

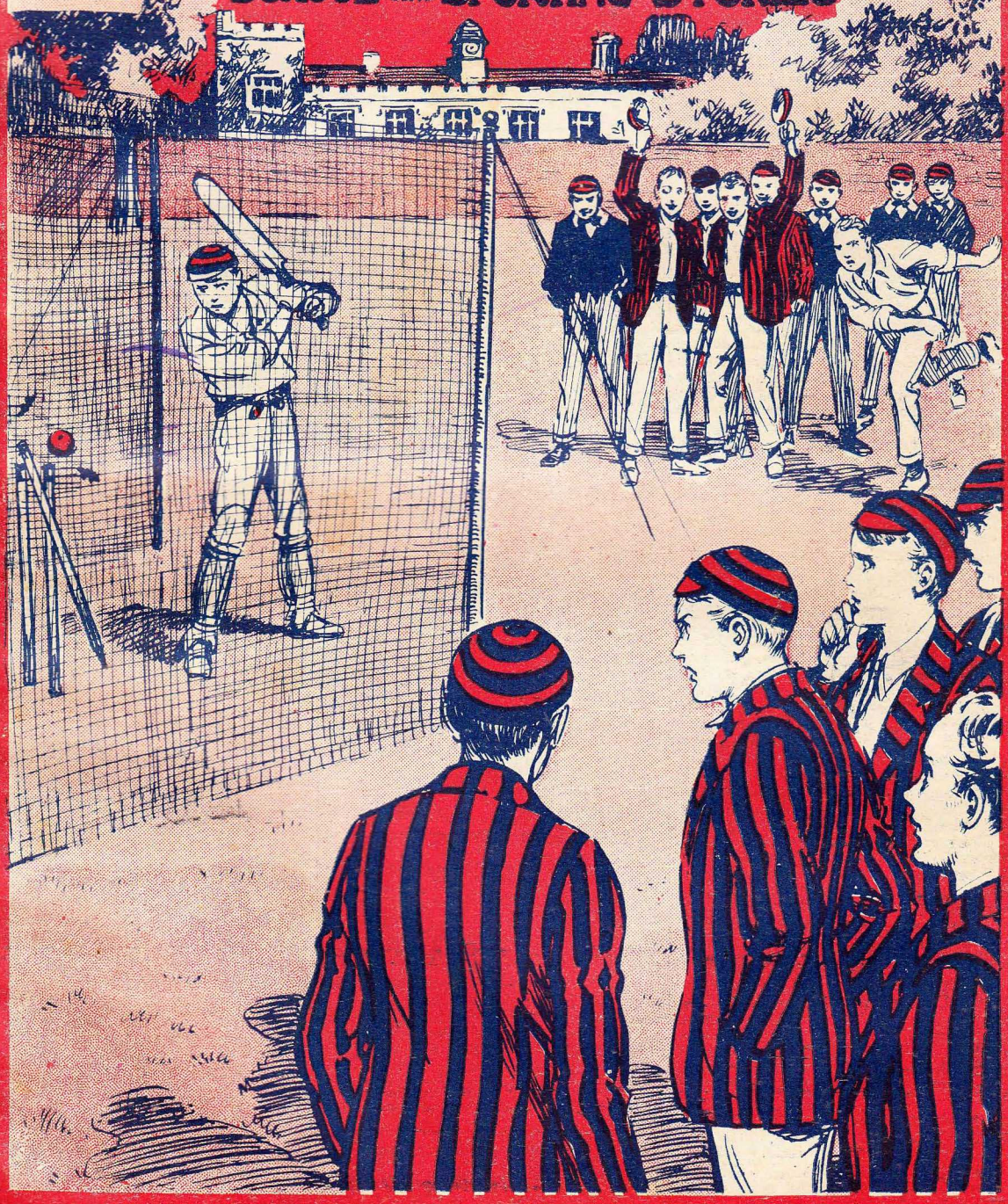
A GRIPPING BOXING STORY: "THE BATTLING BURGLAR!" IN THIS ISSUE.

EVERY WEDNESDAY.

The GEM 2^D

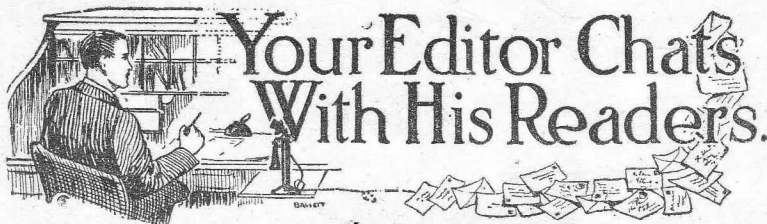
LIBRARY OF SCHOOL AND SPORTING STORIES

No. 853.
Vol. XXV.
June 14th,
1924.



THE DEMON BOWLER!

Ralph Reckness Cardew presents a surprise to his schoolfellows—seniors included! (An exciting incident from the grand long complete school story contained in this issue.)



Address all letters: The Editor, The "Gem" Library, The Fleetway House, Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4. Write me, you can be sure of an answer in return.

OUR COMPANION PAPERS.

"THE BOYS' FRIEND" Every Monday
 "THE MAGNET" Every Monday
 "THE POPULAR" Every Tuesday
 "JUNGLE JINKS" Every Thursday
 "THE HOLIDAY ANNUAL" Published Yearly

MY DEAR CHUMS,—Another treat for everybody next week! I have been asked many times of late for another yarn about Bernard Glyn. It is coming, like Christmas, but ever so much sooner. Next week's issue of the GEM will contain as bright and interesting a story of the great inventor of St. Jim's as you could wish. The way of inventors is hard. They often get it in the neck, as if they were transgressors. But the born inventor—like Glyn—just plods on his stone-strewn way to fame and fortune. His not to reason why, his not to make reply, etc.

"GLYN'S COLOUR RAY!" By Martin Clifford.

That is the new story. I have not a doubt but that it will more than meet the wishes of Gemites. Glyn is almost a fetish when it comes to the finding of new ideas. I much doubt whether there is any other fellow at St. Jim's who would have thought of a colour ray. Certainly not Baggy Trimble. A new stunt in tuck is more in his line. There are unhappy ructions over the new notion. It succeeds all right, but the results are as unwelcome as they are amazing. Victims of the ray find themselves as green as grass. Of course, the sufferers blame it all on Glyn. There is no sympathy for the scientist whose box of tricks goes wrong. You will be thrilled and fascinated by the mystery of the ray. The clever yarn shows once again the bad luck of the fellow who hits on a brainy new idea. He is misunderstood, but that, after all, is just part of the game. Anyhow, next week will provide a topping story which will evoke enthusiasm.

THAT TUCK HAMPER.

One thing must decidedly not be forgotten, namely, that the Tuck Hamper is still on offer. Bright yarnlets are wanted, and should be despatched forthwith to the Editor, the GEM, Gough House, Gough Square, London, E.C. 4.

"MEHTA RAM'S MISTAKE!" By Cecil Fanshaw.

Among the many admirable features in our next programme stands this intensely dramatic tale of Indian intrigue and adventure. You will be doubly keen on it because of the fact that radium figures in it. There are
 THE GEM LIBRARY.—No. 353.

strange happenings on the far-away plantation where the action is placed, and the doings of Geoffrey Wood, the plucky youngster who gets in the know, and who finds his warning scoffed at, are bound to be watched with interest.

GOOD THINGS AHEAD!

For the immediate future I have some cheery numbers of the "St. Jim's News." Be on the qui vive for these. The supplement is extremely popular, and it gets brighter with every issue.

THE WEEK AFTER NEXT!

Our new serial will be the goods! It starts the Wednesday after next, and I am certain it will have a jolly fine reception. The title gives an inkling of the style of the yarn.

"THE SECRET OF THE GALLEONS!"

This supremely fine new serial—commencing in a fortnight's time—describes the search in the depths of the ocean where Spanish galleons, the gold ships from the Indies of ancient days, lie drifting, their timbers falling to pieces amidst the tangle and the shells of the ocean bed. This is a magnificent romance, full of pluck and stirring interest. Don't miss it!

"RIVALS OF THE RACECOURSE!" By Andrew Gray.

For next Wednesday we have the brilliant wind-up of the famous racing story which has delighted all of us. One likes to know how things are going, but all the same, the termination of a popular story, with the curtain thudding down on a familiar scene, is bound to bring a note of regret. But a story which has been appreciated lives in the memory—which is a good deal when you come to think of it.

ENGLAND'S BIGGEST RIVER!

Last summer I was biking through the western counties when I met a traveller—also on a humble jigger—who talked about the Severn River. "It is the most important river in the country," he said. "It takes second place to the Thames, which is all wrong." Now comes the suggestion that the Severn may get its own back thanks to a tremendous scheme for harnessing its water-power, for it appears the Severn tides would provide 500,000 horse-power per day. The idea may be taken up by the engineers, but, anyway, those

The Children's Best Coloured Paper
JUNGLE JINKS
 Out on Thursday—Price 2d

who know the big river of the west, will agree that it is one of the finest waterways in the Old Country.

BAGGY'S BIOGRAPHY!

It appears from information received that Baggy Trimble is jealous. The green-eyed monster has claimed him. The matter is altogether literary. While other celebrities have been asked to write their biographies, poor old Baggy has been shamefully left out in the cold. Here is a chance for Tom Merry to show magnanimity. Without a doubt Baggy would have interesting things to relate concerning his stormy past and his giddy present.

THOSE ADDRESSES!

Somebody in the know has been complaining bitterly about the way some careless letter-writers set down their addresses. I know there is a lot of slipshod work of the kind, for I often get missives with the name of a town or village—nothing more—followed by "Tuesday evening" or something else delightfully vague. Now, one cannot know everybody's address just by intuition, and these happy-go-lucky correspondents usually ask for "an answer by return," which shows their thoughtless way. It is no bad rule to start your letter with the number and name of your street, then the town and county, for the good old hard-working Post Office is not a guessing bureau.

SKIIMPOLE AND CRICKET!

Wonders will never cease. There is a rumour that Skimpole has been so much carried away by the spirit of the summer that he has found time to get up a lot of enthusiasm for cricket. But it is difficult to credit the report. It can be believed when we see Skimpole's first century.

CHEERY WIGSTON MAGNA!

A letter from this famous Leicester-shire town says: "I have taken the GEM for three years, and I do not think one can get a better boys' book anywhere. My favourite character is Talbot, and Marie Rivers comes next. I do hope that Martin Clifford will write more about Talbot. I have also taken the 'Holiday Annual' ever since it has been published. My pals are always wanting to read the 'Holiday Annual' and the GEM, and I am never tired of lending my copies. A Gemite from a village near here won a James motor-bike in your Football Competition. I wish every success to the GEM."

MORE VENTRILOQUISM.

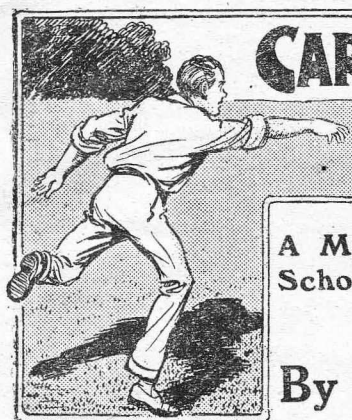
A correspondent in the north asks for a regular bout of ventriloquism at St. Jim's. I am putting this notion before the eagle eye of Martin Clifford, and I feel sure, if the great author can see his way to fall in with the request, he will be on to it.

LETTERS FROM AUSTRALIA.

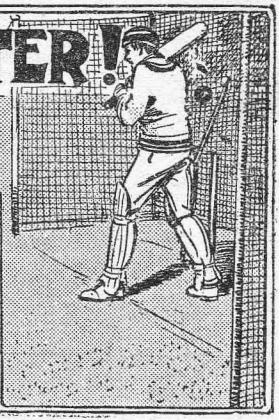
Just a brief word of thanks to the numerous correspondents in Australia who have sent me descriptions of the British Fleet which is making a world cruise. The writers showed tremendous enthusiasm for the Royal Navy, and small wonder at that. Incidentally, they had plenty to say, too, concerning the brilliant yarns now appearing in the GEM.

Your Editor.

In order to teach the spoilsports of St. Jim's a richly merited lesson, Ralph Reckness Cardew puts all he knows into his bowling, which is something really deadly!



CARDEW—THE CRICKETER!



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

By MARTIN CLIFFORD.

CHAPTER 1. Up to Cardew

"CARDEW!"

Tom Merry spoke rather sharply—not at all in his usual pleasant tone.

Ralph Reckness Cardew, reclining in his usual lazy attitude in the armchair in Study No. 9, gave the captain of the Shell an agreeable nod. Levison and Clive looked rather uneasy.

Tom Merry was the last fellow at St. Jim's to butt into another fellow's study looking for trouble. But it was easy to see that Tom was not in a pleasant mood.

"Trickle in, old bean," said Cardew lazily. "Trickle in and take a pew. Don't stand. It makes me tired to see a fellow standin'."

Tom stepped into the study.

"Anything up, Tom Merry?" asked Levison.

"It's about the cricket," said Tom.

"Lot of good talking cricket to Cardew!" grunted Sidney Clive.

Tom Merry frowned.

"That's what I've come to talk to him about, all the same," he said.

Cardew raised his eyebrows, in mild inquiry.

"But why?" he asked gently. "What have I done, or left undone, now? Have I done that which I ought not to have done, or left undone that which I ought to have done? Is it an error of commission or omission?"

"It's a serious matter," said Tom.

"Then don't mention it, old bean. Serious matters are a bore."

Tom Merry's frown deepened.

"But really, I don't see what you're goin' to grouse about," went on Cardew. "You can't say that I've cut games practice on compulsory days. The giddy prefects won't let me, and I haven't. Didn't I turn up this very afternoon to urge the flyin' ball? What more do you want?"

"You showed great form this afternoon," said Tom.

"Oh, good! Then why grouse?"

"You showed that you're as good a junior cricketer as any fellow at St. Jim's, with one or two exceptions," said Tom Merry.

"I'd rise and bow to that if I wasn't so jolly tired," said Cardew. "Have you dropped in to make me blush with your praises? I shouldn't have guessed it from your looks."

"Any other fellow who played the game as well as you do could have a place in the junior eleven by asking for it."

"That's where my modesty comes in. I shouldn't think of askin'. I shouldn't even accept it if offered," yawned Cardew. "I find that cricket, like everythin' else in this weary world, is a bore."

"Well, I offer it to you!" growled Tom Merry.

"Thanks!"

"You accept?"

"No; I decline."

Tom Merry compressed his lips.

"Look here, Cardew—" began Ernest Levison.

"Don't you butt in, old bean," said Cardew. "This is a little matter between Thomas and myself. Thomas offers me a giddy distinction. I decline it. The matters ends. Good-bye, Thomas—unless you're stayin' to tea!"

"The matter doesn't end," said Tom Merry quietly.

"Has it ever occurred to you, Cardew, that you're a St. Jim's fellow, and that a fellow is bound to do his best for his school?"

"Can't say it has."

"Cardew, you ass—" began Clive.

"Leave it to Thomas, Clivey," urged Cardew. "Thomas is goin' to give me a sermon—I can see it in his jolly old eye. Don't you butt in and spoil Thomas' sermon. Go on, Thomas."

He leaned back in the armchair and placed his hands behind his head, crossing one elegant leg over the other.

"Now I'm ready," he announced. "Get on with it. Only, as I'm rather fatigued after games practice, you might chuck it about sixthly or seventhly. What?"

Tom Merry's eyes gleamed as he stood before the dandy of the Fourth. He was strongly tempted to collar the elegant junior and yank him bodily out of the armchair, and bump him on the hearthrug with a heavy bump. Cardew read the thought in his eyes, and smiled. He found it entertaining to "rag" the junior captain of St. Jim's, and he did not care in the least how the matter ended. He was nothing like a match for Tom Merry in conflict, and he knew it; but anything like fear had been quite left out of Ralph Reckness Cardew's composition.

There was a short silence in the study. Levison and Clive looked on grimly, almost as irritated with their volatile study-mate as Tom Merry was. Tom spoke at last.

"I'll tell you how the matter stands, Cardew," he said. "You don't seem to take much interest in the School games, or you'd know as well as I do. It's not usual for a junior captain to go round asking fellows to play for School. Any fellow but you would jump at the chance—even a slacker like Racke of the Shell would be keen to play for St. Jim's if he could wedge into the team."

"Then I must be a sadder slacker than Racke," smiled Cardew. "I'm not keen."

"You ought to be!" snapped Tom.

"Am I ever what I ought to be? But I'll tell you what. If Racke's keen, why not offer the job to jolly old Aubrey, as it seems to be goin' beggin'."

"Racke's no good at cricket," said Tom. "Don't be an ass. I'll tell you how the matter stands. We're playing the Grammar School on Wednesday, and the Grammarians are in great form. And my team is all at sixes and sevens. Talbot's our best man, and he's away staying with his uncle. Kangaroo has crooked his wrist, and Blake's off colour, and Figgins of the New House, and Fatty Wynn and Kerr are all three down with flu in sanny. That's six good men taken off the list."

"What a tale of misfortune!" sighed Cardew. "On horror's head, horrors accumulate, as jolly old Shakespeare remarks somewhere."

"We can always make up a good team," went on Tom. "But we've lost our best bat in Talbot, and our best bowler in Fatty Wynn. I shall have to draw on the reserves. Well, in the circumstances, I have a right to expect any fellow who can put up a good game to be keen on playing for the School."

"Have you?" yawned Cardew.

"Yes!" snapped Tom.

"Cardew, you can't be such a rotten slacker as to refuse!" burst out Sidney Clive.

"Clivey, old man, you've known me a long time, but you don't seem to know me well yet. I'm not keen."

"Keen or not, you're bound to play," said Levison.

"I don't see it."

"You're wanted, Cardew," said Tom Merry, as patiently as he could. "You ought to be keen. Anyhow, you've got to play."

"Got to?" repeated Cardew.

"Yes."

"I decline."

Tom Merry's eyes glittered.

"That's enough," he said. "I shall put your name on the list for Wednesday, Cardew. You will be expected to play up."

"Blessed are those who don't expect—they never get disappointed," remarked Cardew. "I'm not playin'."

Tom Merry took a sheet of paper from his pocket and laid it on the study table. He picked up Levison's pen, dipped it in the ink, and wrote one more name after a list of ten already there.

"R. R. Cardew."

"Is that my name you're puttin' in?" drawled Cardew.

"Yes."

"Better scratch it out."

"I shall not scratch it out," said Tom.

"Better! As a matter of fact, I have an engagement for Wednesday afternoon, which I cannot possibly put off."

Tom Merry paused.

"What's the engagement?" he asked.

"Now you're gettin' inquisitive, old bean."

The captain of the Shell flushed crimson.

"You cheeky rotter! I don't care twopence about your affairs, and you know it! But if it was a serious engagement that you couldn't put off it would make a difference. Will you tell me what it is?"

"No!"

"That settles it, then," said Tom. "Your name goes down. And if you are not on the field to play the Grammarians, Cardew, I can tell you that you won't find life worth living at St. Jim's afterwards!"

"Dear me!" said Cardew.

Tom Merry quitted Study No. 9, with the list in his hand. He felt that it was high time he went. Had he stayed a minute longer, he realised that he could not have kept his hands off the dandy of the Fourth—and he did not want that.

Tom went downstairs, with a set face, to post up the list. In ten minutes all the juniors in the House knew that Cardew of the Fourth was booked to play on Wednesday. Many of them envied him—it was not a distinction that came every fellow's way. And it was quite certain that if Cardew disregarded the call of duty, and failed his House and his school on the great occasion, there would be trouble in store for Ralph Reckness Cardew, more serious than any he had ever encountered in his chequered career at St. Jim's.

CHAPTER 2.

Cardew's Way!

"CONGWATS, deah boy!"

Arthur Augustus D'Arcy of the Fourth addressed Cardew with kind benevolence. It was the day after the posting of Cardew's name in the cricket list; and Arthur Augustus felt that it was a subject for congratulation. He was, in fact, very pleased indeed; for Cardew was a distant relative of the noble Gussy, and Gussy did not like counting slackers among his relatives, howsoever distant.

So coming on Ralph Reckness Cardew in the quadrangle after second lesson, Arthur Augustus offered his kind congratulations. Cardew looked puzzled.

"You're congratulatin' me?" he asked.

"Yaas, wathah!"

"You're awfully good," said Cardew with great gravity.

"I didn't know you took an interest in such things."

"Weally, Cardew—"

"How did you know?" went on Cardew.

"Bai Jove! All the Lovah School knows about it, Cardew," said Arthur Augustus, perplexed.

"Dear me! That's too bad!" said Cardew, still very grave.

"I only hope the prefects won't hear of it."

"The—the pwefects?"

"Yes—they would feel bound to report it to the Head—or at least, to the Housemaster."

Arthur Augustus D'Arcy looked completely puzzled, as well he might. It did not dawn upon his noble brain that Cardew was mystifying him for the purpose of pulling his aristocratic leg.

"But thanks for your congratulations, old chap," continued Cardew. "I've had congratulations from Racke and Crooke and Clampe and Mellish, but I never expected them from you. You're really good. I don't mind tellin' you that I netted a clear tenner."

"A—a what?"

"A tenner," said Cardew calmly.

"Bai Jove! Whatevah are you talkin' about, Cardew?"

"About Tinkle Top winnin' the Abbotsford Plate yesterday," said Cardew, raising his eyebrows. "I backed him, you know."

"You—you what?" ejaculated D'Arcy.

"Weren't you congratulatin' me on my success?" asked Cardew, with a serious air. "I backed Tinkle Top for the two o'clock race, and netted a tenner. Good—what?"

Arthur Augustus D'Arcy drew a deep breath, and did not immediately reply. Cardew smiled gently, and regarded him with a glimmer in his eyes. D'Arcy jammed his celebrated

monocle a little deeper into his noble eye, and proceeded to look Cardew up and down in a manner expressive of the deepest scorn.

He looked at Cardew's feet, and let his scornful glance travel up to Cardew's face. Then slowly the scornful glance travelled down to Cardew's feet again.

Cardew, instead of being reduced to utter confusion, seemed a trifle perplexed.

"Anythin' wrong with my boots?" he asked.

"Eh! No," said Arthur Augustus, taken aback by the unexpected question.

"Nothin' on my nose?"

"No—"

"Oh! I thought there might be," said Cardew. "You seemed oddly interested in my boots, and then in my nose."

"He, he, he!" came from Baggy Trimble of the Fourth, who was loafing near at hand.

"Cardew!" Gussy's voice almost trembled with wrath and contempt. "I was wegardin' you with scorn! I considah you a wank outsiders, Cardew!"

"Bless my soul!" exclaimed Cardew, in so odd an imitation of the Head's voice that Baggy Trimble burst into a yell as he heard it.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I was not congwatulatin' you about winnin' some putwid money on a wotten wace," said Arthur Augustus. "I knew nothin' about it. I am happay to say that I am not in the confidence of Wacke and Cwooke and Clampe, and the othah shady blackguards you are fiwends with, Cardew! I do not speak to them!"

"Lucky bargees!" murmured Cardew.

"What?"

"Couldn't you put me on the same list?" asked Cardew. "I hate to mention it, Gussy; but you are really a bit of a bore, you know."

"He, he, he!" from Trimble.

"I was congwatulatin' you on seein' your name in the ewicket list for a School match," said Arthur Augustus.

Cardew did not need telling that. He smiled.

"So kind of you," he said. "I believe my name is there. One of Tom Merry's little jokes, I fancy. But aren't you goin' to congratulate me on winnin' a tenner on Tinkle Top?"

"Certainly not. I wegard bettin' on horses as disgwaceful, and unworthy of a gentleman, Cardew. I considah that you have acted in a wotten way, and that you ought to be jollay well ashamed of yourself! You would be bunked out of the school if the Head knew—and by not lettin' him know, you are pvnactically deceivin' him. I object vewy stwongly to bein' told about your shady pwceedin's. I look on you as a bad hat, Cardew!"

Arthur Augustus paused, a little breathless. Cardew, who had been watching the pigeons in the quad during that little harangue, made no answer.

"Do you heah me?" snapped Arthur Augustus.

"Dear me! I'm afraid I allowed my attention to wander for a minute," said Cardew regretfully. "Were you speakin'?"

"Bai Jove! I—"

"Tell me over again."

"Weally, Cardew—"

"Sing it over again to me," said Cardew. "It's always a pleasure to listen to you, Gussy—it reminds one of a babblin' brook—especially the brook in the poem that went on for ever. Now, get on with it!"

"He, he, he!"

Arthur Augustus D'Arcy did not get on with it. He realised that Cardew was amusing himself by pulling his noble leg. He gave the dandy of the Fourth a glance of lofty contempt and turned away. Ralph Reckness Cardew smiled.

He strolled on down the path to the elms, and Baggy Trimble strolled with him.

"You told that silly ass off a treat, Cardew!" Trimble remarked. "You did really! He, he, he!"

Cardew stopped and looked at Trimble.

"Do you think so?" he asked gently.

"He, he! Yes, rather!"

"You have every right to your opinion, Trimble," said Cardew in the same gentle way, "but your mode of expressin' it rather jars on my nerves. Would you do me the great favour of bestowin' your conversation on somebody else?"

Cardew walked on, leaving Baggy Trimble staring after him.

"Yah! Cheeky cad!" howled Trimble.

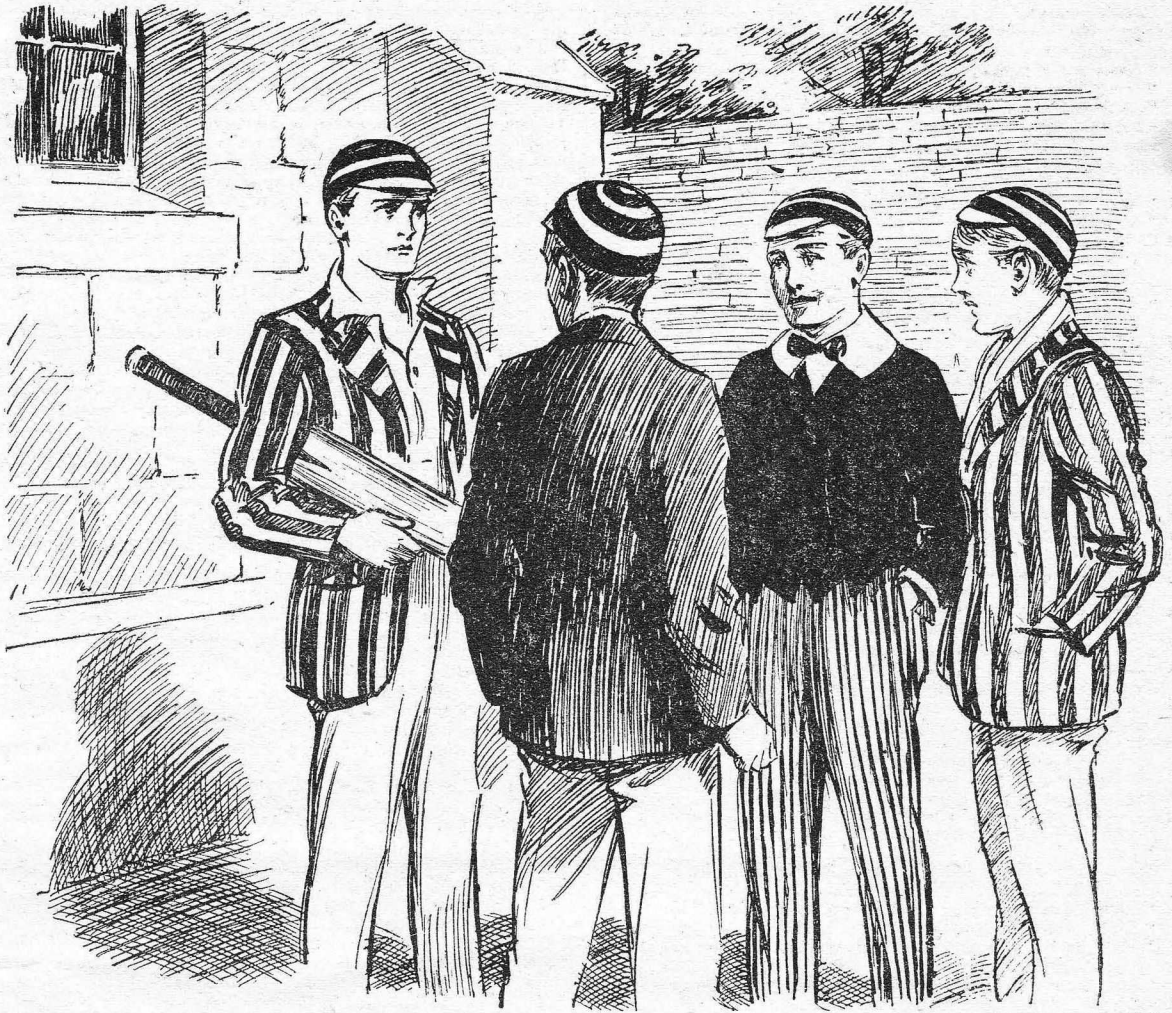
Cardew sauntered on regardless. He came on Blake and Herries and Digby under the elms, and Jack Blake called to him cordially.

"Congrats, old man!"

"Thanks!" said Cardew. "What about?"

"Eh! About getting into the match on Wednesday, of course!" said Blake. "I see your name's in the list. I'm standing out, as it happens—worse luck."

"Awful bad luck!" said Cardew. "I'm sorry! I suppose



"I like Tom Merry no end, you fellows," said Cardew, "but I'm not goin' to take a hand in any dashed cricket except on compulsory days, and—" "You're not what?" asked a quiet voice as the three Fourth Formers turned their heads, to see Darrell of the Sixth, in flannels, with a bat under his arm. (See page 7.)

if you weren't standing out, I shouldn't be standing in. Why can't you play?"

"Stiff knee," said Blake. "It won't be better by Wednesday."

"Can't you oil it, or somethin'?"

"Fathead! Do you think I should keep out of a school match if I could help it?" grunted Blake.

"I suppose not. You fellows playin' on Wednesday?" asked Cardew, glancing at Herries and Dig.

"I am," said Herries. "Tom Merry's had to call out the reserves."

"Not Digby?"

"No," said Dig rather dryly. "Tom Merry seems to think that you're a better man than I am, Cardew."

"What an ass!" said Cardew. "Why, you're ever so much better, old bean! Looks to me as if we want a new cricket captain."

"Eh?"

"Why not put it to Tom Merry?" suggested Cardew.

"Tell him you're a better man than I am—"

"I've told him."

"Tell him I agree, and that I want you to have the chance. Tell him he'd better put you in, anyhow, as I sha'n't be playin'."

Cardew strolled on, leaving the chums of Study No. 6 blinking.

"Cheeky rotter!" growled Blake. "Is he turning up his cheeky nose at playing for the school?"

"Looks like it," said Herries. "I'd jolly well drop him out fast enough if I were Tom Merry!"

"Well, he's a good man when he chooses," remarked Blake reflectively, "and the eleven's pretty weak now, with Talbot away and Figgins & Co. on the sick list and Kangy crooked—not to mention little me. Cardew is worth a lot to the side if he plays up."

"If!" sniffed Herries.

"I know I'd jump at the chance," said Dig wistfully. "But I suppose I'm not quite up to Cardew's form, at his best."

"Not quite, old chap. And he's bound to put in his very best, playing for school."

"But he says he's not playing."

"Swank!" growled Blake. "Let me catch him letting the side down! I know I'd jolly well hammer him!"

Meanwhile, Cardew of the Fourth continued his stroll. On the path under the elms he came on Grundy of the Shell, and Grundy bestowed a frown on him.

"So you're in the eleven for Wednesday—a slacker like you!" was his greeting.

"Thanks for your congratulations, old bean!" said Cardew imperturbably.

"I'm not congratulating you!" growled Grundy. "I think it's utter rot!"

"I agree."

"Oh, you agree, do you?" exclaimed Grundy, rather taken aback.

"Absolutely."

"Then you're not such a silly ass as Tom Merry," said Grundy. "He's left me out."

"I wonder why he's done that," said Cardew thoughtfully. "Perhaps he wants to beat the Grammarians, or somethin' of the kind."

"Look here——" roared Grundy.

"I'll tell you what, old man. I'll let you have the place," said Cardew.

"Wha-a-at?"

"I mean it. Let's trot in and make the alteration now. I stand out in favour of a better man, see?"

"Well, I'm blessed if I ever expected to hear you talk sense like that, Cardew!" exclaimed Grundy. "If you mean it, come on!"

"Right-ho!"

Cardew walked back to the School House with the amazed and gratified Grundy. They went into the junior Common-room, where the cricket list was posted on the wall.

"Lead me a pencil, old bean."

"Here you are!"

The dandy of the Fourth drew a thick line across the name "R. R. Cardew." Under it he wrote, in his small, neat calligraphy, G. A. Grundy. Then he handed the pencil back to Grundy with a smile.

"That all right?" he asked.

"Topping!" said Grundy. "Right as rain!"

"So glad to please you!" murmured Cardew, and he strolled out of the Common-room smiling.

CHAPTER 3.

Wrathy!

TOM MERRY breathed hard and deep.

He was standing before his cricket notice in the junior Common-room in the School House after classes that day. A dozen fellows had seen the alteration made there, but nobody had mentioned it to Tom. He was left to make the discovery for himself—and many fellows wondered how he would take it. Tom's eyes glistened and his lips set hard. As a rule, Tom was a good-tempered and patient fellow; indeed, he was well-known as one of the best-tempered fellows at St. Jim's. But he was angry now—deeply and savagely angry. There was something in the cool and contemptuous impudence of Cardew's action that was peculiarly exasperating.

Manners and Lowther were with Tom, but they made no comment. They did not want to add fuel to the fire.

"The cheeky cad!" said Tom at last. "No fellow has a right to monkey with a paper posted up here—and to put in Grundy's name—"

Tom paused, breathing hard. Grundy's cricket, like his football, was a standing joke in the House. Tom would not have played him in a match with the Third, had the junior eleven ever played the Third.

"Let's go and see Cardew," said Tom.

"Only his rot, you know," said Manners as the Terrible Three walked away. "It's not much good taking notice of Cardew's funny ways. He's as full of tricks as a monkey!"

"This isn't a matter for tricks!" said Tom.

"I know."

Racke of the Shell met the Terrible Three in the corridor. He stopped to speak.

"You're really playing Grundy on Wednesday?" he asked.

"No!" snapped Tom.

"I heard it from Grundy. His name's on the list, too," said Aubrey Racke.

"That's only Cardew's cheek. I'm going to post up a fresh list."

"Not with Cardew's name on it?"

"Yes," growled Tom.

"He's told me he's goin' out of gates Wednesday."

"Well, he isn't."

Tom Merry walked on, not much inclined to bandy words with the black sheep of the Shell. Aubrey Racke grinned, and Crooke, who was with him, grinned back. The two black sheep of St. Jim's seemed to find something entertaining in the peculiar troubles that were falling on the junior cricket captain just now.

"Tommy's got his rag out!" chuckled Racke. "Looks to me as if there's goin' to be punchin' when he meets Cardew."

"The more the merrier," smiled Crooke. "But punchin' Cardew won't make him play cricket if he doesn't choose. He's as obstinate as a mule."

"Tom Merry's a bit off-side, I think. Matches ain't compulsory, like games practice," remarked Racke. "Cardew's within his rights, if you come to that, though it's a bit queer to want to stand out of a School match. Any other fellow would give a week's pocket-money to butt into it. Dash it all, I'd be glad to play myself, for the swank of the thing, though I'm not keen on cricket. But it's just Cardew's way."

"Oh, just!" agreed Crooke.

"It gave me a bit of a shock when I saw Cardew's name in the list," added Racke, in a low voice. "Mind, I think the team's been so weakened that Gay's crowd are bound to walk over it anyhow. Still, if Cardew played, and played his best, it would make an enormous difference. I've seen him do the hat-trick more than once, and he's been seventy not out. He's a jolly good man at any part of the game if he chooses. I'm glad he's not playin' after all. It would make me feel a bit nervous about my tenner."

"And me about my fiver!" grinned Crooke. "But it's all right—he won't play."

"No fear!" agreed Racke. "Mind, not a word about it! You can't be too careful! Betting on a cricket match isn't exactly popular here, and betting against our own school would make the fellows ratty. Silly asses! As if a fellow

would back the losin' side just because it happened to be his own show."

The two black sheep went into the Common-room and looked at the list. It was a good list, but nothing like so strong as the team Tom Merry had hoped to put into the field before disaster came. Talbot of the Shell was always a tower of strength to his side, and Talbot was away from the school. Kangaroo was a mighty batsman, and he was left out. Figgins, Kerr, and Wynn, of the New House, were good men and true, and they were down with influenza in the sanatorium. Blake was a good and steady man, and Blake's knee barred him from the match. Tom Merry had many difficulties to contend with on this occasion, but he had made up the best list he could. It ran:

T. Merry, M. Lowther, G. Wilkins, E. Levison, H. Manners, G. Herries, A. A. D'Arcy, J. Lumley-Lumley, R. H. Redfern, J. Owen, R. R. Cardew.

"It's not a winnin' team, against the Grammar School, at least without Cardew," said Racke.

"No fear!" said Crooke. "Lumley's been comin' on lately, but he's nowhere near Blake's form, or Figgins', or Fatty Wynn's. Tom Merry's first-class, of course, and D'Arcy's good, and Levison of the Fourth is tophole. But there's a lot of passengers in that team."

"Too many to be carried in safety," chuckled Racke. "It's a bit overloaded."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Loaded with passengers over the Plimsoll line—what!" grinned Racke; and the two worthy youths walked away laughing.

Meanwhile, Tom Merry and Manners and Lowther were looking for Cardew of the Fourth. They did not find him in his study, and they came downstairs again, Tom Merry's brow darker than before. In the lower passage the captain of the Shell sighted Trimble, and called to him. The Paul Pry of St. Jim's could generally be relied upon for information about anything or anybody.

"Know where Cardew is, Trimble?" Tom called out.

Trimble chuckled.

"Yes, rather; he's gone over to the New House to see Clampe."

Still darker grew Tom Merry's brow. Clampe was one of the black sheep, a follower of Racke of the Shell.

"Smokes and nap!" grinned Trimble.

Tom Merry walked out of the School House, and his chums went with him across the quad. Manners and Lowther looked a little worried. They had seldom seen their chum so angry as he was now, and they were rather uneasy about the outcome of a meeting with Cardew.

"We were going down to the cricket, Tom," hinted Manners. "The fellows will be expecting you on Little Side."

"I must see Cardew first."

"Cardew will keep!" suggested Lowther.

"He won't keep."

"Oh, all right!"

The Terrible Three entered the New House, and went up to the Shell quarters. Tom Merry knocked at Clampe's door, and threw it open. Clampe of the Shell spun round with a startled exclamation.

"Oh! Only you!" he ejaculated. "You made me jump!"

Tom Merry's lip curled.

There was reason for Clampe to "jump" when his door was suddenly thrown open. In the study was a haze of cigarette smoke, and Clampe was putting away a pack of cards in a drawer. Had Clampe's Housemaster, Mr. Ratcliff, looked in just then, Clampe of the Shell would have had ample and painful reason for repentance.

"Cardew's not here?" asked Tom, glancing round the study.

"No."

"He's been here?"

"No harm in his coming here that I know of," answered Clampe, shrugging his shoulders. "No bizney of yours."

Tom's eyes gleamed. He was in no mood to take 'cheek' from a fellow like Clampe.

"Has he been here?" he snapped, in a tone that made Clampe decide in a hurry not to hand out any more 'backchat.'

"Yes, he has," grunted Clampe.

"When did he go?"

"About ten minutes ago, if you want to know."

"I want to know, or I shouldn't ask. I've got to see him. Do you know where he is now?"

"No; and don't care, either," said Clampe sulkily.

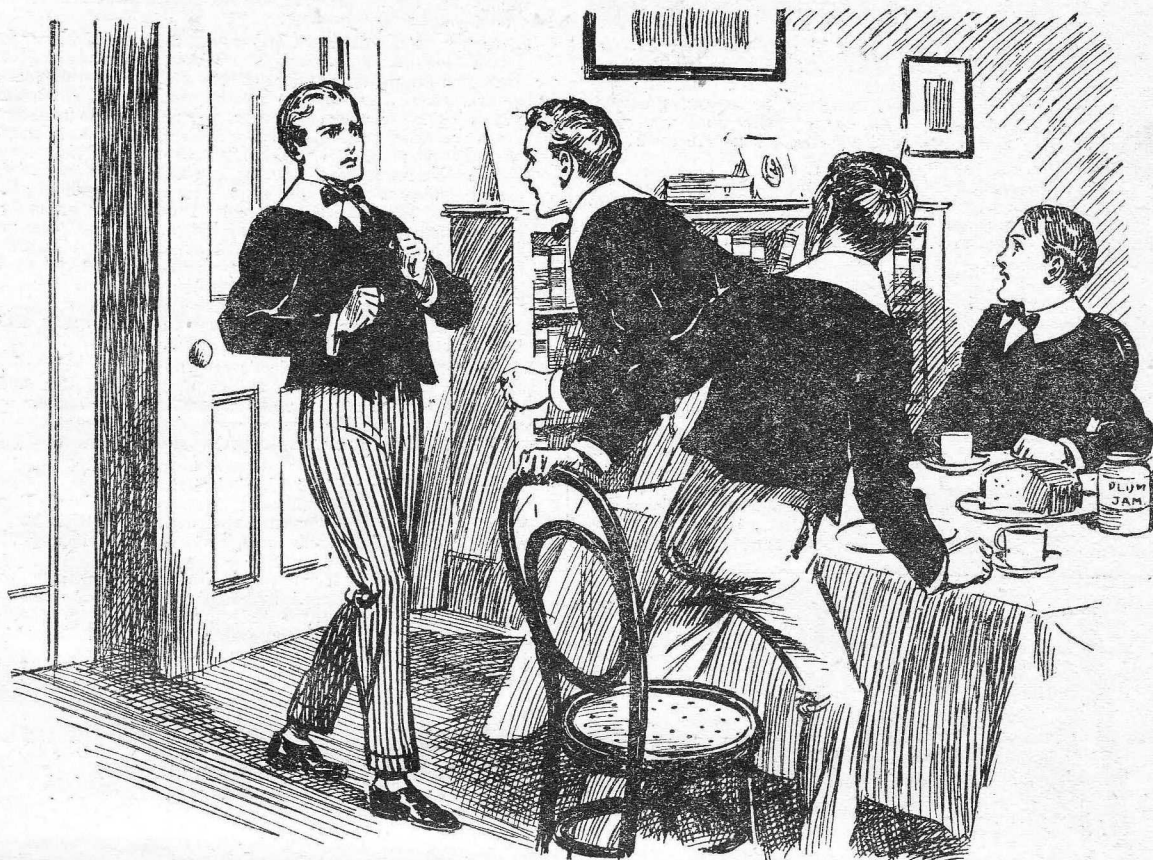
"Come on," said Tom, and the Terrible Three left Clampe's study and the New House.

Tom Merry paused in the quad. Cardew was not to be seen, and cricket was due on Little Side. Much against the grain, Tom Merry decided to let Cardew stand over for the present.

"We'd better get down to the cricket," he said.

"Oh, good!" said Manners, relieved.

And the chums of the Shell walked down to Little Side.



"You dare to tell me that you are leaving us in the lurch, Cardew, to play the blackguard at the races!" exclaimed Tom Merry. The junior captain had been very patient with Cardew, but his patience had given out now, and his long pent-up irritation came out with a rush. "Put up your hands, you cad!" he cried. Cardew's hands went up, only just in time. (See page 11.)

Cardew was not there; but as Tom came on the ground he was surprised to hear the name of the dandy of the Fourth shouted.

"Bravo! Well bowled, Cardew!"

"What's that?" exclaimed Tom. The shout came from a group of fellows on the senior pitch.

"Cardew—he's on Big Side!" exclaimed Manners.

"Oh!"

"Well bowled, Cardew! Good man!"

Tom Merry & Co. hurried across to Big Side.

CHAPTER 4.

Cardew in the Limelight!

"COMIN' out, you fellows?"

Levison and Clive shook their heads as Cardew asked that question. They were going down to cricket, when their chum joined them, coming across from the New House.

"Cricket," explained Clive. "Come along with us, Cardew."

"No jolly fear! Let's get out of gates," said Cardew. "You can give cricket a miss for once. I'm fed up on the word."

"Well, we're not," said Levison, rather tartly. "As I'm in the team for Wednesday, I think it's up to me to keep my hand in. And Clive's got a chance if another fellow should drop out."

Cardew grinned.

"I'd give Clive my place, only I've already handed it over to Grundy of the Shell," he remarked.

"I'm afraid there'll be trouble about that silly jest," said Levison seriously. "Tom Merry isn't the fellow to have his leg pulled like that."

"You shouldn't have done it, Cardew," said Clive. "You seem to want to exasperate Tom Merry, for some reason. What's he done?"

"Nothin', old bean. I like him no end," yawned Cardew. "Only I'm not playin' in the match next Wednesday, and I'm not goin' to take a hand in any dashed cricket except on compulsory days, and—"

"You're not what?" asked a quiet voice, as the three

Fourth-Formers turned their heads, to see Darrell of the Sixth, in flannels, with a bat under his arm.

Darrell, who was a prefect of the Sixth and a great man in the First eleven of St. Jim's, frowned at Cardew. He was a keen cricketer, and he liked keenness among the juniors, and did his best to encourage it when he had charge of junior games practice. On those occasions he had often given Cardew attention—sometimes favourable and sometimes the reverse.

Cardew was not easily quelled, even by the frown of a Sixth Form prefect and, "Colour."

"Not!" he agreed lazily.

"You'll get into flannels at once," said Darrell quietly, "and you'll come and fag at bowling for me, Cardew."

"Shall I?" said Cardew, setting his lips.

"Yes, and at once. You're a ripping good bowler for a junior, when you choose, and you can be useful."

"I'm not specially keen on bein' useful," said Cardew sarcastically. "It's not really in my line."

"You've heard what I said!" answered Darrell. "I shall expect you on Big Side in five minutes."

The big Sixth-Former walked on without waiting for Cardew to make any rejoinder. Ralph Reckness Cardew filled a large space in the limelight, in the Lower School. But in the view of a Sixth Form prefect and First eleven man, he was very small beer indeed.

"Well, you might as well have come to practice with us," said Levison with a smile. "Still, it's good bizney bowling to Darrell. Precious few Lower fellows are any good at it."

"I'm not anxious to distinguish myself," sneered Cardew. "I've a jolly good mind to cut."

"Don't be an ass!" urged Ernest Levison. "It's a prefect's beating if you do. You don't want to be told to bend over before all the fellows."

Levison and Clive went on their way, leaving Cardew standing irresolute. Cardew was deeply irritated; he did not want to fag at bowling for the seniors, and he hated doing anything that he did not want to do. But, as Levison had said, he did not want a prefect's beating. In short, he knew very well that he had to turn up on Big Side and bowl for Darrell,

and after a couple of minutes of angry and rebellious reflection, he went in to change.

While Tom Merry was seeking him in the New House, which he had lately left, Ralph Reckness Cardew was turning up on Big Side, to bowl to Darrell at the nets. Darrell gave him a good-humoured nod, not noticing, or caring to notice, the wrinkle of annoyance in Cardew's handsome brow. The annoyance of a Fourth Form boy was not likely to affect the equanimity of a great man of the Sixth.

"Now send us down a few, kid," said Darrell. "I've noticed your bowling, and it's good. If you were keen on it, I fancy you'd equal Wynn, of the New House—and he's the best junior bowler in the school. Knock out my stumps if you can."

Cardew's eyes glimmered.
"I'll try," he said.

Cardew's first thought had been to give Darrell the "rottenest" bowling he could, to waste the senior's time and irritate him. That thought he now abandoned. For one reason, Darrell was not a fellow to be trifled with; and Cardew did not want to have to "bend over" on a crowded cricket ground and receive "six" in public view. And Cardew had also thought of something better. Darrell was a mighty batsman of the First eleven, ranking only second to Kildare himself, the captain of the school. He did not for a moment expect Cardew to touch his wicket. Cardew believed that he could do it; and it occurred to him that it would make Darrell look rather an ass to be clean bowled by a fag. So that was now Cardew's intention, and he went on the

pitch warily, to do his very best—a far better best than Darrell thought of expecting.

There was no doubt that Cardew was a clever bowler, when he liked. He had a sure eye and a sure hand, and at times he displayed an almost magical deftness that surprised fellows who knew how little time he devoted to games. Sometimes he would slack for weeks together, going down grumbling to games practice on compulsory days only—and then sometimes he would "astonish the natives" with some brilliant performance that made him the cynosure of all eyes. Clive had told him gruffly that he loved playing to the gallery; and Cardew had coolly admitted the fact. Indeed, his chums more than half-suspected that his refusal to play in the Grammar School match was largely due to his love of the limelight, of taking up a singular attitude that was different from everybody else's. Any other junior would have jumped with both feet, so to speak, to get into Tom Merry's eleven for a School match. That was reason enough for Ralph Reckness Cardew to decline the offer with careless disdain.

There was a gleam in Cardew's eyes now as he gripped the round red ball. A score of the Sixth and the Fifth, and a dozen juniors were about, and Cardew knew how their eyes would open if Darrell's wicket went down. He put all he knew into the ball, and Darrell just stopped it, with a slightly surprised look.

"Good man!" he said. "That's hot stuff!"

A fag fielded the ball and sent it back to Cardew. It was a long throw, but Cardew caught it carelessly with his left hand. It was careful carelessness, however, for he caught the ball.

The first ball had been slow, and Darrell looked for another of the same. But the ball that came down was like lightning, and it whipped the balls off.

"My hat!" exclaimed Kildare of the Sixth. "How's that, Darrell?"

"Phew!" said Darrell.

He stared at his wicket.

"Here, let me see if you can give me one like that, Cardew!" exclaimed Kildare.

The captain of St. Jim's took Darrell's place. Cardew's face was a little flushed, his eyes gleaming. He had forgotten now that cricket bored him, that he was fed-up on the word. Deep down in his heart, Cardew was a sportsman, when he forgot his studied attitude of lofty nonchalance, and his rather irritating desire to make light of things that other fellows prized. And he was very keen indeed to take Kildare's wicket if he could. It was a feat that had been once performed by Patty Wynn of the New House, but by no other junior in the school.

Luck favoured him.

Kildare was a magnificent batsman, and he was on his guard. But the ball broke in, in a way that baffled him for once, and the middle stump went out. There was a shout from the onlookers, that rang far over Big Side.

"Bravo! Well bowled, Cardew!"

"Well bowled, young 'un!" exclaimed Kildare.

"Well bowled! Good man!"

Cardew looked elated for a moment—but only for a moment. Then his nonchalant expression returned to his face—he would not seem to be pleased even by the applause of Sixth Form cricketers. He was about to ask Kildare whether he could clear off now, when he sighted Tom Merry and Manners and Lowther coming across from Little Side.

A mischievous gleam came into his eyes. He was in great form, and showing a quality that surprised himself. The thought entertained him of letting Tom Merry see how valuable a recruit he would be for the match at the Grammar School—with no intention whatever of playing in that match.

"Shall I send down a few more, Kildare?" he called out.

"Yes."

The ball was tossed back, and Cardew bowled again. He did not succeed in taking Kildare's wicket a second time.

**Read the Famous
Companion Papers**

**The Big Six
Books
for
Every
Boy**

Clean, wholesome reading—and lots of it. School, sport, and adventure stories—you get the best of everything in Your Editor's famous Companion Papers. Stick to them, and you'll never regret it!

But all the onlookers—including Tom Merry—could see that the captain of St. Jim's had his hands full with the bowling, though it came only from a junior.

Tom Merry looked on keenly.

The anger had died out of his face—his look was keen and elated. At this rate Cardew would replace Fatty Wynn in the junior team, so that the loss of the champion junior bowler would not be felt. Personal feelings were forgotten; Tom looked at the matter as junior cricket captain; and he could not be angry with a fellow whose bowling would probably turn Wednesday's match from defeat to victory. Manners and Lowther exchanged a grin as they noted the change in Tom's expression. But Tom Merry did not notice it; all his attention was fixed on Cardew.

"That kid's hot stuff, and no mistake," Kildare said, as he came away from the wicket.

"A fluke or two," said Cutts of the Fifth with a sneer. "Can't see much in it myself."

Kildare looked at him.

"Try him yourself, Cutts," he said. "Here, Cardew, send down a few to Cutts."

"Pleasure!" grinned Cardew.

Cutts was in the First Eleven, and he was a good bat, but he was nowhere near the form of Kildare or Darrell, and Cardew was convinced that he could handle him. And he had old quarrels with Cutts of the Fifth, which neither had forgotten. Cardew bowled to Gerald Cutts with a grim determination to make the Fifth-Former look as foolish as he could.

He succeeded. The first ball beat Cutts to the wide, and his bats went down. There was a laugh from some of the seniors.

"Was that a fluke, Cutts?" called out Langton of the Sixth. Cutts made no reply, but scowled along the pitch at the junior bowler. Cutts was very careful with the next ball, but it was quite a different ball, and, as a matter of fact, it was too good for Cutts of the Fifth. His leg stump was whipped out.

"My hat!" murmured Tom Merry.

"Good man," said Monty Lowther. "If he plays like that on Wednesday we sha'n't miss Fatty Wynn."

"Wathah not!" chimed in Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, who had been drawn on the scene, with a dozen other juniors, by Cardew's unexpected exhibition. "Bai Jove! Cardew will be a pwize-packet for the Gwammawians, you know!"

"Real mustard," said Lumley-Lumley. "But I've heard that he says he won't play."

"Only swank," said Blake. "He'll play all right."

"Gweat Scott! There goes Cutts' wicket! The hat twick, deah boys!" yelled Arthur Augustus. "Huwway!"

Gerald Cutts' wicket was down for the third time. There was a roar from the juniors. It was an unusual and exhilarating experience for them, to see senior wickets going down to junior bowling in this style.

Arthur Augustus, in his excitement, waved his eyeglass in the air and fairly roared.

"Wippin', deah boy! Bwavo, Cardew! Huwway!"

Cutts of the Fifth, with a black brow, walked away from the pitch. He was strongly tempted to stride along it and lay his bat about Ralph Reckness Cardew. But even the bully of the Fifth could not venture to do that.

"You've got a good man there for your eleven, Merry," said Kildare, as Cardew left the pitch.

"Yes, rather, Kildare," said Tom brightly.

He joined Cardew as the latter strolled away. It was like Cardew to be wearing a bored expression while his exploits were on every tongue.

"That's ripping, Cardew!" said Tom cordially. "Play up like that on Wednesday, and we'll give the Grammar chaps something to think about."

Cardew looked at him.

"But I'm not playin' on Wednesday," he drawled. "I've retired in favour of Grundy of the Shell."

"I was going to speak to you about that," said Tom, patiently. "But never mind—let it go as a joke."

"But it isn't a joke. You can please yourself about playin' Grundy, of course, but you can't please yourself about playin' me," said Cardew coolly. "I've got an engagement for Wednesday, and can't play. Sorry, you know, and all that; but there it is."

Cardew walked away, humming a tune. Tom Merry made a stride after him, but checked himself. His brow was dark again as he walked back to Little Side to rejoin the junior cricketers.

CHAPTER 5. Nothing Doing!

JERROLD LUMLEY-LUMLEY of the Fourth Form wore a worried look.

He came into his study in the Fourth after games practice, dropped his bat into a corner, and threw himself into a chair, knitting his brows and staring at the sunny window.

He looked anything but happy, but most fellows in the Fourth Form would have been puzzled to say what he had to be dissatisfied about.

Lumley-Lumley had taken up cricket keenly, and had shown rather unexpected form. Tom Merry's eye had soon been on him, and he had encouraged him as much as he could. The fellow who had once been known as the "Outsider" of St. Jim's had changed in many ways, and for the better. But according to the gossip of the Form there were still occasions when he showed signs of the cloven hoof. More than once, in earlier days, Lumley-Lumley had run the risk of the "sack" in following his own wild ways. Now he was very regular at games practice, and he was in the list for the junior School match on Wednesday. True, he owed that distinction to the fact that Tom Merry's team had been depleted; still, he was a good bat, and a useful man in the field. He had been greatly elated by his selection, and he intended to play the game of his life on Wednesday at the Grammar School.

But he was looking undoubtedly worried now. He shifted out of the armchair in a few minutes, and walked restlessly about the study.

He left the study at last, and turned his steps in the direction of the Shell passage. There he knocked at the door of Study No. 7, which belonged to Racke and Crooke. He turned the handle, but the door did not open.

"Who's there?" called out Racke.

"Little me."

"Lumley-Lumley?"

"Yes."

"Oh, all right! Trot in!"

Racke unlocked the door and Lumley-Lumley entered the study. There was a haze of cigarette-smoke in the room; Racke and Crooke were both smoking. That was the explanation of the locked door.

"Put on a fag, old bean," said Racke, extending his case to the visitor.

Lumley-Lumley shook his head.

"No, thanks. I've chucked it!" he said.

"How long?" grinned Crooke.

"Since I've taken up cricket, anyhow," said Lumley-Lumley. "No good spoiling your wind if you're going in for games."

"What rot!" yawned Crooke.

"I came in to speak to you fellows about the match on Wednesday," said Lumley-Lumley. "We've got a bet on it."

"We shave," agreed Racke. "Have you come to tell us we can have the stakes now? You may as well, as you haven't an earthly."

"I don't know about that. Tom Merry hopes to beat the Grammar School."

"Tom Merry's an ass. His team is no good against Gordon Gay's crowd," said Racke contemptuously.

"None at all," agreed Crooke. "I shouldn't wonder if the Grammar School win by an innings."

"Well, they won't do that," said Lumley-Lumley. "We've lost some good men, but Tom Merry's got at least one first-class recruit."

"What modesty!" chuckled Racke.

"I'm not speaking of myself. I mean Cardew."

"Cardew isn't playin'," grinned Racke. "It would make a good bit of difference if he did, I know. The team's weakest in bowlers, with Fatty Wynn and Talbot and Blake all out. And Cardew seems to be turning out a wonderful bowler. But he's not playin'."

"He's down to play."

"A lot he cares for that! Tom Merry can't make him play, and he won't if he doesn't choose. And he doesn't."

"I fancy that's gas," said Lumley-Lumley. "I hope so, at any rate."

"I dare say you do," Racke chuckled. "Your tenner is as good as in my pocket, old man. And your fiver in Crooke's. Ha, ha, ha!"

Lumley-Lumley looked worried.

"The fact is, I wish I'd never bet on the match," he said.

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Racke and Crooke.

"Not for the reasons you're thinking of," said Lumley-Lumley angrily. "I mean, it's pretty rotten to bet on the cricket matches, and I oughtn't to have done it. Old habits, I suppose. But I'd really like to call it off, if you fellows were agreeable. I don't want to win your money—"

"You don't want to lose your own, you mean!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"No, I don't mean that!" snapped Lumley-Lumley. "I mean that I acted without thinking, and I wish I hadn't. I was feeling so bucked at getting into the eleven that I took you on without stopping to think; but I've felt rather rotten about it since."

"Since you found that it was a cert for the Grammar School."

"No!" roared Lumley-Lumley.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Lumley-Lumley stared angrily at the two black sheep of the Shell. He realised that it was useless to expect Racke and Croke to understand his motives.

He realised, too, that it was an unfortunate time for suggesting calling off his thoughtless wager. There was no doubt that Tom Merry's team had a hard row to hoe if they were to beat the Grammar School this time. But Lumley-Lumley was not thinking about the money. He had plenty of money, and if he had lost the fifteen pounds it would not have troubled him very much.

"Look here, you chaps," he said. "You won't understand, I suppose, but I feel rotten at having made a bet on the match. Tom Merry would feel disgusted if he knew—so would most of the fellows. I hate having to keep a thing secret, knowing that fellows I like will look down on me if it happens to come out. It's dashed uncomfortable and unpleasant. But I tell you I'm not thinking of the money."

"You can tell us that till you're black in the face, and we sha'n't swallow it!" said Racke coolly.

"I'll prove it. St. Leger of the Fifth is holding the stakes for us," said Lumley-Lumley. "Well, we can call it off and draw the stakes—"

"No jolly fear!"

"And I'll hand over the fifteen quids to the Cottage Hospital," said Lumley-Lumley. "How's that?"

Racke and Croke stared at him.

"What good would that do us?" asked Croke.

"Well, it will prove that I'm not callin' off the bet because I'm afraid to lose the money, anyhow."

"I dare say it would; but it won't suit us," said Racke. "I stand to win ten and Croke five if the Grammar School win on Wednesday. And they're bound to win. We're patriotic enough to back our own school if we thought they had an earthly; but they haven't."

"Not a ghostly," said Croke. "The money's as good as in our pockets. I'm not handin' over my money to any dashed Cottage Hospital, I know that!"

"You don't agree?" asked Lumley-Lumley.

"No."

"You won't let me call the bet off?"

"No."

Lumley-Lumley drove his hands deep into his pockets, and stared gloomily at the two grinning Shell fellows.

"Well, if you won't, you won't!" he said. "I'm bound to stand by it if you hold me to it. If St. Jim's wins—"

"St. Jim's won't win. But if they did you'd handle our money fast enough!" sneered Croke.

"If St. Jim's wins, I shall handle your money just long enough to drop it into the hospital collecting-box," said Lumley-Lumley quietly. "I sha'n't touch it further than that!"

"More fool you—not that I believe it!"

"I'll believe that when I see it!" smiled Racke. "But there's not much chance of seein' it! St. Jim's will be beaten to the wide!"

Lumley-Lumley made no rejoinder to that. He turned to the door and opened it, and strode out angrily into the passage. There was a roar as he did so. His departure from the study was so sudden that a fat figure stopping by the keyhole had no time to shift—till Lumley-Lumley's stride shifted it. Baggy Trimble sat down and roared.

Lumley-Lumley gave Trimble a savage look, and followed it up with a hefty kick, and strode away down the passage, leaving Baggy roaring more loudly than ever.

CHAPTER 6.

Tom Merry Loses His Temper!

KILDARE of the Sixth laid his official ashplant handy on his study table, and called out "Come in!" as there came a tap at his door.

Cardew of the Fourth entered.

Ralph Reckness Cardew had been sent for, and he had come; and he came in a wary mood. His eye fell at once on the ashplant that was on the table, and he smiled faintly. He knew that he was booked for a heart-to-heart talk with the captain of the school; and it looked as if Kildare was prepared to enforce his eloquence with the cane.

"You sent for me, Kildare," remarked Cardew. "Trimble told me you wanted to see me."

"That's so," assented Kildare. "You seem to have developed rather remarkably as a cricketer, Cardew."

"So kind of you to say so!" murmured Cardew.

"Our junior captain has been in some difficulties about his team," went on Kildare. "You have turned out a very useful man, fortunately. Your name is down to play at the Grammar School on Wednesday."

"My name's down, certainly," assented Cardew.

"I'll come straight to the point. It seems to be a topic among the juniors that you have declined to play."

"Can't prevent fellows from tattlin', you know. I should hardly have expected you to hear of it."

THE GEM LIBRARY.—No. 853.

"I hear most things about the cricket," said the St. Jim's captain quietly. "I happen to be head of games, and I happen to attend to my business. Is it true that you do not want to play for your school on Wednesday?"

"Quite!"

"And why not?"

"The spirit doesn't happen to move me," said Cardew calmly. "I warned Tom Merry not to depend on me."

Kildare looked hard at him.

"I suppose this is some sort of affectation on your part, Cardew," he said slowly. "You make it a point to despise a thing that's offered you, chiefly because other fellows are keen on it. Any other fellow in your Form would jump at the chance."

"I'm willin' to let them jump!"

"You are going to play for the school on Wednesday."

"Thanks; no!"

"It's not a matter of choice with you," said Kildare abruptly. "You can play any kind of silly swank you like among the other juniors; but there's a limit. If your own patriotism as a St. Jim's man, and your own sense of fitness of things don't make you want to play—"

"They don't!"

"Then I order you, as head of the games, to do so."

Cardew paused.

"Matches are not compulsory, that I've ever heard of," he said. "I turn up for games practice regularly. I fag at bowling for the First Eleven if I'm asked. That's all I'm called on to do."

"Matches are not compulsory," assented Kildare. "Nobody's ever supposed that compulsion would be necessary to make a cricketer do his best for his school. But the head of the games has authority to give orders, and I've just given you an order. You'll obey that order!"

"Has Tom Merry asked you to chip in?" inquired Cardew disdainfully.

"Tom Merry has not said a word to me on the subject. He has a right to ask me to chip in, but he hasn't done so. I'm keeping an eye on the junior eleven, and I'm seeing that the junior captain's difficulties are not added to unnecessarily. Do you see?"

"I see!"

"You will go over to the Grammar School on Wednesday with Tom Merry's team. That's all!"

"That's all, is it?" said Cardew, with a gleam in his eyes. "And suppose I don't go?"

"I shall suppose nothing of the kind," said Kildare.

"Still, admittin' the bare possibility—" suggested Cardew sarcastically.

"In that case, you would take a prefects' beating," said Kildare, "and I warn you that it would be pretty severe."

"Horrid!" yawned Cardew.

"You are to go to Tom Merry to-day, and tell him that you are playing on Wednesday."

"I might forget!"

Kildare picked up the ashplant.

"This sort of thing won't do," he said. "Are you going to Tom Merry to-day, as I've told you? If not, there's a chair. Bend over."

Cardew smiled at him.

"I hate bendin' over," he said airily, "and you have a very hefty hand with an ashplant, Kildare. If it's all the same to you, I'd rather pay Tom Merry a friendly call."

"Very well; get out!"

"Adieu, old bean!"

Ralph Reckness Cardew walked out of the captain's study, and Kildare laid down the ashplant, frowning. He half-regretted that he had not made the dandy of the Fourth "bend over," anyhow. At all events, he was grimly determined that if Cardew should venture to go his own wilful way and fail his side on the day of the match, the punishment should be one not easily forgotten.

Cardew strolled away from the study with a smile on his face; but his eyes were thoughtful.

He realised that he was in a difficult position.

He did not contemplate giving in; but the matter had become serious now that the captain of the school had interfered. Cardew might really have expected that intervention; but in his lazy, careless way he had not thought about it.

He made his way to Tom Merry's study, where he found the Terrible Three of the Shell at tea.

"Trot in!" said Tom cheerily.

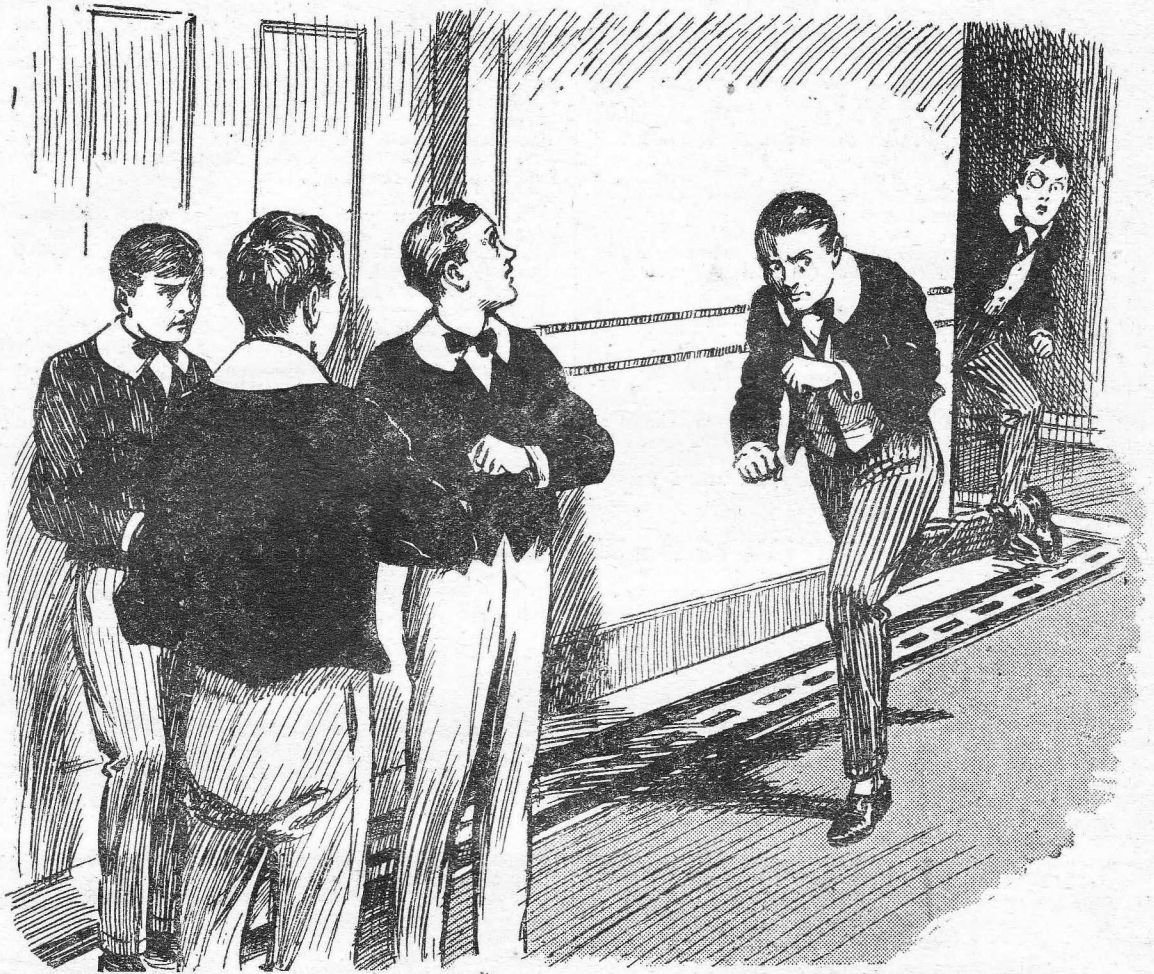
"Kildare's sent me," said Cardew with a smile. "I'm in a difficulty. What ought a truthful chap to do, when he's commanded by a person in authority to tell a crammer?"

"Eh?"

"I'm askin' you, as a fellow of well-known integrity and general uprightness of character, and a model and example to all us errin' youths," explained Cardew.

Manners and Lowther grinned, and Tom Merry knitted his brows.

"What do you mean, if you mean anything?" exclaimed Tom.



"Stop, you wottah!" cried Arthur Augustus. "Stop him, you fellows!" Levison, Clive, and Cardew were in the Fourth Form passage and they heard the cry. They stared round as Racke came in full flight, with the swell of St. Jim's hot on his track. (See page 13.)

"Here it is in a nutshell. Kildare's told me to come to you and say that I'm playin' on Wednesday."

"That's all right," said Tom.

"Not quite—because I'm not playin'."

"Oh, don't be an ass!"

"So Kildare's chipped in, has he?" said Manners.

"He has done me the honour to take notice of my existence," assented Cardew. "I'm to play on Wednesday or take a prefect's beatin'."

"I'd rather play cricket myself," said Lowther with a laugh.

"Very likely; but tastes differ. I've said I'm not goin' to play; and what I have said, I have said."

"Swank!" grunted Manners.

"Anyhow, that's what Kildare told me to tell you, Thomas, old bean. I'm playin' on Wednesday. It's a naughty fib, because I'm not playin'. But I regard Kildare as bein' responsible for the fib."

Cardew turned to the door.

"Cardew," said Tom Merry quietly, "what's the good of keeping this up. You don't want to leave us in the lurch on Wednesday. Be a sportsman, and play up like a decent chap."

Cardew hesitated a moment. He had expected angry words from the junior captain—which would only have amused him. But that quiet appeal had some effect on him.

But his hesitation was very brief.

"You see, it's impossible," he said. "I told you days ago that I had an engagement for Wednesday."

"Cut it out," said Manners.

Cardew shook his head.

"Can't!"

"Look here," said Tom. "If it were something really important—I know your grandfather is in bad health, and if you were going to see him, and didn't want to miss him—or anything like that—"

"It's not jolly old granddad. I don't mind tellin' you what

the engagement is. I suppose you know that the flat racin' is on now."

"The what?" exclaimed Tom Merry.

"Flat racin'. But, of course, you nice fellows don't know anythin' about racin', flat or otherwise," smiled Cardew. "But I'm booked for the Abbotsford races on Wednesday afternoon, and couldn't think of missin' it. I've got some money on a horse, and want to see him lose. See?"

Tom Merry rose to his feet, his face crimson with anger. "You can tell Kildare if you like," added Cardew imperturbably. "If a prefect caught me on the race ground, I should be bunked from St. Jim's, of course. It would be a serious loss for the school—but I believe the school would bear it."

"You dare to tell me that you're leaving us in the lurch, to play the blackguard at the races!" exclaimed Tom Merry.

"I dare tell the Head, if I choose!" said Cardew scornfully.

"You rotter!" shouted Tom. He had been very patient with Cardew, but his patience had given out now, and his long pent-up irritation came out with a rush. "Put up your hands, you cad!"

"Oh gad! Pleasure, dear boy!"

Cardew's hands went up like lightning. It was only just in time, for Tom Merry came at him fiercely.

"A fight!" yelled Baggy Trimble, along the passage. "Cardew's fighting in Tom Merry's study!"

There was a rush along the passage. A crowd of fellows arrived, in time to see Ralph Reckness Cardew spin out of the study, knocked fairly off his feet by a terrific right-hander.

"Cardew!" exclaimed Levison of the Fourth.

He ran to pick up his chum.

"What the thump—" exclaimed Blake.

Cardew leaned dazedly on Levison's arm. Tom Merry stood in the study doorway, his eyes blazing.

"Bai Jove!" exclaimed Arthur Augustus D'Arcy. "What's this feahful wov about? Weally, Tom Mewwy, you ought not to be fightin' a membah of your team a day befoah a cwicket match."

"Cardew's not a member of the team!" snapped Tom Merry. "He's kicked out of the team! He says he doesn't care to play, and I'm taking him at his word now. Better for St. Jim's to lose every match this season than to play that shady blackguard!"

"Bai Jove!"

"But what—" exclaimed Clive.

Tom fixed his eyes on Cardew.

"That's what I think of you!" he exclaimed. "Now, if you want this to go any further, I'll meet you in the gym any time you please—or you can come into this study now, you cad!"

"I'll come in now," breathed Cardew.

"You won't!" said Levison. "Come away, you ass!"

"Let me go!" hissed Cardew.

"Take his other arm, Clive!"

"Let me go, you meddlin' fools!" roared Cardew, struggling savagely.

Unheeding, Levison and Clive walked him away, almost as angry with their chum as Tom Merry was. Tom closed his study door, leaving the juniors in the passage in a buzz of excitement. He sat down at the table again with a clouded brow.

"That settles the point, anyhow," said Lowther.

Tom Merry nodded without speaking. That evening he had ample food for thought in picking out a new man to fill the vacant place in the team. The cricket list in the Common-room was amended, and the name of R. A. Digby appeared in place of that of R. R. Cardew. Many of the fellows shook their heads over it. Dig was pleased—but even Dig was not quite so pleased as Racke and Crooke of the Shell. A defeat for the school mattered little to the two black sheep, in comparison with winning their bets on the match.

"I suppose Tom Mewwy is wight," Arthur Augustus D'Arcy remarked to his chums after much thought. "You can dwag a horse to the watah, you know, but you can't make him dwink. I am weally watah surprised that he has not pitched into that ass Cardew befoah. I think he is wight to dwop him out of the cwicket—but, all the same, the match is a gonah, deah boys. I weally feah that we shall not beat the Gwammah School this time."

And most of the fellows agreed with Arthur Augustus D'Arcy; and among the cricketing set, at least, Cardew's popularity was at the lowest ebb.

CHAPTER 7.

Arthur Augustus Administers Justice!

"I T never rains but it pours!" said Tom Merry bitterly.

It was Tuesday evening, and the match that had given Tom Merry so unusual an amount of trouble was coming off the next day. Tom came into his study with knitted brows.

"Row with Cardew?" asked Manners.

"Bless Cardew! No, he seems to have let the matter drop," said Tom.

"That's rather odd. I suppose Levison and Clive have reasoned with the silly owl."

"Well, I'd rather not have a fight on my hands just before the match," said Tom. "Though, as a matter of fact, I think there would be some satisfaction in giving that fellow a hiding. But never mind Cardew. It's that ass Lumley-Lumley this time."

"He's not standing out, surely," exclaimed Manners. "He seemed to me no end bucked at getting into the team."

"No; but I don't know whether I ought not to boot him out!" growled Tom. "It's the talk of the House now that he has been making bets on the game. I thought he had chucked up that sort of rot, but I suppose old habits have been too strong for him."

"I should have thought he'd have sense enough to keep it dark, anyhow."

"It seems that Trimble heard him talking about it with Racke and Crooke, and spread the story round the House."

"Mayn't be true if it comes from Trimble."

"I've asked Lumley-Lumley, and he admitted it," growled Tom Merry. "Those beauties, Racke and Crooke, have laid money against St. Jim's—precious pair of rotters. Nobody expects anything better of them, I suppose; but we can't

have a member of the eleven making filthy bets on the result of a match. It really looks as if the team is going quite to pot this time."

"Lumley's a good man," said Manners slowly. "But I suppose it wouldn't do."

There was a tap at the door of the study, and Jerrold Lumley-Lumley came in. He looked very red and sheepish. Tom Merry gave him a black look.

"I suppose you're taking my name off the list?" asked Lumley-Lumley awkwardly.

"Yes."

"I can't blame you. But it's rather rotten. I'm awfully keen on playing for school," said Lumley-Lumley. "I'm sorry about that silly bet, and I've told Racke and Crooke that I sha'n't touch the money if I win it. It goes into the hospital collecting-box if it comes my way. If that makes any difference—"

There was keen distress in Lumley-Lumley's face, and Tom could not help relenting as he noted it. After all, the one-time outsider of St. Jim's had changed, and perhaps it was too much to expect the old Adam to be eradicated all at once.

"Can't you call the bet off?" asked Manners.

"I wanted to, but they wouldn't. They think that St. Jim's hasn't an earthly, and that that was my reason for wanting to call it off."

"I've a jolly good mind to report the whole thing to Kildare," growled Tom Merry. "But I can't do that, I suppose. Still, if you put it like that, Lumley, I suppose one can stretch a point. It's understood that you don't touch the money if you win it."

"That's understood, of course."

"You pay if you lose, and it will serve you jolly well right; and you don't touch the money if you win?"

"That's it."

"Let it go at that, then," said Tom. "I've had to drop Cardew, and I don't want you to follow if it can be helped. We haven't much chance of beating Gay's crowd, anyhow."

"I suppose it's all up about Cardew?" said Lumley-Lumley.

"Quite. But you're playing, anyhow, on that understanding."

"Right-ho!"

Lumley-Lumley left Study No. 10 feeling relieved. Tom Merry was relieved, too. He had enough responsibility on his shoulders now as junior cricket captain, without the added difficulty of replacing Lumley-Lumley.

Racke of the Shell met the outsider as he came away from Tom Merry's study.

"Booted out of the team?" he inquired, grinning.

"No!" snapped Lumley-Lumley.

"Sorry!" grinned Racke. "I suppose Tom Merry is stretching a point. He must take some sort of a team over to Rylcombe to-morrow. Is he still expectin' to win?"

"Find out!"

Lumley-Lumley brushed past Racke and walked away. The cad of the Shell laughed lightly.

"Wacke!"

It was the severe voice of Arthur Augustus D'Arcy.

"Hallo! What's bitin' you, D'Arcy?" asked Aubrey Racke cheerily.

"Nothin' is bitin' me, Wacke. I heah that you have been backin' the Gwammah School against your own school."

"Go hon."

"I wegard you as a wotten wottah, Wacke, to lay wotten money on a cwicket match at all."

"Dear me!" said Racke.

"But to make your wotten bets against your own school is weally the limit," continued Arthur Augustus.

"You don't say so."

"I do say so, Wacke, and, havin' thought the mattah ovah, I have decided that what you want is a feahful thwashin'."

"Eh! What?" exclaimed Racke, jumping back.

Arthur Augustus pushed back his spotless cuffs.

"You heard what I said, Wacke. Will you oblige me by puttin' up your wascally hands?"

"You silly owl!" roared Racke. "I'm not goin' to fight you!"

"You can please yourself about that, of course," assented the swell of St. Jim's. "I am goin' to thwash you, Wacke, and whethah you fight me at the same time is a mattah for you to decide."

"Look here—"

"Come on, you wottah!"

Arthur Augustus came on, but Racke backed away in alarm, defending himself as well as he could against Gussy's slashing attack.

There were shouts of laughter from several of the studies as Aubrey went backing down the passage followed up by the warlike swell of St. Jim's.

"You feahful funk!" exclaimed Arthur Augustus. "How's a fellow to thwash you if you keep on backin' away?"

"Go it, Gussy!"

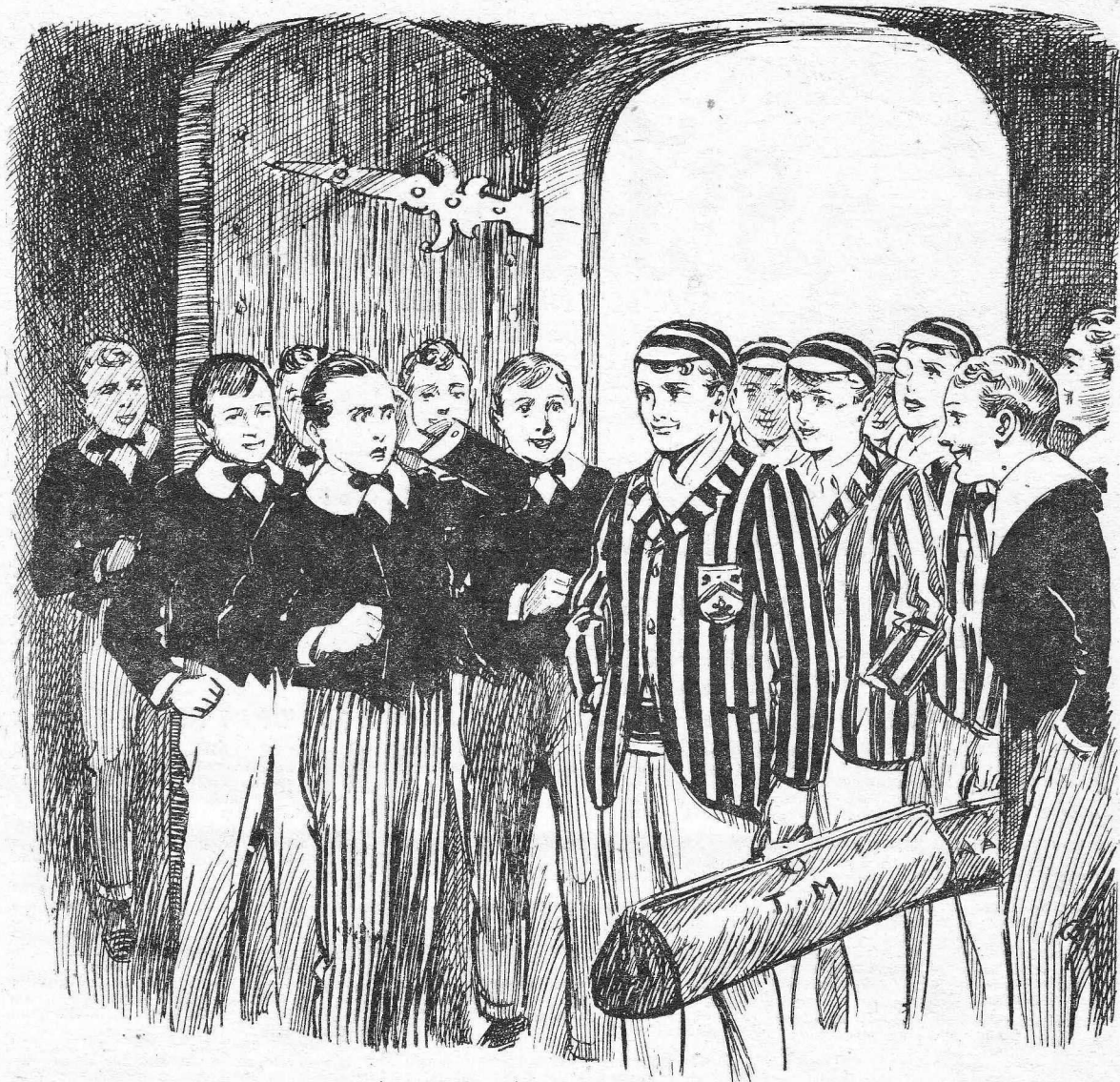
"Mind the step, Racke!"

At the corner of the passage Racke dodged and fairly ran.

ANSWERS

EVERY MONDAY.....PRICE 2:

THE GEM LIBRARY.—No. 853.



Racke shoved his way through the crowd towards Tom Merry. "So you were beaten by the Grammarians, then?" he asked. Tom Merry stared at him. "Hardly," he said. "We won by fifteen runs." "You beat them!" said Racke dazedly. "But—but you can't have done. It's impossible! Cardew played——" "Yaas, wathah!" chimed in Arthur Augustus. "And played like a Twojan, too!" (See page 17.)

At the corner of the passage Racke dodged and fairly ran. A yell of derision followed him. Still more disagreeable, from Racke's point of view, Arthur Augustus D'Arcy followed him. The swell of St. Jim's, usually so placable, seemed to be out for blood.

"Stop, you wottah! Stop him, you fellows!"

Levison, Clive, and Cardew were in the Fourth Form passage. They stared round as Racke came fleeing with the swell of St. Jim's hot on his track.

Racke rushed into them and reeled. Arthur Augustus was upon him the next moment.

"Now face wound, you wottah, and put up your beastly hands!" gasped Arthur Augustus.

"Keep off, you fool!" panted Racke.

"What on earth's the trouble?" asked Levison.

"This feahful wottah, Wacke, has been layin' bets against St. Jim's on the match to-morrow!" explained Arthur Augustus.

"Naughty!" yawned Cardew.

"I wegard it as more than naughty, Cardew. I wegard it as feahfully wotten and blackguardly, and I'm goin' to thwash Wacke!"

And Arthur Augustus piled in with left and right. Aubrey Racke, being fairly cornered, put up his hands and gave out the best he could. But in three minutes he was lying winded on the floor.

"Are you finished, Wacke?" demanded Arthur Augustus scornfully.

"Ow! Yes! Hang you, yes! Ow!" groaned Racke.

"I twust you have now wepented of your wascality, Wacke?"

"Ow! Get out! Ow!"

"If you have not yet wepented of your wascality, Wacke, I shall feel bound to thwash you a little more. Have you, or have you not, wepented of your wascality?" demanded Arthur Augustus sternly.

"Ow! Yes! Anything you like! Ow!" gasped Racke.

"Vewy good!"

Arthur Augustus walked away, and Racke picked himself up dismally. He limped away breathlessly to his study, leaving a crowd of fellows chuckling behind him when he went.

CHAPTER 8.

Good Business!

RALPH RECKNESS CARDEW raised his eyebrows as his study door opened and Aubrey Racke came in. It was nearly bed-time, but Cardew had not chosen to go down to the Common-room with his chums. Levison and Clive were angry and annoyed with him, and did not trouble to conceal the fact, so relations were a little strained in Study No. 9. Cardew had certainly not been expecting a visit from Aubrey Racke, and he did not look specially pleased to see him.

(Continued on page 16.)



FIRES THAT HAVE OCCURRED AT ST. JIM'S.

(Specially contributed by Dr. Holmes.)

DURING the long period that I have been headmaster at St. Jim's I have witnessed numerous outbreaks of fire at the old school, but none of them, I am glad to say, have ever resulted in any loss of life.

The first fire that I can remember took place many years ago, when, in the middle of the night, the old west wing of the school was found to be well alight. Over fifty boys were sleeping there at the time, but all rapidly and safely made their escape, with one exception. He was a lad whose leg had been injured at football, and his absence was not missed until after the fire had obtained a firm grip of the old wing, the structure of which was mostly timber.

The missing boy's face suddenly appeared at an upper window, looking ghastly and terrified in the lurid glare of the conflagration, which lit up the countryside for miles around. One of the senior lads—Merritt by name—essayed to climb the firemen's ladder while they played the hose on him, and in this manner he climbed up into the blazing upper room to find the boy who, overcome by the fumes and heat, had fallen back insensible. I shall never forget the cheers that rang out when, after what seemed an eternity, Merritt staggered down through the raging inferno with the unconscious junior across his shoulder. Both were badly injured, and were under the doctor for weeks afterwards. The old wing was completely gutted that night, and what remained of it was pulled down. The New House was afterwards built to take its place.

Pancake Day, ten years ago, saw an exciting outbreak of fire in the Third Form room. It appeared that the young rascals had attempted to make pancakes for tea, and the superfluity of fat used in the process had, in a squabble, been knocked into the fire. In the ensuing blaze the ringleader had most of his hair burned off, and a good quantity of school books were destroyed. And afterwards I heard that the Third-Formers had celebrated this latter event!

A midnight orgy in the Fourth Form dormitory, some time later, was responsible for the next serious fire at St. Jim's. The juniors had taken a stove into the dormitory, and were frying sausages when Mr. Latham surprised them. The stove was knocked over in the juniors' haste to return to bed, and a bed was set alight. Most of the other beds were well soaked with water by the time the fire had been extinguished, and the unruly juniors had a most uncomfortable night.

(Continued in next column.)

THE GEM LIBRARY.—No. 853.

FIREMAN JACK!

By Dick Redfern.

I TELL you this tale of Brave Fireman Jack, His courage and valour may none of us lack!

In the annals of glory his name will go down As the man who gave all to save Risborough Town.

One dark winter's night the dread alarm came—
"The Risborough Chemical Works are aflame!"
The firemen dashed swiftly to answer the call,
And Jack, he was with them—the best of them all!

For an hour they fought that grim, lustful fire,
The flames of which rose higher and higher.
Eating their way to the vault down below—
If the flames reached the powder, the whole town would go!

A secret explosive—'twas kept by the ton.
The firemen were baffled. Could nothing be done?

Then, taking the hose, in sprang Fireman Jack,
'Mid flame and smoke leaping—and never came back!

He reached the deep vault, and drenched every crate;
The fire reached the powder, but reached it too late!
The fire down there crackled in fury, and raved,
But the danger was gone—the town had been saved!

The building was doomed—it burned to the ground—
And after no trace of the fireman was found.
But he lives, though, in memory, and all who look back
Still thrill at the tale of brave Fireman Jack.

(Continued from column 1.)

portable time during the remainder of the night!

There was once a boy in the Fourth who, out of petty spite on a prefect, set his study alight. Fortunately, the fire was discovered in time, otherwise a serious catastrophe might have occurred. That boy, needless to say, was expelled immediately.

Taggles' lodge has been alight on more than one occasion through the porter's careless habit of smoking his pipe in bed. The juniors' fire-brigade have always risen well to their duty, and they have never been sparing with the water!

EDITORIAL!

By Tom Merry.

MONTY LOWTHER, when I told him that I was bringing out a special Fire Brigade issue of our little mag, had the cheek to say that it would start a fire—in many a grate. Now, that was most unkind. I hope my readers' only burning desire when they see this number will be to lend it to a pal, and advertise it.

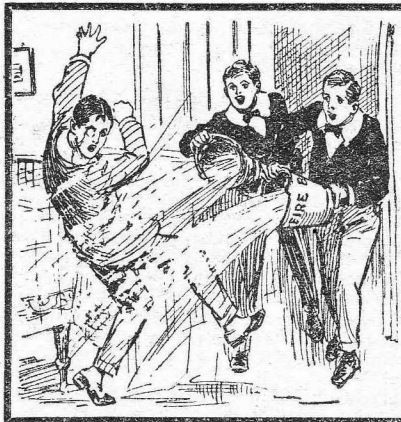
The fire-brigade at St. Jim's is a very important institution, although it does not often come into prominence. That, fortunately, is because we don't have many conflagrations nowadays at St. Jim's. We have fire-drill always with us, of course. How eagerly "we go to it" when the fire-bell clangs for drill—especially when it's in the middle of lessons! We turn out in the quad in double-quick time.

The school fire-brigade was my idea, and it has developed on businesslike lines. We have a fire-escape, the necessary pumping apparatus, and two fine hoses! Only the other day we had a call—to a neighbouring farm, where a haystack had caught fire. The village fire-brigade had been called immediately, but the St. Jim's brigade, summoned by Gussy, who had seen the fire from the road, was first on the spot! We had the outbreak well under control by the time the sleepy village brigade turned up!

The proverbial sleepiness of the Rylcombe Fire Brigade must not be taken as an example of all fire-brigades. No finer body of men can be found anywhere than the average company of fire-fighters. A fireman's life is the most dangerous of all callings, yet he is always ready, at a second's notice, to risk life and limb in his duty. Some of the most heroic deeds on record have been performed by firemen. These gallant, fearless men deserve the pride and honour of us all.

There's one thing we must regret—and that is the passing of the horse in connection with fire-engines. Fire-fighting appliances of to-day are all motor-driven, and they are certainly faster. But what a thrill we used to have when, to the fierce clanging of the fire-bell, the horses dashed past through the crowded street, straining every noble effort in their race against time with the all-devouring fire-fiend!

Tom Merry



FALSE ALARM!

By DICK JULIAN.

"IT'S time we had a clearance!" growled Jack Blake.
"Hear, hear!" said Herries and Digby.

Blake waved a hand round Study No. 6, and gave an emphatic snort.

"Gussy and his clothes are a beastly nuisance!" he exclaimed. "We are lumbered up everywhere with his rotten fancy waistcoats, neckties, trousers, jackets, and other paraphernalia. Ninetenths of the stuff he never uses. The place is a perfect rubbish-hole. Ah! here is the blithering idiot!"

Arthur Augustus strolled into the study just then, arrayed, as usual, in spotless splendour. He jammed his monocle into his eye and glared severely at Blake.

"Weally, Blake, I twust that wemark did not weter to me!" he exclaimed.

"It did!" snapped Blake. "Look here, Gussy! It's time you turned out some of your old rubbish and got rid of it! We're fed-up with your lumber in here!"

"Bai Jove! I wefuse to have my clobbah chawactewised as lumbah!" exclaimed the swell indignantly.

"Undah the circs, Blake—" "Will you turn out your rubbish?" howled all Gussy's study-mates at once.

"No feah! I wefuse—" "Then we'll do it!" said Blake. "We'll make a fire of the neckties and waistcoats and things!"

"You howwid wottahs!" shrieked Gussy, as his chums commenced to turn out his miscellaneous collection of cast-off articles. "Leave those alone! I wefuse to have them burned! I forbid you to make a fiah of them! Bai Jove! I shall give you all a feahful thwashin' all— Yawooooogh!"

A dig in the waistcoat from the poker

sent Gussy staggering back. Jack Blake & Co. were in deadly earnest. They dumped a heap of Gussy's things in the grate, and soon a big fire was roaring merrily.

"Gwoooogh! You wottahs—" "Sizzzz-zzzzz-zzzzz!"

The fire developed into a blaze, and Blake & Co. fed the hungry flames liberally with their aristocratic chum's belongings.

Gussy raved and roared, but of no avail.

"There!" said Blake at last. "That's turned out some of the muck, anyhow. The things are well alight, so we'll leave you to it, Gussy!"

"Oh cwumbs! You howwid wuffians, I—" "Slam!"

The door closed. Gussy surveyed the roaring fire in dismay.

He grabbed the kettle, and emptied the water that was in it over the fire. Great masses of smoke arose, and Gussy fell back, choking.

"Gwoooogh! Yah! What an awful stench. Oh, bai Jove!"

Smoke came up from those smouldering clothes in dense clouds, completely filling the study.

The swell, coughing and spluttering, opened the window, and the smoke belched forth into the open air.

Several fellows in the quad below saw the smoke issue from Study No. 6, and alarmed shouts arose. Gussy did not hear them. He grabbed a cricket-stump and commenced to whack at the smouldering clothes, in a desperate effort to put out the fire.

"Gwoooogh! Ooooooch! Yah! Oh deah!"

Crash! The door came open, and Clifton Dane and Kerruish appeared, laden with fire-buckets.

"It's all right, Gussy!" roared Dane. "We've got the fire-buckets!"

"Swooooooosh!" "Yawooooooogh!"

Gussy, darting to the door to stay his schoolfellows' hands, caught the full force of the water as Dane and Kerruish emptied the pails into the study. A

surging flood swamped his beautifully creased trousers, and Gussy's yells awoke the echoes.

"Yah-hooogh! Oh cwumbs! My bags are wuined! You feahful chumps! The studay isn't alight! Theah's no dangah! Gwoooogh! I do feel howwid!"

"Any more water wanted?" yelled Levison, dashing up with another well-filled fire-bucket.

"Gwoooogh! Keep off! I'm onlay twyin' to put out the fiah in the gwate and—" "Right-ho, Gussy!"

Swoosh! Sizzzz-zzzzz-zzzzz!

Levison emptied the bucket over the fireplace. The water certainly put the fire out—but it made a terrific mess.

Gussy and the study were swamped!

"Oh, bai Jove! You feahful wuffians!" gasped the swell. "You—" "Well, there's gratitude for you!"

exclaimed Levison. "We've put the fire out, and Gussy calls us ruffians! Sit him down on the carpet!"

Bump! "Yawooooooogh!"

Gussy was dumped down heavily in the midst of the water, and he lay there yelling. The others departed.

Jack Blake & Co. arrived a little later. They almost fell down when they beheld the state of their study.

"Mum-my hat!" gurgled Blake.

"Look what Gussy's been doing! He's swamped the room, putting the fire out. Oh, the thundering ass! Bump him!"

"Look heah, Blake, I— Oooooogh! Yah! Leggo!"

Bump, bump, bump!

Poor Gussy went through the mill, and no mistake! He departed from Study No. 6 on his neck, while his exasperated chums remained behind to clear up the mess.

He was very sore during the rest of the day, and would not look at Blake & Co. In the end they apologised to him, and Gussy at last climbed down. But the whole Lower School roared for days afterwards over the false alarm in Study No. 6.

THE END.

TIPS FOR AMATEUR FIRE BRIGADES!

By Monty Lowther.

(The St. Jim's Tame Humorist).

IN starting a fire-brigade, make sure that your recruits will not shrink from duty—there's bound to be plenty of water knocking about.

The first thing to do after forming your brigade is to practise putting fires out. Get one of the brigade to pretend to be a fire, and start on him with the hose—you'll find it quite easy to put him out!

See about discovering a real fire as soon as possible. If you can't find a fire-

make one—for the good of the cause. One can be kindled with a can of petrol and a match.

If you can't afford a real fire-engine, a milk-cart, with the urn polished, will do. A window-cleaner's ladder on a truck makes an excellent fire-escape. Hoses can be purchased at any outfitter's. Some hose—particularly silk hose—is sometimes supplied complete with ladders!

Don't waste time in getting to a fire, or somebody may have put it out by the time you arrive. If the horse, mule, or ass attached to your fire-engine refuses to go, this can usually be overcome by the brigade all crowding to the front and singing "Yes, We Have No Bananas," in the key of "B sharp."

Make sure that you have a good fire-

bell with a healthy, ringing note. A bell of the hand variety is not to be recommended—people will think you are out selling muffins.

Having arrived at the fire, don't go too near it, or you may get burnt; and be careful with the water, or you may catch a cold.

If there are enough of you in the brigade you may succeed in blowing the fire out!

You are entitled to charge for attending fires, and a special rate should be quoted for quantities. Firemen are expected to pay their own doctors' bills.

If you have a fire-station, do not forget to insure it against fire!

THE GEM LIBRARY.—No. 853.



Racke stepped in and closed the door with an air of caution that did not escape Cardew.

"Well?" said Cardew, rather abruptly.

"I've got somethin' to say," said Racke.

He rubbed his nose as he spoke; his nose looked red and sulbous from its recent contact with the knuckles of Arthur Augustus D'Arcy.

"Go ahead!"

"You know I've got stakes on the Grammar School match."

"It seems to be a topic now," yawned Cardew. "Rather thick, even for you, backin' against your own school."

"I'm backin' the winnin' side," said Racke. "At least, I think so. Apart from that, I want the school to lose."

"New brand of patriotism, or what?" asked Cardew, looking at him very curiously.

Racke gritted his teeth.

"It's all come out about my bet," he said. "I've had a fight with D'Arcy—and Tom Merry has been talkin' to me before all the fellows—callin' me all the names he could think of."

"Hard words break no bones!"

"Well, it's not pleasant!" growled Racke. "There's talk about sendin' me to Coventry, an' Crooke, too. I seem to be looked on as a sort of pariah, because I've backed the Grammar School to beat St. Jim's. Every fellow thinks he's got a right to sling insults at me. I've just had it from Levison and Clive, too!"

Cardew smiled.

"Have you come to me for sweet sympathy?" he asked.

"I've come to talk business. You've got to play in the match or take a prefects' beating. Tom Merry's kicked you out, I know; but Kildare will know it was your fault, and you'll get hauled up if you don't play."

"Looks like it," assented Cardew. "Rough on poor little me. Between Tom Merry refusin' to play me, and Kildare whoppin' me for not playin', I seem to be between the devil and the deep sea."

"Well, you asked for it," said Racke. "But I've got an idea. Play in the match—"

"No thanks!"

"Merry will be glad enough to put you in if you ask him."

"Catch me askin' him!" said Cardew disdainfully.

"It will save you from a prefects' beatin'."

Cardew snapped his fingers.

"That for a prefects' beatin'," he said.

"That's all very well, but I've had some, and I know what it's like. But you don't catch on," said Racke eagerly. "I stand to win ten pounds if St. Jim's are beaten. I'm willin' to go halves with you."

"Halves!" said Cardew blankly.

"Yes—and you save yourself a prefects' beatin' by playin', and you score off all the fellows who have been girdin' at you about it, and help me to score."

"But I don't quite catch on," said Cardew slowly. "The team's strong enough in battin', but weak in bowlin'. I'm the jolly old champion bowler at present. If I play, it's quite on the cards that we shall beat the Grammar School."

"Only when the game comes off you'll lose your skill, and bowl duds, you see."

"Eh?"

"You'll chuck away a wicket in each innings, and you'll bowl like Trimble or Grundy, and what becomes of St. Jim's then?"

Cardew sat very still.

For one second a blaze leaped into his eyes—which would have startled Racke had he seen it. But Cardew's head was bent as in thought, and the blackguard of the Shell noted nothing.

Cardew's face was calm and smiling when he looked up.

"What a wheeze!" he said.

"A catch, what!" chuckled Racke. "St. Jim's will be hopelessly licked. You'll be keepin' out a good man by playin', and you'll play your level worst. You'll pay the cads out all round, and you'll help me to do the same, and you'll find half of what I win from Lumley-Lumley. It's good bizney, what?"

"Tophole!" said Cardew. He rose from his chair. "I'll

go along and see Tom Merry at once. Nothin' like strikin' the iron while it's hot."

"He's in the Common-room now—"

"Come on, then!"

Cardew and Racke went downstairs together. They separated before they entered the junior Common-room, however. Cardew strolled in, and Racke followed him after a few minutes.

Tom Merry was there, with most of the School House juniors. His face grew grim as Cardew came up to him. Levison made a forward move, in anticipation of trouble.

"All serene, Ernest, old dear!" said Cardew lightly. "I'm not huntin' trouble this time, dear man! Tom Merry, may I beg the favour of a word with you about the cricket?"

"You needn't talk cricket to me!" said Tom curtly.

"But I'm yearnin' to converse on a subject that's so near my heart!" urged Cardew. "Haven't you any word of welcome for a repentant sinner!"

"Oh, don't talk rot!"

"Habit of mine, old bean—too old to change now. You kicked me out of the cricket eleven," said Cardew. "Kildare's promised me a prefects' beatin' if I don't play—"

"I'll explain to him, if that's worrying you!" snapped Tom.

"But I want to play."

"If you're serious, it's too late. I'm fed-up with you."

"I'm not surprised at that," said Cardew. "If you're as fed-up with me as I am with you, old bean, I must be borin' you fearfully. Nevertheless, it was said of old that a repentant sinner should be welcomed back into the fold. I'm a wonderful bowler—I've noticed that several times—"

"You ass!" said Tom, smiling in spite of himself.

"I've been complimented on it by Kildare himself," said Cardew gravely. "At this crisis in the cricket history of St. Jim's I feel that I ought to offer my services. I'll engage to turn up on Wednesday, and perform as many hat-tricks as I can conveniently crowd into a single day. I can't say fairer than that."

Tom Merry eyed him doubtfully.

"This is a rather sudden change," he said.

"My changes generally are sudden," assented Cardew. "What's the odds, so long as you're 'appy? I'm frightfully keen on playin' in the Grammar School match—"

"How long have you been keen on it?" asked Blake sarcastically.

"Ten minutes, at least!"

"You silly ass!"

"Thanks! Thomas, old buck, relent and put me out of my misery!" pleaded Cardew. "I'll play the game of my life, honest Injun!"

"Bui Jove! It may save the game, Tom Mewwy!" said Arthur Augustus D'Arcy. "With Cardew bowlin', we've weally got a good chance of knockin' out the Gwammawians, you know."

Tom Merry drew a deep breath.

"I'll take you at your word, Cardew!" he said. "I can't see what you've been fooling all this time for; but if you're serious, it's a go. You play to-morrow!"

"Many thanks, old bean!"

Cardew strolled away. As he passed Racke, that youth winked at him, and Cardew winked back. Racke was in high feather now. Cardew left the Common-room, and Levison of the Fourth followed him out.

"I'm glad of this, old man," said Levison quietly. "But what's the sudden change for?"

"I've had a talk with Racke."

"Racke! What the thump has Racke to do with it?"

"Lots! He stands to win ten pounds if St. Jim's are beaten, and he's offered me half to give the match away. So I'm playin' after all."

Levison started back.

"Cardew! You—you can't—you wouldn't—you couldn't be such a—such a villain! Don't talk such rot to me!"

"Exactly!" smiled Cardew. "I couldn't! Racke doesn't know I couldn't, because he could himself, quite easily."

"Oh! You're pulling Racke's leg?"

"Well, as he practically begged and prayed to have it pulled, why not?"

"The scoundrel!" said Levison between his teeth.

Cardew laughed.

"Don't slang old Aubrey. He's supplied me with a motive for playin' in the match, and everybody seems to want me to. Even Racke's got his uses. And I get out of a prefects' beatin'."

"You don't care twopence about a prefects' beating."

"Anyhow, I'm playin'. I shall have to let my horse lose unseen at the races to-morrow. Go and thank Racke for buckin' me up at cricket."

Levison laughed.

CHAPTER 9.
Just Like Cardew.

TOM MERRY & CO. started in good spirits the following morning for the Grammar School. It was a whole-day match, and members of the eleven were free from classes. Digby went with the team, but not to play; but on the whole, Dig was pleased. He wanted St. Jim's to win more than he wanted to play, and he was aware that Cardew, at his best, was worth a dozen of him, at least as a bowler. Cardew seemed in great spirits as he mounted into the brake.

Tom was feeling more confident than he had felt for some time past. His team was not what he would have liked to see it, but there was no doubt that the addition of Ralph Reckness Cardew strengthened it enormously, just where it needed strengthening. If Cardew played up as he had played on Big Side a short time ago the Grammarians would be given plenty to think about, that was certain.

Among the crowd of fellows who saw the cricketers off before going into class was Aubrey Racke of the Shell. He grinned at Cardew, who smiled back, and bestowed a wink on him.

The brake rolled away, and Racke went to his Form-room feeling quite bucked. Prospects looked rosy to Racke; he was going to win his bet, and he was going to punish Tom Merry & Co. for all they had said and done on the subject of that bet. At all events, he fancied so. It did not occur to him for a moment that his base proposition to Cardew had had precisely the opposite effect from that intended. With all his faults, serious enough many of them, Cardew's ways were not Racke's ways.

That afternoon was a half-holiday at St. Jim's, and after dinner a crowd of the fellows wheeled out their bikes to ride over to the Grammar School and see how the cricketers were getting on.

Racke and Crooke did not trouble to undertake the ride. Racke, at least, was feeling quite certain of how the cricketers were getting on. He had no doubt whatever that they were getting thoroughly beaten. Lumley-Lumley's tenner was, in his opinion, as good as in his pocket.

The dusk was falling on a golden summer day when there was a buzz of the returning cricketers. The brake rolled in, with a swarm of cyclists round it, and many walkers following it.

Racke and Crooke were smoking cigarettes and playing nap in their study when they heard the uproar from the quad.

"Hallo, they're back!" yawned Crooke.

Racke laughed.

"I'll go down and ask how many runs they were licked by," he said.

"They don't sound like a licked team. Somebody's cheerin'."

"Rot! They're licked all right!"

Aubrey Racke hurried downstairs. He was in time to see the crowd of ruddy, cheerful cricketers pouring into the House. Kildare of the Sixth had stopped to ask Tom Merry the result, and Racke noticed, with amazement, that Tom's face was very bright.

"Fifteen runs!" Tom was saying.

"Oh, good!" said Kildare, and he passed on.

Racke, with a sudden change in his face, shoved through the crowd towards Tom Merry.

"They beat you by fifteen runs?" he asked.

Tom stared at him.

"Hardly! We beat them by fifteen runs," he answered.

"You beat them!" said Racke dazedly.

"Yaas, wathah!" chuckled Arthur Augustus D'Arcy.

"You lose your wotten bet, Wacke, you wottah!"

"And the money goes to the Cottage Hospital," said Lumley-Lumley. "I'll go and get it off St. Leger now, and you fellows can see me drop it into the collecting-box, if you like."

Racke almost staggered.

"But—but you can't have beaten them!" he panted. "It's impossible! Cardew played—"

"Yaas, wathah! Played up like a Twojan!"

"Wha-a-t?"

"We owe it to Cardew, and that's a fact," said Tom Merry cheerily. "I'm sorry I lost my temper with him the other day, though really he did worry a chap for nothing. I might have known he was true blue, and would play up like a good sport when the time came. And my hat, he did play up!"

"Cardew did?" said Racke hoarsely.

"Toppin'!" chortled Arthur Augustus. "The hat twick twice, deah man. What do you think of that? Gay was sent out with a duck's egg in his first innin's, and with a single in his second—Cardew bowlin'. Wathah good, what?"

"Good old Cardew!" said Blake.

"You seem pleased, Racke," said Lumley-Lumley sarcastically. "You seem to be rejoicin', old bean."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Where's Cardew?" said Racke huskily.

"Gone up to his study, I think."

Aubrey Racke panted up the staircase. He was so enraged that he was scarcely master of himself. He burst into Study No. 9 in the Fourth with a white and furious face. Levison & Co. were there in cheery mood.

"Hallo, Aubrey, old bean!" Cardew nodded and smiled.

"Come to offer me your jolly old congratters? Thanks!"

"You villain!"

"Eh?"

"You—you—you—" panted Racke.

"Dear old Aubrey!" smiled Cardew. "I sha'n't be able to go halves in your jolly old winnin's now—there won't be any winnin's. But you put the price too low, old bean. I suppose I've got my price, like everybody else, but really I wouldn't sell out a cricket match for a fiver. Not quite."

Racke sprang at him. In his rage he forgot all prudence, and he came at Cardew like a tiger, hitting out furiously. The next few minutes were full of incident in Study No. 9. When they had elapsed, Aubrey Racke was lying in the passage outside the study, more thoroughly knocked out than he had ever been in his life before. Ralph Reckness Cardew smiled and closed the door on him.

THE END.

(There will be another grand long story of Tom Merry & Co., next week featuring everybody's favourite in the inventor of St. Jim's. Note the title, chums:—"GLYN'S COLOUR RAY!" By Martin Clifford. You will vote it great.)

A rattling fine cricket story that no one should miss—

"THE PRIDE OF THE COUNTY!"

BY ARTHUR S. HARDY.

in our great companion paper

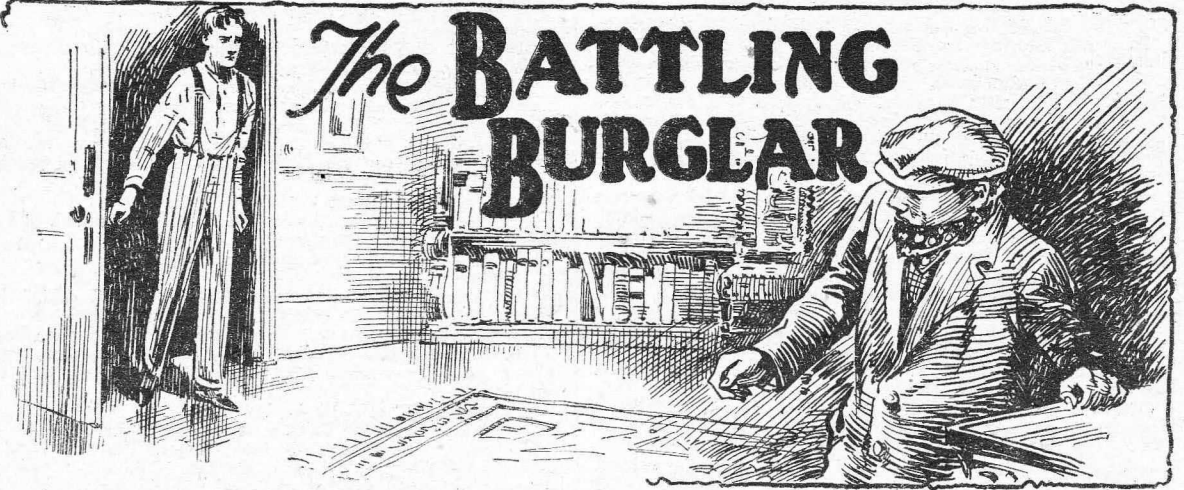
"THE BOYS' FRIEND."

OUT ON MONDAY NEXT.

Get a Copy and Enjoy a Treat!



With the aid of "Rough" Hart, Dick Dennison—amateur boxer and athlete—makes a capture!



A Super-Boxing Story. By EDGAR SAYERS.

CHAPTER 1.

A Midnight Visitor!

A THIN pencil of moonlight, striking through the leaded windows of the big library, partially lit the room, showing the books that lined two of the walls, and a dark, indistinct figure which bent before a low cabinet.

Through the midnight stillness sounded the creaking of wood as the man worked tensely. It was a faint sound, stealthy and cautious, like the movement of his feet as he put his weight into the nefarious work.

The door of the library of that old Sussex house was slightly ajar, and through the opening two eyes gleamed in the light reflected from that single moonbeam. The groping fingers of a hand brushed gently against the oak panelling of the wall, then closed firmly about the head of an electric light switch. An instant later and the switch snapped down, filling the room with soft light from the electrics overhead.

At the same moment Richard Dennison flung the door wide open, and as he did so the burglar at the cabinet twisted on his heels to face him.

For a long second they stood staring at one another.

Dick Dennison was a slimly-built, wiry young fellow, with clear-cut features and dark eyes that were gleaming and steady. He was dressed in shirt and trousers, and his hair was tousled from contact with a pillow. He was the only son of the owner of that old mansion—athletic, keen, and eager to get to grips with the first burglar he had ever seen.

The man at the cabinet was as tall as Dennison, but broader of shoulder. He wore an old big-peaked cap pulled down over his forehead, and the lower part of his face was covered by a yellow-and-red bandanna, which was tied at the back of his head. His eyes were glinting out of the shadow as he faced the young fellow who had interrupted his midnight enterprise.

"Ah! I thought maybe you'd come back some time or other! Lucky I kept awake!"

Dick Dennison was smiling a little as he spoke. It was a smile that stretched his lips across his gritted teeth, and the tense, vibrant note in his voice should

THE GEM LIBRARY.—No. 355.

have warned the burglar that it was time to bolt.

But he didn't bolt. He stood his ground—remained where he was even when Dick leaped towards him.

Dennison was a couple of yards from his man when the burglar moved. And then the fellow leaped, bare-handed, to meet him. Dick slammed a fierce right at the intruder's head. The man ducked coolly, swayed outwards from the waist. Then his left fist came swinging in with beautiful precision.

It landed squarely at the side of Dick's jaw, tipping him to his heels and sending him staggering backwards. For the fraction of a second the young fellow's head reeled. Then he steadied and recovered himself, standing crouched and with his fists half dropped.

It was as he stood there that he realised that the burglar wasn't rushing him, and there was no sign of his having any weapon. He was standing lightly poised on his toes, his hands up and his eyes gleaming from above the bandanna as he watched Dennison.

Dennison was surprised. From all he had read and heard, that burglar should have either bolted or else attacked him with the first thing available. Instead he was waiting for Dennison to come on, waiting as coolly as though they were indulging in a practice bout in Dick's gymnasium at the back of the house.

The young fellow regarded himself as something of an amateur boxer, and he realised that this midnight prowler must know something about the game. The burglar didn't appear in the least afraid, and he seemed quite ready to accept the fight that Dennison had forced on him. In addition, it looked as though he meant to battle fairly.

These thoughts flashed through Dennison's mind. Then he leaped to the attack once again. He slammed a chair out of the way with the flat of his slipped foot as he moved, and he saw the burglar push aside a round table in the centre of the floor. A moment afterwards and they were at it.

Dick ripped in a short-arm right to the body, and followed with a left hook that caught his opponent beneath the jaw. Sending home those blows left the young fellow wide open, and the burglar was quick to take advantage of it.

He got inside Dick's guard and

slammed home short, paralyzing blows to the body, every punch getting in with snap and force behind it.

Dennison covered desperately, and went backwards. The other checked, dropped his hands a little, and as Dick flashed a desperate right at his head, he ducked and countered with a swinging drive that grazed Dick's cheek.

Dick skinned his knuckles on the teeth behind that yellow-and-red bandanna, and as he followed with another left hook he felt the other's left drive in to his right eye. It was a blow that all but blinded the young fellow. Vivid flashes of light stabbed before the damaged optic, and while they still slashed hazily across his vision another fierce drive sent him staggering backwards.

The burglar followed up this time, sending in quick punches which seemed to have a vengeful force behind them. Dennison tried to cover. He had long since realised that the burglar was a better boxer than he was himself, and full appreciation of this came when the man drew off for the veriest fraction of time.

Dennison glimpsed him, crouched and tense. Then the man leaped at him, his right fist slammed savagely in, picking the young fellow clean off his feet and stretching him full length to the carpet.

Dennison fell on one side, facing the door. The room seemed to whirl about him; but his head was clear enough to enable him to see two figures which had appeared in the doorway.

Through the haziness that sat his brain, he recognised them as the chauffeur and his father's valet. As they came jumping into the room, intent upon taking the masked man from behind, Dennison managed to clear his head and prop himself up on one elbow. "Keep out of this, Phelps!" he gasped. "Stand back!"

The burglar had whirled round at the words, and the two men hesitated to attack him as they heard Dick's command. They were both in pyjamas and slippers, and seemed to be doubtful about exactly what was happening.

It was as they hesitated that Dick managed to scramble to his feet. He stood, swaying on his feet, obviously unfit to resume the fight, but urged by a sporting spirit and a pride that made him hate to be beaten by a burglar; especially a burglar whom he

had expected to subdue and to capture. The man in the mask looked at him, saw that he stood unsteadily, and dropped his hands.

"Come on, you blighter! I'm not done yet!" exclaimed Dennison. Then he added to the others: "You stand back an' keep out of this!"

He made a jump for his opponent, slamming madly with both hands. The man gave a yard or so before his onslaught. He seemed to hesitate. Then he crouched and tensed. An instant later and a smashing right crashed through Dennison's guard, connected with his chin, and for the second time stretched him to the floor.

Dick gasped as he fell, rolled over on to his face, and lay still.

For a moment Phelps and the chauffeur regarded him with wide-open eyes. Then they made a combined rush for the man. He jumped to one side as they came, his left fist slogged out to the side of Phelps' narrow jaw, and the man dropped limply.

The chauffeur, a thickset, strong fellow, swung round and jumped for the burglar, slinging out a wildly aimed, forceful right as he moved. The burglar ducked it; but as he straightened up he brought his right home, with all the weight of his body behind it, clean on the mark.

The chauffeur doubled with a long-drawn gasp. His knees gave beneath him and he crumpled up, almost knocking down Phelps, who was struggling to his feet.

The valet regarded the burglar wildly, then, diving for one wall, he whipped a long-barrelled Afghan gun from its bracket. Raising the butt high above his head, he rushed forward.

The burglar jumped for the window as he saw the armed man coming at him. It was opened wide, and as he reached it he snatched up a fat cushion from the settee under the panes. He hurled it with all his force at Phelps' knees, tripping him and bringing him headlong to the floor.

Then, with something like a laugh sounding from behind the bandanna, the battling burglar leaped clean through the open window, and, landing gently on the grass of the lawn beneath, vanished into the darkness of the night.

CHAPTER 2.

"Rough" Hart Takes It On!

THE bright spring sunshine streamed through the opened casement windows of Dick Dennison's bed-room. He was brushing his hair before the mirror, and Phelps was lifting a lounge-jacket from off its hanger in the big wardrobe.

"How's the jaw, Phelps?"

"Very sore, sir," answered the valet, lifting a hand tenderly to the spot with which the burglar's fist had connected a scant eight hours before. "Is there anything more that I can do for your eye, sir?"

"No-o, I don't think so," answered Dick slowly. He set down the hair-brushes and leaned forward towards the mirror. His right eye gazed out from a surrounding of blue and black bruises, the flesh below was puffy, and the top part of his nose seemed considerably swollen. "This is the finest black eye I've ever had, Phelps," Dick went on. "Quite a special one."

It was a very fine specimen. Mixed up with the black and blue there was a hint of yellow; for breadth and depth of colouring it would have been hard to

beat. Dick Dennison had managed to gather a few black eyes in his time, mainly because he was fond of boxing.

"A beefsteak is, I understand, an excellent thing, sir," the valet answered. "The boy could run down to the village and—"

"I don't think we'll bother, thanks," answered Dick. "I'm going to see someone this morning who's an absolute expert on black eyes. He's handed out a few in his time, anyway."

"Going out, sir, with your eye like that!" exclaimed Phelps. "Is it—"

"I'll keep my hat-brim well down—don't you worry," answered Dick. "Buck up with that coat; and you might have one of the spare rooms got ready for to-night. I'm going to bring someone back with me who'll just about settle that jolly old burglar's hash!"

"But you don't expect him to come again, sir!"

"Oh, yes, I do!" answered Dick cheerfully. "This is the second time the perisher has paid us a visit. He's never got away with anything yet, and I can't think what the deuce he's after. He was trying to open the cabinet with my pots in. I suppose he thought they were worth a bit. I've an idea that he wants something. He's made two attempts at getting it, and he might regard the third time as lucky. Well, it won't be—I can promise him that!"

He got into the coat that Phelps held ready for him, and within ten minutes after that he was out of the house and heading for the station at a brisk walk. He wore a broad-brimmed, soft hat, and he saw to it that the wide brim shaded his damaged eye. His jaw felt a little sore where the man had got home on it, and there were sundry bruises about his ribs—otherwise, Dick Dennison was feeling in a fairly cheerful mood.

The battling burglar had provided an adventurous interlude to what was, generally speaking, a quiet life. Dick rather admired the man, despite himself. The unknown had certainly shaped like a real sportsman, and he was obviously a good boxer.

The police had not been informed of the incident. Dick's father had wanted to telephone them, but the young fellow had dissuaded him. He pointed out that the man seemed to have left no clues as to his identity, and he had obviously not gained whatever it was for which he had come—therefore he was likely to pay the old house another visit. When that occurred they would be ready for him and would catch him red-handed.

It was half an hour's run by train to London, and Dick managed to screen his bruised countenance with the assistance of a morning paper. Arriving at the terminus, he hailed a taxi, and within a very few minutes he was standing outside a big house near Half Moon Street, Piccadilly.

The upper part of the building had been converted into flats, and a small brass plate on one side of the door announced that the occupant of the ground floor was:

JERRY ("ROUGH") HART.
Physical Culture Expert.

Dick ran lightly up the steps and passed into the wide hall. He twisted the handle of a door on the right, and, pushing the door wide, entered the apartment beyond.

It was a long, wide, high room, with whitewashed walls and the fittings of a gymnasium—and a very well equipped one at that. The apartment was lit by the sunbeams which streamed through

the window, falling almost into the centre of the big roped ring with its padded posts and resined-canvas floor in the middle of the room.

The place was empty save for a man who was shadow-boxing inside the ring—Jerry Hart.

He was familiarly known as "Rough" Hart, and he had gained the cognomen by reason of his strong tactics within the roped square.

He was a big man, standing well over six feet in height, and with wide shoulders that were padded with muscle. His thick biceps bunched and strung out again as he slammed powerful blows at his imaginary opponent, and the only sound in the room was the quick shuffle of his swift-moving feet as he slipped about the big ring.

His features were rugged, and his grey eyes seemed to glitter from out beneath their bushy, overhanging brows. His face bore plentiful evidence of a long Ring career, and both his ears were thickened and distorted. His jaw was big and square and had the strength of a rock, but the lips above it were shapely, and seemed to have missed the hammering that the rest of his face had received.

His features were grim-set because of the work in hand; but in the ordinary way there was an unusual kindness about them, and the homeliness of his face was off-set by character and strength which showed through it.

Some folk, maybe, wouldn't have called his face "homely"; they'd have said that he was downright ugly. Perhaps Rough Hart was, but only to those who could not see beneath the surface.

He was still a young man, yet he was too old for further practice of a Ring career that had carried him within an ace of the British Heavy-weight Championship. When he had retired he had opened this gymnasium, and there he trained young fellows who had a mind for boxing.

His clientele lay mainly amidst gentlemen whose acquaintance he had made during his Ring career. He helped them to keep fit, and to younger men he taught the rudiments of the art that he loved.

Dick Dennison was one of his most constant visitors, and their acquaintance had ripened into something closely approaching friendship. Rough Hart was, before anything else, a gentleman.

From the other side of the room a gong boomed loudly, as though struck by some unseen timekeeper. It was, as a matter of fact, actuated by an alarm-clock—a little device of Hart's own, for use when he was boxing with a visitor and there was no one to keep time.

Rough Hart's hands dropped to his sides, and he straightened up, breathing a little quickly. It was then that he saw Dick coming through the open door, and, as Dennison closed the door behind him, Hart lightly vaulted over the ropes and landed before him with extended hand.

"Hallo, Dennison! I didn't expect you here to-day, or I'd— Phew!"

Hart's lips pursed to a whistle as Dick pulled off his hat and disclosed his damaged eye.

"Beauty, isn't it?" he asked, with a grin.

Rough Hart bent forward and peered closely at the bruises.

"Looks as though you'd been hit by a sledgehammer!" he exclaimed; and when he spoke his tone was strangely even and strong. "You stopped another one on the jaw, I see! Hope you showed



As the burglar reached the open window he snatched up a cushion from the settee and hurled it with all his force at Phelps' knees, tripping him and bringing him headlong to the floor.

the other fellow some of the things I've taught you."

"I doubt if I even marked him," answered Dennison, and he smiled wryly as surprise showed in Hart's eyes.

"What was the matter?" Hart grunted. "Got your hands tied? D'you know, Dennison, I've always regarded you as one of my best pupils. If you took the game really seriously I'd put you at the top of the light-weight tree inside a couple of years. If somebody did that to you—and you never marked him—then he's a wonder with his mitts!"

"He is that!" answered Dennison, and then he told Rough Hart of the midnight fight with the battling burglar.

"He knocked me out with a beautiful right swing, then he put our chauffeur to the floor, and knocked poor old Phelps off his feet. Honestly, Hart, I did my best, but he had me beaten by a mile. And the queer thing was that he fought fairly! Never a foul hit of any kind, and he played the game like a sportsman."

"Had he got the cut of a boxer?" asked Hart.

"Well, I didn't see anything of him," replied Dennison. "His face was completely covered. But I hope I'll get a look at his features—with your help."

For a long moment Rough Hart looked at him, and his grey eyes were shining as he did so.

"Burglar or no burglar, I'd like to make his acquaintance," he answered. "What do you want me to do?"

"Well, I told you that he has burgled our place before. I can't quite make out what he's after, but it looks to me as though he wants something special. He got into the house three nights ago, and knocked over a pedestal in the library.

THE GEM LIBRARY.—No. 853.

I ran down and got a glimpse of him. Since then I've sort of slept with one eye open, and that's how I heard him at work last night—my bed-room is directly above the library.

"If he's been twice, I thought he might come again. If he'd been an ordinary crook there was plenty of quite valuable stuff in the room that he could have bagged—worth a lot more than my old pots in the cabinet. But it's those trophies that he was after, because he was trying to force the door. What I propose is this: You come down to my place for a few days—a week, say. I'm supposed to be in training for the County Club's athletic meeting in a fortnight's time, and I'd like to have you down there to train me, instead of my coming up here every day or so, as I have been doing.

"You come down, and we'll keep an eye open for this burglar, and be ready for him if he turns up again. If he does, I want you to do this. Help me collar him, then we'll hike him out to my little gym; there he and I will have a regular set-to, and I'll see if I can't get my revenge for this black eye. I think I might with the gloves on. What do you say?"

Rough Hart was interested and amused. The idea of catching a burglar and making him take a hiding as a punishment appealed to him, especially as the man obviously possessed some boxing ability. At the same time, the chances of collaring him were rather doubtful; it seemed hardly likely that the man would return again to the scene of his crime—unless he had some very urgent reason for doing so. Dennison was convinced that the man would, but he had no proof.

"It puzzled me to think what the blighter is after," said Dennison. "I mean, even if he melted down the few cups and medals that I have got in the cabinet it would scarcely bring him more than thirty or forty pounds, while there's stuff in that library which he could get away with much more easily, and sell for double the amount!"

It rather mystified Hart, too. It was obvious that the masked man was no ordinary housebreaker. For all that, Hart would not have accepted Dennison's invitation had it not been that the young fellow was boxing for his county in a fortnight's time.

Hart knew that if he appeared as Dennison's trainer, and the young fellow won the championship upon which he had set his heart, it would be quite a nice advertisement for the gymnasium in Half Moon Street. Expenses were high, and Rough Hart had to live; he wasn't training people to keep fit just for the fun of the thing.

This consideration inclined him to go down to Surrey with Dennison. They chatted the matter over for a while longer, and the more they discussed it the more Hart was intrigued by the mystery which lay behind the visits of the battling burglar.

In addition, however, there was the chance that this mysterious burglar might really prove to be something out of the ordinary as a boxer. Like most men retired from the ring, Rough Hart lived ever in the hope of finding a champion in the rough. He knew that a man had to be mighty good to beat Dick Dennison. It didn't matter whether this prowler of the night was a burglar or not—if he had the stuff in him, then it was his duty to keep straight and carve

for himself a Ring career, and Rough Hart was just the sort of man to make him do it, if the fellow was likely to prove worthy of the trouble.

So the outcome of it was that Hart rang up a Ring acquaintance, who agreed to run the gym in his absence, and "work out" members of Hart's clientele who should call. Then he packed a bag and caught an afternoon train for Dennison's home.

CHAPTER 3.

Caught!

THE first cold streaks of the coming day lit the eastern sky and faintly illuminated the leaded panes of the library window, and they showed a dark figure silhouetted against the glass. For long the figure remained there, peering tensely into the room; then came the sharp snick of the window-catch, another long silence, then the faint scraping of the window as it was pulled wide.

And when that catch opened under pressure of a knifeblade that the intruder wielded, a thin copper wire was broken, and in the room above a bell whirred softly and insistently beneath Dick Dennison's pillow.

He had wired a rough burglar-alarm to all the windows of the ground floor of the house. It had taken himself and Rough Hart all the evening to do it, and they had started immediately upon their arrival from London.

Dick hadn't expected to be aroused so soon, but he had not the slightest doubt that it was the masked burglar who was trying to re-enter the library.

He flung off the bed-covers, jumped into a pair of trousers, slipped on a pair of rubber-soled tennis-shoes, then crept stealthily out of his room, and made for where Hart was sleeping across the corridor.

Within two minutes the pair were creeping noiselessly down the stairs, reaching the hall, and crossing, with soundless steps to where the library door showed slightly ajar. Both listened with bent heads at the opening, and as they did so they heard soft footsteps crossing the floor of the room; then came the sound of someone working again at the door of the cabinet.

Dennison got his fingers to the electric light switch, and he pressed it down as he flung the door open. He made one headlong rush into the room, racing in giant strides across the carpet, and he was barring possible exit through the window before the man at the cabinet realised that he had been discovered.

The man stood tensely in the position in which they had caught him—bent by the cabinet and facing the door. It seemed as though he had not noticed Dennison pass him and cut him off from the window; he was looking at Rough Hart's big figure, almost filling the doorway.

The burglar was dressed and masked as he had been on the night before. From his attitude it seemed as though there was something about Hart which fascinated him. The big man was bent a little at the waist, and his keen gaze seemed piercing enough to penetrate the bandanna which the burglar wore across his face.

Behind the two Dennison was standing alert; there was a triumphant smile on his lips. He stepped a little forward.

"Well, what have you got to say for yourself?" he asked.

The burglar turned his head slowly. He looked Dennison from head to feet, and his gaze seemed to rest a while upon

the discoloured eye which the young fellow wore—shiny now from the lead and opium lotion which Hart had recently applied.

"If Rough Hart don't interfere I'll fight you again an' get away!"

The words came in a low, vibrant voice from the masked man. Hart's eyes widened a little with surprise when he heard his name mentioned. He stepped into the room and closed the door behind him.

"You won't get away as easily as that, my lad," he said slowly, in his strong, even voice. "You can't burgle places in the—"

Like a flash the masked man swung round at him.

"I'm no more a thief than he is!" he exclaimed, and pointed to Dennison. "He's got somethin' o' mine what he ain't got any right to, an' I want it!" There was passion in his tones, and his whole body seemed to be shaking with anger.

"That's all rot!" exclaimed Dennison. "Anyway, we can hand you over to the police if we like; but I'm going to give you a chance. If you can repeat last night's little performance, I'll let you go, and—"

"Only too bloomin' ready!" the masked man exclaimed, swinging round at him. "An' without takin' my coat off!"

"Good egg! But we won't scrap here, else we'll rouse the house. I've got a little gym at the back where we can settle things." He stepped forward, then checked and added: "In case you have any—er—doubts, I'll give you my word of honour that we will take no steps at all about your little house-breaking enterprise until we've settled things!"

"That's good enough for me," the masked man answered. "An' I won't try to bunk."

"Good! Then perhaps you'll step this way? Lead on will you, Hart?"

With the big heavy-weight in the lead, and Dennison bringing up the rear, the trio made their way through the dark passages to a door at the rear of the house. Hart pushed it open, and a few moments afterwards they were standing in what Dennison called his "little

gym." It was about twice as big as Hart's apartment in Half Moon Street, and had everything in it from eight-ounce dumbbells to a patent rowing machine; there were four varieties of punchballs, and the ring in the centre of the floor was as complete an affair as any that had ever been built for a championship bout.

Dennison closed the door, and for a minute or two he and Hart were busy arranging water and towels.

"I could get the chauffeur and Phelps down," said Dennison. "But I think we can manage without them. You referee, Hart, and we'll be our own seconds. Are you agreeable?" he asked the burglar.

"Anything'll suit me," the other growled.

"Right-ho! Er—don't you think you might as well take off that coloured handkerchief thing? You can hardly box with that on, you know!"

Both Hart and Dennison watched as the stranger whipped the bandanna from off his face. He disclosed bronzed features which were rugged and strong; there was in the face something that instantly appealed both to Dennison and his companion.

He was young—younger even than Dennison—and there was nothing the least criminal in his face. He glanced from one to another of them, but he did not smile. His lips were set in a tight line, and his jaw was squared.

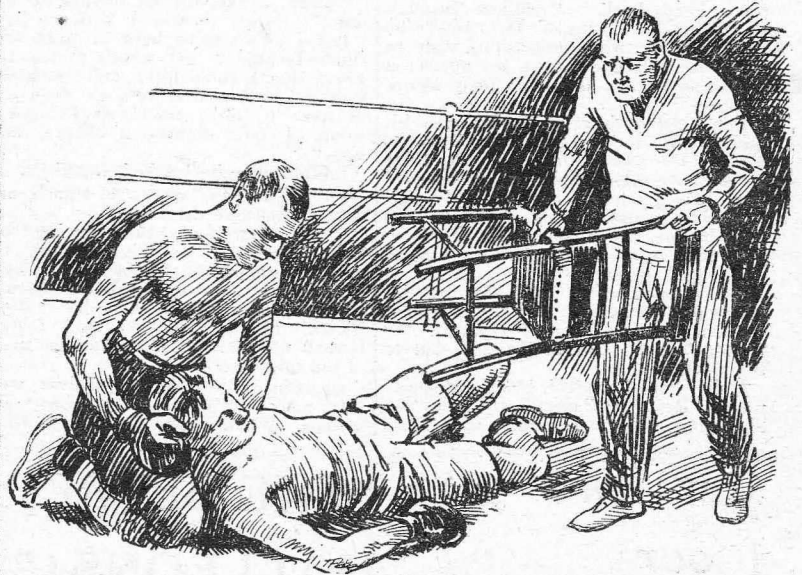
"Can you lend me a pair o' knickers?" he asked.

Dennison obliged. In three minutes they were stripped and in boxing kit, and Dennison lent the young fellow a dressing-gown to protect him from the chill air. Hart fastened on their gloves, and as he tied the tapes of the burglar's, he found the lad's grey eyes looking up into his own.

The unknown spoke no word, however, and Hart stepped away.

"Three minute rounds," he said. "I'll use that alarm gong I made for you, Dennison, then I can referee inside the ropes."

Close beside the ring was a similar timing device to that which Hart himself used in Half Moon Street. He set



"Rough" Hart jumped forward to assist the beaten boxer, but the battling burglar was at Dennison's shoulders before the big fellow could reach him.

it, then waited in one corner of the ring for the gong to sound the signal.

The burglar had stripped bigger and bulkier than Dennison, and it was clear that he was in the pink of condition. Dennison looked like a man who had been through half a fight; and his ribs still showed the bruises that his opponent had inflicted the night before.

Very suddenly the gong strummed on the still air. On the instant the unknown jumped from his seat. Dennison moved just as swiftly, and in a moment they were mixing it in the centre of the ring.

The burglar played for the body, and Dennison sent in two smashing full-armed blows to the side of the other's head which, however, seemed to have no effect; then they were fighting all round the ropes, and Hart saw that they were fighting fairly.

In the first twenty seconds of the bout Hart found the difference between the two. Dennison was a boxer—a gentleman amateur, and he would never be anything else. The unknown was a fighter from the word go, with devil in his punches, and a ferocity which marks the true battler.

He went into Dennison as though he had a grudge against him—apparently he had—and within half a minute he had the young fellow milling desperately as he gave ground all round the ring.

Hart watched them more closely than he had ever watched another fight, and he saw that the burglar never once attempted to get home on Dennison's damaged eye. That, he realised, was really sporting; nine men out of ten would have thought it fair to take advantage of Dennison's disability. But the unknown didn't.

In any case, he had no need. He was far and away a better man than the young aristocrat. At the end of that first half-minute he was hitting his opponent how and where he liked.

Dennison realised it, but he never lost heart. He fought with all that was in him, striving all he knew to avert inevitable defeat.

It came ere sixty more seconds were past.

A half-hook to the jaw jolted Dennison's head back. A follow through tipped him to his heels. Desperately he tried to cover, when a smashing right to the lower ribs drew down his guard; a left came ripping in to the body again, then—

The battling burglar tensed, and his body seemed to bend backwards from the waist. He swung forward, his right glove slamming straight for the exposed jaw. As it got home, his arm, body, and right leg seemed to be almost in one straight line, which meant that the drive went in with all his weight and strength at the back of it.

He stepped away and dropped his hands while Dennison was still slumping to the canvas. From his knees, the young fellow rolled to his side—out to the world!

Hart jumped forward, but the stranger was at Dennison's shoulders before the big fellow could reach him. They lifted

him to a chair which Hart whipped through the ropes, then got busy with water, and cold sponges at the top of his spine.

Dennison came round just as the gong was strumming the end of the first three minutes. For a moment or so his gaze was dazed and blank, then he recovered. With a glove on Hart's shoulder, he rose groggily to his feet, and extended his hand to the burglar, who stood before him.

"You're a—"

"Gosh! I'm mighty sorry, mister! I was wild, else I wouldn't have—"

"I wanted a hiding, anyway!" Dennison broke in. "I was getting a sight too uppish about my boxing ability! You've taken me down a peg or two!"

The burglar took his hand then, and he smiled a little. Dennison went on:

"Well, you're free to go now; but I'd like to know why you hinted that I was a—well, a thief. And what it was that I'd got of yours."

Hart produced dressing-gowns and slipped them over the boxers' shoulders. He had removed the boxing-gloves that they were wearing before the burglar made any reply.

"My name's Smith," he said. "That's honest—it is Smith, an' I ain't stringing you. 'Punch' Smith, I'm called—an' I thought I could make a livin' with me fists, so I took up the fight game. Barney Aston was my manager, an'—"

"Barney Aston!" exclaimed Hart.

"Are you one of his string?"

The big man's features had suddenly gone grim, but they relaxed a little as the young fellow went on:

"I was; but he tried to get me on to fakin' fights. I wasn't havin' any. We had a bit of a dust-up, an' I slogged him one that put him to sleep for a bit, then I cleared out. But Barney fixed things for me. D'you think I could get a fight? Not on your life! Nobody knew me, an' them what did had heard some sort o' yarn from Barney. I've been kicked out of a dozen promoters' offices during the last three weeks. Nobody would believe I could fight, an' I couldn't get a trial."

"Down on your luck, eh?" asked Hart.

"Been breakfastin' off turnips for two days," Punch answered with a grin. "But I didn't come here to pinch anything—I came to get what's mine. It'd prove that I could fight, an' I reckoned that if I could get it back an' showed it to some o' them managers I'd get a scrap. I only wanted a chance, anyway."

"What was it?" asked Dennison.

"I'll show you," answered Punch, and ducked through the ropes.

They returned to the drawing-room then, creeping stealthily through the silent house. Hart switched on the light in the library and followed the others to the cabinet at which they had caught Punch. Dennison produced keys from a bureau near, and he soon had the doors of the cabinet open.

On the polished wood shelves were fully a score of cups, and quite as many medals. When Punch Smith beat Dick,

he had beaten a worthy foe—as those trophies testified.

The doors were hardly open before Punch was eagerly outstretching a hand. His fingers wrapped around the thin stem of a small cup which stood right behind the others, and he lifted it out. His eyes were sparkling as he held it up, gripping it now in both hands as a man might hold something precious.

"I won that at the Dome Amateur Light-weight Competition a year ago!" he exclaimed. "Barney Aston stuck to it when I cleared out; old Bill Durrant got it from him, an' he came to you with a sob story, Mr. Dennison, an' you gave 'im a quid for it."

"That's right," answered Dick. "But he said it was his, or something. Anyway, it's got no name on it."

"No; but I found out where it had gone, an' I came down here to get it back."

Punch's jaw squared a little as he spoke.

"But you needn't have come through the window—if you'd asked me for it I'd have given it to you!" exclaimed Dennison.

"Would you?" Punch looked at him squarely. "If a tramp came an' asked you for a silver cup, would you give it to him? I've got no proof it's mine, beyond my word for it."

There was silence for a few moments, and it was obvious that both Hart and Dennison realised the truth of what he had said.

"Well, there ain't nothin' else, so p'raps you'll let me go," Punch went on, and he turned to Rough Hart. "I've heard about you," he said. "An' once I saw you in th' ring. I'd be proud if you'd shake hands before I go!"

He held out his hand, but Hart didn't take it.

"Where are you going?" he asked slowly, in his level voice.

Punch shrugged his shoulders.

"I'll take this cup along an' see if it won't persuade someone to give me a trial," he answered.

"And you've got no money?" asked Hart.

Punch shook his head.

Then Rough Hart's big hand closed over the battling burglar's.

"I run a sort of gym in London," he said, "where I train gents like Mr. Dennison. I need somebody to give me a hand. There's a job waiting for you there—if you'll take it. You'll get plenty of trainin', an' I'll see that you get some fights later on!"

Punch's lips twitched, but he couldn't answer. They were the first kind words he had heard for a very long while. The way he wrung Rough Hart's hand told of his acceptance.

Dick Dennison's arm came about his shoulders.

"And if you want a backer—there's me!" he said.

THE END.

(Don't miss next week's magnificent yarn of thrilling Indian adventure entitled: "MEHTA RAM'S MIS-TAKE!" by Cecil Fanshawe, whose previous stories have been thoroughly enjoyed by all "Gemites.")

WATCH

OUT

FOR—

"THE SECRET
OF THE
GALLEONS!"

—STARTING

WEDNESDAY

WEEK!

Mat Martingale, the boy trainer and jockey, goes all out to catch the judge's eye in a thrilling neck-to-neck race at Kempton Park!



Rivals of the Racecourse!

BY
**ANDREW
GRAY.**

A Sensational
Story of the
Turf.

A Thrilling Finish!

GILLAROO began to feel the pace, and Mat slipped into third place, with Ting-a-Ring bustling him all she knew. Mat steered wide and wisely at the bend. He left Bonnybrake on the inside rail, and sheered over to the centre of the course.

Swish, swish!

Senlake was the first to use his whip. Ting-a-Ring's jockey promptly responded. Mat alone rode with elbows down.

He was the coolest of the bunch, and this though he was finishing under the most trying conditions he could possibly have chosen.

To feel yourself knee to knee with your rivals, to be able to gauge exactly how much your horse is to the good or bad, is a comforting thing.

But Mat, far out across the course, had none of these advantages. It might seem to him that he was neck-and-neck, when the winning-post would show that he was really a length behind.

Still he came powdering along quite happily, with his head thrust low down over Whiplash's neck, and his keen young face turned to his rivals. Ting-a-Ring was level now, fighting it out stride for stride.

"Let her!" decided Mat. "We'll show 'em our heels in a second. But watch it, boy," he told his mount. "Bonnybrake's going all out, or I'm a Dutchman!"

This was the supreme moment of the race. Suddenly Mat saw Senlake crowding on for all he was worth. The youngster was ready for him.

"Now, lad—now!" he cried to Whiplash, with just a gentle flick of his whip to rouse him to his best.

Out came the favourite with a bang. Out came Ting-a-Ring, too, responding to the general challenge. Kildaw crumpled and fell away. Only the three cracks were in it now.

The pace was furious. They came tearing past the grand-stands like a wild cavalry charge. The rest of the field seemed to be left standing.

"Whiplash! The filly! Bonnybrake!" The crowd were hailing each and all the winner. The cheering rose to a hurricane, and still the race hung in the balance. The winning-post was now only a furlong away.

Mat called on his mount again and again, and right gallantly the brute responded, but without any appreciable effect. The filly he did not fear, but Bonnybrake held him, and still kept half a length to the good.

That came of letting Senlake make his effort first. Overconfidence had cost Mat the race. He cursed himself roundly for his foolishness.

Never had wild excitement reigned at any finish—not even a Derby. Dick Derringer was jumping up and down like a Jack-in-the-box, quite regardless of anybody's toes.

To him it looked as if Mat was ahead all this time. But the persistent yells

WHAT HAS GONE BEFORE!

LORD RIPLADE, late owner of the estates of Furzedown and the famous racehorse, Whiplash, the most-talked-of two-year-old of his day.

TOM MARTINGALE, his lordship's "trusted trainer and esteemed friend," and "guc'nor" of the renowned Furzedown training stables, in whose charge are sixty thoroughbreds, famous among them being the Stunt and Whiplash.

MAT MARTINGALE, his sixteen-year-old son, a true and trustworthy apprentice.

SCARFE, another apprentice, but an unscrupulous rascal.

SIR ROGER RACKSTONE, a mean and despicable scoundrel, and owner of the Stunt, a most unreliable racer.

The late Lord Riplade had so willed that, should his property be unclaimed by his missing heir within one year of his death, the Whiplash colt was to become the property of Tom Martingale, providing the trainer was still at Furzedown. Failing this, it would go to Sir Roger Rackstone.

Realising the situation, Sir Roger Rackstone sets a plot in motion, and gets Tom Martingale hounded out of Furzedown.

Mat Martingale, the old trainer's son, who is left in charge of the stables, finds a friend in Dick Derringer, an American, but further treachery follows.

Later, after buying the Stunt for a ridiculous figure for Lord Dungarrin, one of the Jockey Club Committee, Tom is granted a trainer's certificate.

Further futile attempts to bring about Mat's disgrace follow, thanks to the timely intervention of Lord Dungarrin.

Later, Lord Riplade puts in an appearance; but, owing to Sir Roger's poisonous tongue, he cuts Mat dead, and forbids him to ride the Stunt in his next race.

Mat is determined, however, and, being the first to get "weighed in," is given the mount.

A thrilling race follows, and, when a furlong from the winning-post, Mat forces his mount ahead!

(Now read on.)

of "Bonnybrake wins!" showed that those in a better position for judging than he thought otherwise.

The Furzedown representative, however, had just a little bit up his sleeve, which till now he had been keeping secret even from Mat.

Out went his head just within forty yards of the post. It was so sudden that Mat quite thought that all was up and his mount had "cracked."

But it was a little effort of Whiplash's own. Amid shattering volleys of cheers he began to forge invincibly to the front, leaving the filly done for, and the redoubtable Bonnybrake foundering fast.

"Whiplash! Whiplash! Whiplash wins!" howled his delighted backers. There was no doubt about it. Whiz! They were past the post, and the great race was won.

Mat straightened up, the proudest lad that ever bestrode pigskin. It had been a clean-run race—no crooked riding, no useless stirrup-leathers, no talk of doping. Whiplash had won, and no one in the world could say a word against his victory.

There was no sign of Lord Riplade, either, coming to kick up further trouble. Dick Derringer, happy as a king, led the winner in. In two shakes Mat was out of the saddle and into the scales, and his weights declared correct.

Up went the numbers then, amid more enthusiastic cheers, and if there had been any doubt as to Whiplash being really first favourite for the Derby, it was dispelled for ever.

"They don't know what we do, though!" said Mat bitterly, when Dick told him what everyone was saying. "They don't know that that ass is deliberately going to wreck everything by taking him away from Furzedown! It's good-bye to the Derby then for Whiplash!"

Dick's "Find"!

WELL, Dick"—when the two had talked over the day's events—"what do you think of the new Lord Riplade?"

"Think of him?" echoed the American. "Waal, one don't want to think much about him, I reckon, unless you're hankering after a sick headache."

THE GEM LIBRARY.—No. 853.

"By George, yes!" agreed Mat heartily. "A bigger nincompoop I've never set eyes on!"

"Oh, you've made up your mind that far, have you?" drawled Dick. "Well, I shouldn't be too sure."

"You mean he isn't? Well, you know more about the beast than I do, of course. But how you cowboys out in the Argentine didn't take a dud like that and run him under a steam-roller, I can't imagine."

Dick laughed. "Waal now, I'll tell you," he said. "First and foremost, we didn't happen to have a steam-roller around to run him under. Secondly, if he's the chap I had in my eye as the possible heir to the Riplade estates, then he's only started this baby talk and putting on frills since he came home."

"You mean he's an impostor?" cut in Mat, the wish father to the thought. "I never said so," answered his chum dryly. "But I did tell you that this feller I was thinking about had a double, a slink-eyed waster, who went round trading on his name."

"Yes; and you said he stole something, didn't you, and had to skip out or they'd have lynched him? Whom did he rob?"

"Why, the very man he was always being mistook for," replied Dick.

"Oh! And what did he steal?"

"Some papers, so far as I know, and a locket he had worn ever since he was a kid. It was a rum sort of haul, we reckoned."

"It was. Why, can't you see it all? I can!" cried Mat, his eyes sparkling. "This new Lord Riplade isn't the real heir at all!"

"He isn't?" echoed his chum, astonished.

"No, of course not! These papers and things he stole were probably the only proof the real heir had that he was Lord Riplade's grandson. And his double sneaked them, and perhaps murdered the poor chap besides."

"Do you think he could have murdered

him?" broke off Mat, as this fresh theory struck him. "You say the other one disappeared?"

"Why, sure," assented the American. "You know he did. Isn't that what all this bother has been about?"

"Then there you are!" cried Mat, in triumph, as if he had solved the whole riddle. "This blubbering little beast murdered the real heir, stole his private papers and heirlooms, and now he's come over here, bluffing it out that he's the heir they've all been looking for!"

"Well, sonny, if you don't surprise me!" answered Dick, as if such a possibility had never struck him before. "It may be as you say; but, anyway, the feller is bluffing to good purpose. They tell me he's been to the courts, and looks like stepping into his title as easy as winking. He has taken over some of his property already, in fact."

"Perhaps; but not Whiplash. I'll watch that!" cried Mat. "Let him diddle the judges if he can. He isn't going to spoof me till he has told me more about himself. Surely you'll back me up in that?" he demanded, turning to Dick.

"Rather!" said the American. "But—"

Mat, however, would hear no "buts." As a matter of fact, he knew in his heart that all this wild talk of his was utter folly. If this claimant to the Riplade title once satisfied the powers that be that he was the long-lost heir, Whiplash would have to be given up to him, like everything else.

Still, Mat's heart would break when that day came. He had grown to love the horse better than his life.

When he got down next morning he quite expected to find Sergeant Widgin awaiting him with a summons at least.

But there was no sign of a policeman, and no breath of trouble of any sort.

In any case Mat did not mean to let his spirits be damped to-day. Business was looking up at last. Seven horses belonging to a new client Lord Dunggarrin had got for the boy trainer were arriving on the noonday train.

The new arrivals were fetched up from the station under Dick's charge, and Mat was simply delighted with them. He saw them all installed in their new boxes himself, and then it was lunch-time.

He went up to the house by the back way, and passed the private stable belonging to the house, where his father had kept a hack or two. Mat, however, had had to sell these in the dark days.

Knowing the stable to be empty then, his astonishment may be imagined when he heard the neigh of a horse and a stamp of hoofs coming from within. In amazement he opened the door.

"Why, Dick, what the dickens is the meaning of this?" he cried, in angry dismay, for Dick had turned up, too.

"Meaning of what?" demanded the American, with a curious smile.

"Dash it! Somebody's shifted Whiplash out of his box into here! How dare he, without asking my permission first!"

Mat's eyes were blazing, but Dick still only smiled.

"Are you sure, sonny? Look again!" he advised, leading the way in.

"But there you are! Haven't you eyes?" retorted Mat, going up to his pet. "It's Whiplash. It's— Why, what the deuce is wrong with the brute?"

"Wrong? What way?" demanded Dick, grinning. For the three-year-old, instead of putting his velvet muzzle to his young master's cheek, had shied away. Mat's face was full of growing astonishment.

"Great Scott! Well, of all the miracles! Why, it isn't Whiplash at all!" he gasped at last. "Yet it's a horse so absolutely like him that he quite took me in. Where in thunder did he come from?"

"Not a thousand miles from Epsom," answered Dick. "I knew the dealer who had him, and I wired him last night."

"You did!" blurted Mat, in astonishment.

"Yes. I've sold them six mules of mine, and now I'm planking down seventy-five dollars for this packet out and out."

"Seventy-five dollars! Well, I'm hanged!" gasped Mat, in astonishment. "But why? He's a thoroughbred, but he wasn't born yesterday, I guess, and he can't be sound at that figure."

"Oh, yes he is!" was the cool reply.

"But he can't be. He must be a kicker, or roarer, or something!"

"Not a bit of it! There's not a darned kick in him!" said the American. "The fact is there's only one thing wrong about that horse. He was just born tired, that's all."

"Born tired?"

"Yes; it's his only fault. He is a fine animal, and fast. But set him on a racecourse with other horses, and starting-gate and crowds, and his interest sorter peters out. It don't seem as if racing appeals to him, except just to set down comfortable like and watch the others enjoying themselves, and clap his hoofs when he sees who's won."

"Then why in thunder did you waste your hard-earned money buying the old hack?" demanded Mat, laughing.

For answer, the other handed across a scrap of paper so dirty that Mat thought twice before he touched it.

"I had that shoved into my hand



Amid shattering volleys of cheers, Mat Martingale began to force his mount ahead, leaving his rivals trailing behind. "Whiplash wins!" shouted his delighted backers. Whiz! Mat had passed the post, and the great race was won!

while I was in the crowd last night," explained Dick. "I don't know who gave it me. The beggar was off too quick for me to see. But you read what it says."

"Look out for your horse. They're going to have another try yet. Watch his stable!" read Mat, in bewilderment.

Wednesday night came round at last. Mat had taken entire charge of Whiplash's box himself, and seemed to spend a good deal of his time tinkering about in it, they noticed. Yet no one for the moment suspected that the horse inside was not the favourite at all. For one thing, when Mat took the "double" out to exercise he went in cloths and blinkers, and like this proved as docile as a lamb.

In fact, he was as tame as any kitten at all times, so long as he had no horses round him, bustling him, and he was not asked to race.

He stood Mat's efforts at amateur carpentry as if he loved to hear the merry din of saw and hammer. For the boy trainer and Dick had cut out two holes in the walls of the stable now, though for what purpose no one could imagine.

There were some bulky parcels also that the pair were caught smuggling into the place late that evening. Once, too, the apprentices could have sworn that they heard a voice reciting something on a gramophone echoing from that corner of the yard. So curiosity was pretty ripe by the time Wednesday night arrived.

However, all went blissfully to bed as usual—at least, Mat and Dick pretended to do so. Before midnight, though, they had taken post ready for the enemies' raid.

A long, soft whistle rising and falling—it might have been some night-bird—was the first intimation that the raiders had arrived. From the next box to the kicker's Mat saw a figure slinking down the avenue to unlock the gates and let them in. It was Scarfe, of course.

"Well," hissed Sir Roger's voice, as the supposed traitor put his nose out, "is all quiet? They don't suspect anything?"

"Not a thing," said Scarfe, like the cheerful liar he could be.

"And we can get straight to Whiplash's stable without being spotted? There's no one about?"

"Not a soul," Scarfe assured them as cheerfully as before.

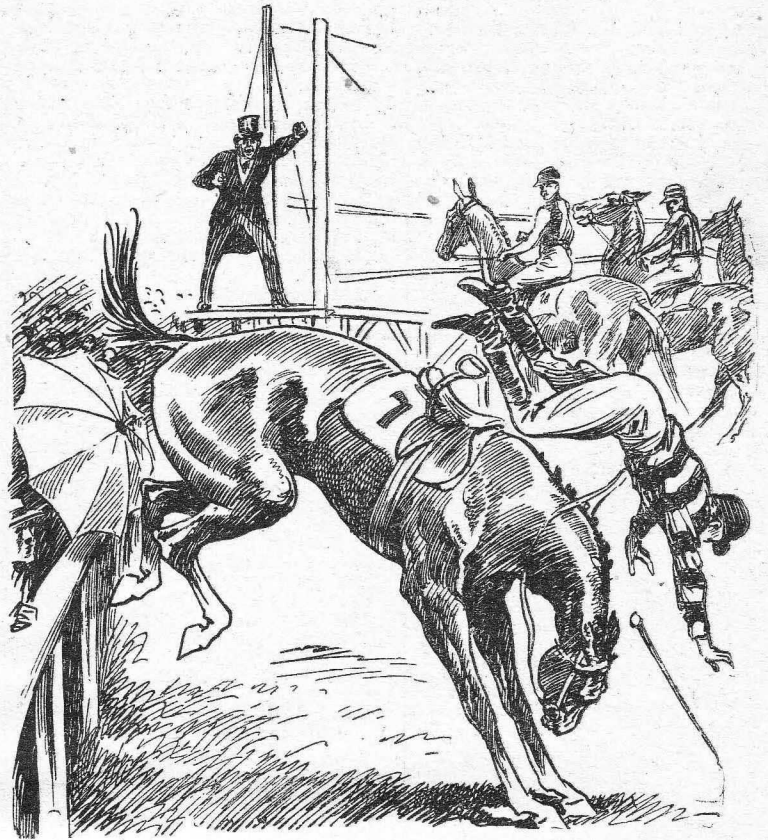
"Then come on, you men!" whispered Sir Roger to six appalling-looking ruffians behind him. "You know what you've got to do. Two of you stand guard over there where the apprentices sleep. Knock anyone down that tries to come out. Two more of you mark the house, and do the same to that young parasite if he appears. The rest follow me—softly."

Caught in the Act!

AMONG the "rest" Scarfe recognised Lord Riplade, looking highly nervous and excited over the job.

Under Scarfe's guidance the main body stalked forward on tiptoe, while the sentries scattered on ahead. Down the second row of stables the traitor led them until he halted and in dumb show pointed out the last box but one.

All was silent as the grave. Not a word was said. Waving his stick like a sword, Sir Roger led the party to the attack.



At sight of the umbrella flicked open under its nose Whiplash's double made one wild buck which shot its jockey clean out of the saddle.

However, it was all very tame. Scarfe had even been able to secure a key to the stable lock, so all that had to be done was to turn the handle and pass in.

Sir Roger's burglarious crew, who had brought a whole outfit of jemmies and bits and all sorts of tools for the job, began to sniff derisively.

"Sh!" hissed the baronet, nipping such levity very promptly in the bud. It was a serious affair to kidnap the favourite for the Derby, and he was surprised that anyone should so far forget themselves as to snigger at it.

So amid caressing "Whoas!" and "Steady, boys!" from Sir Roger, they proceeded to cast their capture loose.

Fortunately, the beast, after the first little start of alarm, submitted to be handled as tamely as a sleeping chicken.

"An easy job," said Sir Roger contentedly.

"Then you really mean to let Wisby take this fraud to the post without any protest?" demanded Dick Derringer.

"You just bet your life I do. I wouldn't miss seeing this race for a fortune," answered Mat. "But when it's over, that'll be our time."

The saddling-bell for the 3.5 found Wisby ready and waiting nervously to be first into the scales.

However, his weights were checked, and nothing said. He had arranged not to have Whiplash brought into the enclosure until the last possible second, and this was done.

The moment the fallen favourite appeared there was a rush, of course. But the cloths were stripped off him with lightning speed. Wisby had clapped his saddle on and girthed it almost before anyone could say "Jack Robinson."

A moment later he was on his mount's back and away, leading the parade instead of being last in it as looked inevitable.

"By George, smart boy that—deuced smart!" chuckled Sir Roger, watching the performance through the railings. And then Lord Riplade and he scuttled off to take their stand by the starting-gate, as the place they were least likely to run into Mat Martingale.

Imagine their disgust, then, when almost the first persons they set eyes on in the crowd were the boy trainer and his hated American friend.

The Fraud!

ALL was excitement. The sudden collapse of Whiplash in the betting had made everyone eager to see what could be wrong with the favourite.

As for ever imagining that this was not Whiplash at all, but his double, not a soul dreamed of such a thing.

The brute had the same white stocking on the near hind-leg, the identical star between the eyes. Mat himself was perfectly amazed at the likeness.

The only one who did look as if he suspected there was something funny about the affair was Wisby.

Mat was overjoyed. Wisby had led the parade canter out of the paddock. But he was last up to the gate, and already he looked as if he had had enough of it. Spur and whip as he would, he had hardly been able to set his mount beyond a crawl.

They could hear him cursing the horse all ends up. For, now he had got him here, the fraud flatly refused to face the tapes, but backed into the rails, and leaned there stolidly while Wisby lashed into him with his whip.

"What's wrong with the beast? Bring him up, can't you? We aren't going to keep the whole card back for you, you know!" roared the starter, losing his temper at last.

"I don't know what's wrong with him! What's the good of asking me? Can't you see?" bawled back Wisby, giving the fraud another basting.

"The fact is, you don't know how to ride him!" retorted the judge loftily, after a blistering silence. "Lord Ripplade ought to have had young Martingale up, if he wanted to do any good."

The effect of this, not only on Wisby, but Sir Roger and Lord Ripplade, may be imagined.

Meantime, the starter on his platform was hopping about like a hen on hot bricks. Fifty times he vowed and threatened that he would despatch the field without waiting another second longer.

But a three-year-old race without the Derby favourite would have been a pity. So Wisby whacked and sawed away at the bridle until suddenly, as the fraud sidled back to the rails again, he caught sight of Mat watching him with face suffused in large-sized grins.

"I've got it! There he is! That's the sweep that's causing all this trouble!" he yelled, flourishing his whip at Mat.

"What is? Who is?"

"Why, young Martingale. He won't let the horse run. He's making signs to him, or something!" declared Wisby wildly. "He's doing it to spite me!"

"Rubbish! Don't be an idiot!" was Mat's laughing retort.

"Yes, you are! You know you are! Send him away, sir," he appealed to the judge, "and I'll wager the horse will be as quiet as a lamb!"

The judge, however, was not going to interfere like this. Mat, however, accepted the challenge. Picking up a white umbrella which rested against the palings, he opened it and hid himself behind it.

"There you are, gentlemen!" he declared, like a conjurer at a music-hall. "If anyone believes that—"

However, there was no saying what anyone believed, for at sight of the umbrella flicked open under his nose the fraud made one wild buck, which shot his jockey clean out of the saddle. Then he sat down on his haunches, solid as a ton of coals, in the very middle of the course.

That settled it. The other horses could not wait all the afternoon for one. They were already more than restive. So, with a last warning shout the starting-judge pulled the lever of the starting-gate.

It flew aloft, and away dashed the horses, kicking up a shower of dust and clods in the fraud's very nose.

Mat and Dick Derringer were simply in fits. Whiplash's double was earning his money if ever a horse did.

"Now, look here, young Martingale," said a stern voice suddenly over his shoulder, "this may be all very funny to you, but if it really is some trick of yours, as Wisby protests, I must ask you to stop it."

Looking round in surprise, Mat saw that it was Sir Tatham Plyte who was addressing him. The youngest knew Sir THE GEM LIBRARY.—No. 853.

Tatham as chief of the stewards of the Newbury Course. He had come up with the rest to know what all the rumpus was about.

"I mean that if it's true that you're really making signals to Whiplash to stop him running out of malice, you know, that's a very serious charge against a trainer," said Sir Tatham pompously.

"Serious, sir! I should just think it was!" laughed Mat. "You'd have to hold another inquiry at once, I reckon."

"Now, don't be cheeky!" said Sir Tatham.

"I'm not, and I've no wish to be," retorted Mat. "But if you really want to know what's wrong with that horse—"

"Of course I do! That's what I'm asking you, isn't it?"

"Were you? I wasn't aware of it," answered Mat, as cool as a cucumber. "Still, I'll tell you. You're under the impression that he is a three-year-old, aren't you?"

"Three-year-old—why, of course he is, you young idiot! What in thunder do you mean?"

"I say that you think that that horse there is a three-year-old; and so he was—once upon a time. But he's grown since!"

"What! Grown since! Preposterous!" spluttered Sir Tatham. "What on earth is the ass drivelling about? Tell me, somebody—quick! Is he mad, or am I?"

"Mad—he's blazing crazy!" bellowed the starting-judge. "What's more, he's slanderous, and it's a good thing Lord Ripplade isn't there to—"

But Lord Ripplade was there, and Mat knew it.

He turned to him.

"Now, look here, you swindlers, I've stood just about enough of this sort of thing!" said Mat. "I tell you, gentlemen," he continued, addressing the stewards, "these two frauds have been deliberately trying to rush you. The horse they've entered as a three-year-old isn't a three-year-old at all. If you don't believe it, then look at his teeth. Yes, and then look at the faces of these two scoundrels," he added. "Tell me if they are the faces of innocent men!"

The judge followed Mat's advice. He opened the fraud's mouth, and his face went purple with anger.

"Take 'em up before the stewards!" he roared, as if he meant to see them beheaded before he started another race.

"And where's that young blackguard Mat Martingale?" he added, twiddling round in his saddle as if he were trying to bore holes in it. "We must have him! Where in thunder has he got to now?"

But Mat, after a few minutes' careful thought, and a quiet word with Dick Derringer, had decided to leave the incident at that.

They celebrated their victory over the enemy with a slap-up dinner at a big hotel, which Mat insisted on standing.

Rather to Mat's astonishment, Dick Derringer seemed quite at his ease amid his swell surroundings.

Indeed, he seemed to know a good deal more about the various French dishes with crackjaw names than his young host.

At last, after a most successful little feed, they had to think about getting across to Waterloo to catch a train home.

At Waterloo, making their way round to the main line, they saw a goods train backing into the station.

"Hallo! Horse-boxes!" exclaimed Mat, casually eyeing two in the lumbering train of trucks—one in the middle and one at the end.

The trucks bumped and jolted and checked a moment as if the engine meant to stop and keep them waiting. The rear-most horse-box was then just level with Mat. It was from Guildford, he noticed, and addressed to Newmarket.

"Some racer, I reckon," said Mat, pitching his voice high, for there was an engine blowing off steam in the station.

Scarcely had he spoken the word than from within the truck came the shrill neigh of the beast inside.

"My hat! What's that?" gasped Mat instantly.

"What's what?" demanded Dick, quite scared, for his chum had gone as white as a sheet.

"Didn't you hear it—that horse's neigh?" gasped Mat. "It sounded to me just like Whiplash!"

"Stuff!" scoffed Dick.

The train was already on the move again, the trucks lurching forward with a jerk and rattle of couplings.

"And there! Great Scott!" cried Mat, pointing. "That man's face at the window! Isn't he one of the brutes who were with Rackstone last night? Look, man! Quick!"

But Dick could see nothing. Whoever the fellow was, he had withdrawn out of view.

Another second would have seen the amazing spectacle of a slim youth running wildly after a train in motion, hanging on behind in an endeavour to make it stop.

Dick Derringer was just in time to catch Mat and hold him back by main force.

"You young idiot! What's wrong with you? Pull yourself together, and think what a spectacle you're making of yourself!"

"I don't care!" spluttered Mat, yielding with ill grace at last. "I swear he was one of Rackstone's ruffians! And as for that horse's neigh—"

"Horse's neigh be hanged!" growled Dick. "Even if it was the man you think, you don't really believe he has stolen Whiplash, and was running off with him?"

"It sounded idiotic, of course."

Scarfe and the rest were waiting up to greet them. They had no news, they said. They had seen just a line or two in the evening paper about Whiplash's

All the
**SECRETS OF
FOOTBALL**
Latest Gossip
and Special Articles
Written by Experts
Revealed in
ALL SPORTS
Every Friday 2d.

fiasco, and wanted full particulars from their young boss.

They knew nothing about Whiplash's double, of course. They still believed that Lord Riplade had bagged his horse and taken him away, Mat being powerless to prevent him.

"Well, good-night, everyone!" sang out Mat at last, and turned away with Dick to get to bed.

And then suddenly that same sickening sensation of foreboding assailed him as at Waterloo. Without a word to his chum he started running.

In vain Dick roared out to him to know what was wrong. Mat was making hot-foot for the stable behind his father's house.

As he crossed the yard he whistled an old, familiar call that Whiplash never failed to recognise and respond to.

But to-night, to the boy trainer's dismay, all was silent.

"Whiplash! Whiplash, old boy! Where are you?" he cried, in terror, fumbling at the key and wrenching the door wide at last. "Whiplash—"

Dick, hurrying up, was only just in time to catch Mat as he came reeling backwards.

"Great gosh, youngster, you're scaring the wits out of me to-night! What in tarnation is it? What's wrong?"

"Whiplash!" gasped Mat, pointing dizzily to the dark stable door. "He's been stolen! That cur had him, after all! He's gone!"

A Long Chase!

WHIPPLASH is gone! That brute on the tram must have collared him! I swear that was his neigh I heard from the horse-box!"

Mat Martingale was so sick, savage, and excited that Dick Derringer quite thought he was going clean off his chump.

"For goodness' sake, don't fly about in that fashion, youngster!" he implored, as Mat went raging in and out the empty stable and up and down the yard. "Take a grip of yourself, can't you?"

"Grip—grip!" retorted Mat, in a regular flare. "Here's the Derby favourite stolen, and you expect me to sit down and play the banjo, I suppose, while that scoundrel is making off with him! Great jumping Jehosaphat, I'd like to have a grip on his throat, I would, the blazing thief, the—"

Suddenly he looked at Dick, and anger changed.

"Of course, I'm a blithering fool to go ranting on like this!" he told his chum. "I ought to be out and away after him instead of acting like a crazy

idiot! Do you hear me, you owls?" he shouted up at the dormitory windows, for the lads were all undressing for bed. "What do you mean by letting Whiplash be stolen out of the place, under your very noses—eh?"

"Here, youngster, steady a minute!" remonstrated Dick Derringer.

Mat, however, was not going to be lectured by Dick or anyone else.

"Look here," he demanded, turning on his chum, white with passion, "how dare you shove your nose into my business in this fashion—eh, dash you? You just keep it out, or you may get it pulled, too!"

"Now, steady, youngster! You don't mean that really?" said Dick gently.

"Mean it?" raged Mat, conscious that he was making a fool of himself, yet only losing his temper the more. "I never spoke a truer word in my life! Who are you, anyway? You've brought nothing but misery and ruin to this place since you set your foot in it, and that is all I know!"

So Mat continued to let fly, taunting his chum with every unlucky thing that had befallen Furzedown since he came to it.

Dick stood it patiently, until at last he could stand no more.

"Very well," he said in a voice full of pain. "If you really mean all this, sonny, the sooner I quit and leave you to get along by yourself the better, I guess."

"Quite so! The sooner the better!" jeered Mat.

But a little later the lad would have willingly given anything to recall his bitter words.

"Dick—Dick, where are you? I want to say hew sorry I am!"

He had thought he heard his chum moving in the sitting-room. But it was empty. He tried the office next, but there was no sign of him there. He went upstairs. Perhaps he was in his bedroom.

"Dick, old chap, where are you? Dick!" cried Mat.

The chest of drawers had been emptied. Dick had but few belongings, yet now all were gone.

"Great Scott!" wailed the youngster. "He can't surely have taken my silly words in earnest, and gone off like this without another word?"

Yet it was too true. Dick had left Furzedown, and so had Scarfe. Mat flung himself down on his bed and broke into fresh sobbing until, worn out and heartsick, he fell asleep.

Mat woke, to find Mrs. Grummidge, his father's old housekeeper, shaking him.

"Why did you wake me up? I'm dog-tired—"

For answer she held out a telegram. The wire was for Dick Derringer. Mat

was perplexed what to do. He decided to open it.

It was signed "Scarfe." So evidently the two exiles had not gone off together.

Mat's mouth opened wide as he read the message.

"Have discovered whereabouts of Whiplash. Believe could get him to-night. Meet me Old Mill Lane, Ewell Common, nine o'clock by water-splash. Come alone. Don't tell Mat."

That Scarfe did not want him to be in the secret was not for him to resent. Mat had behaved rottenly to him as to Dick, and was the first to confess it. The great thing was that Whiplash was tracked, and to-night even might be back safe at Furzedown.

Mat resolved to keep the appointment in Dick's place, since he had no more idea where the latter was than the man in the moon.

Ewell Common was not so far. On a bicycle Mat covered the distance half an hour before the appointed time.

He saw the pretty water-splash ahead of him. It was a shallow brook crossing the road, which vehicles had to ford. He was not going to run his bike through that, nor did he see the fun of taking it on the single plank footbridge just beside for the use of pedestrians. So he pulled up.

"This will do! I'll be able to see him soon enough," he decided.

So, blowing out his lamp, he laid the machine down behind some bushes. Then he waited in the darkness.

In the distance he could hear a motor-car coming purring along.

"I wonder what the ass can be doing along this road?" thought Mat, cocking his ears.

For it was not a short cut to anywhere in particular, and motorists, as a rule, don't like rushing their engines through a shallow brook if they can dodge it.

However, the car came on, and then a strange thing happened. When it was almost abreast of where Mat cowered, it stopped, and as promptly all its lights went out.

"Hallo!" thought Mat. "What's happened to the old tank now?" and was just getting on to his legs to go forward and see, when he heard a voice that made him jump.

"There you are," it said to a second figure at the driving-wheel. "There's the 'splash' I told him I'd meet him at in the telegram. So you see exactly where you are and what you've got to do."

Mat's ears seemed to have grown as long as a donkey's, and his heart was thumping like a sledgehammer. For, though the telegram was signed "Scarfe," the voice proclaiming so glibly who had sent it was that of Sir Roger Rackstone.

(To be concluded next week.)



26 A WEEK OR CASH £4-15/-

Get a "JUNO"—the British-made cycle that will never "let you down." "JUNO" cycles are of the finest construction throughout. Brampton Fittings and Hubs, Bowden Bars and Brakes, Reynolds' Tubes, Dunlop Rims, Dunlop Cambridge or Studded Tyres. Beautifully plated, handsomely lined. Sent carriage paid, packed free, small deposit only. **GUARANTEED**—our 46 years' reputation. Money returned if dissatisfied. Factory Prices save you pounds. **FREE! WRITE NOW!** (Dept. U2), **METROPOLITAN MACHINISTS CO., Ltd.** 168 & 248, Bishopsgate, London, E.C.2.

JUNO

LADS WANTED NOW FOR AUSTRALIA

Aged 14 to 19, good health and character. Assisted passages. Advice how to go and what to do on arrival FREE from CHURCH ARMY. Write or call for full particulars of opportunities awaiting you—CHURCH ARMY, 25, Cockspar Street, S.W.1.

BLUSHING SELF-CONSCIOUSNESS, SHYNESS, TIMIDITY.

Simple 7-day Permanent Home Cure for either sex. No. Auto suggestion, drill, etc. Write at once, mention "G.M.," and get full particulars quite FREE privately. **U.J.D., 12, All Saints Road, ST. ANNES-ON-SEA.**

MAGIC TRICKS, etc.—Parcels, 2/6, 5/6. Ventriloquist's Instrument, Invisible. Imitate Birds.

Price 6d. each, 4 for 1/-.—T. W. Harrison, 239, Pentonville Rd., London, N.1.

65 DIFFERENT STAMPS 24-PAGE DUPLICATE BOOK FREE!! WEMBLEY EXHIBITION STAMP. Just request approvals.—**LEBURN & TOWNSEND, London Road, Liverpool.**

WHEN ANSWERING ADVERTISEMENTS PLEASE MENTION THIS PAPER.



(If You Are Not a Prizewinner This Week You May Be Next.)

All Efforts in this Competition should be addressed to: **The GEM LIBRARY, "My Readers' Own Corner," Gough House, Gough Square, London, E.C.4.**

**GOOD OLD SOMERSET!
CUTE LAD!**

Small boy (to porter): "Say, mister, want me to help you?"
Porter: "Bah! What kin you do?"
Small boy: "Me? Oh, I'll grunt while you lift!"—A Tuck Hamper, filled with delicious Tuck, has been awarded to R. A. March, 19, Wells Road, Glastonbury, Somerset.

A SLIGHT MISTAKE!

A motorist emerged from beneath the car and struggled for breath. His helpful friend, holding the oil-can, beamed upon him. "I've just given the cylinder a thorough oiling, Dick, old man," he said. "Cylinder!" spluttered the motorist heatedly. "That was not the cylinder; it was my ear!"—Half-a-crown has been awarded to G. E. Short, 10, Devon Street, Monk's Road, Lincoln.

HONEST!

Lessons in school had been proceeding for about an hour when a boy took an apple from his pocket and began to eat it. "Go into the playground and finish your meal," the teacher said sarcastically. To his surprise, the boy rose quietly and moved to the door. Then he turned. "Please, sir," he said, "can my little brother come as well, because half of it is his?"—Half-a-crown has been awarded to J. Drover, Mill Hill, Cowes, Isle of Wight.

BRIGHT!

Old gentleman (having boots cleaned): "And is your father a bookblack, too, my little man?" Bootblack: "No, sir; he's a farmer." Old gent: "Ah, I see. He makes hay while the sun shines!"—Half-a-crown has been awarded to F. Ward, 164, Newport Road, Cardiff.

A TWISTED TALE!

A small boy entered a decorator's shop

and boldly asked for twopennyworth of twisted paint. The shopkeeper looked at him in a dumbfounded manner. "Twisted paint!" he said, with a puzzled look. "I've never heard of that before." "Well," said the boy, "dad said he wanted it for the pole outside his hair-dressing saloon."—Half-a-crown has been awarded to E. O. Fox, 20, Mayfield Road, Leicester.

SOME SPEED!

An Englishman, an Irishman, and an American were discussing the speed of trains in their respective countries. "Well," began the Englishman, "I was on one of our trains the other day and we were going so fast that the telegraph-poles flashed by like one black fence." "Sure, bedad, and that's going fast!" said the Irishman. "But Oi was in an Oirish train the other day and in succession we passed fields of turnips, carrots, potatoes, and, lastly, a river, and, begorrah, we were going so fast the whole lot looked like an Irish stew!" "I kinder guess I can beat that, bo!" drawled the American. "I was on a train due out from Noo York the other day, and leaning out of the carriage to say good-bye to my wife, the train suddenly started and I kissed a cow that was grazing fifty miles up the line!"—Half-a-crown has been awarded to H. W. Cooper, 19, Edwalton Avenue, West Bridgford, Nottingham.

TUCK HAMPER COUPON.

THE GEM LIBRARY.
No attempt will be considered unless accompanied by one of these Coupons.

400 MODEL
\$5.50
CASH

2/6 Weekly

is all you pay for our No. 400A lady's or gentleman's Mead "Marvel"—the finest cycle ever offered on such exceptionally easy terms. Built to stand hard wear. Brilliantly plated; richly enamelled, exquisitely lined in two colours. Sent packed free, carriage paid on **15 DAYS' FREE TRIAL.** Fully warranted. Prompt delivery. Money refunded if dissatisfied. Big bargains in slightly factory soled mounts. Tyres and Accessories 33% below shop prices. Buy direct from the factory and save pounds. How a seven-year-old MEAD which had traversed 75,000 miles best 650 up-to-date machines and broke the world's record by covering 24,356 miles in 365 days explained in our art catalogue. Write TO-DAY for free copy—brimful of information about bicycles and containing gigantic photographs of our latest models.

MEAD CYCLE CO. (INC.)
(Dept. B797)
Birmingham

HAVE YOU SEEN MY CAMEL Packet of Stamps? It's FREE if you ask to see my Special Approval Sheets. It contains: NEW SOUDAN (Camel), ANGOLA, TANGER, Cape, REUNION, Victoria, SALVADOR, China, TIFE, Russia, GUAYNE, Cayton, VENEZUELA, Jamaica, PORTUGAL (Charley), Ukraine, GUADELOUPE, Argentine, AUSTRIAN EXPRESS, and Lourenco Marques. Send a POSTCARD: **VICTOR BANCROFT, MATLOCK.**

STOP STAMMERING! Cure yourself as I did. Particulars Free.—**FRANK B. HUGHES, 7, SOUTHAMPTON ROW, LONDON, W.C.1.**

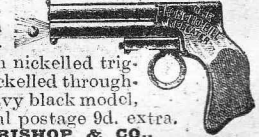
* When Answering Advertisements Please Mention This Paper. *

ARE YOU FRIGHTENED

of meeting people, mixing in company, going to social gatherings, dances, etc.? Do you lack Self-Confidence, suffer from Nervous Fears, Depression, Blushing, Timidity, or Sleeplessness? Become Self-Confident, full of Courage, bright and happy, by sending immediately 3 penny stamps for particulars of the Mento-Nerve Strengthening Treatment. **GUARANTEED CURE OR MONEY REFUNDED.**—**GODFREY ELLIOTT-SMITH, LTD., 543, Imperial Buildings, Ludgate Circus, London, E.C.4.**

Automatic Pea Pistol

Loads 15 shots, repeating action, nicely finished, each in box with instructions and supply of ammunition. No. 1, Black model with nickelled trigger, **1/3** post free. No. 2, brightly nickelled throughout, **1/3** post free. No. 3, 25 shot heavy black model, **2/6** post free. Foreign and Colonial postage 9d. extra. Send P.C. for Catalogue.—**J. BISHOP & CO., 12, ARGYLL PLACE, REGENT STREET, LONDON, W.1.**



DON'T BE BULLIED

Special offer. **TWO ILLUS. SAMPLE LESSONS** from my Complete Course on **JUJITSU** for four penny stamps, or a Large Illus. Portion of Course for P.O. **3/6.** Jujitsu is the best and simplest science of self-defence and attack ever invented. Learn to take care of yourself under ALL circumstances. **SEND NOW.** (Est. 20 years.)
"YAWARA" (Dept. A.P.), 10, Queensway, Hanworth, Feltham, Middlesex



HEIGHT COUNTS

in winning success. Let the Girvan System increase your height. Wonderful results. Send P.C. for particulars and our £100 guarantee to Enquiry Dept., **A.M.F., 17, Stroud Green Road, London, N.4.**



MY GREAT OFFER

I supply the finest Coventry built cycles from **£5-5-0** cash, or **2/-** weekly. Any cycle sent **ON 14 DAYS' APPROVAL, PACKED FREE AND CARRIAGE PAID,** on receipt of small deposit. Write for **FREE BARGAIN LISTS.** Satisfaction or Money Refunded.
O'Brien The World's Largest Cycle Dealer, Dept. 22, COVENTRY.

