

Ethel looked startled.

"Surely none of the girls of St. Freda's do anything like that, Dolores?"

Dolores gave a curious laugh.

"This is your first boarding-school, Ethel, isn't it?"

"Yes."

"Well, there is a great deal for you to learn then, that is all!"

"But I don't understand the Spanish girl, changing the subject."

"It means that Arthur wishes to see you, and he is not more careful. She might have imagined that you were receiving messages from a boy outside the school."



"It is very extraordinary," said Miss Penfold. "There must be some mistake. You had better open the parcel here, Ethel, and let me see what it contains!"

round with amazement. She signed to Ethel to open the boxes.

"The sweets!" ejaculated Mrs. Filby. "Bless my soul!"

Miss Penfold looked at Ethel. The girl was silent, with crimson cheeks.

Very Cautious. "DEAR me!" said Miss Penfold. "This is not—er—ink!"

"No!" stammered Ethel.

"Why have you had sweets sent to you in this way, Ethel?" asked Miss

smuggle things to you here, it amounts to setting all authority at defiance," said the Head of St. Freda's.

"I must write to the person, whoever she is, and point out that this cannot be continued."

"It is a boy, Miss Penfold," said Ethel, scarlet. "He—he imagines that things can be done here the same as in a boys' school. But he meant no harm, Miss Penfold."

The head-mistress's face broke into a smile.

"Ah, I think I can guess what boy, too! Your Cousin Arthur?"

FREE KEW SEEDS FOR SELLING 12 PACKETS OF KEW SEEDS AT 1d. per Packet. Includes list of seed types and contact information for Messrs. Veroity & Co.

TEN DAYS' FREE TRIAL. "GOVENTRY FLYERS" BARRIERS FIFTEEN INCHES. Includes image of a bicycle and promotional text for Mead Cycle Co.

MEAD CYCLE CO., Dept. 123 B, 113, Paradise Street, LIVERPOOL. Applications with regard to Advertisement Space in this paper should be addressed to Stanley H. Dowerman, Advertisement Manager, THE EMPIRE LIBRARY, 6, Boulevard Street, E.C.

PHONOGRAPHS, WATCHES, RINGS, ETC., ETC. FREE!!! Includes image of a gramophone and promotional text for The Famous Boxer and The Marvel Library.

A CAPITAL LITTLE SHORT COMPLETE STORY.

RAIDING THE RAIDERS

A Tale of Gordon Gay & Co.

By PROSPER HOWARD.



CHAPTER 1.

The Plotless.

WHICH there's a hamper for Master Tadpole, young sir, and I darsent 'nd it hover to no one else.

Thus spoke old Giles, the Rycomb carrier, as three youths accosted him at the entrance-gates of Hylands Grammar School.

Frank Monk, Lane, and Carboy looked at one another significantly.

"So there's a parcel for Tadpole, is there, Giles?" said Frank Monk genially.

"Good! Hand it over, and we'll let Taddy know it's come."

"Which I darsent 'nd it borer, sir, as I said afore," said old Giles stoutly.

Frank Monk felt in his pocket and produced a seltene.

"Now don't be so breastly suspicious, Giles," said he persuasively, allowing the seltene to glint in his palm. "We're friends of Tadpole's, you know."

"Which I'm not saying as you ain't, Master Monk," said Giles obstinately. "But this 'ere 'amper is for Master Tadpole."

Frank Monk gave a grunt.

"You're an old ass, Giles!" he remarked. "But take this tanner, anyway, and don't let on that we tried to bag the hamper."

"Right you are, Master Monk!" said Giles, touching his cap with a grin.

Frank Monk & Co. turned away, looking thoughtful.

"We must have that hamper, chaps, of course," said Frank Monk, after a pause.

"Certainly!" said Carboy.

"Of course!" said Lane.

"It would be a waste of good grub to let Gordon Gay & Co. wolf the lot," pursued Monk.

"Ha, ha! Hear, hear!"

"Well, the question is, how are we going to get it?"

Lane and Carboy exchanged looks.

"Blessed if I know what you're leader of this Co. for!" said Carboy, with a snarl.

"Hear, hear!" said Lane. "I suppose a leader ought to know what to do in a simple matter like bagging another chap's hamper."

"Of course!" assented Carboy.

Frank Monk glared at his two friends.

"You couple of asses!"

"Eh?"

"You cranking dummkies!"

"Look here—"

"You fatheaded chumps!"

"I tell you—"

"Do you think we're going to let that hamper slip through our fingers just because we've failed—"

"You've failed!" put in Carboy pointedly.

"Failed to get it from that duffer, Giles!" shouted Frank Monk wrathfully.

Carboy and Lane chuckled.

"Then you've got an idea, Master Monk."

"What course I have!" snorted Monk.

"Good!"

"Put with it!"

And Frank Monk & Co. walked off with their heads very close together.

CHAPTER 2.

Fee!

"**M**Y hat! This looks good, Taddy!"

"A!"

"Smocky ripping!"

Tadpole had recovered his hamper safely from the faithful Giles, and the contents of it, laid out on the table in Study 13, drew forth the above exclamations of approval from Gordon Gay and Jack and Harry Wootton, Tadpole's study-mates.

"Yes, it does look like a good feed, you fellows, and I'm sure I'm very grateful to my Aunt Emma for sending it me."

"Hear, hear!"

"Three cheers for Tadpole's Aunt Emma!"

"Hurrah!"

"At first," went on Tadpole, "I was a little disappointed that the hamper did not contain paints and drawing materials instead of food."

"Shame!"

"Greens."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"But on second thoughts, I'm glad it is a feed, because I do not often get a hamper, and I should not have been able to share the contents with you fellows if it had been artist's materials."

"Good old Taddy!"

Tadpole was the genius of the Fourth at the Grammar School, and, in his own opinion, the foremost artist of the day. He had never been able to persuade anyone else to this belief, and he was frequently called the General Nuisance of the junior school, but he had a heart of gold beneath his eccentricity, and though much chaffed, he was generally popular with his schoolmates.

"Now, I think we might start on the grub," said Tadpole genially.

"It's a little earlier than usual for tea, but I dare say we are all quite hungry enough."

"Father!" said Harry Wootton emphatically.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The four juniors sat down to the table, and in a very few seconds the sardines, the tongue, and the beef-steak pie were being vigorously attacked.

The buzz of conversation had just given place to a steady munching of four pairs of jaws, when a startling interruption disturbed the harmony of the feast.

The door of Study 13 was flung violently open. There was a rush of feet in the passage, and a head—Carboy's head—was thrust into the study, bearing an expression of wild alarm.

"Fire!" yelled Carboy, with starting eyes. "Fire! Quick, you chaps! Fire!"

And the head was withdrawn as suddenly as it had appeared, while the rush of feet passed down the passage in the direction of the stair-door.

"Fire!"

"M-m-m-my hat! Help! Fire!"

And Snipe fairly bounded down the stairs, his eyes bulging with terror, so that the chums of Study 13 could not help grinning.

"Where's the fire?" said Gordon Gay, as the four hurried out into the quad in the wake of the terrified Snipe.

Two or three juniors, most of them very pale, were grouped in the quad, looking anxiously round them for signs of the fire. The only sign that could be seen was a thin column of smoke floating up from behind the wall of the Head's garden.

"There's a fire!" stammered

The studies in the Fourth Form



"Fire!" yelled Carboy, with starting eyes. "Fire! Quick, you chaps! Fire!"

passage were almost all empty at this time, as it was a little early for the fellows to have come in from the playing fields, so that when the chums of Study 13 rushed into the passage there was only one other junior in it.

And Carpenter did not stay in it long; he was dashing along towards the stairs at top speed, evidently in a state of something like panic.

The sight of his solitary fleeing figure did not tend to reassure Gordon Gay & Co., and they, too, raced for the stairhead at the end of the passage.

"Blessed if I can smell any smoke!" gasped Gordon Gay, as he ran along by the side of Taddy. "I wonder where the fire is!"

Jack Wootton anxiously overheard. "Anyway, there's nobody about here."

"No. Let's get out into the quad first, anyway."

The juniors dashed down the stairs in a body, overtaking another junior, who was proceeding down very leisurely. It was Snipe, the cad of the Fourth Form.

"Fire, Snipe! Quick! Fire!" yelled Harry Wootton in his ear, as he charged into him.

Snipe gave a yell and turned green.

"W-what!"

"Fire!"

"M-m-m-my hat! Help! Fire!"

And Snipe fairly bounded down the stairs, his eyes bulging with terror, so that the chums of Study 13 could not help grinning.

"Where's the fire?" said Gordon Gay, as the four hurried out into the quad in the wake of the terrified Snipe.

Two or three juniors, most of them very pale, were grouped in the quad, looking anxiously round them for signs of the fire. The only sign that could be seen was a thin column of smoke floating up from behind the wall of the Head's garden.

"There's a fire!" stammered

The studies in the Fourth Form



"Open the door, I say!"

With a rush Gordon Gay & Co. dashed into the study. Frank Monk & Co. were too much surprised to make any resistance.

Almost before they had crossed their seats they were sitting on the floor. Carboy was jammed in the cupboard, and the door looked upon him; Monk and Lane were squeezed into one another with their arms braced, and the faces of all three were rubbed in the ashcan.

Then Gordon Gay & Co. faded and triumphant, retired to their beds with their disgruntled heads, who had practically untouched, who had dazed Frank Monk & Co. were too much surprised to wonder how it all had happened and what had become of Mr. Adams.

With the aid of the Grammar School ventriloquist, Gordon Gay & Co. had scored again.

CHAPTER 3.

Retribution!

JACK WOOTTON glanced round for Carboy, and saw that he was not in the quad. The Co. he dashed back up the stairs almost as quickly as they had come down. Along the passage they flew, and into Study 13.

There was a howl of rage and anguish.

Their worst fears were confirmed. Not a vestige of the gorgeous spread remained on the study table. Tadpole's beautiful feed had been raided!

"Monk & Co.!" shouted Gordon Gay.

And the four juniors made a dash for Monk & Co.'s study, following the door as they shot, but Gordon Gay locked the door.

"You burglars!" yelled Gordon Gay. "Give us the loot!"

A yell of laughter came from within the study.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You—you rotters! Let us see and we'll wrag you!"

"Ha, ha! Thanks! Not much rat that pie!"

"Fire!" snarled Gordon Wootton.

"Fire!" came the mocking yell from Frank Monk & Co. "Quick! Fire! Ha, ha, ha!"

Another in speechless rage, the sounds of his teeth striking the floor.

"We must get in somehow!"

Jack Wootton shouted, peering at the door.

"By Jove!" Gordon Gay yelled. "I've got an idea, chaps!"

"What is it? Quick!"

"You're improved in your intelligence, but listen, haven't you Harry?"

"Yes, you're right, but speaking in a whisper."

"Rather! But—"

"And you can imitate old Adams' voice?"

"A! But I don't see—"

"Then make old Adams talk when you open the door, poor fellow!"

"My hat! I will!"

Harry had no sooner tampered with the idea than he proceeded to put it into effect.

"Here!" went Mr. Adams' voice to the life—"boys! What are you doing outside Monk's study?"

"Please, sir," said Gordon Gay. "we—were just—"

"Well, never mind!" said Mr. Adams' voice. "Come in, but get going in to have a talk with Carboy."

There was a loud rap on the study door.

Frank Monk & Co. looked at one another in consternation.

"My hat! Here's Adams after me!" muttered Carboy. "What the dickens shall we do?"

"Open the door, I say!"

"Well, never mind!" said Mr. Adams' voice. "Come in, but get going in to have a talk with Carboy."

There was a loud rap on the study door.

Frank Monk & Co. looked at one another in consternation.

"My hat! Here's Adams after me!" muttered Carboy. "What the dickens shall we do?"

"Open the door, I say!"

"Well, never mind!" said Mr. Adams' voice. "Come in, but get going in to have a talk with Carboy."

There was a loud rap on the study door.

Frank Monk & Co. looked at one another in consternation.

"My hat! Here's Adams after me!" muttered Carboy. "What the dickens shall we do?"

"Open the door, I say!"

"Well, never mind!" said Mr. Adams' voice. "Come in, but get going in to have a talk with Carboy."

There was a loud rap on the study door.

Frank Monk & Co. looked at one another in consternation.

"My hat! Here's Adams after me!" muttered Carboy. "What the dickens shall we do?"

"Open the door, I say!"

"Well, never mind!" said Mr. Adams' voice. "Come in, but get going in to have a talk with Carboy."

There was a loud rap on the study door.

Frank Monk & Co. looked at one another in consternation.

"My hat! Here's Adams after me!" muttered Carboy. "What the dickens shall we do?"

"Open the door, I say!"

"Well, never mind!" said Mr. Adams' voice. "Come in, but get going in to have a talk with Carboy."

Wandering Willie Meets a False Friend.



1. While basking upon a dust-bath, wondering how, when, and where to get another home, Wandering Willie was approached—



2. By an old gent, who took quite an interest in him. In fact, he took him home and was as courteous and kind, fed him up—



3. And stroked him down, that Wandering Willie began to think that he was on a very good thing for life, but, overheard—



4. His kind master drop a chance remark to the lady's help, Wandering Willie made a few inquiries, took a walk on the tiles—



5. And discovered that his master's kindness was all a sham, and an enormous hole was attached to it.