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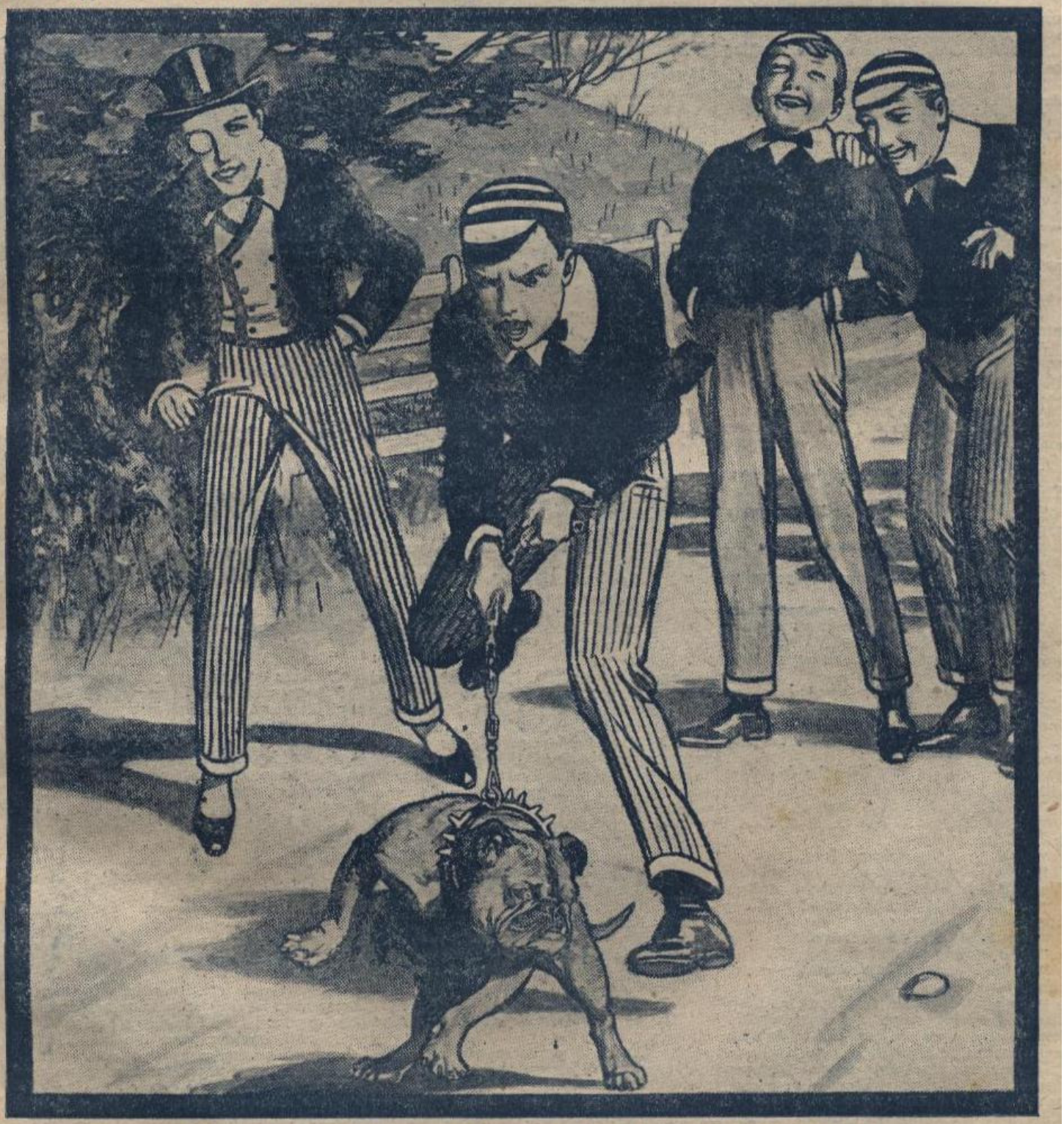
THE SCHOOLBOY HUN!

A Magnificent New, Long, Complete School Tale of Tom Merry & Co.



LEADING TOWSER!

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THE SCHOOLBOY HUN!

A Magnificent, New, Long, Complete School Story of Tom Merry & Co. at St. Jim's.

By MARTIN CLIFFORD.

CHAPTER 1.
Quite a Reception.

"WHAT'S the game now?"

"Blessed if I know!"

Monty Lowther and Manners were making those remarks as Tom Merry came into the study in the Shell passage.

Lowther and Manners were looking surprised.

So was Tom Merry, as he came in. And Tom Merry's first remark was:

"I wonder what the dickens this means?"

"You had it, too?" asked Lowther.

"If you mean an invitation to Herr Schneider's study, I have," answered Tom Merry. "Have you?"

"We have—we has!" said Lowther. "Blessed if I feel inclined to go!"

"Same here," said Manners. "I'm not gone on Huns. I don't see that old Schneider has any right to bother us to come to his study."

Tom Merry scratched his curly head, puzzled.

"I suppose we shall have to go," he said. "It's nothing about lessons. But what can Schneider want to see half a dozen chaps at once for?"

"Half a dozen!" repeated Manners.

"Yes—Talbot's asked, and Kangaroo, and Gore."

"My hat!"

It was no wonder that the Terrible Three were surprised.

Toby the house page, had been on a regular round, with Herr Schneider's request to the juniors to come to his study.

It was not exactly a flattering invitation.

A German master was a necessary evil; but the juniors considered that if they "stood" Herr Schneider in class, that was as much as they could be expected to stand.

What Herr Schneider wanted to see six members of the Shell in his study for was a mystery. But one thing was quite certain, the Shell fellows did not want to see him.

An eyeglass gleamed into the doorway, with the noble face of Arthur Augustus D'Arcy of the Fourth behind it.

"What do you fellows think of this?" he exclaimed.

"You, too!" exclaimed Tom.

"I have been wequested to step into Herr Schneidah's study," said Arthur Augustus. "Blake and Hewwies and Dig have also been wequested to do so."

"My hat! That makes ten."

"You fellows goin'?"

"I don't know if we're going—we're asked."

"I object to visitin' Huns in their studies," said D'Arcy. "I have a very stwong objection. It's nothin' to do with lessons; and Schneidah has no wight to talk to us exceptin' about German lessons. Of course, politeness pwevents us from tellin' him what we think of him; but we can't help thinkin'. The question awises, deah boys, whethah we can wefuse this wequest without infwingin' upon the laws of good mannahs."

"Blake going?"

"Blake says Schneidah will be down on us in the German class if we don't go—he says the old houndah will take it out of us in iwwegulah verbs."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Very likely," agreed Monty Lowther, "We'd better go. Politeness on one side, and irregular verbs on the other—politeness wins."

"That is not the question, Lowthah. I wefuse to be influenced by such considewations. The question awises——"

A burly fellow pushed Arthur Augustus aside in the doorway, and put his head into the study. It was George Alfred Grundy of the Shell.

"You fellows——" he began.

"Gwunday, you have pushed me quite wudely——"

"You fellows going to see the Hun?" demanded Grundy, unheeding. "Like his cheek to ask us!"

"Eleven!" said Lowther. "Is he going to make up a cricket team, I wonder?"

"Better go!" decided Tom Merry. "After all, a chap's bound to be civil, even to a Hun."

"Especially when he can take it out of you in German verbs!" grinned Lowther.

"But what does he want?" snapped Grundy.

"I dare say he will tell us."

"Well, I'll go if you fellows go," said Grundy. "Like his cheek to ask us, all the same! He doesn't seem to understand that we're at war with Hunland."

"Gwunday——"

"Well, what do you think about it, D'Arcy?"

"I was not thinkin' about that, Gwunday. I was goin' to wemark that you pushed me wathah wudely——"

"Oh, rats!" answered Grundy, striding from the study.

"Bai Jove!"

Tom Merry and Co. left the study, and found Blake and Herries and Digby on the staircase. Talbot and Noble and Gore joined them. The whole party numbered eleven— and it was a deep mystery what Herr Schneider wanted them for, unless, as Lowther humorously suggested, he was going to make up a cricket team.

The party then proceeded to Herr Schneider's quarters.

They were joined on the way by Dick Roylance and Levison of the Fourth.

"You, too!" howled Blake.

"Us, too!" said Levison. "Anybody know what the game is?"

"Can't be cricket," said Lowther, shaking his head. "Thirteen—perhaps he's going to form a Northern Union football team."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Hallo. What do you New House bounders want?"

Figgins and Kerr were coming along the passage. They joined the crowd, staring at them a little.

"You for Schneider's study?" asked Tom Merry, laughing.

"We are," said George Figgins." "Great pip! What a crowd! Is the merry old Hun holding a reception?"

"Fifteen!" said Monty Lowther. "It's Rugger, evidently. We shall have to explain to him that our game's soccer, and we can't oblige."

"Fatty's coming, too," grinned Figgins.

Fatty Wynn came hurrying after his chums, a little out of breath.

"Sixteen!" Lowther gave it up. "I simply can't guess what the game is. Let's get in and ask Schneider."

There was great curiosity among the juniors as Tom Merry tapped at the German master's door.

"Gum in!"

Tom opened the door.

Herr Schneider was standing by his table with the sun shining on the bald top of his head. His expression was unusually agreeable. He blinked over his glasses quite benevolently.

"Gum in!" he repeated.

It was not the easiest thing in the world for sixteen juniors to "gum in." However, they got in, and stood in array before the German master. Most of them looked surprised. Grundy looked cross and disdainful. Only Arthur Augustus D'Arcy contrived to wear an expression of polite interest.

"You sent for us, sir!" said Tom Merry.

"Ja, ja wohl! Mein poys, I have something to say to you."

"Yes, sir?"

Herr Schneider took off his glasses, wiped them, and replaced them on his fat nose. He seemed in no hurry to say his "something"; and indeed he looked a little embarrassed. The astonishment of the juniors increased.

"Mein poys," said Herr Schneider at last, "I have sent for you pecause I—I vish to say sometings."

"We've had that already," murmured Lowther, sotto voice.

"Vat? Did you speak, Lowther?"

"Ahem! We—we're here, sir."

"I tink tat you poys are representative of te poys in both houses at dis school, and derefore I speaks mit you. I have ein favour to ask of you."

"Oh!"

"Dere is unfortunately, at dis moment, a war proceeding between your country and mine," continued Herr Schneider.

The juniors blinked at him. Surely the Herr had not sent for them to hear a war lecture! If he began expressing his Hun views on the war, they would begin expressing theirs—emphatically! There was no doubt about that.

"A what proceeding, sir?" asked Monty Lowther politely.

"A war, mein poy."

"You don't say so, sir!"

"Vat?"

"But now you mention it, sir, I remember having seen it referred to in the papers," said Lowther meekly.

Herr Schneider gave the humorist of the Shell a very expressive look, and his glance strayed towards a cane on his table. But he did not reach for the cane. He coughed, and went on rather quickly:

"Mein poys, I am aware tat dere is naturally great feeling on dis subject. But even in war time kindness of heart and hospitality should not be forgotten. I hope you agree with me."

"Certainly, sir," said Tom Merry, in wonder.

"Yaas, wathah!"

"Ferry goot. It is for tat reason that I asks a leetle favour of you, mein poys. To morrow a new poy he is gumming to dis school."

"Oh!"

Levison, screened by Grundy's burly form, tapped his forehead significantly. He meant to imply that the fat Herr was wandering in his mind. But Herr Schneider's next words explained.

"I vishes tat you and de odders vill treat dis new boy wiz politeness and kindness. He is a Cherman."

"Oh!"

CHAPTER 2.
Grundy Objects.

TOM MERRY and Co. all said "Oh!" together.

The cat was out of the bag at last!

This was why the Herr had sent for them; to bespeak, as it were, their kindly consideration for the new fellow—a German schoolboy!

Grundy frowned portentously.

"Dis poy," resumed Herr Schneider, blinking at them, "he is a goot poy. His name is Paul Laurenz. He is a good Cherman poy. I trust tat you vill be kind to him, and vill not—vat you call—chivvy him pecause he is a Cherman. He is a ferry goot poy."

Grundy snorted.

"Oh, my hat!" murmured Figgins.

"Is he coming into the New House, sir?" asked Kerr.

"No; he gums into dis School House."

"Oh, good!"

"Vat?"

"I—I mean—ahem——" stammered Kerr.

"Will he be in the Shell, sir?" asked Manners.

"No. In te Fourth Form."

"Oh, good!" said Manners, in his turn.

"Shurrup, Manners!" murmured Tom. As a matter of fact, Tom was pleased to hear that the "Cherman" was not coming into the Shell.

"Does he speak English?" asked Blake demurely.

"Ja, ja! He has always lived in England, and has been brought up in England," said Herr Schneider.

"I suppose his people are interned?" remarked Gore.

"His beoples are not interned, Gore."

"Then they ought to be!" growled Grundy.

Herr Schneider considered it wise not to hear that remark.

"You vill find Paul Laurenz a ferry goot poy," he went on. "Te Head would not receive him in the school unless tat was so. Dr. Holmes tinks, as matter of course, tat all poys treat him vell. But I tink I puts it to you tat you tink pefore you act, pecause I know tat you do not like Chermans."

"We don't!" said Grundy.

"A relation of yours, sir?" asked Talbot.

"No, Talbot. I do not know te poy, and have neffer seen him. It is only tat he is mein gountryman."

"It's all right, sir," said Tom Merry. "I don't suppose anybody will bother him on that account, sir."

"Rot!" said Grundy.

"Shut up!" whispered Talbot.

"I'm not going to shut up. I'm going to speak my mind," said George Alfred Grundy, mounting the high horse, as he always did when opposed. "Herr Schneider, I'm surprised to hear this!"

"Vat?"

"I object!"

"Vat?" repeated the Herr.

"I object!" said Grundy firmly. "I don't approve of a German kid coming to a decent English school."

"Grundy!" thundered the Herr.

"You've asked us here to hear this, and you must expect to be told what we think," said Grundy undauntedly. "Considering that we've all got relations out in Flanders killing Huns, we can't be expected to stand a Hun here. We don't like Huns, and that's flat!"

"Pway dwy up, Gwunday."

"Rats! I object to a Hun coming here," declared Grundy. "It's a disgrace to the school."

"Mein Gott!"

Herr Schneider's fat face was a study. Evidently Grundy of the Shell was not to be conciliated in favour of the new boy. Grundy, in his wrath, seemed to forget that he was speaking to a master. George Alfred was no respecter of persons.

Arthur Augustus D'Arcy stepped forward, giving Grundy a glance of disdain. The swell of St. Jim's felt called upon to take the lead, as it was a matter in which politeness and tact were required.

"Herr Schneider, we shall be very pleased to tweat the new chap with evewy considewation," he said firmly. "I shall make it a point to make his acquaintance. If anyone should be wude to him on account of his owigin, I shall give that person a feahful thwashin'."

"Bravo, Gussy!" grinned Blake.

That was exactly the line Arthur Augustus might have been expected to take. Anybody who was down could always count upon the championship of the noble Gussy.

"If the chap happens to weside in England, he is bound to go to school somewhah," continued Arthur Augustus. "It would be uttahly wotten to be down on him for a thing he can't help. If he is a decent chap he will find fwiends heah."

"Tank you, mein poy," said Herr Schneider. "Tat is vat I vish to hear you say."

He glanced at the others.

"We all agree with D'Arcy, sir, I think," said Tom Merry. "Certainly I shouldn't think of being down on the chap."

"Hear, hear!" murmured Figgins.

There was general agreement. Gore gave a grunt, and Grundy a contemptuous snort; but the rest nodded. Nobody there could be expected to like a German schoolmate; but there was no reason why they should have any desire to persecute him. If there was any misfortune a fellow couldn't help, it was his nationality, and it was not for anyone to visit the sins of the fathers on the children.

But Grundy couldn't see that.

He gave Arthur Augustus a push, and addressed the German master again, with increasing emphasis.

"I object, sir!" he rapped out. "Germans are not wanted here. In fact, I think German lessons ought to be stopped, and we ought to have Russian instead. I'm going to chip in. I shall ask all fellows to come with me, in a deputation to the Head, and ask him to keep the Hun out."

"Dry up, you ass!" said Tom Merry.

"Cheese it, Grundy!"

"Weally, Gwunday——"

Herr Schneider's fat face was crimson with wrath. He picked up the can from his table.

"Mein poys, you may go," he said. "But you, Grundy, I shall bunish you for your insolence. Hold out your hand!"

Grundy put his hands behind him.

"I'm not going to be caned for telling the truth," he said. "You asked us here, and you ought to have expected it."

There was something in Grundy's view. Having invited the juniors into his study, the German master was bound to regard them as having come under a safe-conduct, as it were. But the Herr took a Prussian view of such matters, and his reply was to take Grundy by the collar.

"Let go!" roared Grundy.

Whack, whack, whack!

"Take tat, and tat, and tat!" gasped the German master.

Tom Merry & Co. looked on grimly. Grundy had certainly asked for it.

But though he had asked for it, Grundy did not want it. He struggled savagely in the German master's grip.

"Let go, you confounded old Hun!" he roared.

Whack, whack, whack!

The cane fairly rang on Grundy's broad shoulders.

With a terrific effort he tore himself away, and jumped to the door. There he turned, giving Herr Schneider a glare as angry as his own.

"Wait till that young Hun comes!" he bellowed. "I'll show him what I think of him. I'll——"

Grundy left the remainder of his views unuttered, and dodged into the passage as Herr Schneider strode at him.

Tom Merry & Co. followed him out, and the door closed.

"Yow-ow-ow!" said Grundy. "Look at that! Caning me, you know, for telling him what I think of Huns! I'll show him! Yow-ow!"

"Serve you wight," exclaimed Arthur Augustus indignantly. "There is such a thing as 'Noblesse oblige,' Gwunday."

"Oh, you're a silly ass!"

"Bai Jove! You cheeky wottah——"

Grundy strode away in great wrath, leaving the crowd of juniors discussing the matter. He tramped into his study, snorting, and Wilkins and Gunn, his study-mates, greeted him with a grin.

"Well, what did the Schneider-bird want?" asked Gunn.

"There's a young Hun coming here!" roared Grundy. "Wants us to be civil to him."

"Well, I don't see why we shouldn't be civil," remarked Wilkins.

"Don't you? I do! What are we killing Huns for—not for civility, I suppose? It's because they're not fit to live. Well, if they're not fit to live, they're not fit to come here. I'm going to keep my eye open for this Paul Laurenz tomorrow. I'm going to start by thrashing him!"

"Wha-at?"

"Thrashing him!"

"I—I say, old chap, you can't thrash a chap you've never seen before, and who's done nothing!" remonstrated Wilkins.

"Can't I?" snorted Grundy. "He has done something—he's a Hun. That's something, isn't it? Isn't my cousin George crocked for life by their filthy poison-gas? I'll show him! By gad, as soon as he puts his nose inside St. Jim's I'll make it into a prize nose for him!"

Grundy accompanied that statement with a terrific thump on the table, and his chums thought it best not to argue. Grundy was evidently in a mood to give the nearest person a prize nose, and at such times George Alfred had to be dealt with tactfully.

CHAPTER 3.
The New Boy.

"BETTAH keep that beast on the chain, Hewwies."

"Rats!" snapped Herries.

It was the following afternoon, and Study No. 6 were sauntering

down Rylcombe Lane, enjoying the fresh spring sunshine.

Blake had to see about a new bat at Rylcombe, and his chums bore him company, as it was a half-holiday, with nothing special on.

Herries had taken Towser, his celebrated bulldog, for a run. He firmly declined to take him on a chain. His reason was that Towser did not like the chain, and that was ample reason—to Herries. Towser was monarch of all he surveyed, as far as George Herries was concerned.

"No; leave him loose," remarked Jack Blake thoughtfully. "He might get run over by a motor-car."

"If that's meant to be funny——" snorted Herries.

"The beast has no wespect whatevah for a fellow's twousahs," said Arthur Augustus, eyeing Towser very unfavourably.

"Bosh!" said Herries.

Herries was one of the best-tempered fellows going, but anything approaching criticism of Towser was sure to make Herries snappy.

"Howevah, to come back to our subject," said Arthur Augustus, dropping the touchy question of Towser, "about that new chap, Lauwenz——"

"Bother him!" yawned Digby.

"Some of the fellows are wathah watty about it," said D'Arcy. "That howlin' ass Gwunday is talkin' of thwashin' him, I heah. I have been thinkin' ovah the mattah, and I feel that it is up to our study to set an example."

"Bow-wow!"

"I do not wegard that as an intelligent wemark, Blake. The poor chap will feel awf'lly down, I should think. How would you feel if you were at school in Germany, Blake?"

"I should feel as if I were in a pigsty," answered Blake cheerfully. "No reason why a Hun in England should feel like that."

"Of course, there is a diffewence. Howevah——"

"However, fathead, you're not going to play the giddy ox," said Blake warningly. "You can be civil to the fellow, if you like. Don't ask him to the study, or there will be a row."

"I was thinkin' of askin' him to tea, Blake," said Arthur Augustus, with dignity.

"I thought so. Well, don't!"

"Weally, I considah that it is up to us——"

"Stuff!"

Arthur Augustus sniffed. The swell of the Fourth was probably the only fellow at St. Jim's who felt in the least concerned about the new boy. Most of the fellows intended to be civil to him, but to have nothing to do with him. Chumming with a Hun was asking rather too much.

"Talking of Huns," murmured Digby, "there's one, if you like!"

Herries nodded towards a fat gentleman who was coming along from the village, with a quiet-looking lad walking at his side.

The stranger did, indeed, look like a Hun.

He was portly and fat, and fair-complexioned, and looked as if he ate twice as much as was good for him. He had a blonde moustache and beard, and light blue eyes, and wore gold-rimmed glasses. He was very well-dressed, though Arthur Augustus' glance was disapproving. The gentleman's expensive attire erred a trifle on the side of loudness.

There was no mistaking his nationality—it was written, so to speak, all over his fat, blonde face and podgy figure.

The juniors glanced at him carelessly, wondering a little what a Hun could be doing there.

"Bai Jove!" ejaculated Arthur Augustus, after a moment's thought. "That must be Lauwenz and his patah."

"Oh, the new kid!" exclaimed Blake.

"Very likely," agreed Dig.

And at that thought they looked with new interest at the fat gentleman's companion.

He was a lad of about their own age, slimly made, but sturdy enough. His face was fair and good-looking, but did not resemble that of the fat man in the least. He was not looking cheerful. But the juniors noticed that he smiled as his eyes fell on Towser, who was trotting along some distance ahead of them. He waved his hand to the dog, and called to him. He had not observed the four juniors in the distance yet.

"That kid can't be Laurenz," said Blake. "He looks thoroughly English."

"Can't be a Hun!" said Herries, with a shake of the head. "You can see that he's fond of dogs."

"Well, a Hun might be fond of dogs, fathead."

"Rot! Only decent people are fond of dogs. They're eating them in Hunland, now they're short of food. That shows the kind of rotters they are."

"We may come to eating Towser yet!" grinned Blake.

"Let me catch anybody trying it on!" ejaculated Herries wrathfully. "There would be a slaughtered rotter lying about soon afterwards."

"Bai Jove! The Hun johnny does not look pleased."

Somehow, to the surprise of the juniors, Towser had walked up to the boy, and was allowing him to caress him. It was very unusual for Towser to allow strangers to take that liberty. The fat gentleman paused and looked round, and a scowl came over his flabby face.

"Paul!" he snapped.

The boy started.

"Yes, uncle?"

"Let that brute alone, you young fool! He might bite you."

"I don't think he'd bite anybody, uncle. Oh, don't!" exclaimed the boy sharply.

The fat gentleman had raised his heavy walking-stick, and as the boy cried out he brought it down on Towser with a sharp blow. It was a cruel and needless blow, and the juniors, watching the action, flushed with anger at the sight of it.

"Be off!" exclaimed the fat man, waving his stick at Towser.

The bulldog turned round on him with a growl. He did not get off—he made a waddling rush at the fat man's legs.

"Seize him!" yelled Herries, speeding to the spot.

"Hewwies—stop him!"

"Great Scott!"

"Seize him, Towser!" yelled Herries recklessly. Herries was almost bursting with rage.

Towser did not need bidding. He was making for the fat man's legs, and the fat gentleman had turned quite pale as he hopped and dodged and brandished his stick.

Paul Laurenz stood still, watching them with a clouded brow. The cruel action of his uncle had angered him as well as Herries.

"Keep off!" shrieked the fat man. "Take him away! Paul, take him—— Oh, mein Gott! Mein Gott in Himmel! Ach, ach!"

The fat gentleman, dodging with wonderful activity, considering the weight he had to carry, bounded to the fence beside the lane, and scrambled on it, with Towser snapping after him. If Towser's teeth had closed on the podgy calf there would have been serious damage done. The fat man clambered on the fence, getting on the top rail, and balancing himself there with great difficulty; and even there he was hardly safe. Towser growled furiously below.

The juniors came up breathlessly. Blake and Dig and D'Arcy were grinning now—the spectacle of the fat gentleman bunched up on the top of the fence was a peculiar one, and appealed to their sense of humour.

But Herries was black with wrath. He shook a furious fist at the terrified man, as he came panting up.

"You rotter!" he roared.

"Bai Jove! Herries——"

"You sneaking, rotten German!" bellowed Herries. "How dare you hit my dog for nothing! I've a jolly good mind to knock you off that fence!"

"Ach, ach! Keep him off!"

"Take your chance," retorted Herries. "Stick on that fence as long as you like. He'll have your leg if you get down."

"Ach! If that is your dog, call him off!" shrieked the fat gentleman.

"I won't!"

"Hewwies, old scout——"

"Didn't he hit Towser for nothing?" bellowed Herries.

"Yaas; he is a bwute; but——"

"Let him stick there! Watch him, Towser! Seize him!"

Towser gave a low growl. He was watching the man on the fence with a deadly intentness.

The portly figure swayed on the fence, and Towser moved. But the terrified man contrived to regain his balance. Herries watched him grimly. The man had himself to thank for his unpleasant situation, and Herries was not in the least disposed to relieve him.

"Take him away!" yelled the German gentleman. "Ach! I will have the brute killed. That is against the law. Call him off!"

"Rats!"

"Paul, do something! Boy, do you hear? Drive him away."

Paul Laurenz came towards the group by the fence, and touched Herries lightly on the arm.

"Call your dog off!" he said.

CHAPTER 4.
A Run for a Hun.

HERRIES stared grimly at the speaker. He was not disposed to take orders from anybody—least of all from a fellow who was apparently a Hun.

"What's that?" he grunted.

"Call your dog off, please, and let my uncle get down."

"You're Laurenz, I suppose, the new fellow for St. Jim's?" demanded Herries gruffly.

"Yes."

"Then you're a German?"

"Yes," said the boy, colouring painfully.

"Well, then, don't speak to me!" said Herries. "And don't touch me, please! I don't like being touched by a German."

The boy's flush deepened to crimson.

"Hewwies!" murmured D'Arcy, in great distress.

"Call that dog off!" yelled the fat gentleman, still clinging on the top of the fence, swaying and clutching. "Paul! Take up the stick and drive him away! Do you hear? I command you."

"Please, call your dog off," said Paul, looking at Herries.

"I won't! Let the old fool stick where he is."

"Then I must take him away."

Herries laughed angrily.

"Touch him, and see what will hap-

pen!" he answered. "I warn you that if my bulldog's teeth get into you they won't come out in a hurry."

"I must risk that," said Laurenz quietly.

He did not make a movement towards the walking-stick, which lay in the road. He stepped towards Towser with bare hands.

"You silly ass!" shouted Herries. "Stand back! I tell you he'll have a finger off if he bites—and he will bite now."

"Then call him off."

"I won't, I tell you!"

"Very well."

The boy walked straight at Towser, who turned one eye on him, and gave a deep growl, showing a magnificent set of teeth. Jack Blake jumped forward and dragged Laurenz back.

"Don't be an ass!" he said. "We'll see about it. Herries, put the chain on that tripehound of yours, and hold him off. You silly ass, if he bites anybody he will have to be killed!"

"He won't bite if he's let alone," said Herries.

"Bai Jove! I insist upon your chainin' up the beast, Hewwies! Mr. Laurenz cannot wemain on the fence all the afternoon."

"I don't see why not," said Herries obstinately. "Besides, that fellow won't touch Towser—a Hun wouldn't have the pluck."

"Let go my arm, please," said Laurenz quietly to Jack Blake. "I must remove that dog, and let my uncle get down."

"Chain him up, Herries!" whispered Dig. "That old brute will complain to the Head about this."

Herries grunted, but he slipped the chain on Towser at last, and drew the bulldog away.

"You can get down!" he snapped.

The fat gentleman glared at him with rage and fear curiously mingled in his podgy face.

"Is he—quite—safe?" he panted.

"Oh, don't be a funk!" retorted Herries contemptuously.

"It is all wight, now, sir," said Arthur Augustus reassuringly. "He will not get at you now, I assuah you."

Still eyeing Towser dubiously, the fat man descended from the fence. The chain rattled as Towser strained to get loose, and Mr. Laurenz gave a breathless howl.

"Hold him! Hold him!"

"B-r-r-r-r!" said Herries.

"Paul! Come! Come, I tell you!"

"Yes, uncle."

The fat gentleman started up the road towards the school, with the boy at his heels. He glanced round two or three times in evident uncertainty and nervousness. Herries glared after him with utter contempt. Cowardice, added to brutality, did not make a pleasant combination.

"Bai Jove! He is wathah a funk," murmured D'Arcy. "The kid has plenty of pluck, though; he was not afwaid."

"You'll see!" said Herries.

He rattled the chain loudly and yelled:

"Run for it! Run!"

The fat gentleman gave a terrified glance over his shoulder, and broke into a wild run. His heavy footsteps went pounding up the lane, and his silk hat flew off behind and rolled in the dust.

He disappeared round the bend at top speed.

Paul Laurenz did not run, however. He picked up his uncle's hat, brushed it with his handkerchief, and followed the elderly man in a leisurely way. He did not even look round to see whether Towser was loose or not.

George Alfred Gets It!
(See Chapter 8.)

The chums of Study No. 6 chortled.

The utterly ridiculous flight of the fat gentleman tickled them immensely.

"Bai Jove!" gasped Arthur Augustus. "I wondah if he will keep that up to the school! It would be wathah an odd way to awwive!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared the juniors.

"The kid wasn't scared, though," said Dig. "He never even looked round. He doesn't look a bad kid."

"He looks wathah nice," said Arthur Augustus. "Not in the least like a German. Pewwaps he is partly English."

"Must be, from his looks!" said Blake. "That old porpoise is only his uncle, not his pater. Come on, we shall never get my bat at this rate."

"Come on, Hewwies!"

"Come on, Towser!" said Herries, in his turn.

But Towser wanted to go the other way; evidently not yet having abandoned his design on the Hun's podgy calves. He pulled, and Herries pulled.

"Towser, old boy! Come on, Towsy!" said Herries encouragingly. "Good dog! Come on!"

But Towser was deaf to the voice of the charmer.

"Are you coming?" called out Blake.

"Yes, ass! Come on, Towser! Towser will come if I tell him!" said Herries.

"Looks like it—I don't think!"

"Oh, rats! Towsy, old son—good dog—good doggie! Come on, old boy!"

"Shall I thwow somethin' at him, Hewwies?" asked Arthur Augustus D'Arcy innocently.

"You silly chump!"

"Bai Jove!"

"Towsy—Towsy—good dog—come on! This way, Towsy!"

"Hadn't you better kick him?" asked Dig.

"I'll kick you, you fathead, if you try to be funny. Can't you wait a minute for a fellow? No hurry for a blessed cricket-bat, I suppose?" snorted Herries. "Come on, Towser! Good dog!"

Instead of Towser coming he was going, and he was dragging Herries after him.

"That's not the way to Rylcombe!" roared Blake. "It's nearly twenty-five thousand miles that way!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I'm not going to Rylcombe," gasped Herries over his shoulder. "You can fetch your silly bat without my help, I suppose? Do you want me to help you carry a cricket-bat home?"

"Ha, ha! But Towser was going to come if you told him——"

"Towser isn't a lapdog, to be ordered about!" snapped Herries. "The fact is, I—I want to get back to the school just now——"

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled Herries' chums.

"Oh, don't cackle!"

And Herries marched off, keeping pace with the strong-minded Towser. Blake & Co. chuckled and walked on to the village, leaving Herries to go home with the bulldog. As Blake remarked, it was a case of Herries proposing and Towser disposing.

CHAPTER 5.
The Hun Arrives.

"MY only hat!" ejaculated Tom Merry.

He looked out of the gateway at St. Jim's in great surprise. Manners and Lowther followed his example. Down the road from the direction of the village came a fat man running and panting, hatless, dusty, and crimson with exertion.

His heavy footsteps pounded on the road with a noise that could be heard quite a long way off. It was that pounding which had caused the captain of the Shell to look out.

The Terrible Three stared.

"A foot-race!" remarked Manners. "But who's he racing with?"

"Can't be Farmer Lucas' bull again!" said Lowther. "Can't see anything on the road behind him. He must be doing this for exercise."

"Ha, ha!"

"Bring down his fat very likely," said Lowther sagely. "He can do with some off, to judge by appearances. Go it, sir! Put it on!"

Monty Lowther felt bound to call out that encouragement to the stranger. He expected to see the fat gentleman go puffing and blowing past the gates. But as the stranger spied the old stone gateway and the three juniors therein, he swerved and charged in at them. The Terrible Three had just time to jump out of the way, or the excited man would certainly have bowled them over like ninepins.

Tom Merry and Co. stared at him amazed. They looked down the road, but there was nothing in sight to account for the stranger's hurried fleeing.

"My hat! What——"

"No dogs or strangers admitted here!" said Monty Lowther.

The fat man halted and turned, panting.

"Is he coming?"

"He! Who?"

"Have the Huns landed?" asked Monty Lowther politely.

"The dog—the mad dog——"

"Phew! A mad dog!" exclaimed Tom, becoming serious. He looked out into the road again. "There's no dog in sight."

"Ach, ach, ach!" gasped the fat man. "I—I have been attacked by a fierce dog. Ach, ach!"

"Well, he's not in sight," said Manners. "All safe now."

"A fierce bulldog—he was set upon me!" panted the fat man. "Ach! I—I have lost my hat."

"Lost your head, too, I think," murmured Monty Lowther.

"It's safe to go out now," said Tom Merry reassuringly.

"Ach! I go not out. This school is St. James', is it not so?"

"Yes, this is St. Jim's."

"My nephew, you do not see him in the road?"

"Nobody in sight yet, sir."

"Perhaps—if you are here—when he comes you will tell him to follow me in, isn't it? His name is Paul Laurenz."

"Oh!" exclaimed Tom. "Yes, certainly. We'll tell him."

"Thank you."

The fat man plodded away towards the building, still gasping for breath, and a good many glances were turned upon the hatless gentleman as he went.

"A blessed Hun!" growled Manners. "He's brought the new chap here, I suppose—the chap Schneider was gassing about yesterday."

"He's a Hun right enough," agreed Tom.

"And not a plucky 'Un!" remarked Lowther, perceiving an opening for one of the funniosities with which he adorned the comic column in "Tom Merry's Weekly."

"Bow-wow! I suppose we'd better wait here for the kid," said Tom.

"May as well, as you've said you will, fathead. What are you so jolly polite to Huns for?"

"'Noblesse oblige,' as Gussy says."

The Terrible Three had nothing special to do, so they did not much mind waiting in the gateway for Paul Laurenz. They were rather curious, too, to see the young Hun about whom Herr Schneider had spoken.

They had not long to wait. About ten minutes later Paul Laurenz came up the road, carrying his uncle's silk topper in his hand.

He paused outside the gates, and looked at the juniors, raising his hat slightly.

"Excuse me, is this St. James' School?" he asked.

"You've hit it," answered Monty Lowther.

"Thank you."

He hesitated a moment, colouring as he felt the juniors' eyes curiously upon him. His nationality was a painful consciousness with Paul Laurenz, as the Shell fellows could see, and they felt rather sympathetic in consequence.

"Would you be kind enough to tell me if you have seen——" he began.

"Your uncle?" asked Tom, with a smile.

"Yes. You have seen him?"

"He came in ten minutes ago," said Tom Merry. "He left a message for you to follow him in. He went into the Head's house—that building yonder joined to the School House."

"Thank you very much."

Paul Laurenz passed in and walked on to the Head's house, and the Terrible Three looked at one another.

"So that's the Hun!" said Manners. "Like his cheek to come here, but he doesn't look a bad sort. Not much of a Hun in looks, either."

"He doesn't seem to have been scared by the mad dog, or the fierce dog, or whatever it was," remarked Tom Merry. "He's fielded the old gent's hat, too, and brought it in."

Monty Lowther chuckled.

"I fancy I know something about that ferocious tripehound that frightened the Hun," he observed. "Herries took Towser along with him a little while ago."

"Towser!"

"The old boy said a bulldog, you know. I'll bet you ninepence to fourpence that the Hun has fallen foul of Towser!"

"Oh, my hat!" exclaimed Tom. "That means a row for Herries, if he tells the Head."

"Here comes Herries!"

It would have been more appropriate to say "Here comes Towser!" for it was Towser who was coming, Herries following at the end of the chain. Towser had a deadly determined look, and had evidently not yet given up his designs on the fat calves of the Hun gentleman.

"Was it Towser?" exclaimed the Terrible Three in chorus, as the Fourth-Former came up.

"Oh, you've seen the old Hun!" growled Herries.

"The old 'Un and the young 'Un," answered Monty Lowther. "Was Towser the terrific jabberwock that frightened the old 'Un!"

"Yes, he was! The beast hit him!" said Herries wrathfully. "Hit Towser, you know—my bulldog! You know what a quiet old chap Towser is—friendly and affable——"

"He looks it!" agreed Manners.

"He's a bit excited now. So would you be if you'd been bashed by a filthy Hun!" snorted Herries. "Towser doesn't like Germans, naturally, he's a well-brought-up dog! And the old rascal hit him for nothing!"

"All the same, you'd better keep Towser out of sight," counselled Tom Merry. "If he finds out that the tripehound belongs to the school he's sure to pitch it to the Head, and Towser may have to be got ready for the sausage-machine."

"I'd like to see 'em do it!" growled Herries.

But Herries decided to get Towser out of sight, all the same. Fortunately, Towser consented to go back to the kennels, and was safely chained up there. He lay down, and expressed his feelings in a series of blood-curdling growls.

Tom Merry and Co. strolled away to the School House, where they found Grundy and some other fellows in the doorway. Grundy was showing signs of restiveness. Gunn and Wilkins were arguing with him ineffectively.

"I tell you," boomed Grundy, "that I won't stand a Hun in the place! I'm going to smash him. Hallo, Merry! Has that Hun come yet? Trimble says they're coming by the three train, and they've had lots of time to get here."

"He's come," said Tom. "Didn't you see that kid going to the Head's house?"

"Great pip! Was that Laurenz?"

"It was."

"I didn't take him for a Hun," said Grundy in surprise. "He didn't look like a Hun. Looked quite decent."

"There are decent Huns," remarked Manners. "Only a few, perhaps, but there must be some decent among sixty millions."

"Rot!" answered Grundy. "I don't believe it! Didn't they invent poison gas, the rotters? I'm down on all Huns! We're not going to have a Hun here. My idea is that a jolly good thrashing will make him alter his mind about coming here at all."

"Grundy, old man——" murmured Wilkins.

"Don't jaw, Wilkins! I regard it as a duty."

"But the chap can't help coming here, if his uncle brings him, and the Head lets him," said Tom Merry mildly.

"Oh, rot! He ought to keep away. Besides, Huns ought to be thrashed, on principle!"

"That depends," answered the captain of the Shell. "Anyway, you're not going to thrash this particular Hun, Grundy."

"Who says I'm not?" roared Grundy.

"I do," answered Tom coolly. "He's not big enough to stand up to you. Bullying a smaller chap isn't patriotic—it's Hunnish. If you're going to understudy the Prussians, Grundy, you'll get sat on."

"You cheeky ass!" roared Grundy. "I'm going to thrash him till he can't crawl!"

"Then I'll jolly well keep my eye open, and see that you don't!" retorted Tom Merry.

"If you want a thick ear, Tom Merry, I'll——"

"Oh, rats!"

Grundy made a stride towards the captain of the Shell, with his big fists up. A quiet voice broke in:

"Grundy!"

"Oh! Ah! Yes, sir?" stammered Grundy, dropping his fists hastily as Mr. Railton came up.

"You are quarrelling again, Grundy," said the House-master severely.

"N-n-n-nunno, sir; only—only explaining to Merry—ahem——"

"You will kindly make your explanations in a less threatening manner, Grundy. Let there be no more of this!"

Mr. Railton passed on. Grundy waited till he was out of hearing before he snorted.

CHAPTER 6.

"Noblesse Oblige."

"ANY gwub, deah boys?"

Arthur Augustus D'Arcy asked that question as he came into Study No. 6 at tea-time.

"Only a bit of old bone," said Herries, with a worried look. "I got it from the cook; but she jolly well took care that there was nothing left on it before she let me have it. I believe it's been through the soup, too."

"Gweat Scott!" ejaculated D'Arcy. "I weally wefuse to attempt to eat an old bone that has been thwough the soup."

"Ass!" said Herries. "I'm talking about Towser. I thought you were asking me what there was for him."

"Bothah Towsah! Weally, Hewwies, I am gettin' fed up with that fwightful beast of yours! Towsah is gwowin' into a wowwy."

"It's rotten," said Herries moodily. "Railton refused even to attempt to get a meat-ticket for him. He was quite ratty when I asked him. What do you think of that for a House-master?"

"I wondah he did not lick you for your cheek, you feahful ass. Is there anythin' for tea, Blake?"

"Same as usual," yawned Blake. "Butter-cards and war-bread, with meat-tickets thrown in."

"Oh cwumbs! I was thinkin' of askin' a fellow to tea."

"Ask him, my boy, by all means. He may have some grub to bring with him; and if he has we'll help him polish it off."

"A new fellow would not be likely to have any gwub. The days of hampahs are over till we have beaten the Huns, I feah."

"A new fellow?" exclaimed Blake.

"Yaas, wathah!"

"See that door?" inquired Jack Blake.

"Eh?" Arthur Augustus turned his eyeglass upon the study door. "Yaas, I see it, Blake! What about the dooah?"

"You'll go through it, head first, and the new kid after you, if you bring a Hun to tea in this study, that's all!" answered Blake tersely.

"I should wefuse to do anything of the sort, Blake."

"Well, bring your Hun along, and see what happens," said Jack Blake darkly.

"Weally, Blake——"

"Oh, cheese it, and lend a hand with the spuds!"

"Bothah the spuds! I have been lookin' for Lauwenz, but he is shut up with Mr. Lathom. His uncle has gone."

"Good riddance to bad rubbish."

"As a mattah of fact, I do not like that old Hun vewy much. But I wegard it as up to this studay to tweat young Lauwenz decently."

"Rubbish!"

"I wathah pwide myself," continued Arthur Augustus calmly, "on keepin' a level head in war-time. The Huns are howwid beasts, but I wefuse to get excited about it. Old Conway has been fightin' the Huns a long time, and he says there are Huns and Huns—some of them decent."

"Bow-wow!"

"I am firmly of opinion that the Kaisah ought to be hanged, and in fact all the German kings and princes and things. But I do not think it is wight to be down on a schoolboy."

"I'm not down on him," growled Blake. "I don't want to have anything to do with him, that's all. Germans make me feel ill."

"I admit, Blake, that I have wathah that feelin' myself," confessed Arthur Augustus. "But that only makes it more important to be very careful to keep up one's good mannahs. 'Noblesse oblige,' you know."

"'Noblesse oblige' be blowed!" remarked Digby.

"If you weally don't want me to ask the chap to tea——"

"Oh, ask him! We'll boot him out if he comes!"

"It would be a gwaceful action, Blake, undah the circs."

"I'm not gone on graceful actions," answered Blake. "Is there any margarine to fry these spuds with?"

"Vewy well—I will not ask him heah," said D'Arcy, with dignity. "Howevah, I feel bound to show him some civility. I will have tea in Hall to-day."

"With the German?" demanded Herries.

"Yaas. It is up to somebody to show the poor chap wound a bit. Nobody seems to want to speak to him."

"Can't you let him alone?"

"Yaas, deah boy; but I'm not goin' to."

With that remark Arthur Augustus quitted the study. He paused in the passage to reflect, and then looked in at No. 5, where Dick Julian and his study-mates were at tea.

"Would you fellows care to extend the hospitality of youah study to the new chap for tea?" he inquired.

"Sure, I'll extend him my boot if he puts his German nose in here!" answered Reilly.

"Wats!"

Arthur Augustus went further along the passage, to No. 7. Roylance and Smith minor and Contarini were there.

"Pway excuse me, deah boys," began Arthur Augustus gracefully. "Would you care for me to bwing a chap to tea with you?"

"Certo!" said Contarini, with a smile.

"Two if you like," said Roylance.

"Pewwaps I had better mention that I am weferrin' to the new chap, Lauwenz."

"Oh!"

"Il Tedesco!" said Contarini.

"Bring him here!" said Smith minor. "I've got a cricket-stump handy. "I'll let him have it, with pleasure."

"Wats!"

Arthur Augustus next looked into No. 9, and found Levison and Clive and Cardew there. He repeated his proposition, and Cardew nodded.

"Bring him, by all means," he said heartily. "I'll see whether his Hun nose is as hard as British knuckles."

"Weally, Cardew——"

"You're not chumming with the Hun, surely, D'Arcy!" exclaimed Levison.

"Certainly not. I am simply goin' to be civil to a new chap. Howevah, if you do not want to make a good impwession on a stwangah, you can go and eat coke!"

Arthur Augustus walked out indignantly, and bore down upon Tom Merry's study. They looked rather grim when they heard his suggestion.

"I—I don't mind," Tom Merry said, his good nature getting the upper hand. "I suppose he will feel a bit lonely here."

"We'll pull his Hun leg," remarked Lowther.

Manners gave a growl.

"We don't want any Huns! Take him to your own study, D'Arcy."

"The fellows won't have him——"

"Well, we won't either!"

"I wegard you as extwemely inhospitable and wathah lackin' in good form!" said Arthur Augustus crushingly. And he retired.

The swell of St. Jim's did not try any more studies. It was only too clear that he was the only fellow in the School House who was inclined to take any trouble about being civil to the Hun. He descended the stairs, and met Paul Laurenz when the latter left Mr. Lathom.

Laurenz had a clouded expression on his good-looking face.

His interviews with the Head and with his Form-master had passed off well enough; and Mr. Railton had spoken to him kindly. Mrs. Mimms, the housedame, had been kind, too, though she had looked very curiously at the German boy. Kildare of the Sixth had gone out of his way to speak a word to the lad.

But Laurenz had not failed to observe the glances that were given him, and to understand what they meant. Most of the fellows meant to let him alone—they would not persecute him, but they wanted nothing to do with him. It was natural enough, but it was hard on the lonely boy, stranded in a big school under such unfavourable circumstnaces.

He had, so far, spoken only to one boy of his own accord—that was Racke of the Shell. He had asked Racke where to find Mr. Lathom's study, and Racke had stared at him, sneered, and turned on his heel without replying. Racke, certainly, wasn't a favourable specimen of the St. Jim's fellows, but Laurenz knew nothing about that, and the incident had cut him deeply. It was not surprising that the boy looked moody as he came down the passage, feeling himself utterly alone in the great place.

Arthur Augustus was not the most observant of fellows; but he had a pretty clear idea of what the boy felt like. Perhaps even the noble Gussy felt some slight inward twinge as he approached the new boy—it required an effort to be friendly to a German. But he mastered any repugnance he may have felt, and sailed down on the new junior with a beaming smile.

"Finished with Lathom?" he asked.

Laurenz stopped

He remembered Arthur Augustus as one of the fellows he had met in Rylcombe Lane that afternoon.

"Yes," he said.

"You haven't had your tea, I suppose?"

"No. Perhaps," said Laurenz, encouraged by Gussy's kind manner, "you will tell me where to go. Mr. Lathom said in Hall, but——"

"I will take you there, deah boy. I am goin' to have tea in Hall myself today," said Arthur Augustus graciously.

"Thank you very much."

"Not at all."

Arthur Augustus walked away with Laurenz, whose face had brightened a little. He was not, after all, such an outcast as he had felt a few minutes previously. Even the good-hearted Gussy did not realise how much a little friendly kindness meant to the lonely lad at that moment; but if he had done so he would certainly have been more than ever satisfied that he had done right in paying regard to the claims of "Noblesse oblige."

CHAPTER 7.

The Hun at Home.

ARTHUR AUGUSTUS D'ARCY, about an hour later, tapped at the door of Study No. 8 in the Fourth and looked in.

Jerrold Lumley-Lumley was there. Lumley-Lumley had the study to himself, his study-mate, Wyatt, having recently left St. Jim's. Lumley-Lumley, naturally, did not much like "digging" alone, and he had offered a share in his study to several fellows. Baggy Trimble had generously offered to come in to stay; but Baggy's offer was declined without thanks. The junior looked up with a smile as Arthur Augustus' eyeglass glimmered in at the door.

"Trot in!" he said.

"Thank you, I will come in."

"Made up your mind to change into this study?" asked Lumley-Lumley. "More room than in No. 6—for two! Blessed if I like goin' it alone."

"You are very flattewin', deah boy; but I feah that Blake and Hewwies and Dig would feel wathah deserted if I changed out," said Arthur Augustus. "And I don't know how those youngstahs would get on without me."

"Ha, ha!"

"Howevah, you are goin' to have a study-mate, Lumley."

"I guess I've had some offers—but I'm not taking Trimble or Mellish, not if I know it!"

"I was not alludin' to Twimble or Mellish."

"Who wants to change, then?"

"Ahem! I was weferrin' to the new fellow who awwived this aftahnoon," said Arthur Augustus, with a little cough.

Lumley-Lumley started.

"The Hun!" he exclaimed.

"Ahem! His name is Laurenz."

"Well, my hat! This is too jolly bad!" exclaimed Lumley-Lumley indignantly. "They have no right to plant the Hun on me."

"He must have some studay, deah boy."

"Take him into yours, then."

"We are four alweady——"

"Look here, is it official?" demanded Lumley-Lumley. "Does Railton say so, or are you trying to get a home for the bounder?"

"It is Mr. Wailton's ordah. He has told Laurenz that this is to be his studay. I—I thought I would dwop in to bweak it gently, deah boy."

Lumley-Lumley grunted.

"I wish Wyatt had stayed," he growled. "He used to whistle while I was trying to work; but he would be better than this. I don't want a Hun in this study!"

"I twust you will be civil to him," said D'Arcy anxiously.

"I guess I sha'n't eat him," growled Lumley-Lumley. "But it's a shame. I don't want to be uncivil, but the fellow can't expect me to be friendly, I suppose."

"Howevah——"

"Oh, rot!"

Arthur Augustus coughed and retired from the study. With his usual tact and judgment, the swell of St. Jim's had deemed it wise to break it gently to the Hun's study-mate. He was rather anxious that Paul Laurenz should not have too uncivil a reception in his new quarters.

Five minutes later the swell of St. Jim's was helping Laurenz to carry his books and belongings into No. 8.

Several fellows looked at them as they were so engaged; but nobody volunteered a remark to the new boy.

There was not even any mild ragging, such as new boys sometimes experienced from the older hands. They simply let him alone.

Only when Talbot of the Shell came along, and nearly ran into the new junior with his arms full of books, he paused a moment and gave him a nod.

"Getting into your new quarters?" he said pleasantly.

"Yes," said Laurenz.

"You'll find that a nice study," said Talbot. "There's a view of a corner of the quad, if you put your head out of the window."

Laurenz smiled, and Talbot of the Shell passed on. It was only a few careless words that he had uttered, but the thought was kindly, and the lonely boy understood it. Talbot, in the old days when he had been called "The Toff," had known what it was to be down on his luck, and he had a little fellow-feeling for the new junior. A minute or two later Gore was slanging him in his study for "jawing to the Hun."

While D'Arcy and Laurenz were disposing the new fellow's belongings in the study, Lumley-Lumley sat at work on his prep. He did not look up, and did not seem to be aware that anything was going on about him. When the task was finished Arthur Augustus went to his own study to work, leaving Paul alone with the original inmate of No. 8.

Laurenz looked at the junior working at the table, and the colour deepened in his cheeks. Lumley-Lumley kept his face down, his eyes steadily on his work. But as if the new boy's gaze moved him, in spite of himself, he looked up at last, meeting the steady glance of Laurenz's handsome blue eyes.

"Hallo!" he said, rather gruffly.

"Hallo!" said Laurenz, smiling slightly.

"You're Laurenz?"

"Yes—Paul Laurenz."

"I'm Lumley-Lumley."

"D'Arcy told me your name."

"You seem to have made friends with D'Arcy."

"He has been very kind."

"Gussy all over!" grunted Lumley-Lumley. "Well, I guess you're going to be my study-mate, Laurenz, whether I like it or not."

"I am sorry if you do not like it, Lumley-Lumley. I have been told that all boys in the Fourth have a study, and that one is not allowed a room to himself; so it cannot be helped, can it?"

"I guess not."

"You are an American?" asked Laurenz.

Lumley-Lumley grinned.

"No. I've lived in America, as a kid," he answered. "I guess that guessin' sticks to a chap when he once picks it up. You don't like Americans, I suppose, any more than English?"

Laurenz's flush deepened.

"I am a German," he said simply. "I cannot help that. But I was born in England, and I have never spoken any language but English, and I feel English."

"You look English right enough," said Lumley-Lumley, thawing a little. "Blessed if anybody would take you for a Hunlander! That old johnny who was with you this afternoon—your father I——"

"My uncle."

"Well, he looks a Hun right enough—excuse me, I mean a German. You're not a bit like him."

"No."

"Don't you feel rather queer, coming to an English school?"

"Yes, a little. But it cannot be helped. I hope that I shall be able to get on with the fellows here."

"I guess that won't be easy. Being a German, I suppose you don't understand why fellows can't stand Germans. You wouldn't."

"I think I understand," said Laurenz quietly. "I do not feel German, but English. And such things as the German Government has done during the war are atrocious. But the Government is not the people—the people are not so base as their Government—at least, I hope and believe so."

The boy sighed as he spoke.

"Oh!" said Lumley-Lumley, melting still further. "You're not one of the chaps who howls with glee when they sink a hospital ship, then?"

"I hope not. I wish there had been no war," said Laurenz. "As a German by blood, I ought to wish my own country to be victorious; but I cannot wish that. I should rejoice to see Prussia defeated and humbled. It may be wrong, but I cannot help it."

"Well, it can't be wrong, as Prussia

is in the wrong," said Lumley-Lumley. "But you are partly English from your looks."

"I do not know."

"You don't know!" exclaimed Lumley-Lumley.

"No. I never knew my parents," said Laurenz, with a clouded brow. "I have never known any relations but my uncle, and he never speaks of them. I have lived always among English people, and at times I have quite forgotten that I was of German descent. But for the war it would not have mattered. Now to be a German is to be suspected and disliked, and I cannot complain. I can understand now how I shall be treated here. I must make the best of it. You were speaking to D'Arcy about changing studies. If you wish to change and leave me alone, I shall not mind."

"I guess I sha'n't do that. No reason why we shouldn't get on together. I don't suppose I shall catch you making signals to air-raiders some evening!" grinned Lumley-Lumley.

Laurenz smiled.

At that moment there came a crash at the door. It flew open, and the burly form of George Alfred Grundy of the Shell appeared in the doorway. His thunderous glanced fixed upon the new junior.

"Here he is!" he roared.

"Grundy, old man——" murmured Wilkins from behind.

"Shut up!"

"Ahem!"

Grundy strode into the study.

CHAPTER 8.
Grundy Comes Down Heavy.

PAUL LAURENZ stood looking at Grundy, not at all alarmed apparently. He looked so handsome, and so thoroughly English, as he stood there, that even Grundy paused. German as he was, there was not a fellow at St. Jim's who looked more English than Paul Laurenz.

"You're Laurenz?" jerked out Grundy.

"Yes."

"Then you're the German?"

"Yes."

"You haven't got a face like a side of bacon or a nose like a pug dog," said Grundy, puzzled. "Are you sure you're a German?"

Laurenz laughed.

"I suppose so," he said. "What does it matter?"

"It matters a lot!" said Grundy, growing thunderous again. "We don't like gas-poisoners and baby-killers here. You've got to get out!"

"Grundy!" murmured Gunn.

"Shut up, Gunn! Now, Laurenz, as you look such a whipper-snapper, I really don't want to hit you," said Grundy magnanimously. "Will you buzz off?"

Laurenz stared at him.

"Leave the school, do you mean?" he exclaimed.

"Yes, that's what I mean."

"You are joking I suppose? How can I leave the school when my uncle has brought me here for the term?"

"You can settle that with your uncle," said Grundy. "Tell the old freak we can't stand Huns, and we won't. My cousin George is crocked for life by your gas-poisoning crowd. You've got to get out! Take the evening train. Your box can be sent after you. See?"

Laurenz looked at him and laughed. Grundy of the Shell was famous for his colossal nerve. But this was really past the limit, even for Grundy. Only George Alfred could possibly have imagined that he could order a new boy out of the school on the day of his arrival here.

Lumley-Lumley grinned, too, and there was a chortle from the fellows who were gathering in the passage.

"I don't see anything to cackle at," said Grundy. "The question is, Laurenz, are you going or are you not going?"

"Of course I am not going," answered Laurenz, smiling. "I think you must be out of your senses to ask such a thing."

"He knows Grundy already," chuckled Jack Blake in the passage, and there was a laugh.

"You won't go?" roared Grundy.

"Certainly not."

"Perhaps you'll go when you've had a thrashing."

"I think not," said Laurenz calmly. "And I have not had a thrashing yet."

"That won't take long! Put up your hands!"

"I guess you'll do nothing of the kind," broke in Jerrold Lumley-Lumley. "Get out of this study, Grundy! You're not going to handle a kid half your size, you bullying duffer!"

"If you call me a bully, Lumley-Lumley, I'll thrash you, too, when I've finished with this Hun!"

"You have not finished with me yet," remarked Laurenz. "I do not want to fight you, but I am willing to do so if you wish."

"Precious fight you'll put up—a dashed Hun!" snorted Grundy. "I'll make mincemeat of you in about ten seconds!"

"Bai Jove! Let me pass, you fellows!"

"Don't push, Gussy!"

"Let me pass, Blake! I am goin' to give Gwunday a feahful thwashin'!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I insist upon passin'——"

"Make way, gents, make way!" sang out the humorous tones of Monty Lowther of the Shell. "Here comes Thomas in his wrath!"

The juniors, grinning, made way for the captain of the Shell. Tom Merry passed through the crowd, and entered the study. His eyes were gleaming under his knitted brows.

"What are you doing here, Grundy?" he snapped.

"Find out!" retorted Grundy undauntedly.

"I've come here to find out. I suppose you are bullying the new kid? You've got to stop it. Understand?"

Tom Merry's manner was sharp. He was fed up with George Alfred Grundy and his lordly ways. He was in a mood to give Grundy a severe lesson if he wanted one.

"Oh, go and eat coke!" answered Grundy with a sniff. "I've come here to turn that Hun out. We don't want him at St. Jim's."

"You silly ass!" roared Tom.

Grundy pointed to the door.

"You get out!" he said imperatively. "I don't want any interference. In fact, I sha'n't stand any. I never stand any rot. I've told you that before."

"Get out!" said Tom.

"Eh? I'm telling you to get out," said Grundy.

"And I'm telling you!" snapped the captain of the Shell. "And if you don't go on your feet you'll go on your neck!"

Grundy pushed back his cuffs in a business-like way.

"I'm ready!" he announced.

Tom Merry made a stride at him. He was angry. He did not like being called away from his prep to protect a new kid from Grundy; but he felt that it was up to him, and he intended to deal severely with the hot-headed and high-handed Shell fellow. But as he strode forward, and the crowd in the doorway looked on with keen interest for the fight, Paul Laurenz made a sudden move and interposed.

"Step aside, kid!" said Tom.

"You are very kind to come here to protect me," said Laurenz. "But I cannot let you fight my battles."

Tom stared at him.

Then the Head Arrived!
(See Chapter 12.)

"You're not his size," he said.

"Well, you are not, either, if you come to that," said Laurenz with a smile.

"Nearer than you," said Tom.

"Yes. But I do not want to be protected."

Tom Merry paused, quite at a loss. He had chipped in from a sense of duty, not because he was looking for trouble. He had more important things to do than licking Grundy.

"Look here, you can't tackle Grundy, Laurenz," he said at last. "He's too big for you, and it wouldn't be fair play."

"I shall try, if he doesn't let me alone."

Grundy gave a snort.

"I could snap you over my knee!" he grunted. "I don't want to hurt you if you get out. But you've got to get out."

"I couldn't very well get out if I wanted to," said Laurenz. "But certainly I don't want to, and don't intend to. I ask you to leave my study, Grundy, if that is your name."

"Perhaps you'll put me out if I don't go!" suggested Grundy with crushing sarcasm.

"I shall do my best."

"Oh, my hat!" said Grundy. "Well, I must say that you're plucky for a Hun, if youre not gassing."

Tom Merry stepped back. He was willing to take the trouble on his hands, but the new fellow had a right to please himself. Certainly there was no doubt that he had plenty of pluck, if he chose to tackle the burly Grundy.

"Well, please yourself," said Tom Merry. "You can't handle Grundy, but you can try, if you like; and I'll see that Grundy stops as soon as you are fed up."

Laurenz fixed his eyes on Grundy.

"Will you leave the study?" he asked.

"Will you leave the school?" retorted Grundy.

"Very well! I shall do my best to handle you," said Laurenz.

He peeled off his jacket sedately, and laid it across the back of a chair. The crowd in the passage, growing in numbers now, regarded him with amazement and keen interest. Somehow, the fellows had taken it for granted that the Hun would be rather funky, but that was evidently a mistake. Grundy watched him, hardly believing that this slim fellow, nearly a head shorter than himself, would really venture to encounter him.

Laurenz rolled back his sleeves. He knew he had a big job in hand, and he did not underrate it. Slim as he looked in figure, his arms showed good muscular development. He was very far from being a weakling. Grundy did not deign to strip. He fully expected to settle the Hun's hash with his celebrated four-point-seven punch at the first onset, if the Hun really had the nerve to tackle him, which Grundy did not quite believe yet.

"Are you ready?" asked Laurenz.

"Quite!" grinned the Shell fellow.

"I object to this!" exclaimed Arthur Augustus D'Arcy. "It is not faiah. Bettah leave the bwute to me, Lauwenz."

There was a chortle at that. Arthur Augustus was not exactly up to George Alfred's weight.

Laurenz smiled and shook his head.

"Well, if you are goin' to fight, we will have it accordin' to the wules," said D'Arcy. "I will keep time."

"No need for that!" growled Grundy. "Do you think the blessed Boche will last a minute? You can time me pitching him downstairs and kicking him out of the house, if you like."

"Wats!"

Arthur Augustus took out his handsome ticker.

"Time!" he said, with dignity.

Grundy lounged forward with a grin. Lumley-Lumley had pulled the study table out of the way. Five or six juniors were sitting on it, and three or four more were crammed in the window. Round the doorway there was a throng. But plenty of room was left for the combat—if there was a combat.

The latter point was soon settled. Laurenz came on, without waiting to be attacked, and Grundy's four-point-seven punch came a little too late. It swept the empty air, and Paul Laurenz's clenched fist smote Grundy full on the jaw, and the great George Alfred went down on his back with a crash that shook the study.

CHAPTER 9.
A Good Plucked 'Un.

CRASH!

"My hat!"

"Bai Jove!"

"Well hit, Hunny!"

Laurenz panted a little. George Alfred Grundy lay on his back, blinking up at the ceiling in a state of astonishment that could not possibly be described in words.

"Oh, crumbs!" said Wilkins. "Grundy is down! The Hun's knocked Grundy down! Oh, my only sainted aunt!"

Arthur Augustus was too astonished to count for a moment. But he began to count, with a grin, now.

"One, two, three, four, five——"

Grundy sat up.

"Ow!" he gasped.

"Go it, Hun!" yelled Trimble from the passage. "Knock him down as he gets up!"

The new junior was entitled to take the advantage, but he did not do so. He stepped quietly back. Grundy was quite at his mercy as he scrambled heavily to his feet, but Laurenz did not touch him.

"By gum!" Lowther murmured to Tom Merry. "He's not much of a Hun, is he, Tommy? Fancy a Hun giving a fellow a chance like that—with the odds against him!"

He seems jolly decent," said Tom.

"Ow!" gasped Grundy, rubbing his jaw. "Yow! Come on, you blessed Hun! I'm going to smash you up now!"

Grundy attacked rather groggily. That terrible drive on the jaw had made his head sing, and hurt him considerably. He was not really feeling fit for a slogging-match, but George Alfred was a sticker.

The juniors watched breathlessly as they closed in strife.

The new fellow knew how to box, that was clear. It was only great skill that saved him from Grundy's terrific drives, any of which was heavy enough to have knocked him out if it had fairly landed.

He had to give ground, but with great nimbleness and quickness on his feet he recovered it when he was in danger of being driven into an awkward corner. Several times the two changed ground without Grundy being quite aware how the change in position came about.

Three rounds were fought out, and Grundy was panting with his exertions. His energy had been spent in striving to get at the new junior, but he had not succeeded in getting fairly at him. At the close of the third round Grundy thought he had a chance, and rushed in, letting out with right and left; but it was an almost obvious feint, though it took in the slow-witted Grundy; the Shell fellows fists beat the air, and Laurenz's right came home on his chin, followed by the left on his nose.

Grundy sat on the floor with a heavy bump.

"Time!" grinned Arthur Augustus D'Arcy.

"By Jove!" murmured Manners. "That kid's hot stuff! He could give you something to think about, Tommy, with the mittens on."

Tom Merry nodded. He could see that.

Wilkins helped Grundy to a chair for the rest. Grundy sat down heavily, blinking. Some of the juniors looked anxiously down the passage of the staircase. There had been a great deal of noise, and the arrival of a prefect on the scene would have spoiled what promised to be one of the biggest fights of the term.

"Oh, crumbs!" murmured Grundy, as Wilkins fanned him with a sheet of impot paper. "He's a good man, Wilkins. I see that."

"You ought to have had the gloves on," said Wilkins. "There'll be a row about this."

"Of course, I didn't think he could fight."

"Are you going on?"

"Fathead! Of course! Do you think a Hun could lick me?" snorted Grundy.

Wilkins did not reply. His own opinion was that Grundy was already licked. Even Grundy's great size and strength and sticking powers could not save him, in the opinion of his chum.

"Time, deah boys!"

Grundy lurched up to the mark, Laurenz stepping lightly to meet him. The juniors were looking at the German schoolboy with new respect now. German or not, he had plenty of pluck, and he was a good fighting-man, and the St. Jim's juniors could respect qualities like that.

"Go it, Grundy!" murmured Gunn, not very hopefully.

The fourth round began.

Tom Merry & Co. watched with mixed feelings. Grundy was so hopelessly in the wrong that they could not wish for his success. But it was not wholly gratifying to see a St. Jim's fighting-man licked by a Hun. And the licking was quite certain now, although Grundy could not see it.

Grundy closed at last, and they clinched in a close grapple, struggling.

"Bweak away!" rapped out Arthur Augustus.

The struggle was brief. It was broken by Grundy going down under a drive in the ribs which landed him on the floor. Laurenz stood panting. In the struggle his shirt-sleeves had been torn to ribbons almost, revealing arms that were splendidly developed and strong. As he stood there, with Grundy gasping on the floor, all eyes were on the new junior. On his left arm, bare to the shoulder now, there showed up, clear against the white skin, the design of an anchor, tattooed in Indian ink. It was a large design, half-covering the length between shoulder and elbow.

"Great pip! What's that?" ejaculated Lumley-Lumley.

Laurenz looked at him, and Lumley-Lumley pointed to the anchor tattooed on his arm.

"Oh, nothing," said Laurenz indifferently. "It has always been there."

"Didn't you do it yourself?" asked Lumley-Lumley, examining the design curiously, as Wilkins helped Grundy up.

"No. It was done when I was a little kid."

"You've been to sea?"

"Not that I know of."

"I should guess it was a sailorman tattooed that for you."

"Possibly."

"Don't you know?" exclaimed Lumley-Lumley, in astonishment.

"No."

"Well, my hat!"

"Groogh-hooh-hoohoohooop!" was coming from George Alfred Grundy.

"Bai Jove! I weckon this is a win," remarked Arthur Augustus.

Grundy gasped painfully.

"Rats! Shut up! I'm not done yet."

"Cave!" came a voice from the passage.

"Look out! Railton!" whispered Blake.

The crowd dodged away in the passage as the School House master came striding on the scene. But the fellows in the study could not dodge away, and there were nearly a dozen of them. Mr. Railton stood in the doorway, his brow growing thunderous at the sight of the two bruised and panting adversaries.

"What—what does this mean?"

There was a dead silence in Study No. 8. It was broken by George Alfred Grundy. And what Grundy said was:

"Grooh-hoh-hooooh!"

CHAPTER 10.
Grundy Sees It All.

MR. RAILTON eyed the juniors very sternly.

"You have been fighting!" he exclaimed.

"Right on the wicket!" murmured Monty Lowther—not aloud.

"Grundy!"

"Groogh-hooh!"

"How dare you fight in this way—without gloves, too! Both of you have been seriously marked. This is disgraceful!"

"Groogh!"

"Laurenz, this is a serious matter!"

"I am sorry, sir," said Laurenz quietly, though breathlessly.

He did not add that it was not his fault, and that he had had no choice in the matter. The juniors half-expected him to do so; but "the Hun" played up as any other fellow there would have done.

"As this has taken place in your study, I can only conclude that Grundy sought the quarrel."

"I suppose we are both to blame, sir, if the rules have been broken," said Laurenz.

"You do not imagine, I suppose, that a prize-fight is allowed in this school?" said Mr. Railton tartly.

"I suppose not, sir. I did not think about it."

"It wasn't Laurenz's fault, sir," said Grundy. Obtuse as Grundy was, he could always be depended on to play the game, as he could see it. "I came here to thrash Laurenz."

"Indeed! And what cause of quarrel, Grundy, could you possibly have with a boy who had not been in the school many hours?"

"I don't like Huns, sir."

"What?"

"I was going to thrash him, and make him get out," said Grundy sturdily. "My idea was to thrash him every day till he went."

Mr. Railton seemed almost petrified by that reply.

"Shurrup!" whispered Wilkins.

"Then you are wholly to blame in this matter, Grundy!" gasped the Housemaster, at last. "You deliberately attacked a new boy, younger than yourself, without any cause of offence!"

Grundy blinked at him. Put like that, it really did sound as if George Alfred had been bullying. So he had, though he had not realised it.

"Well, sir, I thought we didn't want any Huns in this school," he said. "I don't think the Head ought to let in Huns, sir."

"Wha-a-at?"

"I asked the fellows to come with me in a deputation to point it out to Dr. Holmes, sir, but they wouldn't."

"I should imagine not!" snapped Mr. Railton. "Grundy, you are out of your senses! Do you presume to dictate to your Headmaster?"

"Nunno, sir! But——"

"I shall punish you most severely for this, Grundy! You are not in a state to receive punishment now. To-morrow I shall give you a very severe caning. And if you should molest this boy further, I shall report you to Dr. Holmes for a public flogging."

"Oh!" gasped Grundy.

"Let there be no more of this!" exclaimed the Housemaster. "I am ashamed of you, Grundy. Have you no sense of chivalry towards a boy in a somewhat unfortunate position?"

"Oh!"

"I trust," said Mr. Railton, looking round—"I trust that no other boy shares Grundy's desire to persecute Laurenz on account of his origin."

"Certainly not, sir," said Tom Merry.

"Wathah not, Mr. Railton. Gwunday doesn't weally mean that, sir, only he can't help being a silly idiot."

"H'm! Grundy, you will be punished to-morrow. Meanwhile, you will give me your word not to interfere with Laurenz."

"Yes, sir," mumbled Grundy.

"You boys have probably not finished your preparations?" exclaimed Mr. Railton, glancing at the juniors.

"Nunno, sir; not yet."

"Then you had better return to it at once."

Mr. Railton rustled away. Paul Laurenz quietly put on his jacket, Lumley-Lumley lending him a hand. The latter was rather pleased with his study-mate now, in spite of his nationality. A Fourth-Former who could "take down" the overbearing Grundy of the Shell was a fellow likely to be popular in the Fourth.

Laurenz was very near the end of his tether, but he was not so done as Grundy. Nobody doubted what the end would have been if the fight had gone on to the finish—excepting Grundy. But even Grundy realised that it had been a very near thing. His rugged face was a perfect picture of damage, and he blinked painfully out of one eye.

He stood regarding Laurenz with a very queer expression. The German schoolboy smiled slightly.

"It beats me," said Grundy, at last.

"What does?" grinned Monty Lowther. "The Hun?"

"No, Lowther. I haven't been licked, and you know it. I'm ready to fight any fellow here who thinks I've been licked!" exclaimed Grundy wrathfully.

"You're not fit to fight anybody now," said Tom Merry drily. "And if you did it wouldn't alter the facts."

"Wathah not!"

"I've not been licked," said Grundy. "That's utter rot! Nobody at St. Jim's could lick me. When I was at Redclyffe——"

"Oh, give Redclyffe a rest!"

"When I was at Redclyffe nobody could lick me, either. A prefect tried it once, and I whopped him. But I admit this chap has put up a good fight. That's what beats me. I never thought a German could stand up to me. In fact, a German couldn't."

"Laurenz has," grinned Blake.

Grundy nodded.

"Yes; he's stood up to me, and gave as good as I gave. But a German chap couldn't do it," said Grundy, with conviction. "That's utter rot! Laurenz isn't a German."

"What?"

"Bai Jove!"

"But I am," said Laurenz, with a smile.

Grundy shook his head.

"That's rot!" he said. "You don't look like a German. You don't talk like a German. You don't play mean tricks like a German. You don't go for little fellows and leave big ones alone, like a German. You're not a German! You're spoofing!"

"Wha-at?"

"That's it," said Grundy. "Spoofing! You're not any more German than I am—and if anybody said I was I'd slaughter him. You're pulling our leg—making out you are a Boche; though what you're doing it for beats me."

"But——" began the amazed Laurenz.

Grundy waved his hand, waving his protest aside, as it were. Grundy never listened to any opinion but his own.

"If you'd been a German you couldn't have stood up to me like that," he said. "Don't tell me you are. You're not, and I know it. You've blacked both my eyes, and nearly squashed my nose, and my mouth feels as if it isn't there. I can respect a chap who can do that. Precious few chaps could. There's my fist!"

With great dignity Grundy held out his hand to Paul Laurenz.

The new boy, astonished, smiled as he took it. He had no objection to shaking hands with Grundy.

"You don't claim to have licked me?" asked Grundy, rather anxiously.

"Not at all."

"We'll have it out again, if you like, another time."

Laurenz laughed.

"I've had enough, if you have," he said. "Enough is as good as a feast."

"Well, let it go at that," said Grundy. "I expect I shall have a fight or two on my hands to-morrow, as some fellows may hint that I have been licked. Mind," said Grundy, looking round, "no larks on Laurenz, you know, you fellows! I don't allow it!"

"You don't allow it?" yelled Blake.

"No. I don't believe he's a German at all, and I'm standing up for him," said Grundy.

With that the great Grundy strode from the study—Wilkins and Gunn following him in almost a dazed state. They were used to George Alfred, but he always had a new surprise for them.

For Grundy to decide, off his own bat as it were, that the new fellow wasn't a German, against the fellow's own statement, was really the limit.

Tom Merry & Co. looked very curiously at Laurenz when Grundy was gone.

"There isn't anything in that, of course?" asked Tom.

Laurenz smiled.

"No. I—I wish there were! But I am a German!"

"You don't seem like one in any point at all," said Tom Merry. "There isn't a trace of it in your looks."

"Or your ways," said Manners.

"Bai Jove! I suppose Laurenz knows whethah he is a German or not," said Arthur Augustus. "Gwunday is a feahful ass!"

"Better come and bathe your chivvy, Laurenz," said Lumley-Lumley, with a grin; and the new junior nodded and followed him.

Tom Merry & Co. returned to their interrupted prep, but most of the fellows were thinking a good deal of Paul Laurenz that evening. His standing up to Grundy had told greatly in his favour, and there was some relenting in the general attitude towards "the Hun." After all, as Jack Blake remarked, if a Hun didn't act Hunnishly, he could be treated like a white man. As for Grundy

of the Shell, he remained firmly convinced that the new fellow wasn't a Hun at all—that being the only possible way to account for his having stood up to the great George Alfred.

And in the fulness of time the St. Jim's fellows were destined to discover that Grundy, the biggest duffer in the School House, was nearer to the truth than they dreamed of suspecting.

CHAPTER 11.

Herr Schneider Gets His Answer.

"YAH! Hun!"

It was the following morning, and the Fourth Form had just come out. Baggy Trimble thus expressed his feelings to the new junior in the passage.

Paul Laurenz had taken his place in the Fourth Form that morning. He had little to complain of. The other fellows were civil; and Arthur Augustus, at least, acting on his great maxim of "Noblesse oblige," was very gracious. Most of the Fourth, as a matter of fact, were indifferent to him. But Baggy Trimble—not conspicuous as a rule for patriotism—felt called upon to display his disapproval after lessons, feeling that he was on safe ground in chivvying a Hun.

Laurenz started and coloured as Baggy's unmusical voice assailed him. He made a step towards Trimble, who promptly dodged behind Herries' burly form.

"Keep him off, Herries!"

George Herries took Trimble by the collar and jerked him round towards the junior.

"Keep him off yourself," he answered.

"Yaas, wathah, you fat boundah!" exclaimed Arthur Augustus, wrathfully.

"I'm not going to touch you," Laurenz said to Trimble. "But why should you call me names?"

"You're a Hun!" sniffed Trimble, watching him warily. "I don't like Huns! Yah! Go back to Deutschland!"

"Look out!" murmured Blake, sighting Herr Schneider coming from the direction of the Fifth Form room.

But Trimble had his back to Herr Schneider, and went on loftily:

"I'm down on Huns! We're short of bread because of the Huns! I haven't had a decent meal for weeks, all through your rotten Kaiser!"

"The Kaiser is not my Kaiser!" exclaimed Laurenz angrily. "How dare you say so, you fat rascal!"

"Rot! Hun! Yah! Oh, crumbs!" Baggy broke off, as a fat hand was laid on his collar from behind, and he was shaken.

"You young rasgal!" thundered Herr Schneider.

"Oh! I didn't see you, sir—— Ow! Leggo!"

"You call Laurenz names, isn't it?"

"Oh, no sir!" gasped Trimble.

"Vat?"

"I—I was only saying it was a fine afternoon, sir," stammered Trimble.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Trimble, you take a hundret lines of Deutsch," said Herr Schneider, shaking him. "You are a pad and untrootful poy!"

"Yow-ow!"

Herr Schneider released him, and Baggy scuttled away, in great wrath. The fat Herr blinked at Laurenz over his spectacles.

"Laurenz, I vish to speak mit you. You will step into mine study."

"Certainly, sir," said Laurenz.

Some curious glances were cast after them as Laurenz followed the German master to his study.

"They're going to be as thick as

thieves, you bet," sneered Mellish. "We shall have the young Hun spying on us and telling tales to the old Hun."

"You have no wight to suggest such a thing, Mellish!" exclaimed D'Arcy sharply.

"Well, that's what it looks like to me."

"Oh, wats!"

"I shouldn't wonder, though," remarked Blake, as the juniors moved away. "Germans are born spies. I shouldn't wonder if Schneider intended it."

"I am suah Lauwenz would not do it, Blake."

"How do you know, fathead? You don't know anything about the fellow, excepting that he's a Boche."

"I am not likely to make a mistake about a fellow, Blake. With my tact and judgment——"

"Oh, rats!" answered Blake disrespectfully.

Laurenz entered the German master's study, with a quiet, grave face. He supposed that the Herr wished to speak kindly to him as a fellow-countryman, but he was not enjoying the prospect. Herr Schneider beckoned him to a seat, and he sat down.

"You get on mit te poys so far, Laurenz?" asked Herr Schneider.

"Yes, sir."

"You may, if you wish, speak in Cherman," said the Herr. "It will be a bleasure to you to speak your own language, isn't it—nicht wahr?"

Laurenz flushed.

"I do not speak German, sir."

"Vat?"

"Only a little, I mean," said Laurenz. "About as well as other fellows. I have been brought up among English people. I was not always with my uncle, Mr. Laurenz. I could not keep up a conversation in German. I—I never took to the language, sir. I always found it difficult, and my uncle was sometimes very angry with me about that."

"Mein Gott!" said Herr Schneider, staring at him. "Tat is ferry strange. You are Cherman and you do not speak Cherman. But you are Cherman?"

"I—I suppose so, sir."

"You subbose so? But you know, nicht wahr?"

"Yes, sir." Laurenz hesitated. "I do not feel German. All my thoughts and feelings are English. I forget that I am German, and it is a shock to me when I think of it."

"Mein Gott!"

The Herr blinked at Lorenz for some minutes.

"Tat will not do," he said. "Tat is not patriotic, Laurenz."

"I suppose not, sir, but I cannot help it. I—I do not wish to help it, either."

"I am surprised at dis, Laurenz. But I will take care of you mit your Cherman, and you shall soon learn to speak him."

Laurenz was silent.

"I shall be your friend—perhaps your only friend—in dis school," went on Herr Schneider. "You shall gum to me when you are in droubles. Am I not a Cherman also? You do not like Englanders ——"

"But I do like the English, sir."

"Nonsense!" said the Herr sharply. "You do not—you gannot. Listen to me, Laurenz! I will be your friend in te school. You shall tell me if any poy shall taunt you or trouble you, and I vill see tat he is punish."

Laurenz shook his head very decidedly.

"I do not wish to do that, sir. I can fight my own battles. That is what the fellows would call sneaking."

"Vat?"

"I thank you very much, sir, but I would prefer to look after myself," said the new junior firmly.

Herr Schneider stared at him hard. The expression on the Herr's fat face was much less agreeable now.

"You speak ferry strangely, Laurenz, for a Cherman poy!" he said. "Perhaps it is tat you are part English."

"I do not know, sir, but I hope so; I—I mean, I believe so," stammered Laurenz, flushing again.

"Mein Gott! Do you not remember your parents?"

"No, sir; I never saw them. I—I asked my uncle once if my mother was English—I felt sure it must be so—and he was very angry. So I know nothing of that."

"Mein Gott! You do not look Cherman. But, no matter, mein poy, you will need a friend here; de boys do not like Chermans—Huns, as they call them. But you will report to me if dey are unpleasant to you. Also, odder things, if there shall be breaking of te rules, and so forth, you will come to me quietly and giff me information—nicht wahr? You understand?"

Laurenz rose to his feet, his handsome face very red.

"You want me to act as spy in the school?" he exclaimed, his voice trembling with indignation.

suffer!"

"Are you out of your senses, poy?" exclaimed Herr Schneider angrily. "You vill do as I tells you, or you will

"Then I will suffer!" exclaimed Laurenz hotly. "I will not do as you ask. It would not be honourable. Perhaps you do not expect your countryman to be honourable!" he added recklessly.

"Mein Gott! You speak so to me!" thundered Herr Schneider, jumping up and seizing a cane from the table. "Ach! I vill teach you lesson, isn't it? Hold out te hand!"

Laurenz hesitated a moment, then he obeyed.

Swish!

"Now te odder hand!" thundered Herr Schneider.

Swish!

The German master pointed to the door with his cane.

"You go now!" he snapped. "I wash te hands of you! Look after yourself as you vish—I have nottings to do with you. Go!"

Laurenz opened the door.

"I am glad of it!" he answered. "I am no spy, and I never will be a spy!"

"Mein Gott! You giffs me more insolence!"

The enraged Herr made a rush at the junior in the doorway, brandishing the cane. Laurenz stepped quickly into the passage, and as he did so the cane descended across his shoulders with a loud crack.

The new junior uttered a cry of pain. He spun round on the German master with a blaze in his eyes.

"You cowardly brute!" he shouted.

"Vat—vat?" stuttered Herr Schneider, almost speechless with rage. "Vat? You call me vat is it?"

He rushed at the new boy, fairly slashing with the cane. There was a rush of footsteps, and Tom Merry ran up.

"Herr Schneider!" he exclaimed

Slash!

Tom Merry, interposing, caught the descending cane on his arm, and he gave a yell.

"Stop it!" shouted Monty Lowther, running up with Manners.

"Get avay!" yelled the infuriated German. "Avay mit you! I trashes tat poy——"

He hurled Tom Merry aside and grasped Laurenz with his left hand, and

lashed at him with the cane in his right. The Herr was in too great a rage to consider what he was doing, and every brutal Hun instinct in his nature was roused.

Herr Schneider was a master, but the Terrible Three did not hesitate. They rushed on him together, grasped him, and dragged him away from Laurenz. The Herr staggered and reeled, and the portly German, with the three juniors clinging to him, went with a crash to the floor.

CHAPTER 12.
Quite Popular.

"GREAT SCOTT!"

"They've downed Schneider!"

There was a rush from all parts. The sight of Herr Otto Schneider sprawling on the floor in the grasp of the Shell fellows was simply astounding. The juniors simply blinked at the scene.

"Schneider, how you vas?" sang Blake softly, and there was a chortle.

"Bless my soul! What can this mean?"

It was the Head!

Dr. Holmes, on his way from the Sixth Form room, came fairly on the astounding scene. He stopped dead, staring in petrified astonishment at the three Shell fellows and the fat German on the floor.

There was a hush on the crowd gathering in the passage.

"Herr Schneider! Merry! Manners! Lowther! What does this mean?"

Tom Merry and Co. jumped up in a great hurry. But the fat Herr was out of breath, and he went on sprawling.

"Merry! Explain yourself!" thundered the Head.

Tom Merry turned a flushed face to his headmaster. Certainly the amazing incident needed some explaining. But Tom Merry went ahead fearlessly with the explanation.

"We had to interfere, sir!" he gasped.

"What?"

"Herr Schneider was going for the new kid, sir——"

"You dare to interfere between a master and a boy whom he was chastising!" exclaimed Dr. Holmes.

"Yes, sir, in this case. Herr Schneider was going for him like a wild beast, and would have done him some injury."

"Merry!" gasped the Head.

"It is quite twue, sir," chimed in Arthur Augustus D'Arcy. "I saw it all fwom a distance, sir, but I was too fah to intahfeah. I wegard Herr Schneider as havin' acted in a bwutal Pwussian mannah, sir!"

"D'Arcy!"

"I wepeat it, sir—a bwutal Pwussian mannah."

Her Schneider sat up dizzily.

"Mein Gott! Himmel! Ach!" he spluttered.

"A lot of us saw it, sir!" interjected Jack Blake. "Schneider—I mean Herr Schneider—chased Laurenz out of his study, slashing at him. I'd have chipped in if I'd been near enough."

The Head paused. The concurrence of testimony from eye-witnesses was not without effect; and, moreover, he could see the marks of the Herr's reckless blows upon Paul Laurenz. Two of the savage slashes had landed on Laurenz's face, and showed deep red on the white skin. Caning of that variety was very far from being allowed at St. Jim's under any circumstances.

"Herr Schneider!" The German master had struggled to his feet now. "Herr Schneider, what does this mean?" said the Head quietly. "I am waiting for your explanation, sir."

"Ach!" gasped the Herr. "Tat poy was insolent—he was so insolent as neffer vas. He run away when I go to bunish him, isn't it—and—and——"

"Indeed!" said the Head, with a glance of very great disfavour at the Herr's excited face. "It is very strange that Laurenz should so forget himself on his first day here. In what did his insolence consist, Herr Schneider?"

"He—he——" the Herr stammered. "He cheek me, he trow pack mein kindness in my teef—he—he say—oh, insolent tings!"

"Laurenz!"

Paul Lorenz's eyes were flashing.

"Herr Schneider dares not tell you what he calls my insolence, sir!" he exclaimed in a clear voice. "You would not have called it insolence, or have punished me for it, I am sure of that."

"Bless my soul!" said the Head, in perplexity. "If the boy has been insolent, Herr Schneider, punishment must be administered, though not in such a manner. I will take this matter into my own hands. Kindly tell me what Laurenz said?"

"I—I vish not to make gomplaints," stammered Herr Schneider.

"That is not the question. I insist upon knowing."

He—he say—— Oh, it was notting!"

"Laurenz, what did you say to Herr Schneider?" demanded the Head. All eyes were very curiously upon the new junior. The crowd of fellows could not make head or tail of the affair, as Herries expressed it.

Laurenz was silent, but he looked expressively at the Herr. Dr. Holmes' frowning brow grew darker.

"Do you object to Laurenz telling me, Herr Schneider?" he asked very quietly.

"N-n-nein!" gasped the hapless Herr.

"Then tell me at once, Laurenz. I command you."

"Very well, sir! I told Herr Schneider that I was not a spy, and would not be a spy, and would not tell tales to him about the other fellows," said Paul Laurenz, slowly and distinctly.

"Bai Jove!"

There was a murmur among the juniors. They understood now. Dr. Holmes understood, too, and his eyes glinted over his glasses.

"Oh!" he said. "Herr Schneider, have the kindness to step into my study. I have something to say to you!"

"Ja, wohl!" mumbled the Herr, and he limped away, crestfallen.

"Laurenz, I am glad to see that you have such just and proper ideas of your duty," said the Head, and he rustled away after Herr Schneider, who probably did not enjoy the next ten minutes.

The juniors gathered round Paul Laurenz as he walked away. Arthur Augustus, with superb dignity, slipped his arm through the new junior's.

"I twust that howwid beast did not hurt you much, deah boy?" he said.

"Yes, rather, but it doesn't matter."

"I—I say, Laurenz," muttered Blake, "you gave it to him a treat. I—I say, will you come to tea in my study after lessons to-day?"

"If you like," said Laurenz with a smile.

Herries gave him a dig in the ribs.

"Like to come and see my bulldog?" he asked.

Tom Merry smiled as Paul Laurenz walked away with Study No. 6.

"Looks as if the Hun is going to be popular," he said. "Blessed if I don't rather like him myself! If he keeps on like this I shall begin to agree with Grundy, that's he's spoofing us, and he's not a Hun at all."

And Tom Merry and Co. had reason to remember those words afterwards.

THE END.

(Don't miss next Wednesday's Great Story of Tom Merry & Co. at St. Jim's —"CARDEW'S CHUM!" by Martin Clifford.)

The Editor's Chat.

For Next Wednesday:

"CARDEW'S CHUM!"

By Martin Clifford.

This story tells more about Paul Laurenz, and that erratic and wayward junior, Ralph Reckness Cardew, plays an important part in it. An uncle of Cardew's, Commander Durrance, comes to visit his nephew. Cardew is not particularly keen on his uncle; and that fact leads, in a curious way, to the temporary adoption of Laurenz by Cardew as a chum. It is not that Cardew really feels specially friendly; but it suits his book at first to pretend to be. Later it does not suit him to keep it up, and out of that fact arise fresh developments. But I must not tell you too much, lest I spoil the interest of a ripping good story.

LIST OF TOM MERRY STORIES IN THE "GEM"—(continued).

421.—"Manners Minor."
422.—"The Right Stuff."
423.—"By Luck and Pluck."
424.—"Spoofing the Swell."
425.—"The Conscripts of St. Jim's."
426.—"D'Arcy's Debt."
427.—"The Eleventh Man."
428.—"The St. Jim's War-Workers."
429.—"A Mission of Mystery."
430.—"The Conquering Heroes."
431.—"Grundy the Ventriloquist."
432.—"In Spite of All!"
433.—"True to Himself."
434.—"The Man from the Front."
435.—"Skimpole the Sportsman."
436.—"Under Gussy's Protection."
437.—"A Strange Secret."
438.—"A Schoolboy's Sacrifice."
439.—"The Snob of the School."
440.—"Moneybags Minor."
441.—"Too Clever by Half!"
442.—"The Schoolboy Reporter."
443.—"Grundy the Detective."
444.—"Every Inch a Hero."
445.—"The Patriots of St. Jim's."
446.—"Kildare's Enemy."
447.—"Holiday Camp."
448.—"Heroes of the Fourth."
449.—"Friends or Foes?"
450.—"Levison on the War-path."
451.—"Levison Minor."
452.—"Redfern to the Rescue!"
453.—"By Cousin Ethel's Wish."
454.—"On His Honour."
455.—"A Surprise for St. Jim's."
456.—"D'Arcy in Disgrace."
457.—"All the Winners!"
458.—"In the Seats of the Mighty."
459.—"The Third Form Sweepstake."
460.—"Herries' Orchestra."
461.—"Barred by the School."
462.—"Levison Minor's Luck."
463.—"The Cross-Country Cup."
464.—"For His Brother's Sake."
465.—"Grundy's Guilt."
466.—"The Wisdom of Gussy."
467.—"A Pal in Peril."
468.—"Levison for St. Jim's."
469.—"Passing it On."
470.—"The Intruder."
471.—"Arthur Augustus' Ally."

Yours Editor

THE ST. JIM'S GALLERY.

No. 15.—Frank Levison.

FRANK LEVISON, though he is comparatively a new-comer to the stories of St. Jim's, has few rivals for popularity among the many characters who play their part in those stories. Tom Merry, Talbot, Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, Jack Blake, the whimsical and erratic Cardew, Frank's major—all these have their enthusiastic admirers, and all deserve to have them. And there are others. One must not forget Figgins and Kerr, and Fatty Wynn, and Kangaroo, and Redfern. But I doubt whether more than three of them rank with Frank Levison in the favour of readers. Lest I might provoke controversy, I am not going to say which those three are. "You pays your money and you takes your choice," as the old saying goes.

Is there in any school story a better picture of a clean-hearted, innocent, loyal, rather serious youngster of twelve or thirteen than Mr. Martin Clifford has drawn for us, with many light but telling strokes, in giving us Levison minor?

I know of none.

When I say innocent, I do not mean soft or foolish. Frank is shrewd enough, and he has plenty of the average small boy tastes, though he may be more thoughtful than Wally D'Arcy, and more balanced than Reggie Manners. "Innocent" is not an adjective that should be used in a slighting sense, as it is often used.

There was trouble in Ernest Levison's mind when he learned that his young brother was coming to St. Jim's. Frank knew nothing of the fact that there was hardly a blacker sheep at the school than his brother; and Ernest was very fond of Frank, and hated the idea of his learning how little good he had done for himself—or anyone else—at St. Jims.

But there was no help for it. The people at home settled such things as that.

Frank came; but Ernest did not meet him. Levison major had an important engagement with Racke & Co. It was the Terrible Three who went to Rylcombe Station, expecting to see a second and smaller edition of the fellow they despised and disliked. But they did not. Frank's features were very like his brother's, but the expression was so wholly different that little more than a glance was needed to show Tom Merry and his chums that here was no smoky, gambling young blackguard.

Before they reached St. Jim's Frank had had his eyes opened—but not fully opened. In a glade of the wood they came upon Racke & Co., and the fag saw things he had never anticipated seeing. But he put it all down to his brother's having been led astray by rotters; and he slapped the face of Baggy Trimble when that saintly individual told him nasty stories about his brother; and he fought Wally for being too candid about Ernie's shortcomings. But he soon found his feet in the Third, and he and Wally became the best of chums.

The good that has been so often completely hidden by the evil in the complex nature of Ernest Levison came to the top when he had his minor to be guarded. He might pal with Racke himself, but he would not let Frank get into the clutches of the cad of the Shell. Out of that determination came a big row with Racke; and only Frank's pluck and the heady help of Tom Merry saved Levison major from being caught at the Green Man by Kildare. Racke called up Mr. Railton on the telephone from the village, and laid information anonymously; Kildare was sent to investigate, but Tom Merry's bicycle-step brought Frank to the inn first, and the situation was saved—for the time being.

There was more trouble—lots more of it. But from the very first Levison minor had a good effect upon Levison major. Not all at once could he shake off his bad associates and get clear of his bad habits; but he began to try. He played for the village footer team against the St. Jim's junior eleven, and played well, greatly to Frank's joy. He resisted the temptation to sell a House match. Such a suggestion would offer no temptation to Ernest Levison now; but it was different then.

And it was all due to Frank. The elder brother simply could not bear that the younger one should know him as he was, and because of that he strove to become something better. He would have had an easier task if Racke and Crooke would only have let him alone. But they were not minded to do this. They resented his intended defection, and plotted to prevent it.

Meanwhile, Frank was getting to know that the stories told were true. He saw too much to doubt them any longer. Yet his loyalty stood firm. He might not be able to look up to Ernest as he had done. The brother he had almost worshipped was more the shifting quicksand than the firm rock. But there was no slackening in his affection.

This much should be said for the elder Levison. Though he might speak roughly

to Frank at times, his actions were always kind. The cads waxed humorous over the spectacle of the black sheep coaching a fag in the classics; but when Frank needed help Ernie was never too busy to give it.

Reginald Talbot had been for some time the best friend Levison major had at St. Jim's. Not a chum exactly; they went different ways. But each had a strong feeling for the other on account of things that had happened in the past, and Talbot never would allow that there was no good in Levison, whoever might decry him. Talbot became Levison minor's friend, too, in circumstances that reflected great credit on Frank, for it was he who upset the plot that Crooke had laid to put Talbot all wrong with the uncle of them both. The colonel was going to the Front in the belief that the nephew in whom he had come to believe, in spite of his criminal past, was an utter rotter and hypocrite. Frank took his courage in both hands, made his way to the camp at Abbotsford, got an interview with Colonel Lyndon through the kindness of Lord Conway, Gussie's elder brother, and set matters straight.

Frank's pluck was shown again—as was his devotion—when he tried to save his brother from the consequences of Ernest's foolish night visit to the Green Man. It was rather curious that an acute attack of jealousy was at the bottom of this fresh foolish outbreak. Talbot had taken Frank to Southampton with him on an afternoon when the elder Levison had planned to take his minor out. To take Frank to Abbotsford, driving, Levison had turned down the offer of a place in the St. Jim's junior team and an invitation from Racke to visit the Wayland Empire. And then Frank had gone off with Talbot! The youngster knew nothing of his brother's plans; for Ernie he would have forsaken Talbot or anyone else—even his Third Form chums. But Levison forgot that, and his sulky temper made him not only unpleasant, but reckless. He went with Racke, and that young scoundrel got him drunk; and he was found by the roadside by Tom Merry & Co., to their utter disgust.

They did all they could for him; but he had spoiled for them all the effect of his earlier striving. Then came the Green Man break, and Frank saw no way to save his brother from discovery except by occupying his place in bed. No one seemed to be missing in the Fourth dormitory; but Mr. Railton found an empty bed in the Third! Even before the Head Frank stuck to his guns. He would not betray his brother; far rather would he take a flogging. But Levison major was not base enough to let that go through. In the nick of time he confessed, and, because of his confession, escaped the sack.

That ought to have steadied him once for all. But again he broke out, and Frank was at his wits' end how to influence him. Then it was that Arthur Augustus D'Arcy came to the rescue with a crafty suggestion; and Frank commenced to play the giddy ox. Not really, though he did take up Piggott and do several things besides out of which he got no enjoyment. He was only trying to show Ernest how his own conduct looked; and the argument he had ready was a very forcible one:

"If you may do these things, why mayn't I?"

And that did it! To see Frank going to the dogs was more than his brother could bear. For Frank's sake he chucked it all. Later, constant association with Sidney Clive helped, too. Clive and Cardew both think quite a lot of Frank. They may chaff their chum at times about his fondness for his fag brother, but it is hardly too much to say that, for all practical purposes, Frank has three elder brothers in Study No. 9 on the Fourth passage. He is not likely to forget how Cardew stood up for him against Cutts, and fought a plucky losing fight against the Fifth Form bully. But Talbot, Cardew, and Clive are not Frank's only friends in the Forms above his own. Tom Merry & Co. and the chums of Study No. 6 also hold him in high regard.

Of Frank's delight when Ernie, as he always calls his brother, taking up games seriously, won distinction both at cricket and footer, and came second to Talbot in the Cross-Country Cup race, it is not necessary to say much. The youngster himself is a keen little athlete, quite good in all branches. Readers will remember how he went as one of the hares in the Third Form paper-chase, Wally being the other; and how Wally was silly enough to take the risk of a dangerous bull; and how Frank told Wally plainly what he thought of him. These two are fast friends. Wally may have other chums, and chums of longer standing—Joe Frayne, Curly Gibson, Manners minor, Hobbs, Jameson—but he has no closer chum than Frank. They quarrelled once, however, and they fought, and, of

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course, Wally won. After which he wished he had not, for he learned that he had been completely in the wrong, and that it was only a question of honour which had kept Frank from explaining matters and setting him right.

No one who has read it will soon forget that capital story, "After Lights Out"—impossible to get now, except second-hand; indeed, it was out of print almost as soon as it was on the market. It is a fair question whether Ernest Levison or Frank was the real hero of the yarn. It was Ernest who got into trouble that was not of his own making, who was under sentence of expulsion through the lies of Racke, who ran away and took to the woods; but it was Frank who held fast to loyalty when even Clive and Cardew wavered in their faith. Cardew had, indeed, some hand in aiding Ernest Levison's escape from the punishment-room; but Frank's part in that was far bigger than his, and it was the fag who proved Ernest's innocence after all. Some day that story may be republished, together with others by Messrs. Martin Clifford and Frank Richards; but that is a matter for the future. I know that "After Lights Out" would have the heartiest of welcomes from thousands of readers new and old.

Of Doris Levison, the sister of the two boys, I do not propose to say much here, for she will be dealt with separately later. Frank is a good deal like her; both have opener and gentler natures than Ernest, whose moody, suspicious cast of mind has brought him into trouble that another fellow might easily have escaped. But one incident connected with Doris must be mentioned—Frank's tumble into the river at Lantham, and the heroic rescue attempted by Baggy Trimble. Baggy really did his best—a pretty poor best, it must be allowed—but one would have expected Frank to be grateful. He was not. Frank is no small, wingless angel, and he cannot stand Baggy at any price. On the whole, one sympathises with him, even in his ingratitude.

It is not only for Ernest that Frank's loyalty is kept. No one could be more loyal to his chums than he; and when Cardew fell under the ban of the school Frank would not turn his back on him. He is a patient little chap, always ready to make allowances; and, although the swank and obstinacy of Manners minor sometimes rile him, he has stood a good deal from the wayward Reggie, and has shared with Wally the risk of rescuing him at a critical stage of his erratic fortunes.

There are other things to which one might refer at length—the part played by Frank in the Outram episode, told of in "The Shadow of the Past," our last Christmas Number—the election of him and Wally as joint referees with Lefevre of the Fifth in the Shell v. Fourth series of events—the interrupted fight between him and Reggie Manners—and much else.

But enough has been told to show what a decent, straightforward, plucky youngster Levison minor is. May we hear of him often in the future!

THE TWINS FROM TASMANIA.

FOR NEW READERS.

The twins are Philip Derwent, of Highcliffe, and his sister Philippa, of Cliff House. They have a cockatoo, named Cocky, which has been until recently with Flip (Philip) at Highcliffe, but is now at Cliff House. Flip has made an enemy of Gadsby, who is plotting against him with Vavasour. His best chums, Merton and Tunstall, are away from the school for a time, owing to a serious accident to one of Merton's eyes in a fight with Ponsonby. In their absence Flip gets too friendly with Pon and the rest of the nuts, and, without any real taste for it at the outset, takes to gambling. He goes with the nuts to a gambling den at Courtfield, quarrels with Pon, and is knocked senseless just as the warning "Police!" is heard. Flip comes to himself in a cellar, bound hand and foot. He is let out, however. He makes up his mind that the only thing for him to do is to run away, as returning to Highcliffe means certain expulsion. Then he meets Peter Hazeldene, who has run away from Greyfriars. Goggs of Franklingham comes to Highcliffe. Flip and Hazel go to London, and after many exciting adventures make for Wayland. They tramp for some time, and eventually lose their way. Suddenly Hazel disappears from view, and Flip, moving forward, pulls himself up in the nick of time on the edge of a steep downfall. By a trick Pon, Gadsby, and Vavasour are sent to the Head, and Vavasour confesses.

St. Jim's to the Rescue (continued).

Flip could not sleep. Now and then something like a stupor came over him, but never sleep.

He kept his eyes as much as he could upon the valley below, bathed now in the full sunlight of a clear, frosty day. But in it he could see no house, no human being; not even the smoke of a chimney, not even a sheep or a dog.

Far away on the opposite slope he could discern one house—a big, red-brick building, with a long row of fir-trees stretching on either side of it. But it was much too distant to be of any aid, and he had seen no sign of life about it as yet.

To look upwards was useless. The face of the down which they had descended was so sheer that no one at the top could be seen unless walking as dangerously near the edge as they had done last night; and there was no reason why anyone should do that in the full light of day.

Still Hazel dozed, muttering at intervals, and still Flip held on to the hardest task he had ever been set.

It was so hard because it seemed so utterly hopeless.

They might stay there all day without sighting anyone. Could either of them live through another such a night as the last?

Flip was hardier than most fellows, and he had spent many a night in the open. But in his far-away island home he had never known such cold as this of a night in England with the thermometer registering something like twenty degrees of frost.

And even on his hardy frame and high spirit all that had happened during the past few days had told heavily. It was Hazel who had suffered most in body; but it was Hazel's comrade who had to bear the brunt of everything in another sense.

And it had been the harder to bear from Hazel's manner—now sulkiness, suspicion even, now a burst of real contrition; a growing feeling of friendship and confidence alternating with weak resentment that Flip should be by so much the better man of the two.

Flip felt his strength ebbing from him. With the dragging passage of each weary hour he grew weaker. Even had he started in search of aid as soon as the sun was up, he must have gone stumblingly, slowly. Now, could he go at all? Had he still the strength left for the essay?

He was not sure. All he knew was that he had promised Hazel to stay, and that promise must be kept.

The sun reached its zenith, and began to descend as it wested. At last Flip dozed off, with his back against the sheer wall behind him and the head of the sleeping Hazel close to his knees.

The last thought but one in his mind was that Hazel really was a wonder for getting his whack of sleep. He had never known any other fellow quite so good at it.

The very last thought of all was that he himself had no right to go to sleep—no right! He must watch, lest the chance of aid be missed. He must not sleep—he must not!

But exhaustion overcame him, and, even as he told himself that, he fell asleep.

He dreamed, too, though he did not mutter in his dreams.

He was back in his old island home, with his father and elder brothers, and Flip and the older girls. Walter Leith was there—paying court to Helen, manly and yet humble, taking nothing for granted, yet losing no chance of showing Helen, and all their world, that he loved her. Somehow, in the dream Flip understood that far better than he had understood it at the time.

The scene changed suddenly—faded away. Bunter showed for a moment, with Cocky perched on his shoulder. The dreamer felt a momentary pang of disgust that Cocky should so honour Bunter—the worthless, grasping, lying, sponging Owl of the Greyfriars Remove!

But it wasn't Bunter at all—it was Merton. And Merton was blind—quite blind. Poor old Algy! Cocky sat on his shoulder and peered, with neck strangely twisted, into his sightless eyes. And Tunstall led Merton by the hand, and on Tun's face there was a look of such sadness as Flip had never seen there before.

Where was he leading him? Into what strange place were they going—Algy and Tun and old Cocky?

For the place whither they went was a place of desolation, scarred and pitted, a place of unnatural pools of stagnant water, and long lines of trenches, and horrible entanglements of barbed wire, with horrible things upon them, and overhead the drone of battleplanes and the harsh song of the shells before they burst!

And not only Algy—poor blind Algy!—and good old Tun were going. Over the top swarmed almost every man or boy Flip had ever known. His father led, drawn sword in hand, a gallant figure. And there were his soldier brothers, and there were Walter Leith and another man whom he might call brother some day. Frank Courtenay, his handsome face aglow; the Caterpillar, languid no longer; Langley and Beauchamp and Roper; Ponsonby—Pon wasn't shirking it at the pinch, nor Gaddy. But Vav was—he was lagging. And so were Bunter and Skinner!

But Wharton and the rest of the Famous Five, Squiff, the Bounder, Peter Todd—other Greyfriars fellows, some of whom he only knew by sight—fellows from his old school at Launceston, too—they were all in that dream-charge over No Man's Land. Chiker showed up among them; Highcliffe masters—Mr. Mobbs among the rearmost; Goggs; Mr. Quelch of Greyfriars; Wingate; even old Gosling!

And Flip's brain almost burst with the longing to be with them—the dread that any there should think him a laggard! He saw Hazeldene go, limping, white faced; and he shouted to Hazel to wait for him.

Cadet Notes.

When a boy leave school, and goes to work for the first time, which, in the majority of cases, takes place when he is about 14 years of age, he first loses his old school friends. Unless he joins some organisation, where he can make new acquaintances and form fresh friendships, he is liable to find himself at a loose end, and to degenerate into wasting his time standing at street corners, and perhaps getting into mischief. At any rate, he is not doing himself any good, and whatever disadvantages there may be about belonging to the various organisations which accept boy members, it cannot be doubted that the worst thing a lad in this position can do is to get into a habit of wasting time aimlessly.

This is where the Cadet Corps Movement comes in. Boys of 14 to 17 are welcomed, and are provided with some useful training, combined with pleasant recreation for their evenings and Saturday afternoons. It must not be considered that Cadet Corps training is all work, by any means. A great deal of it is highly interesting, and really recreative in the true sense of the word, and includes athletic sports, games, gymnastics, and, usually, a summer camp. The recent growth of the movement shows that this is being appreciated, and our readers who are not already members of corps should lose no time in joining one of those in their own neighbourhood. They can obtain full particulars on application to the Central Association of Volunteer Regiments, Judges' Quadrangle, Royal Courts of Justice, Strand, London, W.C. 2.

And, shouting, he awoke, to find Hazel tugging at him frantically.

The sun was sinking in the west, and the air was bitterly cold.

The chill of it struck to Flip's very heart before he could remember where he was—before that vivid dream of battle had faded.

Slowly it dawned upon him that Hazel, with cracked, hoarse voice, was trying to tell him something. It seemed painful to ears and brain alike, the effort to understand.

"Down there!" croaked Hazel, and pointed into the valley. "Oh, shout—shout!"

Flip's voice had not gone. He sent a ringing cry for help through the frosty air, even before he saw those four red-and-white caps.

When he saw them he shouted again, with all the strength left to his lungs.

They heard, the wearers of the red-and-white caps—the St. Jim's colours, as Flip remembered now. They heard, but as yet they could not tell whence the shouting came.

They stood looking about them—up the valley, down the valley, anywhere but towards the right place.

"Here!" yelled Flip. "Up here!"

Then one of the four saw, and waved his hand.

All four started to run. In a moment or two they were lost to sight. But Flip knew that rescue was near now, and he sank back in a brief stupor.

Somebody shook him by the shoulder. He looked up stupidly into a pair of bright blue eyes—the eyes of Tom Merry, of the Shell Form at St. Jim's!

"My hat, Tommy, if this isn't a go! It's Hazeldene of Greyfriars!" spoke a voice close by.

"Can't be, surely!" said another.

"It's Hazeldene, all serene, Manners!" answered a third.

"Yes, it's me, Talbot!" croaked Hazel.

"What's happened?"

"How did you come here?"

"Who's the other chap?"

The questions came too thick and fast for Hazel.

"It's Derwent of Highcliffe," he answered hoarsely. "He'll tell you all about it."

But Flip was in no condition to tell anybody anything.

He had managed to hold out to the end somehow; but now that help had come at last he collapsed utterly.

"Looks to me as if they'd tumbled from up there," remarked Lowther. "What's to be done, Tommy?"

"No need to ask that, old chap! There's only one thing to be done—get them out of this and into warmth and shelter as quickly as poss."

"They have tumbled. Hazeldene's hurt pretty badly," said Talbot, who had been bending over the Greyfriars junior.

"My hat! It's going to be no easy job getting them down!" Manners said doubtfully. "It's got to be done, of course; and so it must be. But it wasn't quite an easy climb up, and——"

"There are some of the other chaps!" said Tom Merry joyfully.

Below, in the rays of the setting sun, showed several more red-and-white caps.

Tom shouted down to their wearers:

"Hi, Kangaroo — Dane — Grundy — Glyn! Come up here as quick as you can!"

Flap's Knight.

"OH!"

Flap Derwent stopped suddenly, and her hand went to her heart as if she were in pain, while her face turned white as a sheet.

"What's the matter, dear? Oh, what is it, Flap?" inquired Marjorie Hazeldene, in great distress.

The two girls were on the road between Cliff House and Greyfriars when Flap halted thus. The red rays of the setting sun shone full upon them, and to the eyes of a fellow who was approaching from the Highcliffe direction they walked as if glorified.

But, though Cecil Ponsonby saw them, they did not see him. Flap had all Marjorie's attention, and Flap's vision was turned inwards, as it were, searching vainly for what might not be seen.

"It's Flip! Something's happened to him! I told you I was sure of it last night, Marjorie! It was dreadful then; but it's worse than ever now. It—— Oh, it's almost as if he were dying!"

The words came in a voice that was almost a groan—quite unlike Philippa Derwent's usual silvery tones.

"It can't be—oh, it can't! I know that the messages are true, dear—I know! But it can't be that!" faltered Marjorie.

There was no room for Marjorie to doubt the existence of that strange bond of sympathy between the twins which told the one, as if by some wireless mental telegraphy, when the other was in peril or in trouble. She had seen several manifestations of it, and there had never been a mistake.

So she shared Flap's dread concerning Flip. But for Marjorie there was more than that in it. Her brother was with Flip. Danger to one surely meant danger to both, although no mysterious message came over the miles between to Marjorie Hazeldene. Even if the actual peril was only to Flip, what would become of Hazel without him to lean upon? Marjorie knew only too well the fatal weakness of her brother.

What the girls could not know—could not even guess—was that the wanderings of the fugitives had come to an end at that very hour. For when that sharp shock of warning came to Flap—following trouble less acute of the same kind, which had lasted through the night before, and had never ceased during the day—Flip, away among the Sussex downs, had just collapsed utterly, while Hazel was already knocked out.

Flap frankly put her handkerchief to her eyes and wiped away a tear or two. But she had not broken down in a fit of weeping. When she spoke again her voice was more nearly normal.

"It can't be the worst, Marjorie," she said, "because if it had been it would have killed me, too. I'm sure of that. Pretty rough on you, old girl, to find yourself with a dead Flap on your hands all at once!"

"Oh, don't!" gasped Marjorie. "Don't, Flap!"

"It's all serene, my dear. Better now. Something's happened that isn't bad. Flip will be all right, I think; and Hazel, too. Oh, if there isn't that hateful Ponsonby coming!"

"We need not speak to him," replied Marjorie uneasily. "And he surely will not dare to speak to us! He's at the bottom of nearly all the trouble. But—— Shall we turn, Flap?"

"No! Do you think I'm afraid of Cecil Ponsonby?"

"I don't think you're afraid of anything; but——"

"I'm not going to turn back for that—that rotter!"

Marjorie, gentle as she was, had her own courage; but Flap's had in it more of fieriness, more of the warrior spirit.

Ponsonby drew nearer. They saw that his face was drawn and haggard; but not even Marjorie Hazeldene could feel pity for any trouble that had fallen upon the graceless Pon.

The leader of the Highcliffe nuts was in one of the tightest places of his life, and he knew it. He believed that within a few hours he would have to leave Highcliffe for ever; and he was utterly reckless.

Vavasour—or Vav and Mr. Mobbs between them—had given the game away in the Head's study the night before; and the three nuts had not been allowed to return to their dormitory—a sure sign of the grave view the Head took of their conduct.

Dr. Voysey had been almost astounded when the four had come into his study. He had not expected them, of course. But before he had had a chance to make it clear that this was so Mr. Mobbs had begun his apologies and explanations. And after that an inquiry was inevitable.

But it had not been inevitable that so full a disclosure should be made. Mr. Mobbs had been responsible for that, but not to the same extent as Vavasour. Mobby could not have told all that Vav had told.

For Adolphus Theodore, no hero at best, had broken down completely, and had let out all he knew. That did not cover the whole ground. There were things Pon himself could have told, and more things Gaddy could have told, which would have rendered the statement fuller and easier to understand.

But Vav's tearful tale was enough. Only a few hours before Dr. Voysey had had an interview with Captain Walter Leith, and the result of that interview had been to make him feel very uneasy. For Captain Leith had not minced his words. He had told the Head of Highcliffe plainly that he considered that gentleman to have done something considerably less than his duty, and had made him understand that the boy's father would exact from him a close account of his dealings in the matter.

Bitter resentment still raged in Ponsonby against Vavasour, as also, though in a minor degree, against Gadsby and Mr. Mobbs. Gaddy was really the fount and origin of the trouble. He saw that. But to Pon the only commandment that really mattered was the eleventh: "Thou shalt not be found out."

Adolphus Theodore had had the rough side of his pal Pon's tongue that day in no stinted measure. The three had been put in confinement together, their fate still undecided. And since breakfast they had fairly worn one another's nerves to rags. Both Pon and Gaddy had belaboured Vav with angry words, and had taken it as a fresh offence whenever he plucked up spirit to answer back.

Now Pon had left the other two to their squabbling. He had no right to be out; but he regarded expulsion as a certainty.

He had come along in the direction of Cliff House in the hope of seeing Philippa Derwent. It was a strange thing in a fellow of Pon's type; but there really was something more than mere idle fancy in the feeling he had for Flap. He would have done anything—except be decent and honest—to win her favour.

But that was past. This would be in all likelihood his last meeting with her. All that was evil in him was uppermost, and she was glad to see that Flap's only companion was gentle Marjorie Hazeldene. Phyllis and Clara were not there. The four of them would not have awed Cecil Ponsonby, but they might have held him in some check.

There was no check upon him now. A mocking smile played about his lips as he raised his cap to the two girls.

Marjorie gave him the slightest possible nod, and he only got that because she was more than half frightened.

Flip did not acknowledge his salutation by even as much as a nod.

But he came to a halt right in front of them, and they were almost forced to stop.

Flap held her head high, and her eyes flashed. She looked just then very like Flip as he appeared when game to defy anybody and everybody.

"Excuse me, Miss Derwent, but I came to bring you news of your brother, an' I really don't know whether it's quite kind of you to look through me," said Pon, with bland insolence.

"I do not wish to hear any news you are likely to be able to give me!" replied Flap icily. "And I should prefer——"

"To cut me out of the list of your friends—eh? Oh, dash it all, y'know——"

"There is no need to do that. I never counted you among my friends."

"Really not? Oh, by gad, I rather fancy we came to quite a friendly agreement once!"

Flap stamped a stoutly-shod small foot in her anger.

"We didn't!" she cried. "And if we did it was because you deceived me! You pretended——"

"I pretended nothin', I assure you. From the first moment I saw you——"

"You pretended to be Flip's friend, and you were his worst enemy! As for all that other rot, do you think that I could have liked you even? The very idea's absurd!"

(To be continued.)