

"THE BOY WHO HELD HIS TONGUE!" A NOVEL SCHOOL YARN OF TOM MERRY & Co. AT ST. JIM'S!

EVERY WEDNESDAY.

The GEM 2^d

LIBRARY

No. 1,023.
Vol. XXXII.
Sept. 24th,
1927.



**The Action that Saved
the Head's Life!**

A Thrilling Incident from the Magnificent, Long
School Story—Inside.

AN AMAZING STORY OF SCHOOL LIFE, FEATURING—

The Boy Who—

A few words of explanation would reinstate Castleton in the good opinion of his Form-fellows. But Castleton, for reasons of his own, prefers to remain silent. Why?



CHAPTER 1.

Awkward for the New Chap!

"GREAT SCOTT!"

Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, of the St. Jim's Fourth, came to an abrupt halt in the doorway of the Palm Cafe, and gazed across the picturesque old Wayland High Street. An expression of pained surprise had come into his aristocratic countenance.

"Come on, Gussy!" said Blake briskly.

"Pway wait a moment, deah boy!"

"Rats! We shan't have time for a decent feed if you stand out here all the afternoon, staring vacantly into nothingness!"

THE GEM LIBRARY.—No. 1,023.

"Weally, Blake——"

"Grab him!" said Jack Blake.

Herries, and Digby prepared to grab, but Arthur Augustus avoided them with an adroitness which rather took them by surprise.

"Kindly wefwain fwom wottin', deah boys!" he protested. "Castleton is——"

"Bother Castleton!" interrupted Herries.

"I wefuse to bothah Castleton!"

"Oh, drag him in!" said Blake impatiently. "How the

merry dickens can we go into the cafe for tea without him?"

"I will join you latah," said D'Arcy.

"Rats! You've got to pay the bill!"

"Weally, Blake——"

"Well, I like that!" protested Blake. "Didn't you offer to treat us?"

"Yaas, but——"

Blake and Herries and Digby wasted no further words. They seized their elegant chum and forced him towards the doorway of the cafe. Study No. 6 were hungry, and the dull afternoon was already drawing in. There was only just time for a brief snack, and even then it would mean hard pedalling to get back to the school before lighting-up time. And Blake hadn't brought his bicycle-lamp.

"Welease me, you wuffians!" gasped Arthur Augustus. "Bai Jove, I uttably wefuse to entah this cafe against my will!"

"He refuses!" said Blake sweetly. "Now, then, one heave!"

And undoubtedly Arthur Augustus would have been whirled through the doorway if Herries had not suddenly lost interest at that moment. Herries, too, was staring across the High Street.

"Well, I'm blessed!" he began, in surprise.

"Bai Jove," said D'Arcy, "Hewwies has seen it, too! This is weally most remarkable! Pway look at Castleton, deah boys!"

Blake and Digby realised at last that there was something unusual to look at. They turned and gazed across

—TOM MERRY & CO., THE CHEERY CHUMS OF ST. JIM'S!

Held His Tongue!

MARTIN CLIFFORD

the High Street. Some little way up, on the opposite pavement, Castleton of the Shell was pausing with a curious air of uncertainty, and approaching him, with outstretched hand and beaming smile, was Mr. Banks.

Without question, there was a light of genial recognition in the fat bookmaker's face. Mr. James Joseph Banks was acting just as though he were about to greet an old, old friend.

"Bai Jove!"

D'Arcy uttered the ejaculation in a tragic voice. His chums said nothing. They had not seen, as Gussy had seen, Mr. Banks' earlier wave of the hand and Arthur Castleton's sudden faltering halt.

"Well, well!" came Mr. Banks' voice across the quiet High Street. "Who said it wasn't a small world, Mr. Castleton? The last young gent I expected to see in Wayland this afternoon! How are you, sir?"

"Well, I'm jiggered!" muttered Blake.

"This is an unexpected pleasure, if you like!" went on Mr. Banks, in his coarse voice. "Delighted to see you, Mr. Castleton—delighted to see you again! You're looking fine!"

"Let's get into the cafe!" growled Blake.

"Yes!" said Herries gruffly.

"We've seen enough!"

"And heard enough!" added Digby.

"Weally, Dig—"

"Come along, Gussy!" said Blake.

And Arthur Augustus was whirled through the doorway, and the chums of Study No. 6 made their way to an empty table. Outside, on the other side of the High Street, Arthur Castleton was gazing at Mr. Banks with undisguised displeasure.

He had never seen this man in his life before!

He didn't know him from Adam. He hadn't the faintest idea what his name was, but he was quite convinced of Mr. Banks' profession. Mr. Banks advertised his calling in every inch of his unlovely person.

"Shake, Mr. Castleton!" said Mr. Banks genially.

The new fellow in the Shell drew back.

"I beg your pardon!" he said, in a low voice. "I think you must have made a mistake!"

"Eh?" said Mr. Banks, looking at his rejected hand in surprise. "What's the idea, Mr. Castleton? Old pals like us—"

"I'm sorry!" interrupted Arthur. "I don't know you, sir, and I wish you good-afternoon!"

He pushed past and walked on, leaving Mr. Banks staring after him.

"Well, I'm blowed!" said the bookmaker, an ugly flush coming over his fat face. "So that's it, is it? He don't want to know me now? Belongs to St. Jim's, by the look of 'is cap! Oh-ho! So that's how the land lies! Too proud to recognise his old pals now that he's in a big school!"

And while Mr. Banks glared savagely at the retreating junior's back, Castleton walked on, with burning cheeks and tightly set lips. But his discomposure was no indication of a guilty conscience. He had not denied a shady old



acquaintance. He had never seen that man before, and had utterly no knowledge of him.

But he knew the truth in a flash.

Banks was a bookmaker, and he was one of Alan's disreputable friends!

The truth was obvious, but only obvious to Arthur Castleton. For Arthur was the only one at St. Jim's who knew that he had a twin brother. Even Mr. Banks didn't know it.

Arthur Castleton was rudely shaken.

He had not been at St. Jim's long, and at first the other fellows had regarded him somewhat unfavourably, owing to certain rumours which Racke & Co., the black sheep of the Shell, had circulated. But Racke had made the mistake of assuming that the new boy was the twin that Mr. Banks was acquainted with.

Arthur had spent an uncomfortable time to begin with—until he had satisfied everybody that he was the clean, straightforward fellow he looked. All doubts had been set at rest when St. Jim's had learned that he had been captain of Walsing Grammar School, had won every important sports prize, and had been publicly acknowledged as the finest footballer that Walsing had ever turned out. These statements had effectually killed the unsavoury rumours, and Racke & Co. had come to the conclusion that they had made a blunder.

But now, in a moment, all Arthur's misgivings had returned.

He had heard that there was a bookmaker in Wayland

who had known Alan, and he had been a little uneasy on the point. And it had occurred to him that he might run across the man one day. But it was a risk that had to be taken. The chances were that he would not ever come across the man.

And now, unexpectedly, the thing had happened!

Banks, naturally, had mistaken him for Alan. It was an unfortunate mischance, and just the "cussedness" of Fate. His twin brother's shady past was dogging him, and it would seem that Arthur would have much difficulty in avoiding it. Fortunately, this meeting in the High Street had happened when he was alone. Arthur didn't know that Blake & Co. had witnessed the whole incident!

"Just my luck!" he muttered moodily. "Oh, I'd like to punch Alan's head! He's at St. Frank's, and I'll bet he's meeting none of his old acquaintances there! It's just my luck that I should run across them here!"

But the real trouble was that Arthur's lips were sealed. The twins had made a compact that neither should reveal the fact that they were twins. Quite apart from this, Arthur was bound to silence, for it was against his code to act the part of an informer. The only way to clear his own name was to besmirch Alan's, and that wasn't Arthur's way.

Whatever came, he would see it through. And such was Arthur Castleton's sunny disposition that within a few

minutes he was cheery again. There was nothing on his own conscience, and that made all the difference.

CHAPTER 2.

Not Very Convincing!

"RUMMY!" said Blake thoughtfully. "Very rummy!" "Yaas, wathah!" agreed Arthur Augustus. "It is not only fwithtfully wummy, Blake, but it is vevy mystewious!"

"Fishy!" said Herries.

"Rats!" growled Digby. "There's nothing rummy about it, and nothing mysterious, and nothing fishy! The thing is as clear as daylight! Castleton isn't such a saint as we took him to be!"

"Bai Jove!"

Arthur Augustus lowered his teacup, jammed his eyeglass into his eye, and surveyed Robert Arthur Digby with frigid disfavour.

"Weally, Dig, I am surprised at you!" he said coldly. "I uttably wefuse to sit heah and listen to you twaducin' Castleton's chawactah! You are well awah that Castleton was skippah of his pwevious school, and that he led his ewicket eleven to victowy throughout the season."

"Yes, I know that, but—"

"Furthahmore, he wam away with all the top pwizes for wunnin', swimmin', and boxin'," continued Gussy. "In fact he won the boxin' championship of Walsin' Gwammah School for three years in succession, and is the finest footballah that the school evah pwoduced."

"We know all that, Gussy," said Digby patiently.

"Vevy well, then," said Arthur Augustus.

"It's all right for you to say 'very well, then,' but what does it lead to?" asked Dig. "I'm not denying that Castleton was the wonder of Walsing, but you can't get away from the fact that he's a pal of Banks'."

"I wefuse—"

"And any chap who is a pal of that shady rotter is an outsider," said Digby, with emphasis. "What do we know about this new Shell chap, anyhow? He hasn't been at the school a week, and even before he came we heard rumours about his character."

"Fabrications!" insisted Gussy stoutly.

"That may be. But how do we know that those tales of his Walsing triumphs aren't fabrications, too?" asked Digby. "I want to be fair to the man. I'm not condemnin' him. But when we see Banks—"

"Pway wait a moment," interrupted Arthur Augustus indignantly. "Are you suggestin', Digbay, that Castleton was not skippah of his gwammah school? Are you suggestin' that he did not win the boxin'—"

"After all, you can't believe all you read in the papers, Gussy," said Blake, shaking his head. "We saw all that in one of the illustrated weeklies, under Castleton's photograph. How do we know that Castleton isn't a deep schemer? How do we know that he didn't have that stuff printed on purpose to spoof us?"

"Weally, Blake," protested D'Arcy. "I am surprised at such a wank suggestion from a fellow I have always wogarded as a sportsman! I have a good mind to give you a feahful thwashin'!"

"I'm not saying that it is so, but it's a possibility," growled Blake.

"But the headmastah of Walsin' Gwammah School would wefute the suggestions," said Gussy hotly. "Pway be weasonable!"

"If it comes to that, we don't even know if there is a Walsing Grammar School," said Herries, with a grin. "That may be spoof, too. And even if there is, and even if Castleton faked up the statement, it might be difficult for the headmaster of the place to contradict it. And you can't get away from the fact that old Banks recognised the chap a mile off."

"Wubbish!" said Arthur Augustus. "He was only a hundred yards away."

"All the same, it's fishy," said Blake finally. "No getting away from it. If Castleton was the man he professes to be, Banks couldn't have been so friendly. Why, he was all over greasy welcome."

"But pway considah—"

"Didn't you hear the beast?" went on Blake. "The last young gent I expected to see in Wayland! Delighted to see you again, Mr. Castleton. You're looking fine. That's what he said, and we all heard him."

"Yaas, wathah! But weally—"

"Rats!" said Blake gruffly. "I admire you for sticking up for the chap, Gussy, but seeing is believing. And we all saw that shady Banks coming for Castleton with the glad hand and the welcoming smile. As I said before, it's rummy!"

And even Arthur Augustus had to admit it.

THE GEM LIBRARY.—No. 1,023.

He was very concerned, and his noble brow was puckered as he sat idling with his teacup. He had taken a particlar interest in the new Shell chap from the very first. Indeed, he had met Castleton practically at the station, with the idea of taking him under his wing, and had set out with the purpose of reforming this wayward character, only to discover that Castleton, apparently, needed no reforming.

But this fresh incident put Gussy into a state of uncertainty and indecision. He liked Castleton. There was something about the new chap that endeared him to everybody. He was so obviously decent.

And yet—

"It is all fwithtfully odd," said Gussy, shaking his head. "I can only assume that Banks took a fwithtful liberty. You may wemembah that Castleton did not return the boundah's gweetin'?"

"We didn't wait to see whether he returned it or not," said Blake. "We saw enough. Let's talk about something else."

"Better talk about getting off," suggested Herries. "It's getting dusk, and there's rain coming. Let's be going."

"Yaas, wathah!"

They rose to their feet and Gussy settled the bill. Then they emerged into the gloom of the street. A gust of wind came whirling round the side of the cafe and lifted D'Arcy's topper off his head and sent it skimming down the High Street.

"Bai Jove!" gasped Gussy. "Wescue, deah boys!"

"Too late!" said Blake. "It's gone!"

"My toppah!" roared Arthur Augustus in anguish. "Good gwacious! My bwand new toppah!"

"You shouldn't wear brand new toppers on windy days, Gussy," said Herries.

"You wottah, Hewwies!" yelled Gussy. "My toppah is wuined!"

He rushed along the pavement after his precious headgear, and was relieved to observe that the hat had already been rescued by Arthur Castleton. The new fellow, emerging from a shop at the identical moment, had actually caught the silk hat in mid-flight, before it had even touched the ground. One swift sideways lunge, and he had it.

"Bai Jove!" gasped D'Arcy, running up. "Thanks, awfully, deah boy!"

"Is it yours?" smiled Arthur.

"Yaas, wathah!" panted the swell of St. Jim's. "I don't need any tellin' that you are a ewicketah, old bean. Well caught, bai Jove! Only a wippin' ewicketah could have made a catch like that."

"Gussy's right," said Blake, as he came up with the others. "That was a genuine cricketer's swoop. Good man! And Gussy's topper isn't even soiled! He doesn't deserve it for being so careless."

"The wind's getting up," said Arthur.

"Yaas, wathah!" agreed D'Arcy. "It is wisin' fwithtfully. I wathah think we are in for a storm. Jollay sporty of you, Castleton, to gwab my hat like that. Thanks, most awfully, old thing!"

Castleton grinned.

"That's all right," he said good-naturedly. "Anything to oblige, D'Arcy. You'd better get a tube of fish glue, and make certain of it this time."

"Weally, Castleton, there is no need to be fwivolous," said D'Arcy. "I should uttably wefuse to stick my toppah on with fish glue. I wegard fish glue with the most fwithtful aversion."

"Never mind the fish glue," said Blake bluntly. "Castleton, there's something I want to ask you. Don't think I'm inquisitive or—"

"That's all right," said Arthur. "Go ahead."

Something told him what was coming.

"Weally, Blake!" protested D'Arcy. "I twust—" "You dry up, Gussy," said Blake. "Look here, Castleton, are you a friend of Banks?"

"Banks?" said Arthur steadily. "Who's Banks?"

"That greasy bookie you met twenty minutes ago on the other side of the street," said Blake. "I may be wrong, but he seems to be a friend of yours."

"You're quite wrong," said Arthur. "He's no friend of mine."

"Bai Jove!" beamed Gussy. "Didn't I say—"

"Half a tick!" growled Blake. "We saw Castleton meet that shady bookie, and Banks was all over him."

"The man made a mistake," said Arthur, very quietly.

"Oh, he made a mistake?"

"Yes. I never saw him before in my life."

The chums of Study No. 6 looked at the Shell fellow strangely.

"He made a mistake?" said Blake grimly. "And you never saw him before in all your life? And yet he came up to you, smiling all over his face, with the glad hand extended, and addressed you by name?"

Arthur realised that he hadn't been so lucky as he had first believed. And there was no doubt that appearances

were against him. To give Alan away was impossible. His only course was to stick to the truth. Experience had always taught him that the truth was impregnable.

"I can only repeat that Banks made a mistake," he said quietly. "It seems funny that he addressed me by name, doesn't it? And yet I never saw the man before. Do you believe me?"

"Yaas, wathahl!" said D'Arcy promptly.

"We'd like to believe you, Castleton, but doesn't it seem a bit too thick?" asked Blake. "Why can't you be open about it? If you've had shady dealings with Banks, it's no bisney of ours, but we thought—"

"I am sorry if you thought anything," interrupted Castleton steadily. "I've told you that I never met the man before, and I meant it. I'm not in the habit of telling lies. That's all!"

He walked on, and Blake & Co. looked after him with black expressions. Arthur's moment of huffiness had not done him much good, and he realised it a minute afterwards, when it was too late.

It seemed that the truth was going to let him down for once.

CHAPTER 3.

Racke Learns Something.

"I SAY, Racke—"
Baggy Trimble, of the Fourth, jumped off his bicycle, puffing and blowing. He was looking hot and excited, and Racke and Clampe turned on him, frowning. The black sheep of the Shell were in no mood to put up with Trimble's company. They had had some bad luck that afternoon, and they were not in the sweetest of tempers.

"Clear off, Trimble!" said Racke curtly.

"Oh, wait a minute!" puffed Baggy. "I've got something important to tell you. In fact, you ought to be willing to stand me a feed—"

"We'll stand you on your head unless you scoot!" interrupted Clampe. "We're rather particular about who we're seen with, Trimble! Don't forget this is the public street!"

"You will have your joke!" said Baggy, with a cackle. "Honest Injun, though, I've got some first-class information for you! It's about Castleton."

"Oh!" said Aubrey Racke ominously.

Baggy was disappointed in the lack of interest he had aroused.

"Castleton!" he repeated.

"Are you goin' to clear, or shall we tip you in the gutter?" asked Racke.

"I saw Castleton talking with Banks, the bookie," said Trimble eagerly. "It proves that you were right all the time, Racke! Aren't you going to stand me a treat now?"

Racke moved a step nearer to the fatuous Fourth-Former. "You haven't told us anythin' we didn't know," he said gruffly. "So your information is worth nothing. Now clear, before I burst you!"

"I thought—"

Racke reached out a grim hand.

"Yaroooh!" roared Trimble, before he was touched. "Yah! Mean rotters! I wish I hadn't told you now!"

He jumped on to his machine and pedalled disconsolately away. He had hoped to make some profit out of his information, but it seemed that Racke and Clampe knew as much as he did. Arthur Castleton's meeting with Mr. Banks had been seen by more eyes than those of Study No. 6!

In fact, Racke and Clampe had been discussing the matter as Baggy had ridden up. They had seen that encounter between Banks and the Shell fellow from afar, but Banks had entered a public-house before they could reach the spot, and they were now waiting for him to come out.

It would be risky enough to speak to Banks in the open street, but it would have been riskier to enter a "pub" in full view of all and sundry.

The two young rascals had seen Mr. Banks earlier—when they had put some little bets on with him. But since then they had learned, to their chagrin, that their "fancy" had lost. They had nothing to collect from the bookie. Hence their gloomy expressions.

But there might be some consolation if only they could



As the juniors emerged into the street, a gust of wind lifted D'Arcy's topper off his head. "My toppah!" gasped Gussy, dashing off in pursuit. But at that moment the figure of Castleton loomed up in a shop doorway. One swift lunge, and the new junior deftly caught the flying hat.

(See Chapter 2.)

learn something to Arthur Castleton's detriment. Scandal of that kind was very gratifying to the black sheep of the Shell.

"Here he is!" said Clampe at last.

Mr. Banks emerged, wiping his mouth. He stuck a big cigar between his teeth, and moved off down the High Street. Racke glanced quickly up and down, and saw that there was nobody of importance in sight.

"Come on!" he muttered. "We'll risk it!"

They hurried after Mr. Banks, eager to pump him regarding Castleton. They hadn't forgotten the way in which Arthur had treated them on his first day at St. Jim's. They were still feeling somewhat sore. They had attempted to drag the new fellow into a game of banker, and Arthur had thrashed them soundly. Crooke had been included in that unfortunate incident, and the whole Lower School had roared with laughter at Racke & Co.'s discomfiture at the hands of a "new kid." Racke was still thirsting for revenge.

Until this afternoon he had believed that he had made a mistake about Castleton. His original information had come from Banks—and to-day Banks had again asserted that Castleton was actually the "hot-as-mustard" blade that rumour had proclaimed. And on the top of that Racke had seen the recent meeting. He wanted to know more about it. He was determined to know more.

"I say, Banks!"

Mr. Banks looked round and frowned at the two juniors. "I'm not feelin' any too good-tempered this afternoon, Mr. Racke," he said sourly. "You've got nothin' to come—"

"We know that," interrupted Racke. "Just our luck to back the wrong horse! Still, he only came in a length behind the winner, didn't he? We wanted to speak to you about Castleton."

Mr. Banks scowled.

"Don't talk to me about young Castleton!" he snapped. "Bar me in the street, would he? Just because he's at St. Jim's now, hey? Too good for the likes o' me, is he?"

"You saw him, didn't you?" asked Racke eagerly. "Is he the fellow you were tellin' us about? Is he the chap who got mixed up in a brawl in Piccadilly and nearly got arrested?"

Mr. Banks frowned.

"Didn't I tell you he was?" he retorted. "Of course, he's the same! I'd know him in a thousand. Didn't I do lots of business with him last season? He's had pounds o' my money, the young blighter!"

"And I'll bet you've had pounds of his," said Clampe.

"Which I haven't!" growled Mr. Banks. "That kid had the luck of the deuce! He always beat me, he did! Still, I didn't bear him no ill-will because of that. Business is business. When I loses I pays. But it riles me when my hand's ignored, and I'm treated like I was dirt!"

"Wouldn't he recognise you, then?" asked Racke.

"Turned his nose up, he did!" said Mr. Banks heatedly. "Swore he'd never seen me before! What's come over him? Reformed?" he added with a sneer. "Some of them nambypamby schoolmates of yours got hold of him?"

Racke frowned.

"He's deep," he replied. "He's foolin' everybody that he's a good little Eric, and that he spent all his time, at his other school, on sports."

"That's good!" said Banks savagely. "Ho, ho! That's rich! Sports, eh? What he meant to say was sport! You couldn't keep him away from the 'orses! Ay, and card-playin', too. Many's the game I've had with him. Hottest young rip I ever came across!"

Mr. Banks was thinking of Alan Castleton, but he could not be blamed for confusing that young rascal with Arthur, his twin brother. In appearance the pair were identical. It was in character that they differed so greatly.

"Well, there's no mistake about it," said Racke, after a pause. "The trouble is, the fools won't believe us when we tell them the truth. They'd rather take Castleton at his own rotten word."

"Well, I know him, but I don't want to see him no more," said Mr. Banks. "If I ain't good enough for the likes of that young spark he can keep to himself! A fine sort of young scamp, too! I could tell you a lot o' things about Castleton if I liked."

"What sort of things?" asked Racke eagerly.

"Things as his schoolmaster wouldn't like to 'ear," replied the bookmaker. "What about that time he half-killed a kid over in Twickenham?"

"When was that?" asked Racke.

"Two or three months ago now," said Mr. Banks. "But I 'eard all about it. Why, the young rip boasted about it to me. Him and three of his sporty pals went into a shop, and got fresh with the young lady behind the counter. So another youngster, who 'appened to be in the shop, ups and gives him one to be goin' on with. So what does young Castleton do? He trips the kid up, and swipes him one that lays 'im out for half an hour. Might easily have cracked his skull, that might. A dangerous young ruffian, if you ask me!"

"By gad!" said Racke. "So that's the man we've got in the Shell, is it? You're sure he's the same one, Banks?"

"Sure?" snapped Banks.

"Look 'ere, Mr. Racke—"

"He came from Walsing Grammar School—"

"I don't care where he came from!" interrupted the bookmaker harshly. "He's the same young scamp, and I know what I'm talkin' about! Castleton his name is. And—yes—that's right! A grammar school, eh? Yes, Walsing Grammar School. I never saw the place, but that's it sure enough."

THE GEM LIBRARY.—No. 1,023.

Banks was quite sincere in this statement, and he could be excused, perhaps, for the additional mistake. For Alan had also attended a grammar school before going off to St. Frank's, and the name meant little or nothing to Banks. Walsing was as good as any other.

CHAPTER 4.

The Germ of a Plot!

"WE'VE got him now!"

Aubrey Racke made that remark in gloating tones as he and Leslie Clampe battled against the blustering wind on their way back to St. Jim's. The Wayland road was exposed to the full force of the sudden gale, and the two Shell fellows were having hard work to pedal against the blast.

"Got him?" repeated Clampe. "How have we got him? Better let the beast alone—that's my advice."

"I don't want your advice," said Racke sourly. "Castleton's in the School House, anyhow, and that makes a difference. Whether you like it or not, I'm goin' to expose him in his true colours! I can't stick these rotten turncoats!"

"How are you goin' to work the oracle?"

"I don't know yet—but I'll think of a way," retorted Racke. "By gad, I'll expose this beastly hypocrite! Pretends to be a saint, does he? I'll show him up—before everybody, too!"

But Clampe was not so sure.

"How about that picture of the rotter in the illustrated weekly?" he asked. "All the fellows think that Castleton is a blessed hero. Tom Merry is even thinking of puttin' him in the eleven!"

"I know that," said Racke. "I'm not denyin' that Castleton was skipper of his rotten grammar school. He probably was. I expect the place is only a hole, anyhow. The man must be two-faced. He pretends to be a great sportsman, and yet he's a goer, too."

"But how are you goin' to make everybody believe it?" asked Clampe. "They won't accept your word, Racke. And they won't take any notice if you quote Banks. I don't see what the thump you can do. The man's dug himself in."

"Then I'll dig him out!" said Racke. "What about that affair at Twickenham?"

"What about it?"

"I shan't think much of myself if I can't conjure up a plot to show him up," replied Racke confidently. "The idea is to prepare a trap. See? Then I'll get Castleton to fall into it."

"Sounds easy," said Clampe. "But what if Castleton won't bite? Even Banks admits he's a hard nut! Confound this wind! It seems to be gettin' worse all the time. Rainin' now, too! Blow it!"

"But Racke was not thinking of the wind or the rain. "A trap!" he said gloatingly. "Yes, by gad, that's the scheme! But how? If only I can think of somethin'—"

He broke off, his eyes glittering.

"Yes, that Twickenham business," he said. "Castleton tripped up some kid and knocked him out for half an hour! Might have cracked his skull! Gad! That's the line to work on."

"I expect Banks exaggerated."

"I expect he did, too; but that doesn't make any difference," said Racke. "The affair was pretty rotten, you can bet, and Castleton is bound to remember it. He couldn't forget an affair of that sort. I'll trap him this evenin'!"

"How?"

"Never mind how!" replied Racke, between his teeth. "I've got a glimmerin' of an idea, and I'll have it all straight soon. Come over to the School House Common-room this evenin', Clampe, and you'll have some entertainment. By gad, I shall be pleased to see that hypocrite exposed!"

And Racke continued to exercise his vindictive brain. The fact that Castleton was upright and honourable galled him. He had expected the new fellow to join

The Solution of Last Week's "HIDDEN NAMES" PUZZLE!

1. We go regularly on capital botany tours through summer rye, and dig by crooked paths for red ferns. (Gore, Talbot, Merry, Digby, Crooke, Redfern.)

2. We like Virgil more, but will risk no Xenophon. (Gilmore, Knox.)

3. The holidays have begun now; we go by rail to-night to Greyfriars, and to-morrow we gather at Cliff House. (Gunn, Railton, Ratcliff.)

4. When fellows yell "Ow!" there is a poker, red-hot, to explain it! (Lowther, Kerr.)

5. An injury obtained in football fray needs lint on; then rest leg erect. (Frayne, Linton, St. Leger.)

6. Our cooks bake really delicious cakes, surprisingly nice; James, on seeing them, an enthusiastic howl emits. (Baker, Glyn, Jameson, Chowle.)

7. We are all at home, and agree there is no blessing like the study feed we now enjoy. (Latham, Noble, Owen.)

his own particular vicious set, and Arthur's contempt for him aroused all his animosity. He was doubly incensed because he believed Arthur to be a "reformed" character. He little dreamt that Arthur was a totally different person from the one he had in mind.

And while Racke was thinking thus, Blake & Co. had reached Rylcombe, and had encountered Tom Merry and Manners and Lowther of the Shell. The Terrible Three had been to the station to inquire after an expected hamper. It hadn't arrived, and their visions of a sumptuous tea had faded.

Blake felt it his duty to tell of the incident between Castleton and Banks. And Tom Merry looked rather uncomfortable as he listened.

"It seems funny," he admitted at length. "But it's none of our bizney."

Blake coloured.

"Is that a gentle hint that I'm nose?" he demanded.

"No, of course not!" smiled Tom. "Don't be an ass, Blake!"

"Well, you said—"

"It was quite right for you to tell me," interrupted the cheery Shell skipper. "Castleton is in my Form, and I'm thinking about giving him a trial in to-morrow's House match."

"Bwavo!" said Arthur Augustus approvingly. "Bai Jove! I wogard that as distinctly sportin' of you, Tom Mewwy. It is only fair that the new fellow should have an opportunity to show his prowess."

"The best footballer that Walsing ever produced!" grinned Tom Merry. "We've got to give the man a chance. And I must say he's shown some first-class form in practice. As for this meeting with Banks, I don't quite know what to make of it. It seems to prove that Castleton knows the man, anyhow."

"It seems to prove that Racke's yarns were right!" growled Blake.

"I uttahly wufete the insituation!" said D'Arcy wrathfully. "Castleton is a wippah! I have said so fwom the vewy first. I am surprised at you, Blake, for bein' so down on the fellow. He's done nothin' to you."

"I'm not down on him!" roared Blake.

"Weally, Blake—"

"I'm only judging by what I see, you crass idiot!"

"I wufese to be chawactahised as a cwass idiot!" said Gussy. "And there is no need to woah at a fellow, Blake. I have wepeatedly wotested about your habit of woahin'! I would wemind you that I am not deaf!"

"Blake's right, Gussy," said Tom Merry. "We've got to judge by what we see.

Can't get away from it. Seeing is believing. That's the rummy part about the whole affair. Castleton's one of the nicest chaps imaginable when you're talking to him, face to face—"

"Yaas, wathah!"

"Yet Banks comes up to him in the friendliest possible manner," went on Tom, frowning. "And Banks is even more disreputable than that beast, Joe Lodgey, of the Green Man. But we mustn't judge. Banks is the sort of brute to force his company on a chap who doesn't want it. It's rather a pity you didn't wait to see how Castleton took Banks' overtures."

"Yaas, wathah!" agreed Arthur Augustus promptly. "I wogard it as a vewy important point. I wotested at the time, but these wottahs took no notice of me. Bai Jove, I must wemark that you are bwainy, Tom Mewwy."

Tom Merry bowed low.

"What greater praise could one desire?" he murmured.

"Pway cease wottin', you sillay, ass!" frowned Gussy. "It might make all the difference if we could discovah how Castleton weturned Banks' gweetin'. I wathah think we should make some inqwies."

"I say, you fellows—"

Baggy Trimble jumped off his bicycle and joined the group.

"Clear off, Trimble!" said Blake curtly. "We're busy."

"Yes; but I've got some news!" panted Baggy. "I saw Castleton hobnobbing with that beast, Banks, in Wayland, and—"

"Hobnobbing with him?" interrupted Herries.

"Yes, rather!" said Baggy. "Banks was all over him."

"Here's a witness," said Monty Lowther, with a wink. "I'll bet Baggy didn't discreetly fade away when he spotted Banks extending the glad paw. What happened, Trimble? Tell us all about it."

"Weally, Lowthah—"

"Rats!" said Lowther. "Didn't you just say that you wanted to make some inquiries? Well, here's a genuine eye-witness, straight from the scene of action. What happened when Banks greeted the new chap, Trimble? Did they shake hands or did they only kiss?"

"I pwotest—"

"They shook hands, and stood talking like old pals," said Trimble, drawing upon his imagination. "Castleton seemed as pleased as punch to meet Banks, and I believe he put some bets on with him. And after that I believe they went into a pub together. I didn't actually see them go in, but they walked off, arm-in-arm, and I believe they popped in to have a game of billiards."

"You believe a lot!" said Blake tartly.

"Yaas, wathah!" said Arthur Augustus. "I twust, deah boys, that you don't wppose to cwedit the statements of this unwelable witness? We all know that Twimble has a fwightful habit of tellin' woppahs!"

"Oh, really, Gussy!" protested Trimble. "I saw everything."

"Did you see Banks wave to Castleton?" asked Tom Merry.

"Yes."

"And did you see Castleton wave back?" asked Lowther. "Did you hear Castleton shout out, 'Why, it's dear old Bankie, my old college chum'? Did you hear Castleton say that?"

Baggy Trimble nodded.

"Rather!" he said coolly. "I was only ten yards off, and I heard every word."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You fwightful wottah!" roared D'Arcy. "When Banks

waved, Castleton didn't take any notice whatevah! As for callin' Banks his old college chum—"

"It's all right, Gussy," chuckled Lowther. "I only said that to trip this young liar up! The Court unanimously decides that this witness' evidence is unreliable. He is hereby sentenced to five bumps."

"Hi! Leggo!" hooted Baggy wildly. "Oh dear! I—I didn't actually hear those exact words. I didn't actually see— Yarooop!"

Whatever Baggy Trimble actually saw in Wayland there was no question of what he actually felt in Rylcombe.

Bump, bump, bump!

"Yow! Youp!" he howled, as he was seized and bumped by the School House juniors. "Yaroooh!"

Baggy fled, and after that he was strangely silent on the subject of Castleton's meeting with Mr. James Joseph Banks.

SEE HOW MANY YOU CAN DISCOVER, BOYS!

HIDDEN NAMES!



In each of the following sentences you will find concealed the names of a number of St. Jim's characters, either boys, masters, or members of the domestic staff. Study the sentences carefully, and see how many names you can discover. The complete solutions will be published next week.

1. Having run, dying for food, the pig got to the tuckshop for a feed, which he polished off in no time.
2. I had an egg Sunday; ham Monday; a wriggly nice eel Tuesday; and a mussel by the seashore Wednesday.
3. The wild rakes drove their car in manner so reckless, nor thought of danger till the brook engulfed them.
4. The aeroplane can skim poles, and almost trim bleak hedgerows, and see where it goes to by Mars' heavenly light.
5. The German master is a Herr I especially dislike; I am not at all at home with him.
6. When you are ill you owe nice compliments to the nurse; her tonic lives in your memory.
7. Pell-mell I shall rush for my GEM on Wednesday; the rush denotes my enthusiasm.

CHAPTER 5.

The Head's Peril!

DR. HOLMES paused uncertainly. "Dear me!" he murmured. "This is most sudden!"

The headmaster of St. Jim's was walking up Rylcombe Lane, and the evening shadows had grown dim. The day had closed in with an unexpected burst of fury. The gale of the afternoon was developing into a hurricane.

It had all come so abruptly, too. Dr. Holmes had had no idea that the weather was going to get so bad, and he had started out without even an umbrella. Even when he had left the village, ten minutes earlier, there had only been a few spots of rain. The wind was somewhat high, but only to be expected at that time of the year.

And now, in a moment, a hurricane had burst. It was almost like a cyclone in its terrific fury. A swift roar of wind and rain. The gale came hooting over the hedgerows, rising in shrieking gusts. And with it the rain drove along with blinding force. Dr. Holmes was caught midway between the village and the school, and there was nothing for it but to hurry onwards. There was no shelter here.

"Good gracious!" he murmured. "An extraordinary storm! I had no idea that it was about to break! I must hurry!"

Overhead the sky was heavily overcast. Thick, threatening clouds were scudding across the zenith, and the evening light was practically blotted out by the premature darkness.

Dr. Holmes had left himself comfortable time to get to St. Jim's well before calling-over. But now he realised that he would not be able to preside in Big Hall, for his first task would be to change his clothes. And he had had one or two announcements to make, too. It was most annoying.

"I should have waited if I had guessed what was coming," murmured the old gentleman, as he fought on against the driving wind. "Most foolish of me! Most incautious! Dear me! It is getting worse every minute! I am positively alarmed!"

Indeed, it was as much as the Head could do to walk on. The gale was driving over the low hedge on his side, gathering tremendous force as it swept across the barren expanse of Wayland Moor.

And it hit the Head like something solid. It was impossible to progress without bending his head blindly down, and thus protecting his face. Hail was mixed with the rain, and the force of the tiny ice-stones was deadly.

Blindly Dr. Holmes battled on. Zoom-zoom! The storm shrieked and howled with unbelievable ferocity. It was so severe, indeed, that it could not possibly last. It was just a squall, and would probably be over within a few minutes. But while it lasted it was devastating.

The sky had now become as black as ink, and the unfortunate Head had lost his bearings. He only knew that he was still in the lane and struggling onwards. More than once he wandered on to the grass which bordered the road, and it was only these signs which told him where he was.

With wild intensity the wind screamed over the hedge, and then came a sudden, ominous crack. It was almost like a pistol-shot, but a hundred times as intense. Even the roar of the wind could not drown it.

A stately tree sagged giddily, and came heeling over towards the lane. That fiercest gust of all had proved too much for the ancient sentinel, which had stood the strain of countless hurricanes.

Crash, crash! Dr. Holmes knew nothing of his danger. With his head bent low, he was unable to see, and with his ears deafened by the rushing wind he knew nothing of that threatening crack. He walked on, straight into the path of the falling tree.

It was coming over with fearful force, and it seemed that nothing could possibly save the Head of St. Jim's from a tragic end.

And then, from the rear, a shadow appeared. A figure was running up. And it seemed that this figure had no illusions regarding the danger. There was no time to shout a warning, and such a warning, in any case, might have been futile. For the Head would never have heard it.

It was action or nothing! And as the tree came thundering down into the lane the figure ran wildly up, seized Dr. Holmes, and wrenched him round. The Head was startled beyond measure. For an instant he had vague fears of footpads.

"Good heavens!" he gasped. "What on earth—"

THE GEM LIBRARY.—No. 1,023.

He was forced round by sheer strength. His rescuer gave him one violent heave, and the next second the Head was reeling back, to find himself entangled and confused by a mass of twigs.

Thud, thud! The earth shook with the sheer force of it, as the heavy trunk crashed across the lane. And then came a gasping cry of agony:

"My leg! Oh, my leg!" And then not another human sound! The shriek of the wind, the hissing of the rain and hail. Dr. Holmes came out of his groping bewilderment.

"Who's there?" he asked sharply. But the howl of the wind and the roar of the rain made it impossible for him to hear anything beyond. He looked closely in every direction, but the surrounding darkness was such that he could tell nothing. For a moment he half thought that he had imagined the cry. He groped through the branches of the fallen tree and managed to fight his way clear.

"Who's there?" he shouted again. But still there was no reply from the darkness. And at that moment, just when Dr. Holmes was beginning to believe that his imagination had indeed run riot, he caught sight of two gleaming lights coming round the bend in the lane.

A motor-car was approaching! The Head felt very relieved. Up till now he had been utterly alone, and the experience was beginning to get on his nerves. He ran towards the approaching motor-car, shouting a warning about the fallen tree. And his relief was considerable when the motor-car stopped and he recognised the figure of Mr. Railton.

"Good gracious, Dr. Holmes!" exclaimed Mr. Railton sharply. "Is anything the matter?"

"I am glad you have come, Mr. Railton!" panted Dr. Holmes. "I have had a dreadful experience—a terrible adventure! By the merest chance I have been saved from death, although I cannot possibly understand how."

"But, my dear sir—" began the Housemaster. "Waste no time, Mr. Railton!" interrupted the agitated Head. "An unfortunate boy is pinned down by this fallen tree!"

"But what happened?" asked Mr. Railton, leaping out of the car.

"I don't know," said the Head hoarsely. "I really don't know, Mr. Railton! I was fighting my way up the lane against this dreadful wind when, without warning, I felt myself seized by somebody unknown, and whirled back. The next second I was in the midst of a mass of twigs and small branches."

"Good gracious!" said Mr. Railton. "I hope you are not hurt, sir!"

"No, no!" said the Head. "A mere scratch or two—nothing! But I should have been assuredly killed if that boy had not pulled me back in the nick of time. I had been walking blindly, and I had no idea of the danger."

"And you did not see this plucky youngster?"

"I saw nothing of him." "Then how do you know he was a boy?" "Through the roar of the wind I heard a shout of agony—'My leg—my leg!'—and I know that the words were uttered by a boy," replied the Head. "For mercy's sake, Mr. Railton, hurry! He is still pinned down, I have no doubt!"

They both ran towards the tree, Mr. Railton only pausing for a moment to get a powerful electric-torch from the car. There was the tree—a fallen monarch. It was athwart the lane, and the jagged ends of smashed branches told grimly of the force of the fall. Anybody caught beneath that awful weight—

"Poor boy—poor boy!" said the Head huskily. "He is here somewhere."

But soon afterwards Mr. Railton was looking at him in a curious way. For there was no sign of any living thing. Every inch of the surrounding ground was searched by the active Housemaster. He climbed over the branches and shed his light into every conceivable spot.

But nothing was there. Had Dr. Holmes imagined the dramatic incident, Mr. Railton asked himself?

CHAPTER 6.

Missing—A Hero!

"EXTRAORDINARY!" said the Head, in an agitated voice.

Mr. Railton gave him another strange glance. "Are you quite sure that you actually heard this voice?" he asked. "Are you sure that a boy pulled you back—"

"I may have been bewildered by the storm, Mr. Railton, but I was not so bewildered that I should imagine such a

thing," said Dr. Holmes quietly. "The boy was here, and he saved me. I cannot possibly understand what has become of him. And I know that his leg was injured, too. I shall never forget that cry of his."

"We can only assume, then, that he has crawled away," said Mr. Railton gravely. "Perhaps we shall find him beyond the tree—between this spot and St. Jim's. We must hurry on without any further loss of time."

"Yes, yes!" exclaimed the Head. "You must leave your car here, Mr. Railton. It can be collected afterwards. In any case, it is impossible for you to progress farther."

Mr. Railton assisted the Head over the tangle of branches, and very soon they were both hurrying along towards the school. But they saw nothing of the unknown rescuer during that walk, and when they arrived in the old quad of St. Jim's they found it deserted. Lights were gleaming in both the School House and the New House, and the Head came to a sudden decision.

"Calling-over is now being held," he said. "I must go into Big Hall and make inquiries. If that boy belongs to St. Jim's I want to find him. I must thank him. I must publicly acclaim his bravery. Come, Mr. Railton!"

"But, my dear sir!" protested the Housemaster. "You are soaked! Your clothing is torn, and you are suffering from scratches and—"

"Tut, tut!" interrupted the Head. "That matters nothing, Mr. Railton! I must find out about that boy—without a ny delay!"

And he went straight into the School House, and appeared on the platform in Big Hall exactly as he was. The school received a big surprise when the Head walked on to the dais, soaked, bedraggled, and dishevelled. There was an immediate hush.

"Boys!" said the Head quietly. "I have just had a dreadful experience. By the merest chance I have been saved from death—and I believe that a boy belonging to this school is responsible for saving my life. At the risk of his own safety this boy dragged me back when it seemed that nothing but death could befall me. I want to find out who he is—and I want to thank him."

And the Head gave the simple details. There was an immediate silence.

"Who's the giddy hero?" murmured Blake, looking round. "Yaas, wathah!" said D'Arcy. "We've heard nothin' about the mattah!"

Kildare, the school captain, stood forward.

"Come along!" he shouted. "Who's the fellow who did this?"

No response.

"It would be as well to see if any boy is missing," said the Head. "I am certain this boy was injured, and he may even now be lying out in the wind and rain, suffering. Let us finish the roll-call without any further delay."

And so it went on. But when every name had been called and everybody had answered, there was a startled hush. It seemed that nobody at St. Jim's had done this deed. The hero was missing.

"I can only conclude that the boy does not belong to St. Jim's," said the Head. "In one respect I am relieved—

but, at the same time, this boy must be found. His leg is injured, and he may be in grievous agony. I shall institute a search forthwith."

And the school was dismissed.

Naturally, the affair created a kind of mild sensation. Everybody was asking questions, and everybody was wondering who could have done that brave act.

"Well, the chap seems to have been made of the right stuff, whoever he was," said Tom Merry, as he went out of Big Hall with two or three other juniors. "He dashed up at the right moment and dragged the Head back. It's a funny thing they couldn't find him, though."

"Yaas, wathah!" said Arthur Augustus, shaking his head. "He pwobably went through a gap in the hedge, and crawled away somewah. I wathah think we ought to get up a search party and find the fellow."

"We're all willing to have a shot at it," said Blake. "But nobody has given any order yet. I expect the prefects and the Sixth-Formers will be on the job. They'll only drag us in after they've failed."

"It couldn't have happened long ago," said Blake. "We only came up the lane just before the storm."

"You fwightful fibbah!" roared D'Arcy. "When Banks wathed, Castleton didn't take any noties whatevah!" "Quite right, Gussy!" said Lowther. "The Court sentences Baggy to five bumps for being an unreliable witness!" "Hi! Leggo!" hooted Baggy Trimble, as he was seized by the School House juniors. "I didn't actually see—I didn't hear—Yarooop!" (See Chapter 4.)



"Castleton came in after we did," said Herries. "Where's Castleton? Perhaps he saw somebody in the lane?" Arthur Castleton happened to be near, but he shook his head.

"I didn't see anybody," he replied. "It was nearly dark, of course, but I should have seen a fellow if he had been walking either up or down the lane. Jolly rummy business, if you ask me."

"Yaas, wathah!" declared Gussy. "I can onlay conclude, deah boys, that the chap was a villagah. Or pewwaps he was one of the Wylcombe Gwammah School chaps. Wouldn't it be a good ideah to wing up the Gwammah School and make inqwivies?"

"I expect the Head's doing that already," said Tom Merry. "We haven't been asked to do anything, anyhow. We can only wait and hear what the developments are."

"That's all," said Castleton.

"Anyhow, we've got a jolly good clue as to his identity," said Blake. "The fellow injured his leg, and that's pretty easy to follow. Puzzle—find the hero with the injured leg."

Arthur laughed.

"I don't know so much about hero," he said smilingly. "According to the Head's story, the fellow only jumped forward and dragged the Head back. There was nothing particularly brave in that."

"Oh, wasn't there?" said Blake, with a strange look at Castleton. "What about that tree falling? The chap stood a jolly good chance of getting crushed to death. It was only a matter of seconds, as it was."

"Yaas, and he nearly got killed, anyhow," said D'Arcy. "What about his injured leg?"

"Well, it doesn't seem to have been particularly bad, does it?" laughed Castleton. "The man was able to get up and walk away. Any of you fellows would have done the same thing if you had been there."

"All the same, Castleton, the action was that of a genuine sportsman," said Tom Merry quietly. "There's no need to belittle his performance."

"Sorry!" said Arthur, colouring. "I didn't mean that—not in that way, anyhow."

He walked off, and the group of juniors looked after him rather wonderingly.

"That wasn't like Castleton," said Tom Merry, with a frown. "He's a queer bird. A bit of a mystery, one way and another."

"I think I had better have a word with Castleton," said Arthur Augustus severely. "He ought to know better!"

"Yes, that's right, Gussy," said Blake. "You find him, and give him a good ticking off."

Baggy Trimble came rolling up, and it was rather significant that he was limping.

"Hallo!" said Monty Lowther. "Had an accident, Baggy? Hurt your leg?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Baggy is the hero!"

"That's what I thought!" said Lowther gravely. "Just like Trimble, too! He's kept quiet all this time, hiding his light under a bushel!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Better report to the Head, Baggy, and receive his grateful thanks," said Blake. "Such modesty as this is—"

"You fathead!" said Baggy Trimble. "I've got a stone in my shoe!"

"Oh!" said Lowther. "Then you haven't injured your leg?"

"Not that I know of!"

"So you didn't save the Head's life?"

"Well, no!" admitted Trimble. "Of course, if I had been there—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I don't see any reason for cackling!" said Baggy with dignity. "If I had been on the spot, instead of this unknown chap, I should have rushed forward just the same, and the Head's life would have been saved in exactly the same manner! We Trimbles don't hesitate when there's danger!"

"I've always thought so!" said Monty Lowther. "You always bunk, don't you?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Baggy Trimble rolled off, and the juniors felt convinced that he was not the unknown hero. In fact, they not only felt it, but they knew it!

CHAPTER 7.

The Fellow Who Did It!

"JUST a minute, deah boy!"

Arthur Castleton looked round, just as he was about to enter Study No. 2 in the Shell passage.

Arthur Augustus D'Arcy had just turned the corner, and he was coming up with elegant strides.

"Want me?" asked Arthur smiling.

"Yaas, wathah!"

D'Arcy arrived, and he proceeded to gaze severely at Arthur through his eyeglass. In fact, the scrutiny was so searching that the new fellow wondered what was the matter.

"Something wrong, old man?" he asked concernedly.

"Well, deah boy, the fact is—"

"Waistcoat the wrong colour?"

"Good gwacious, no!"

"Trousers too short?"

"Weally, Castleton, I have no quawwel with your trowsahs!"

"Then it must be the boots!" said Castleton, with conviction. "Sorry about the boots, D'Arcy, old scout. I suppose I ought to have cleaned them—"

"I will admit that your boots are wathah dirtay, deah boy," interrupted Arthur Augustus. "But the fact is, I weally came to speak to you on quite anotheah mattah. It is a somewhat delicate subject, to tell you the truth."

"Ah, I understand!" said Arthur, nodding. "We're all liable to be hard up at times—even the best of us."

"Eh?" gasped D'Arcy.

"I'm not particularly flush at the moment, but I'm willing to spring five bob, if that's any use," said Arthur generously.

"I'll make it a quid by the end of the week—"

"Gweat Scott!" ejaculated Gussy. "Pway do not imagine, you fwithful ass, that I have come to you askin' for a loan."

"But didn't you say it was a delicate matter?"

"Yaas, wathah! But—"

"If it's a delicate matter, it must be connected with money or clothing!" said Castleton firmly. "I know you, Gussy, and I know your little ways. So you can't spoof me."

"I can assure you, Castleton, that the subject is nothin' to do with monay or with clothes," said Arthur Augustus. "Not long ago you were wathah unspordin'—if I may use the word."

"Unspordin'?" repeated Arthur, rather pained. "I don't remember, D'Arcy."

"You distinctly said, deah boy, that the fellow who saved the Head's life did nothin' particularly bwave," continued Gussy, in severe tones. "In fact, you belittled the performance in a vewy fwithful mannah! Ewewybody is of the opinion that the chap is deservin' of the highest pwise."

You must wemembah that he wisked his own life in ordah to save Dr. Holmes. And that was the act of a weal hewo. Any fellow who disagwees is goin' to have a quawwel with me."

Castleton looked solemn.

"I won't risk a quarrel with you, Gussy, so I'll agree with you," he said promptly. "Awfully sorry if you thought I was unspordin'. I take it back."

"Then ewewythin' is all wight," said Arthur Augustus, beaming.

"That's a relief!" said Arthur. "At the same time, Gussy, I think it would be better if you stopped gassing about the fellow. We don't know who he is, and I don't suppose we ever shall know. Anything else of importance to say? If not, I'll ask you to excuse me. You may have forgotten that the Shell fellows are rather expected to do prep in the evening."

"Yaas, wathah!" said D'Arcy. "If it comes to that, old thing, the Fourth are supposed to do pwep, too."

"Frightful bore, isn't it?" asked Arthur, smiling.

"Weally, Castleton, I do not know quite what to make of you," said Arthur Augustus, regarding the new fellow with a critical eye. "In many ways, you are a wemarkable chap."

"Very remarkable!" said Aubrey Racke, coming up the passage in D'Arcy's rear. "By gad, rather! What do you say, Crooke? Isn't Castleton a remarkable chap?"

"Oh, shut up!" said Crooke gruffly.

"I shouldn't be surprised if somethin' interestin' happens this evenin'," went on Racke coolly. "It's awfully cheerin' to have these fellows in the Shell. They help to pass the idle hours."

And, with a grin, Racke and Crooke disappeared into Study No. 7, and the door closed with a slam.

"Bai Jove!" said Arthur Augustus hotly. "The wascal! Whatevah did he mean, Castleton?"

Arthur shrugged his shoulders.

"What's the good of asking me?" he asked. "Racke isn't one of my friends, and, thank goodness, I'm not responsible for what he says. Well, Gussy, are you ready to let me go now?"

"Weally, Castleton, I was not awah that I was keepin' you," said D'Arcy. "I onlay came to wemontswate with you wegardin' the chap who saved the Head's life. As we have settled that little mattah, I had better be gettin' back to Studay No. 6. Blake and Hewwies and Dig will pwobably be wondahin' whatevah has become of me."

And Gussy turned on his heel and walked off down the Shell passage.

But even now Arthur Castleton was not allowed to enter his study. For Tom Merry came along just at that moment, and he gave the new fellow a hail.

"Half a jiffy, Castleton!" he sang out.

"As many as you like!" smiled Arthur genially.

"It's about the footer to-morrow," said Tom, as he came to a halt in front of the doorway of Study No. 2. "I am going to give you a place in the School House eleven for to-morrow afternoon's House match."

Arthur coloured with pleasure.

"Really?" he asked eagerly. "I say, Merry, that's ripping of you!"

"Rats!" said Tom. "You were the best footballer at Walsing, weren't you?"

"But it's a far cry from Walsing to St. Jim's!" replied Arthur, with a smile.

"All the same, you're going to have a trial to-morrow," went on the Shell skipper. "I'm giving you the inside-right position."

"That's too gorgeous for words!" exclaimed Arthur, his eyes sparkling. "I've always played on the right wing—generally inside man, too. You're a brick, Merry!"

"Rats again!" said Tom, with a nod. "Don't forget to turn up for practice in the morning."

"Forget!" said Arthur. "I'm more likely to forget to go to bed to-night!"

His pleasure was so obvious that Tom Merry felt a warm glow within him. Somehow, there was something exceedingly likeable about Arthur Castleton. And yet it was impossible to say exactly why he was so likeable. There was an intangible something about him which gripped a fellow. It was impossible to imagine that this chap was anything but upright and genuine—genuine to his very marrow.

"So that's settled," went on Tom, smiling.

"Thanks, Merry—thanks again!" said Arthur quietly.

Tom Merry went off, having failed to notice that a sudden expression of alarm had come into Arthur's eyes. Not only alarm, but dismay, too. A curious frightened dismay. It was as though he had just realised something. He stood there, in the doorway of Study No. 2, watching Tom Merry as he went down the passage. And then at last Tom turned the corner and disappeared. Arthur still leaned against the doorpost, and his figure had suddenly drooped.

It was an honour for a new fellow to be chosen to play in a House match during his very first week at the school. Very few new juniors were selected for such treatment. And it seemed all the more curious that Arthur's first joy should now have turned to something that was even more acute than dismay. He gave a little groan as he turned into the study and entered. He closed the door and locked it.

"Oh, my hat!" he breathed softly.

He was glad that Frere was not there. Frere was his study-mate, quite a decent sort of chap, and under ordinary circumstances Arthur would have been glad enough of his company. But just at the moment he wanted to be alone.

Alone!

He glanced hastily at the window, and then started to move across in order to draw the blinds. But he faltered, and an expression of exquisite agony came over his face.

His features were twisted, and a gasp came out of his throat. He clutched at the table for support.

"Oh crumbs!" he muttered, between his clenched teeth.

But he managed to get across to the window, and he drew the curtains so that none could possibly see what went on within that little room. Then he again went to the door and tried it. Yes, it was securely locked. Nobody could come in and interrupt him. He sat down on the nearest chair, and now his face had gone pale. It was still twisted, and he was compelled to bite his lip in order to restrain a cry.

Suddenly, with feverish haste, he bent down and gingerly pulled up the trouser leg from his right shin. He pulled it up well over the knee, and then pulled down his sock.

"Great Scott!" he muttered.

He stared at his leg in a dazed kind of way.

From the ankle, almost to the knee, the skin was badly grazed, and underneath the flesh was bruised—brutally, cruelly bruised. Already the colour was turning to an ominous bluey-black. And the leg was swelling, too. Arthur sat there, looking at the injury.

How he had managed to keep his face until this moment he hardly knew. But he felt sure that none of the other fellows had guessed the truth.

For Arthur Castleton was the boy who had saved Dr. Holmes from certain death out in Rylcombe Lane!

CHAPTER 8.
Arthur's Dilemma!

THE hero!
Arthur Castleton was the unknown boy who had saved the Head's life!

Only he himself knew of the agony he had suffered immediately following that valiant act of his. A

mass of the fallen branches had crashed down upon him and his leg had been pinned to the ground. He only dimly remembered giving that involuntary cry—that cry which the Head had so plainly heard above the howl of the gale.

And after that Arthur had extricated himself, and had crawled away while the Head was talking to Mr. Railton. By the skin of his teeth the new fellow had got into Big Hall in time for calling-over. And he was so successful in hiding his agony that none of his Form fellows had the slightest idea of what had actually happened.

And when the Head had called upon the hero to step forward Arthur's natural modesty had forbidden it.

He shrank from the idea of being publicly acclaimed, as the Head evidently intended. He did not want the other fellows to make a ridiculous fuss over an action which Arthur himself regarded as a trifle. Quite unwittingly he had put his foot into it when he had belittled the hero's action. Little did the other juniors realise that Arthur himself was the one they sought.

There was something in Arthur's composition which rendered it impossible for him to receive the plaudits of his fellows with any composure. Rather than face the publicity, he would for ever keep silent, no matter what pain he was called upon to bear.

If only he had not made that involuntary cry! The Head wouldn't have known, then, that his rescuer had been a boy. And so there would have been no inquiries within the school itself.

Inquiries?

Another thought came into Arthur's mind. Even now prefects were going about looking for the unknown hero! Yet what could he do to save them from this unnecessary work? To go to the headmaster and admit that he was the hero was a task from which Arthur shrank more than ever. He simply couldn't do it. Neither could he let any of the Shell fellows know.

A tramp of feet sounded out in the passage, and there were voices, too.

"Oh, my goodness!" muttered Arthur.

Hastily he drew down his trouser

leg, and pretended to be busy with some books.

For the moment, he had overlooked the fact that the door was locked. But, as it happened, the footsteps passed, and all became silent again.

Arthur sat there, wondering what he should do. If he remained in the study too long, the others might wonder what was the matter. True, he had his prep to do, but perhaps it would be just as well to go along to the Common-room for a while. At all costs, he must hide his pain, and must pretend to be quite normal.

And then he remembered Tom Merry's words of a short time before.

He had been chosen to play outside-right in the match to-morrow. No; inside-right! Arthur felt that his wits were deserting him. Yes; inside-right! The very position he loved! But how could he play football with his leg in such a condition as this? And yet, on the other hand, how could he ask to be excused?

Here was a dilemma, indeed! Neither Tom Merry, nor any of the other fellows, knew of any reason why he should cry off the football match. Tom would naturally want to know why he was anxious to stand down. And that would mean exposure. If he confessed that he had hurt his leg, the truth would be known! Everybody would at once jump to the conclusion that he—Arthur—was the fellow whom the Head sought! So what was he to do?

Nothing—except play!

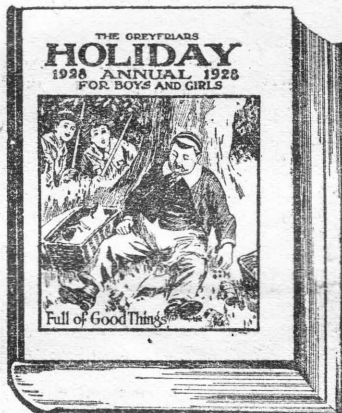
And the very thought of playing, with his leg in this condition, brought a wry grimace to Arthur's visage. It was tragically comic, in one aspect. This chance in a House match was what he had most desired. And now that the chance had come, he was a crock! A crock who daren't breathe a word about his incapacity! For to

IF YOU ARE LOOKING

**FOR A BOOK WHICH
WILL FILL THOSE
LONG EVENINGS
AHEAD WITH ENJOY-
MENT,**

**PAY A VISIT TO YOUR
NEWSAGENT TO-DAY
AND ASK HIM TO
SHOW YOU A COPY
OF THE**

**HOLIDAY ANNUAL,
NOW ON SALE!**



PRICE SIX SHILLINGS.

breathe that word would mean letting the cat out of the bag!

Once again Arthur set his teeth, and grimly decided to bear the pain, and to say nothing whatever.

"Perhaps I shall be better to-morrow!" he muttered hopefully. "My leg looks pretty awful now, but I might have a chance of giving it a rub to-night. I've got some liniment in my bag, and I shall wait until all the other fellows are asleep, and then see what I can do. I don't suppose it's so bad as I imagine. These bruises are always worst during the first hour. Anyhow, I'm not going to say anything! They won't drag it out of me, whatever they do!"

Tramp, tramp, tramp!

More footsteps coming along the passage! And this time the footsteps stopped outside the very door!

The handle rattled, and then somebody thumped upon the panel.

"Hallo!" came Frere's voice. "Who's in here?"

"It's all right!" called Arthur. "Just—just doing my prep!"

"Then what's the idea of locking the door?" asked Frere. "Do you always lock the door when you do your prep, Castleton?"

Arthur gasped, and sprang to his feet.

"Oh!" he muttered, in agony.

For a moment, he had forgotten the injury, and the sudden strain almost brought tears to his eyes. He swayed slightly, but he managed to regain his composure as he unlocked the door. Frere, entering, noticed nothing out of the common.

"Sorry!" said Arthur apologetically. "I had forgotten I'd locked the door."

Frere looked round the study rather curiously.

"Been doing something that anybody else mustn't see?" he inquired.

"Oh, don't rot!" said Arthur.

Frere sniffed the air.

"No sign of cigarette smoke!" he remarked. "You're a queer fish, Castleton! Why the dickens did you lock the door like that? If you weren't doing anything shady, what was the wheeze?"

"Oh, nothing!" said Arthur uncomfortably. "As a matter of fact, I was just going down to the Common-room."

"And so you locked the door on the inside?"

"There's no need to make a fuss about a locked door," replied Arthur quietly. "I've done nothing wrong in this study, Frere, and you needn't look so jolly suspicious. I wasn't smoking up the chimney, and you won't find any cards under the table."

And Arthur walked off.

"Jolly touchy!" muttered Frere, as he frowned after Arthur's departing form. "I wonder if there's anything in the yarn that Baggy Trimble has been spreading about the place? I wonder if Castleton is really a pal of Banks, the bookie. It seems a bit steep, but the chap is so mysterious that one hardly knows what the dickens to think!"

In the meantime, there was quite a lot of conversation in the Common-room, on that very same subject.

Baggy Trimble, Mellish, and one or two others, were discussing Arthur with open satisfaction. The affair of the unknown hero had been almost forgotten by this time. It was taken for granted that the boy did not belong to St. Jim's, and so there was no local interest. And it was felt, too, that Dr. Holmes had possibly exaggerated the affair.

"There's no doubt about it, Castleton is a dark horse," Mellish was saying. "He pretends to be a sportsman, fond of footer, and all sorts of games, and yet—"

"Games is the right word!" chuckled Baggy Trimble, with a fatuous smirk. "Banker and nap for choice!"

"Yes, and putting money on horses!" went on Mellish. "I'll bet that's why he met Banks in Wayland this afternoon. You saw Castleton speaking to Banks, didn't you, Blake?"

Blake glanced round.

"Rats!" he replied gruffly.

"But didn't you?" insisted Mellish.

"Go and eat coke!" retorted Blake. "I don't want to hear any of your rotten scandalmongering! If you fellows don't go out, I'll smash you!"

"Dear man, allow me to voice my support," drawled Ralph Reckness Cardew, lounging over. "It is, quite possible that Castleton is a deep lad, but what business is it of ours? Why shouldn't he meet Banks if he wants to? Is there any bye-law, passed by the Wayland Council, prohibitin' people from meetin' Banks? Does he carry the plague, or the malaria, so that people mustn't go near him? Personally, I regard Banks as an awful sort

THE GEM LIBRARY.—No. 1,025.

of blighter, but I daresay he has his good points—if only you look for them long enough!"

"Oh, dry up, Cardew!" growled Blake. "Why can't you let Castleton alone?"

"My dear old cheese, I'm not touchin' him!" replied Cardew mildly. "If it comes to that, Castleton is a hell fellow—and beyond our ken. By all means, let him hoe his own row."

And just then Arthur himself came into the Common-room, and he bit his lip. He was no fool, and he knew the significance of the sudden hush that resulted upon his entry. Many juniors were glancing at him, and he understood the reason for those glances. They had been talking about him—discussing his meeting with Banks that afternoon. In a flash, Arthur knew the truth. Another of his little problems!

CHAPTER 9.

Racke Means Business!

RACKE softly closed the door of Study No. 7.

"By gad!" he muttered, his eyes glittering.

"We've got him now, Crooke!"

Gerald Crooke looked up from his prep.

"Why drag me into it?" he asked. "This is your affair, Racke. I don't want to be mixed up in this bizney."

"Wait until I've got Castleton in the trap!" said Racke savagely. "He pretends to be so jolly goody-goody! But I'll make him own up this evening! I'll make him show the other fellows in the common-room what his true colours are!"

"Goin' to hold a revolver to his head?" asked Crooke, with a slight sneer.

"Not literally—but it'll be practically the same thing," replied Racke. "He won't be able to slip out of the noose that I've prepared! I've just heard him having a word with Frere, and he's gone down to the Common-room now. It's the chance I've been waitin' for!"

"And what are you goin' to do?" asked Crooke curiously.

"If you come down to the Common-room, you'll see," replied Racke coolly.

"Hang it, you might tell me!"

"No, you'll probably give the game away, or something—by grinnin' in the wrong place," said Racke. "This thing must be done carefully, my son! But I can tell you this much. Castleton knocked out a chap in a shop in Twickenham. That's the stunt I'm goin' to work. Come down to the Common-room, old bean! I can assure you it'll be frightfully interestin'!"

"It's no good doin' anythin' like that," said Crooke, with a glare. "You'll never get Castleton to admit that he half-killed a chap in Twickenham! What's the good of accusin' him in that way? You've only Banks' word to rely upon, anyhow. Perhaps the whole thing is a faked-up yarn! You don't believe Banks, I suppose?"

"Not more than I can help!" replied Racke. "But there was no reason why Banks should tell me a faked-up yarn. He knows Castleton—he's known him for months. And I believe that affair about the chap in the Twickenham shop."

"And you're goin' to make Castleton admit his guilt?"

"Yes," said Racke.

"And how are you goin' to work the oracle?"

"Old man, it'll be as easy as fallin' off a log!" grinned Racke. "I've got it all waxed up for him. I've got everythin' cut and dried. He won't be able to slip out of it—no matter how much he wriggles."

"Oh, why pester the chap?" asked Crooke. "Goodness knows, I'm no saint!"

"You're not!" agreed Racke promptly.

"No need to try any of your cheap humour on me, Racke," said Crooke unpleasantly. "As I was sayin', I'm no saint, but I don't see any reason why you should make such a dead set on this new fellow."

"You don't see it, eh?" snarled Racke, with sudden ferocity. "Well, I'll tell you! Didn't Castleton come into this very study, on his first day in the school, and smash us both up? Didn't he go for Clampe, too? We haven't had our own back for that yet! Besides, the man's an absolute fraud. He pretends to be this, that, and the other—and all the time he's grinnin' up his sleeve. He's foolin' everybody!"

"Except you?" asked Crooke.

"Yes, except me!" retorted Racke harshly. "But he won't fool the rest much longer! I'm goin' straight to the Common-room now, and I'll have him in that trap of mine within five minutes! Come and watch the fun!"

"Yes, I think I will!" said Crooke, with a grin.

He was rather curious to see what form Racke's present unpleasantness would take. He knew a great deal of Racke's character—indeed, more than any other fellow in the House. And he had a shrewd idea that Aubrey Racke

had planned something particularly unsavoury for Arthur Castleton's benefit. And Gerald Crooke himself was not any too particular when it came to a question of unsavouriness.

The precious pair arrived in the Common-room, and found everything peaceful there. Tom Merry was having a game of chess in one corner with Talbot, and Monty Lowther was giving the game the benefit of his witty remarks. Blake & Co. were over by the fireplace, discussing football. Arthur Castleton was talking with Skimpole—or, to be more exact, Skimpole was talking with Castleton. Skimpole had found a new listener—one who politely allowed him to wander on—and the genius of the Shell was making the most of his opportunity. It was not often that he got a junior to give him his wholehearted attention as Arthur was doing. But Arthur was only too glad to listen to Skimpole's long-winded nonsense, as it gave him a chance to bear the pain of his injured leg without being compelled to laugh and chatter with the others. Skimpole was short-sighted, anyhow, and would not notice a wince or two.

Racke lounged in, and sat down on one of the chairs, and obtrusively pulled out the evening paper. It wasn't actually that day's paper, but this was a small point. Racke was going to assume that it was a current issue. Nobody was likely to make any close inquiries.

For some little time Racke continued to read, as though he had deliberately come there to pass an idle, peaceful

"Yes, I did!" snapped Racke. "But there's no need for you to be actin' the fool—"

"Hold on a minute, old boy!" interrupted Cardew. "Three guesses, don't forget! Now, how about guess No. 2? Banks, the bookie, has paid up everybody after a race?"

"You—you—" began Racke.

"Wrong again!" said Ralph Reckness Cardew, with a sigh. "I'm not in good form this evenin'! Oh, well, let's have a final shot! Somethin' particularly unusual, isn't it?"

"I don't want to hear any more of your idiotic humour!" said Racke. "This item in the paper is about a schoolboy, and, what's more, he's booked for chokey!"

"Oh!" said Cardew. "It's about yourself, then?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"No, it isn't!" hooted Racke, turning red.

"But didn't you say the chap is booked for chokey?" asked Cardew.

"Yes, you fool!" yelled Racke. "And if you'll only listen for a minute, instead of tryin' to palm yourself off as a comedian, I'll read it out!"

Cardew shrugged his shoulders.

"Go ahead, then!" he said resignedly. "I won't interrupt!"

"I'll bet it's something particularly nasty!" said Blake,

ARTHUR CASTLETON'S BROTHER— MEET HIM AT ST. FRANK'S!

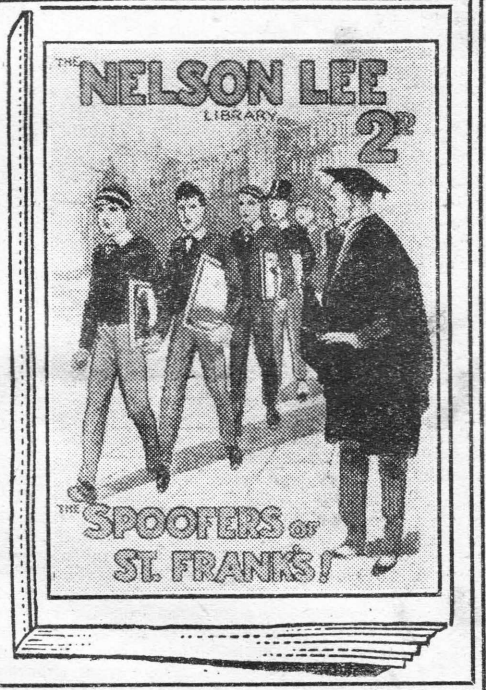
Unlike Arthur, however, Alan Castleton is several kinds of a rotter. Owing to a misunderstanding the St. Frank's juniors think he is Arthur; he goes to the school with the reputation of being a great all-round sportsman, and when Nipper & Co. find that he can't play footer, or box, they think he is a fraud. In

"THE SPOOFERS OF ST. FRANK'S!"

Alan proves himself to be a thorough cad, and he earns the dislike and contempt of practically all the juniors at St. Frank's. This powerful story of schoolboy fun and adventure is written in Edwy Searles Brooks' best style, and is a treat not to be missed. Go to your nearest newsagent now and ask for

The NELSON LEE LIBRARY

NOW ON SALE : : : : PRICE 2d.



half-hour. Crooke lounged near by, wondering when this little affair was to begin.

He did not have to wonder for long.

"By gad!" ejaculated Racke suddenly.

He looked up, but found that nobody was giving any attention to him.

"By gad!" he repeated, in a louder voice. "I say, you fellows, this is a bit funny!"

"What is it?" asked Crooke, feeling that it was up to him to help things along.

"Why, there's something jolly interestin' in this paper!" said Racke, still speaking in a loud voice. "'Listen, you fellows!"

"What is it, dear man?" inquired Cardew, glancing over. "Has your favourite for to-morrow fallen dead in his stable?"

"Don't be funny!" snapped Racke. "There's somethin' particularly unusual here!"

"Ah!" said Cardew. "Somethin' particularly unusual—eh? Can I have three guesses?"

"Don't be funny!" said Racke again, with emphasis.

"Guess No. 1," said Cardew: "Your pater has sent a donation to charity?"

"You frabjous idiot!" roared Racke.

"Wrong?" drawled Cardew mildly. "But you said it was somethin' unusual?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

with a glare. "Racke wouldn't want to read it out unless it was!"

"I wathah think we ought to bar the wotten bizney altogether!" said Arthur Augustus D'Arcy frigidly. "Why should we listen to Wacke's wotten voice, anyhow? I appeal for supportahs!"

"We're with you, Gussy!" said Levison. "Dry up, Racke!"

"Yes, shut up, Racke, you rotter!"

"All right, if you don't want to hear!" said Racke savagely. "But this is about a schoolboy—a fellow we know, too! He's done somethin' pretty rotten, and the police are after him! He's liable to be arrested at any moment!"

At last Racke had gained the attention of the Common-room, and he was ready to explode his bomb.

CHAPTER 10.

Into the Trap!

"W EALLY, you fellows—"

"Dry up, Gussy, and let Racke have his say!" interrupted Blake.

"Weally, Blake—"

"Oh, do give it a rest, Gussy!"

"I uttahly wefuse to give it a rest, Blake!" said Arthur

THE GEM LIBRARY.—No. 1,023.

Augustus coldly. "Not a minute ago you were advisin' Wacke to dwy up, and now, you fwhighful wottah, you are encouwagin' him to pwoceed with his wascally scandal!"

"My poor old Gussy," said Blake kindly, "you don't seem to understand. We're only giving Racke a little length of rope. As soon as we've heard what he's got to say, we'll bump him!"

"Bai Jove, that's not a bad ideah, Blake!"

"It's a jolly good idea!" said Monty Lowther approvingly.

"But why wait until he's read something out?" asked Herries. "Why not bump him now?"

"Yaas, wathah!"

"Hear, hear!"

Crooke could not help grinning to himself. Racke's great scheme did not seem to be working so well, after all! Aubrey Racke himself was scowling viciously. He rose to his feet and backed away, so that the crowd of inquisitive juniors should not be able to look over his shoulder.

"I'll risk it!" he said sourly. "When I've finished readin' this, you won't want to bump me! I'm more inclined to think that you'll bump somebody else!"

He glanced at the paper again.

"Do any of you fellows remember a particularly rotten sort of affair in a shop at Twickenham?" he went on, with a glance at Arthur Castleton. "It happened some months ago. A crowd of chaps from a grammar school went into the shop and started cheekin' the girl behind the counter. Another fellow who was in there, thinkin' it a bit steep, went for the ringleader and told him to dry up. And the chap went for him baldheaded, kicked him in the shins, and gave him a foul blow that sent him over backwards."

"Bai Jove!"

"What's this—a fairy tale?" asked Blake suspiciously. "We heard nothing of it, Racke. I don't believe you're reading that out of the paper at all!"

"Of course I'm not!" retorted Racke. "I'm only recallin' somethin' that happened months ago."

"Then why drag it up now, dear man?" asked Cardew.

"Why not let it remain decently buried?"

"Because there's a sequel," replied Racke, "and a pretty dramatic sequel, too!"

Inwardly he was feeling just a little bit disappointed. By this time he had expected Arthur Castleton to be showing signs of agitation. Surely his reference to that Twickenham shop should have touched some chord in Arthur's memory? He had been blunt enough, anyhow. But Arthur was listening with the other fellows, and seemed merely politely interested. There was no sign of agitation on his good-natured face. But wait! Racke could detect a strained look. Arthur even winced, and he was biting his under-lip tightly.

Racke felt more comfortable.

He thought that these were signs of the distress and agitation he had looked for. How was he to guess that Arthur was in great agony, and was doing his utmost to hide the fact? Yet this was the simple truth. Arthur knew nothing about that Twickenham affair, for the very good reason that he had never been to Twickenham in all his life, and he knew nothing of Alan's unsavoury escapade.

"I'll read from the newspaper now," said Racke. "I thought I'd just jog your memories about that other affair, that's all. If you didn't read about it in the newspapers, that was your look-out. I saw it myself, anyhow, weeks and weeks ago."

"But, weally, Wacke, I fail to undahstand—"

"You'll understand in a minute, D'Arcy!" interrupted Racke. "The police are lookin' for that boy! There's a warrant out for the arrest of that ringleader who hacked the other chap on the shins and knocked him over backwards!"

"Haven't the police been rather a long time gettin' after him?" inquired Cardew.

"The police knew nothin' about it at the time," replied Racke, with a scowl. "But that chap has just had a relapse. He's dead!"

"A pretty serious relapse, by the sound of it!" nodded Monty Lowther.

"They've discovered that his skull was fractured," continued Racke. "The poor chap has been goin' about for weeks with a cracked skull, and didn't know it. Here you are; listen to this: 'At the inquest, which was held to-day, the coroner's jury brought in a verdict of manslaughter against the unhappy boy who committed this act of unprovoked violence. We understand that a warrant has been issued for his arrest, and that the police are attempting to trace him. As soon as his present whereabouts are learned he will be arrested, and brought to Twickenham to answer this grave charge. It is most unusual for a schoolboy to be charged with manslaughter, and the result of this present case will be interesting to watch. It is almost certain that

the young rascal will be sent to a reformatory, if not to prison."

Racke paused and looked round.

"All very interesting, but why such a fuss?" asked Blake. "If that chap did all this, he deserves to go to a reformatory. He must be a pretty tough sort of scoundrel to kick a chap in the shins, knock him over backwards, and break his skull!"

"A pretty tough sort of scoundrel!" agreed Racke. "Yes, rather! And he's not so far off as you might think! His name is in the newspaper here, and I'll read it out if you like! I rather think it will give some of you a big surprise!"

"His name!" shouted a dozen voices.

"Yes—his name!" said Racke gloatingly.

He looked round with a triumphant expression in his eyes, and he saw that all the fellows in the Common-room were regarding him with great interest. But he also saw that Arthur Castleton still revealed no sign of acute distress. And this gave Racke a little jolt.



Arthur Castleton was dragged along the passage by the excited juniors, and heads popped out from study doors to see what all the rumpus was about. "I say, you idiots!" shouted Tom Merry. "Stop that!" "Mind your own bizney!" roared Scrope. "We're going to give this rotter the hiding of his life—we don't want his sort at St. Jim's!"

(See Chapter 15.)

Surely Arthur had heard enough now?

Why didn't he go pale and look hunted? Why didn't he make an attempt to leave the Common-room—to escape the exposure that was on the point of coming? For once, Racke's calculations seemed to be going wrong. He did not quite know what to make of Arthur.

"Just a minute, Racke," said Tom Merry quietly. "You say that we know this fellow? This rascal who kicked somebody in the shins and cracked his skull?"

"Know him!" jeered Racke. "I should say you do!"

"I'd better warn you that we'll deal pretty stiffly with you if you're telling lies!" went on Tom grimly. "You've made a pretty rotten accusation, Racke! Without giving any name, you've accused this fellow of manslaughter. You say the police are after him now?"

"Yes," replied Racke. "There's a warrant out for his arrest!"

"What's his name?" demanded the crowd.

"Yaas, wathah!" shouted Arthur Augustus D'Arcy. "Unless you give his name at once, Wacke, I shall considah it my dutay to give you a feahful thwashin'! We all know what a fwhighful fibbah you are—"

"Rats!" interrupted Racke savagely. "Why don't you accuse the newspaper of tellin' lies?"

"That wouldn't be anything fresh," said Monty Lowther dryly. "Newspapers aren't always particular about the literal truth!"

"Well, they're right in this case!" said Racke. "I know for a fact that this chap is guilty! I've heard it independently—and I'm goin' to give you his name now. Be ready for a big surprise."

"Weally, Wacke, you are frightfully exaspewatin'!" said D'Arcy. "Why can't you give the name without any



furthar bothah? What is the ideah of keepin' us waitin' like this, you wascal?"

"He'll keep us waiting all day, Gussy, if you interrupt!" growled Blake. "You're the exasperating one if anybody is! Unless you dry up we'll squash you!"

"Weally, Blake—"

"Ring off!" roared Blake.

"I uttably wufuse—"

"Oh, gag him, somebody!" growled Herries. "How can we hear Racke if Gussy keeps butting in?"

On the other side of the Common-room Arthur Castleton was watching and listening with curious interest. He had noted a sinister glint in Aubrey Racke's eye, particularly when Racke looked in his direction. And Arthur was already convinced that the black sheep of the Shell was making a dead set at him. There was something deep in this. Before long, Racke would show his true colours. But at the moment Arthur was mystified.

He knew nothing of Twickenham, and it never occurred to him that Alan, his rascally twin brother, could be connected with this affair. For Arthur had no knowledge of Alan's visit to such a place as Twickenham. And, naturally, Racke's present activity only puzzled him. The one certain

fact was that Racke was bent upon some ill-natured roguery.

"Come on, Racke!"

"Give us that name!"

"Out with it, Racke!" said Blake. "We'll give you ten seconds!"

"Yaas, wathah!" said Gussy hotly. "I wufuse to believe—"

"Dry up!" roared Blake.

"Weally, Blake—"

"Oh, all right!" said Racke sneeringly. "I won't keep you in suspense any longer. The fellow I'm talkin' about is in this very room!"

"What!"

"In this room!"

"Yes!" said Racke gloatingly.

"Look here, Racke, you'd better be careful!" said Tom Merry very quietly. "You can't make these accusations—"

Aubrey Racke pointed.

"There he is!" he shouted. "There's the fellow the police are after!"

And his finger was pointed straight at Arthur Castleton. All eyes were turned upon Arthur, and the new fellow turned red with the sudden focussing of so many eyes. He was confused for a moment, too, and took a backward step.

"I?" he said amazedly. "But—but—"

"Yes, you!" shouted Racke. "What's the good of tryin' to deny it? You know jolly well that you were in that Twickenham shop! You know that you knocked that fellow down and cracked his skull!"

"It's a lie!" panted Arthur. "I—I've never been to Twickenham!"

And then, suddenly, his face went deathly pale, and he swayed as he stood. Everybody else in the Common-room had become deadly silent. They were watching Arthur with strange eyes. What could be the meaning of these signs?

For now there was no question of Arthur's dismay and consternation.

His deadly pallor, the frightened look in his eyes, and his whole attitude of horror, seemed convincing enough. It appeared that his reserve had broken down at last. Up till now he had been pretending, affecting to have no knowledge of that disgraceful incident. But he could keep up the pretence no longer. It all seemed so plain.

"There you are!" shouted Racke. "Can't you see him? Can't you see how scared he is? There's guilt in every line of his face!"

But it wasn't guilt.

Arthur was utterly and absolutely dumbfounded. A sudden, devastating thought had come to him. His brother! Alan was the fellow that Racke had referred to! Alan was the boy whom the police were after!

No wonder Arthur turned pale and lost his composure! His twin brother was in danger of arrest, in peril of being placed in the dock and charged with manslaughter! And then the reformatory! Disgrace for the family, agony for Arthur's father and mother!

The police were after his twin brother!

Was it any wonder that Arthur stood there frightened and pale? And Aubrey Racke openly gloated. He had got him! At last he had exposed this hypocrite in his true colours! It was as obvious as daylight itself!

CHAPTER 11.

Which?

RACKE sneered openly. "Well, what about it now?" he asked. "Look at our saint! Look at our wonderful sportsman! The finest cricketer of Walsing! The best footballer under the giddy sun! I told you I'd expose him in his true colours, didn't I? And I've done it! There he stands—guilty!"

"Gweat Scott!"

"Oh, my hat!"

"Castleton, why don't you deny this?"

Arthur seemed to come out of a trance. His face suddenly flushed, and his eyes took on a fierce, wild light. He leapt forward, caring nothing for the pain in his injured leg.

"Let me see that paper!" he shouted hoarsely.

Racke tantalisingly held the paper aloft.

"No fear!" he shouted. "Why should I show it to you?"

"Because if you don't show it to me I'll knock you down!" said Arthur passionately.

"And crack my skull, too?" jeered Racke.

"You—you scoundrel!" panted Arthur. "It's all a lie! I don't believe—"

"Hold him off!" interrupted Racke hastily. "He's lookin' dangerous!"

And this was the truth. Arthur was desperate. He wanted to see those printed words with his own eyes. The

police were after his twin brother! At the moment it did not occur to him that there was something rather curious in this story. If the police were after Alan Castleton, why didn't they get him? There had been no secret of Alan's being sent to St. Frank's College.

"Show me that paper!" repeated Arthur, his voice shaky with rage and apprehension.

"Yaas, wathah!" said Arthur Augustus D'Arcy. "It is only wight that Castleton should be allowed to see the papah!—Personally, I don't believe this wotten stow. The police are always makin' frightful mistakes! There must be some misundahstandin'! I don't believe Castleton is a wascal. I have said ffrom the first that he is a wippah!"

Arthur shot a grateful glance at the staunch D'Arcy. But he had no time to say anything. He made a grab at the newspaper, and Racke, with a sneering, mocking expression on his face, watched him open it and search the front page. The other fellows were crowding round, eager to catch a glimpse of that paragraph.

"There's nothing here!" said Arthur fiercely.

"Why not look inside?" asked Racke.

"This paper is a week old!" said Tom Merry sharply.

"What the merry dickens—"

"A week old?" yawned Racke. "That's funny, isn't it?"

"Look here, Racke!" said Tom Merry grimly. "If you've been making up this yarn we'll smash you! We won't allow you to tell such rotten lies about—"

"Oh, cheese it!" interrupted Racke. "As a matter of fact, I did make up the yarn!"

"What!"

"Of course I did!" said Racke. "The police aren't after Castleton, so he needn't look so jolly shaky at the knees. He needn't look so white at the gills. He's in no danger of bein' arrested and sent to a reformatory!"

Arthur reeled.

"You—you mean that you were faking it all up?" he demanded.

"Yes."

"Then I'll thrash you till you can't stand!" shouted Arthur angrily. "I'll give you the hiding of your life!"

"Yaas, wathah!" said D'Arcy. "Pway pwoceed to wipe up the floah with this wascally wuffian!"

The Common-room was very excited.

"Grab him!"

"Bump the rotter!"

"We'll teach him to tell such beastly lies!"

Aubrey Racke backed away, holding up a hand.

"Steady!" he shouted hastily. "I was justified, wasn't I?"

"What do you mean—justified?" demanded Jack Blake.

"I mean what I say!" replied Racke. "Didn't you see Castleton's agitation? Didn't you see him turn pale and go all goosey? It was a trap, that's all—a trap! And Castleton fell into it head first."

"A trap?" repeated Tom Merry sharply. "You'd better explain yourself, Racke."

"Yes, and you'd better do it quickly!" shouted some of the others.

"Nothin' easier," said Racke coolly. "You've all looked

upon Castleton as a kind of saint, haven't you? Well, I thought I'd expose him in his true colours. I thought I'd let you see just what sort of a hypocrite he actually is. Hasn't he admitted, by his very actions, that he's the fellow who knocked over that chap in the Twickenham shop? Hasn't he admitted that he kicked him on the shin and cracked his skull?"

"I didn't hear him admit anything like that!" said Blake bluntly.

"His actions admitted it!" shouted Racke savagely. "What did he do when I said the police were after him? You all saw."

"By jingo!" said Blake, with a start.

"That's right,

you chaps! Castleton did go rather queer, didn't he?"

"Rather!" said Mellish. "He nearly fainted!"

"And why did he nearly faint?" asked Racke. "Because he thought the police were after him. Because he thought that fellow had died, and that he was in danger of bein' sent to a reformatory, convicted of manslaughter. As I told you before, it was a trap, and Castleton fell headlong into it!"

There was no doubt that Racke's plan had been cunning and ingenious. And what were the juniors to believe? Arthur's actions had been significant. So significant, indeed, that his guilt seemed plain to all. Otherwise, why should he have turned pale, and shown such obvious signs of distress and apprehension?

"It was all spoof!" went on Racke mockingly. "But Castleton fell for it. There's your saint. He's only made of plaster, after all, and at the first knock he cracks to pieces. It's of no interest to me, of course, but I thought I'd pull some wool out of your eyes. I don't pretend to be any too good, but I'm not such a hypocrite as this fellow."

Arthur felt strangely sick. He seemed to be in a morass. What hope was there for him to extricate himself? He could not tell the truth, since that would mean giving his twin brother away. And Alan's reputation was bad enough already without anything else. Arthur knew that he could do nothing except silence. And his very silence would be taken as a sign of guilt. His brother's rascally doings were haunting him continuously. It was hard luck.

Exactly as Racke had foreseen, nobody wanted to bump him. Arthur's guilty behaviour had indicated that he, Racke, had been justified in his subterfuge. For it had resulted in Arthur exposing himself.

And now Racke found himself in the background. Everybody was turning to Castleton. All eyes were upon the new fellow. And Arthur stood there, pale and grim. His lips were set and his eyes were calm.

He knew how he had been caught in the toils. Racke's cunning brain had devised this story, and there was probably no truth in it. But it had achieved its object. Arthur had given himself away. But how could anybody guess that his agitation had been caused by his fears for his twin brother?

"Well, Castleton," asked Scrope, "what have you got to say?"

"Yes, what about it, Castleton?"

Arthur looked round steadily.

"What do you expect me to say?" he asked.

"You've heard what Racke's been saying, haven't you?" asked Blake bluntly. "Aren't you going to deny it?"

"Yaas, wathah!" said Gussy. "Pway, deny this wotten stow, Castleton, and confuse these wottahs! I don't believe a word of it!"

"Rats!" said Gibbons. "We've got to believe it! If there was no truth in it, why did Castleton go so pale, and why did he look as though he were about to fall into a fit? Isn't that what any chap would do if he thought the police were after him?"

"Yes, rather!"

"Castleton acted jolly suspiciously!"

"So he did!"

"You can fight it out between yourselves now," said

Racke, shrugging his shoulders. "I've finished with it. I only wanted to show you what Castleton was, and now I've done. Go ahead with the good work! If you'll take my advice, you'll bar the man completely! He isn't fit to mix with decent chaps!"

Castleton took a step forward, his fists clenched, his eyes blazing.

"You bound!" he shouted. "I'll smash you—"

"Wait a minute!" said Tom Merry steadily. "Don't get excited, Castleton. You know well enough that your actions look suspicious. Why did you get the wind up when Racke made that reference to the police? Let's

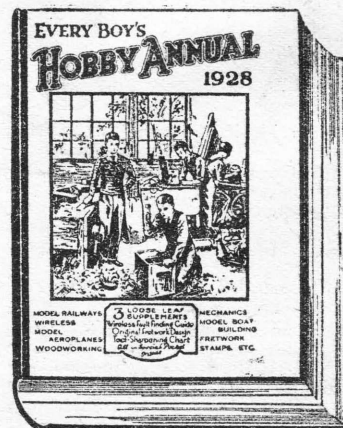
THERE'S NO TIME

LIKE THE PRESENT
WHEN IT COMES TO
SNAPPING UP THIS
VALUE - FOR - MONEY
BARGAIN!

Full of the latest information,
written and illustrated
by experts, it will prove
invaluable to the chap with
a hobby.

ASK YOUR NEWSAGENT TO SHOW YOU A COPY OF

EVERY BOY'S HOBBY ANNUAL,
PRICE SIX SHILLINGS. NOW ON SALE!



have this thing quite clear. Did you knock somebody down in a Twickenham shop and hack him on the shins?"

"No, I didn't!" replied Arthur quietly.

"You deny the story completely?"

"I deny it completely," said Arthur. "I have never been to Twickenham in all my life!"

"Bai Jove!" beamed D'Arcy. "I told you all along—"

"Hold on, Gussy!" growled Blake. "Is this honour bright, Castleton?"

"Honour bright!" said Arthur simply.

"You idiots!" jeered Racke. "You're not goin' to believe him, are you?"

"I don't expect anybody to believe me," said Arthur wearily. "I've only told the truth, that's all. I deny ever having been in Twickenham, and I know nothing of this brawl that Racke has been telling you about."

"And I suppose you've never met Banks before to-day?" asked Mellish.

face was so frank, too. And when he smiled there was an intangible quality in that smile which made it difficult to dislike him. And Arthur was smiling now.

He was smiling rather ruefully, it is true. The farcical nature of this affair had occurred to him. It was all so ridiculous. Two words of explanation from him and the mystery would be cleared away. As soon as the fellows knew that he had a twin brother, and that Alan was an unscrupulous young rascal—well, there would be no further misunderstanding. But those few words were denied him. He could not give his twin away.

"I'm blessed if I know what to think!" said Tom Merry uncomfortably. "You say that you never went to Twickenham, Castleton?"

"Never," said Arthur.

"Then why did you go so pale when Racke mentioned something about the police?" asked Scrope.

"Did I go pale?" asked Arthur quietly. "Perhaps I was

ALEC JACKSON, the International outside-right of Huddersfield Town, is in business as a private hire car specialist. No wonder we hear such a lot about the craze for speed in football!

Only six of the Bradford City players who were on the books last September when Mr. Colin Veitch took over the managership have been retained for the present season. The new broom has done rather a big sweep.

Most of the big football clubs now have their only electrical massage appliances in the dressing-rooms. These should have the effect of giving the game more sparkle.

Sommerville, the Burnley goalkeeper, once played at centre-forward in a friendly match in Scotland, and he scored three goals.

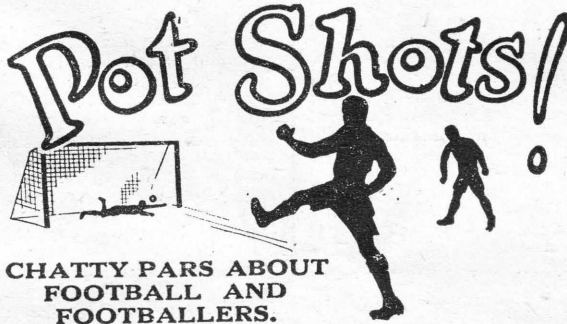
Four weeks before the start of the present season Durham City had only five professionals on their books. Economy is very necessary there.

The honour of scoring the first goal in the present football season belongs to James Fleming, the centre-forward of Glasgow Rangers. He sent the ball into the net within twenty seconds of the start of the game. That may certainly be referred to as a good kick-off.

We hear a lot about record transfer fees, but what about this for a record distance transfer. During the "close" season Dugald Livingstone left Aberdeen to play for Plymouth Argyle.

Notts County have a new man this season in P. c. Mills. He ought to give them what is called an arresting display.

Colin Veitch, manager of Bradford City, thinks the change in the off-side rule has given us more goals, but has not given us any better football. The spectators say, however, that it's goals they want.



Sir Henry Norris is of opinion that football would be better if the maximum wage idea was scrapped, and if the clubs were allowed to pay the players according to what they think they are worth. If some of the players were paid at their own valuation they would soon be millionaires.

At the moment, however, the most that professional players may receive is eight pounds per week during the playing season, and six

pounds during the "close" season. On top of this, of course, they are allowed bonuses for wins and draws.

At one time last season Cardiff City were in such low water financially that the directors had to find the wages for their players out of their own pockets. But by winning the Cup Cardiff eventually made over two thousand pounds profit, and wrote off three thousand pounds aside for depreciation. There's money in the English Cup for Welsh clubs.

In big football the centre-forward problem is just as big as ever. It is scarcely an exaggeration to say that not half the managers of the big clubs are satisfied with the man now leading the attack, and in London alone five clubs started the present season with a new centre-forward. A fortune awaits the fellow who can produce "the goods" in this line.

Fourteen Bristol City players who helped to gain promotion for the side last winter have been presented with gold watches. They should be able to keep good time in their new sphere.

There are some fellows who have just the right names for football. Arsenal, for instance, have a forward who can trick them, and his name is Tricker.

The supporters club connected with Charlton Athletic publishes a monthly magazine dealing with the affairs of the club. Fortunately, all the remarks of the supporters are not reproduced.

"I never saw Banks in my life before to-day!" replied Arthur quietly. "That sounds like another lie, doesn't it? I can't help it. And if you want to believe these things about me—well, that's your affair."

What were they to believe?

Castleton was an enigma. Every action of his proved that he was a sportsman. His very appearance was reassuring. And yet his past seemed to be so shady. Which was he? The victim of a misunderstanding, or a colossal liar and an out-and-out fraud?

**CHAPTER 12.
The Crock!**

TOM MERRY was sorely puzzled. He liked Castleton. He couldn't help liking him. There was something extraordinarily attractive about the new chap. His very look—the straight, direct gaze of his eye—proved that he was true blue. His

concerned for the safety of somebody else. Nobody likes to hear that a chap is wanted by the police. Anyhow, if you want an explanation, I'm afraid I cannot give one. There isn't one. I wasn't afraid of the police on my own account—I can give you my word on that. I wasn't mixed up in that brawl, and I rather wish you would drop the matter."

"Of course!" sneered Racke. "The sooner it's dropped the better, eh? If the rest of you will take my advice, you'll cut this chap dead!"

"I refuse to cut Castleton dead!" said Arthur Augustus firmly. "Castleton is one of my friends!"

Arthur looked at him warmly.

"Thanks, D'Arcy," he said.

"Wats!" said Gussy. "There is nothin' to thank me for, Castleton. I should hope I know a sportsman when I see him! I don't take any notice of Wacke's wotten twickow. Pway wemembah that I am one of your pals, deah boy!"

Tom Merry, curiously affected by Arthur's personality, turned to all the other fellows.

"Look here!" he said. "We'd better drop this thing at once. Forget it! And if Racke tries any more of his traps, we'll know what to do with him!"

"By gad!" ejaculated Racke. "Do you still believe in this cad?"

"Don't call him a cad, Racke!" said Tom. "The next time he goes for you, we shan't stop him!"

"No fear!" said Blake. "Leave the fellow alone, Racke! We've had enough of your sneers and jeers and taunts!"

Racke was discomfited. He had fondly hoped that everybody would turn dead against Arthur Castleton after that dramatic episode. But there was that "something" which clung to Arthur that made it impossible for the fellows to absolutely turn against him. In his presence, they could not help feeling the intangible air of wholesomeness which surrounded him.

That was the mystery of the whole business.

There were these stories about Arthur which he did not refute—and which it seemed he could not refute—and yet it was impossible to bar the chap. The best thing, perhaps, was to let it all drop.

So Racke's satisfaction was not complete, after all.

However, from that moment onwards there was a certain restraint in the air. Nobody actually cut the new fellow, but they were extra polite to him. And when this sort of politeness was indulged in, it was significant. Arthur plainly felt the change.

But what could he do?

He had given himself away by his fears for Alan. And he could not explain himself! Of all the juniors in the School House, D'Arcy was perhaps the only one who treated Arthur as before. And Gussy, staunch as ever, made a special point of being particularly friendly with the Shell fellow.

"It's all very well for you to be so jolly enthusiastic, Gussy, but it won't do," said Blake gruffly. "The man's no good. We mustn't be deceived by—"

"I would remind you, Blake, that I am at liberty to choose my own friends," interrupted Arthur Augustus frigidly. "I would also remind you that I have taken Castleton undah my wing. I feel that he needs my protection."

"He may be a rascal, Gussy, but he's done nothing to deserve that!" said Blake.

"Weally, Blake—"

"And you can't get away from the fact that he wouldn't deny that Twickenham story," put in Herries. "That was jolly significant, to my mind. If there was no truth in it, why didn't he say so?"

"Bai Jove!" said Arthur Augustus. "He did say so!"

"Rats!"

"He distinctly said that he had nevah been to Twickenham—"

"I know that!" interrupted Herries. "But actions speak louder than words, Gussy! And Castleton's actions were too plain to be ignored."

"We've got nothing against the fellow personally," said Blake. "And, as far as we're concerned, he can do as he jolly well likes. But I don't see why we should go out of our way to be friendly with him."

"Then we will agree to diffah!" said Gussy firmly. "I shall make a point of goin' out of my way to be friendly with Castleton as much as I can! And if you don't like it, you wotahs, you can lump it!"

But Gussy's friendliness was apt to be somewhat embarrassing, and Castleton was rather pleased when bed-time came round. He was pleased for two reasons. In bed, he would be able to find some peace. And he would be able to rest his leg, too. It was paining him worse than ever. And he was haunted by the fears of the morrow. How would he get on in the football match?

Later, as he lay in bed in the Shell dormitory, he noticed that hardly any of the other fellows spoke to him. And after lights-out, while most of the rest were asleep, Arthur still lay awake. The pain in his leg made sleep impossible for him. And again he pondered over his dilemma.

Should he tell Tom Merry?

And yet, how could he? How was it possible for him to cry off the match? What would the Shell skipper think? And it was certain that Tom Merry would require an explanation. Excuses wouldn't be of any use, because they wouldn't be believed. And Arthur knew that it was impossible for him to tell the truth about his leg. He would rather play in the match, and suffer the agony, than go upon the platform in Big Hall and submit to Dr. Holmes' public thanks. More than ever Arthur shrank from the publicity of it all.

After he had made sure that all the others were asleep, he crept out of his bed and withdrew a bottle of liniment from under his pillow. He had smuggled it up earlier, but had not dared to use it until the dormitory was slumbering. Even now he was half afraid that the odour of the pungent stuff would spread throughout the room, and that somebody would awaken and ask about it.

However, he was lucky.

He succeeded in anointing himself with the liniment, and he rubbed it well in, hoping against hope that this treatment would be effective.

He got to sleep at last. The liniment had had a soothing effect, and the pain was not so acute now. The throbbing had grown less, and Nature came to Arthur's aid and allowed him to slumber.

He did not awaken until the rising-bell was clanging out, and his first lucid thought was for his leg. He moved it and winced. It was stiff and painful still. But the swelling had gone down. That was something, at all events.

He had been rather afraid that the other fellows would notice the swelling of his leg once he had changed into footer togs. But now there would be no risk of that. It was only necessary for him to wear a bandage over his knee—a commonplace practice among footballers—and nobody would notice. His stocking would cover the rest of that ugly bruise. Above the knee his leg was unmarked.

There was something stoical in the way Arthur walked about that morning. Nobody would possibly guess that his leg was hurting him. He walked without the trace of a limp. And yet, every time he bent his knee—every time he set his foot to the ground—it felt as though daggers were being driven into his calf. The liniment had done him good, undoubtedly, but it was impossible for that bruise to be even partially healed in such a short space of time.

Arthur could only hope for the best.

He was a crock! And he was just about to be given his first chance in a House match! A chance? Arthur's thoughts were bitter. What real chance had he? At practice he had shown up well, and Tom Merry had been impressed. But what kind of impression was the skipper likely to get after Arthur's appearance in a real game?

CHAPTER 13.

Sticking it Out!

"BUCK up, Gussy!"
"I am nearlay weaday, deah boys!"

"Nearly isn't quite!" said Blake. "We've waited for you long

BEST VALUE - FOR - MONEY VOLUMES!

THE SCHOOLBOYS' OWN LIBRARY.

59.—THE GREYFRIARS SAILORS!

Rollicking Yarn of Harry Wharton & Co. of Greyfriars.

60.—THE SCAPEGRACE OF ROOKWOOD!

Rousing Tale of School Life and Adventure, featuring Jimmy Silver & Co. of Rookwood.

THE SEXTON BLAKE LIBRARY.

109.—THE PRISONER OF BUDDHA!

Thrilling Chinese Mystery Drama.

110.—THE OATH OF FEAR!

Baffling Detective Romance.

111.—THE TRAIL OF DEATH!

Intrigue and Adventure in Africa.

112.—THE TOUR OF TERROR!

Mystery and Thrills on the Turf.

The Boys' Friend Library.

109.—THE SHAME OF THE SIDE!

Stirring Yarn of League Soccer.

110.—THE SCHOOLBOY RE-PUBLIC!

Amazing Story of Schoolboy Adventure Abroad.

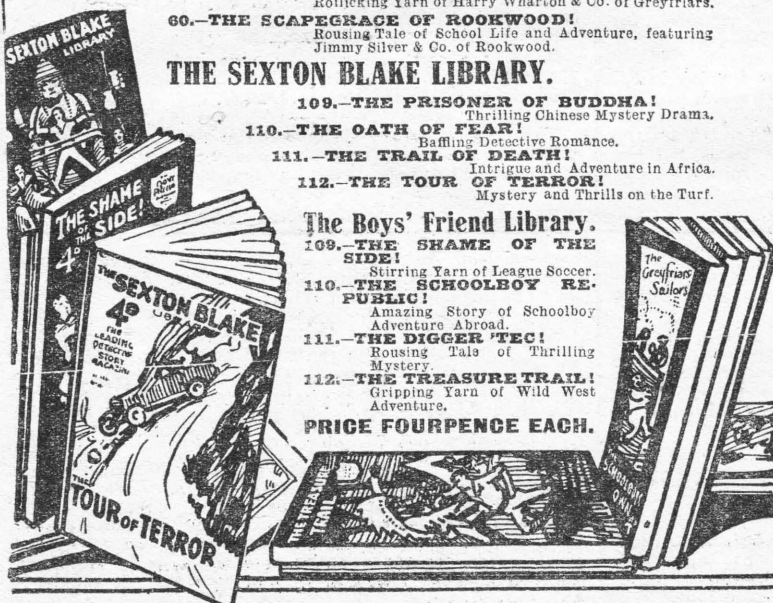
111.—THE DIGGER 'TEC!

Rousing Tale of Thrilling Mystery.

112.—THE TREASURE TRAIL!

Gripping Yarn of Wild West Adventure.

PRICE FOURPENCE EACH.



The ball fell right in front of Castleton's feet. "Oh, shoot!" The new junior's heart leapt within him. Now he might be able to retrieve all the blunders of the earlier part of the game. Slam! But a groan went up when the ball left Arthur's foot, and went wide of the goal. It was a feeble effort!

(See Chapter 12.)



enough, Gussy! What's the delay, anyhow? You don't have to waste time on fancy waistcoats when you're changing into footer togs!"

"Pway cease wottin', Blake!"

"And you don't wear a necktie of any kind!" went on Blake. "So what's the delay for? You're all dressed up, as far as I can see. No amount of gazing into the mirror will make you look any better. We can't help Nature!"

"Weally, Blake—"

"Oh, do come on!" said Herries impatiently.

"There is no need for you to wait for me, deah boys," said Arthur Augustus D'Arcy. "As a mattah of fact, I am waitin' for Castleton!"

"What!"

"I am waitin' for Castleton to come out of the Shell dormitow'y," continued Gussy calmly. "I thought it would be wathah nice for us to walk down to the footah field with him."

"Then you're off the rails, Gussy!" said Blake indignantly.

"Do you mean that you wufuse to walk with Castleton?"

"No, I don't," said Blake. "I mean that Castleton went out five minutes ago!"

"Bai Jove!" ejaculated Gussy. "Weally? I didn't see him!"

"You wouldn't!" put in Digby. "How do you expect to see people when you've been gazing at your own reflection in the mirror for the last ten minutes? It's a wonder you're not feeling dizzy!"

"Weally, Dig—"

Castleton at that moment was on Little Side, chatting with Tom Merry and Manners and Lowther. Talbot and Figgins were close at hand, too. The junior footballers were practically ready for the fray.

"Feeling fit, Castleton?" asked Tom Merry, with a smile.

"Yes," said Arthur quickly; "that is, I mean I'll try to give a good account of myself!"

"We only want your best, old man," replied Tom. "If you score one goal I shall be satisfied. We don't reckon to get more than four in this match."

George Figgins glanced round.

"Four!" he scoffed. "My dear fatheads, we're the chaps who're going to get four goals!"

"We're all liable to have these little hallucinations," said Lowther kindly.

"Rats!" grinned Figgins. "Fatty Wynn has decided that

he won't let any goals through this afternoon, and we've decided that we're going to get four! So you might as well enter up the figures already, Tom Merry!"

"There's many a slip 'twixt the leather and the goal-post!" said Monty Lowther. "And after last night's rain, and judging by the state of the ground, there'll be a good many slips this afternoon, too!"

"All the more full!" said Figgins cheerily.

Quite a crowd of fellows had gathered round the ropes, and Racke & Co. were prominent. It was not usual for Racke to grace a junior football match by his presence, but this afternoon he seemed to be particularly interested.

"We've come to watch Castleton give his celebrated performance!" explained Racke calmly. "He's the best footballer that Walsing ever produced, isn't he? I don't pretend to be a prophet, but I'll bet he makes a mess of the whole game!"

"He knows about as much of football as Trimble does!" said Clampe of the New House. "I shall be jolly interested in this game. Merry won't do himself any good, either! He's no sort of skipper to choose a smoky, gambling blade to play in the forward line!"

"Here's the referee!" said Crooke. "Darrell of the Sixth. He'll soon send Castleton off the field if he starts any of his famous kicking stunts!"

Phoop! Phoop!

The preliminary whistle blew, and the footballers lined up. The weather was still blustery, but the wind was only a mere breeze compared to the gale of the previous evening. The sky was cloudy, but there was no rain. It was really excellent weather for the football match.

"Hallo, they're off!" said Racke. "Now we're goin' to see a marvellous performance by Castleton, the genius!"

Arthur, in the forward line, was fighting a battle of his own. During those first tense moments he almost believed that he would have to call the game off now. As soon as he started to run, his leg caused him such excruciating agony that he could have screamed aloud. But none of his fellow-players guessed at the truth. If they noticed a tense expression on Arthur's face, they merely thought that he was intent upon the game. He gave no real indication of his hurt. He ran as lightly and as springily as any of the others. But it seemed to him that his leg was filled with burning fire.

It was, of course, too acute to last.

After the first minute the pain became a dull ache. And in the excitement of the game, he almost forgot it at times. It was only when a lull occurred that he became acutely conscious of his disability. But to kick with that leg was impossible.

Whenever the ball came to him he was compelled to steady himself and kick with his left foot. And Arthur had always been accustomed to kick with his right. This was bound to have a detrimental effect upon his whole play.

And at his very first opportunity, when there was a chance of Tom Merry scoring, Arthur muffed a perfectly simple pass, and sent the ball careering over the touchline yards wide of his objective.

"What did I tell you?" asked Racke jeeringly. "The fellow's got no idea of the game!"

And it really seemed that there was some justification for Racke's remark. Arthur was not showing any of that form which Tom Merry had believed him to possess. Time after time he failed and lost chances that many inferior footballers would have seized upon with swift surefootedness.

D'Arcy, of course, was greatly disappointed. He was playing in the game himself, and he was startled when he saw Arthur missing chance after chance. It seemed that Arthur's greatest fault was lack of speed. He obviously knew a great deal about the game. Occasionally he gave a sparkling display, but whenever he was called upon to do anything rapid he failed. He seemed almost exhausted after only ten minutes of play.

Yet really he was giving a marvellous performance.

His leg was like a dead weight to him. The agony was dull now, but every movement of his was an effort to him. Considering the condition of his leg, his play was valiant. But nobody knew about that injury of his, and so he was judged unfairly.

"It's no good, Gussy! The man's a wash-out!" said Blake, during a lull.

"Yaas, wathah!" said D'Arcy, in a disappointed tone.

"He seems to be vewy off colah!"

"You would put it like that!" growled Blake. "If you ask me, he's never been much good at footer!"

"Weally, Blake, I wish to give the chap the benefit of the doubt," said Gussy. "We must wemembah that he hasn't had much practice—"

"Look out!" interrupted Blake. "We're off again!"

They were, and during the next minute Figgins scored for the New House. And, in a roundabout way, that goal had been obtained through a muffed pass of Arthur's. Trying to slip the ball through to his outside man, Arthur had miskicked, placing it at the foot of one of the New House backs, and this man promptly sent the leather flying downfield, where it was trapped by Figgins, who made a brilliant run past the School House backs, and slammed in a shot which utterly defeated the goalie.

"Hurrah!"

"New House one up!"

"It was Castleton's fault!" said Grundy of the Shell. "Didn't you see the way he messed up that pass? If he hadn't miskicked, Tom Merry might have scored!"

"Oh, well, it's all in the game!" said Wilkins philosophically.

"Rats!" said Grundy. "I'll bet Castleton doesn't get another chance!"

It was noticed that Arthur kept faltering. His face was haggard, and that exhaustion of his was increasing. Long before half-time, he was little more than a passenger. The right wing was doing nothing.

"Feeling bad?" asked Tom Merry, as he found himself near Arthur, while the ball was being thrown in on the other side of the field.

"I'm all right, thanks!" muttered Arthur.

"You don't look all right!" retorted Tom.

"It's—it's nothing!"

Tom Merry said no more, but he drew his own conclusions. And who could blame him for drawing conclusions which were utterly wrong? It seemed that Arthur Castleton was fagged out because he was in no fit condition. And this idea was prevalent all round the ropes, too.

"Racke must have been right!" Grundy was saying. "The man's all flabby!"

"The result of slacking and smoking, I expect!" said Gunn, nodding. "Can't burn the candle at both ends, you know!"

"Oh, well, we know what the chap is now!" said Grundy. "He shapes like a footballer, too. There's no doubt that he knows something about the game. He's played before, and played well, too. But he's in rotten condition. That's the only explanation."

THE GEM LIBRARY.—No. 1,023.

"What else could you expect?" asked Racke, strolling up. "Didn't I tell you that the man was a smoky slacker?"

"Oh, dry up, Racke!" said Grundy, glaring.

"Why should I dry up?" asked Racke coolly. "I hope you'll believe that yarn about Twickenham now. You've been fooled by Castleton ever since he arrived here! It'll be a dashed good thing if New House wins! It'll teach Tom Merry a lesson!"

"Shut up, blow you!" roared Grundy.

"I don't take orders from you!" sneered Racke.

"Don't you!" bellowed Grundy, pushing up his sleeves.

"When I tell you to shut up, Racke, you'll either shut up or take a licking! Which is it going to be?"

Racke walked off, and Grundy breathed hard.

"That rotter makes me sick!" he said thickly. "Even if Castleton is a frost, there's no need to jeer at him like that! Blessed if I can make the chap out! You can't help liking him, and yet he's such a giddy fizzle! Look at him now! Did you see the way he hesitated just then? There's no life in his movements at all! He's dragging his legs along as though he were a cripple! It's a pity! I thought he'd turn out better than this!"

And so the game went on, with Arthur sticking it out. But he was feeling dizzy and dazed. Every kick was agony to him. And every kick made it more and more certain that he would never again play for his House!

CHAPTER 14.

Not Good Enough!

"GOAL!"

"Well kicked, Blake!"

"Yaas, wathah!"

School House had equalised, and Tom Merry and his men were feeling more confident. Fatty Wynn, in spite of his assertion that he had decided to let nothing through, had been completely defeated by a swerving shot which Jack Blake had sent in. Even the redoubtable Fatty was not impregnable.

"Now's our chance!" said Tom Merry briskly. "If we can only score again before half-time, we shall have these New House chaps whacked! So we've got to put on top speed, and slam another goal in before the whistle goes!"

"It's time you had a shot, Castleton," said Blake, giving Arthur a strange look.

"Yes," said Arthur, "I'll do the best I can!"

The game re-started, and Arthur was beginning to feel miserable. He knew that he had failed, and he knew that his fellow footballers were regarding him as a wash-out. It was not a pleasant thought—after all the rosy dreams he had had. Under ordinary circumstances, without the encumbrance of that injured leg, he would have gloried in this game. Physically, he was feeling as fit as ever he had felt in all his life. He was at the top of his form. And here he was, hindered by that gammy leg, and unable to give any explanation! It was cruel hard lines.

Pheep!

"Oh, rats!" said Tom Merry. "Half-time!"

"And the scores are still equal," said Blake breathlessly. "One—one! Oh, well, we'll make up for lost time during the second half."

Arthur Augustus came hurrying across from the other wing.

"Castleton, deah boy!"

"Oh, hallo, Gussy!" said Arthur turning. "I've made a pretty miserable exhibition, haven't I?"

"Well, to be quite fwank, Castleton, I must admit that you have been wathah disappointin'," said Arthur Augustus. "Pewwaps you will be bettah in the second half."

"I'm afraid not," said Arthur, shaking his head. "And this was my big chance, too!"

"Feelin' bad, deah boy?" asked Gussy, with concern.

"Why should I feel bad?" asked Arthur evasively. "I'm fit enough. There's nothing wrong with me, D'Arcy. Nothing wrong with my health, I mean. I've never felt better."

"Weally, deah boy, I fail to compwehend," said Gussy. "You are lookin' fwightfully white about the gills. Your face is haggard, and there is a drawn look about your mouth which I don't like. I weally believe that you are ill!"

"I'm not," said Arthur quietly. "Please don't worry, Gussy."

He turned aside, and D'Arcy did not press him further. For a minute or two, Arthur wandered about by himself. His lips tightly compressed. The pain in his leg was worse now. There wasn't the excitement of the game to make him forget it. And the strenuous exercise had done much to aggravate the injury. Glancing down, he

could see that his leg was again swelling. He hoped that nobody would notice it.

Wouldn't it be better to tell Tom Merry? Arthur pondered over the point. Why not excuse himself at once, and get off the field? He knew, in his heart, that he was only a hindrance to the other footballers. His room would be more preferable than his company. Not once had he revealed a trace of his true form. He had been slow, laborious, in all his movements. He had lost opportunity after opportunity. And everybody had an idea that he was exhausted because he was in bad physical condition. He had cleverly concealed the fact that his leg was injured.

His play was even worse during the second half. The brief rest had not done him any good. On the contrary, it had done him more harm than good. And the climax came after about twenty-five minutes of play, when he failed to score an absolute "sitter."

It was a glorious chance. There had been a scramble in front of the New House goal, and Fatty Wynn, after much valiant work, managed

Arthur was forced into a chair, and Tom Merry raised his trouser leg, and pulled down his sock. Then the juniors uttered shouts of horror. "Good heavens!" exclaimed Tom Merry. "Look at this! His leg's black and blue, and swollen nearly double its ordinary size" (See Chapter 16.)

"Why don't you play marbles!"

Arthur heard most of these taunts, and he bit his lip with vexation. His state of mind was by no means improved when Kerr, of the Fourth, scored for the New House a minute afterwards. And when the game finally ended, School House left the field the losers. Without the slightest doubt, Arthur had lost the game for his side. Any ordinarily decent play on his part would have carried the School House to victory. But he had been a passenger all through, and he had hindered the other forwards. His presence had been like a dead weight upon the whole forward line.

"Well, what about your marvellous footballer now?" asked Racke jeeringly, as the players came off the field. "What do you think of the wonder of Walsing?"



to get the ball clear away. But, unexpectedly, the leather came back into the danger zone when the New House backs were confident that their citadel was safe. And it fell right in front of Arthur's feet! There was an open goal in front of him, with only Fatty Wynn to beat!

"Shoot, Castleton!"
"Oh, shoot!"

Arthur's heart leapt within him. Now he might be able to retrieve all the blunders of the earlier part of the game. He was on the ball like a flash, and he got his foot to it before either of the New House backs could get near him.

Slam!
But a groan went up when the leather slewed off from Arthur's left foot, and went yards wide of the mark. It was an atrocious effort, and Arthur himself could have cried aloud with anguish. At any other time, he would have had the leather in the net in a trice. He glanced round, flushing, and found Tom Merry eyeing him grimly.

"Sorry!" muttered Arthur.
"Yes, it's a pity!" was all Tom said.
"Yah! Muffer!"
"Rotten shot!"
"You're no good, Castleton!"

"We don't want to hear any of your sneers, Racke!" said Tom Merry quietly.

"Hang it, Racke's right!" put in Gibbons, of the Shell. "You're skipper, Tom Merry, and you ought to have known better than to play a man like Castleton! A new kid, too—absolutely untried! I suppose you know he lost the game for us?"

"Wats!" said Arthur Augustus warmly. "Castleton may not have come up to expectations, but he isn't such a wank outsiders as all that, Gibbons. Pway keep your wotten ewiticisms to yourself!"

In the dressing-room, Arthur went up to Tom Merry, and looked him straight in the eye.

"I'm not good enough, eh?" he asked quietly.
"Well, old scout, you didn't play the game I expected," replied Tom. "Rather off-colour to-day, I'm afraid."

"Yes," said Arthur. "I'm most awfully sorry."
"Don't be an ass!" said Tom Merry uncomfortably. "I hate to say it, Castleton, but I suppose you realise that you're not good enough for the team?"

"Of course I realise it," replied Arthur. "On my showing this afternoon, I'm not good enough to play for the fags, even! But if you'll only give me another chance, some other time—"

"We'll talk about that later—after you've had a lot more practice," interrupted Tom Merry. "I think you ought to know that your present form isn't up to the St. Jim's standard."

Arthur felt a kind of lump in his throat. He had seen the St. Jim's standard, and, high as it was, he knew well enough that he was every bit as good as most of the other footballers. Vanity was his very last failing, but he had no lack of confidence, and at football he knew that he was at his best. As a matter of fact, Arthur's standard of play was even better than the average he had seen that afternoon. His own performance had been a travesty of his usual form.

And he was condemned! It was very improbable that he would be given another chance in a match. The whole season might go through without such an opportunity occurring!

And it was all Alan's fault!

Arthur was not deceived by the sneers which went about. He knew the reason why the juniors avoided him. They were beginning to believe the tales that Racke had set about. They thought that his bad play was due to his bad living before he had come to St. Jim's. And Alan was responsible for this new attitude which was growing amongst his schoolfellows.

And then Arthur felt contrite. Was it fair to blame Alan? If only he had played a decent game, Racke's tales would have been refuted. The juniors would have acclaimed him as a good footballer, and his very performance would have wiped out those slanderous stories. No, it was just luck—just fate! His leg was injured, and he could say nothing about it. He must suffer in silence.

More than ever before, Arthur was determined to keep quiet about that injured leg of his. Dr. Holmes' inquiries had come to nothing, and he had now gone a step further in his efforts to find the boy who had saved his life. He had publicly announced that he would give a reward to the brave boy, if he would only come forward. A reward! Arthur grimly told himself that he would never claim it. That little secret was his, and his alone. None should ever know of it! As long as he kept silent, the mystery would remain hidden.

CHAPTER 15. Bowled Out!

"**B**AI Jove!"

Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, coming downstairs from the dormitory, resplendent in Etons, found a group of juniors chatting in the Fourth Form passage. And the subject of their chat did not meet with D'Arcy's approval.

"Mellish, you wottah!" said Gussy. "What did I hear you sayin' just now?"

"How should I know?" asked Percy Mellish. "You shouldn't be eavesdroppin', D'Arcy. It's a bad habit!"

"You frightful ass!" shouted Gussy indignantly. "Are you callin' me an eaveswoppah?"

"Listeners never hear any good of themselves!" said Scrope.

"Weally, Scrope—"

"This discussion doesn't concern you, anyhow, D'Arcy," said Gibbons. "We're talking about Castleton."

"Bai Jove! That's just what I thought!" said Arthur Augustus. "I distinctly heard Mellish sayin' that it would be a good ideah to cut the chap."

"Yes, and that's what we mean to do!" said Mellish. "We're goin' to cut him dead. From this minute onwards we're barrin' him. Understand? We don't want to have anythin' to do with a shady rotter of his description."

Even Grundy of the Shell nodded.

"You can't get away from the fact, D'Arcy, because it hits you in the eye!" he said reluctantly. "Castleton isn't the pattern he's been held up to be. His performance this afternoon was terrible. And why?"

"Because the chap was feelin' off colour," replied Gussy promptly.

"Why was he feeling off colour?" asked Grundy. "It seems to be pretty obvious that he's the smoky, gambling rotter that Racke says."

"I twust you are not takin' Wacke's word?" asked Arthur Augustus frigidly.

"What else can I do?" asked Grundy.

"Weally, Gwunday, I gave you cwedit for bettah sense—"

"Rot!" interrupted George Alfred Grundy. "I wouldn't take Racke's word alone. As a matter of fact, I like Castleton. I've liked him from the very first. But after his play this afternoon I've got to readjust my views. Look at the way he turned pale last night when Racke led him into a trap. And what about his meeting with

Banks, the bookie? It's all very well to give him the benefit of the doubt, but there's a limit to these things. Actions speak louder than words, Gussy, and Castleton's actions this afternoon spoke so loudly that they yelled at us!"

"Look out!" muttered Mellish, in a low voice. "Here comes Castleton now! Let's give him the cold shoulder."

"Simply ignore him!" said Scrope.

"That's the idea!"

And when Arthur came past, on his way to the Shell passage, he noted how the juniors shrank back, as though he were contaminated in some way. They stared at him in hostile fashion, and said nothing. All this was eloquent of the feeling that was being generally aroused.

"Pway, wait a moment, Castleton, deah boy!" said D'Arcy. "I twust you will take no notice of these wank outsiders."

He hurried up, and caught Castleton by the arm. "Please don't talk about it, D'Arcy!" said Arthur quietly.

"Weally, deah boy, I would like to respect your wishes, but it is impos!" said D'Arcy firmly. "I want you to realise that these fellows are in a minowity. I can only chawactewise them as unsportsmanlike wascals. Any fellow is apt to be off colah now and again."

"Very decent of you to say it, old man, but that doesn't excuse my beastly play," said Arthur. "And if the fellows are down on me I can't blame them. Be a good chap and let it drop, won't you?"

"But, weally, Castleton—"

"You're a decent chap, Gussy, and I appreciate your friendship," went on Arthur quietly. "You're one of the best chaps under the sun, and you don't know how much I—"

"Pway, cease this wicidulous pwattle!" protested D'Arcy. "Bai Jove! You are talkin' uttah wot, deah boy!"

"I'm not, D'Arcy, and you know I'm not!" said Arthur.

"Everybody is rather fed-up with me for the mess I made this afternoon. If I hadn't been such a rank duffer I could have scored that goal, and my play throughout the game was too shocking for words!"

"You are distwessin' me, Castleton, by this attitude of yours," said D'Arcy. "Be good enough to accept an invitation to tea in Study No. 6."

"That's very nice of you, Gussy, and I'd like to accept," said Arthur warmly.

"Then it's settled, deah old thing!" said Arthur Augustus, beaming.

"But has Blake invited me, too?" asked Castleton. "Have Herries and Digby expressed a desire to have me there to tea?"

"Weally, I fail to see how Blake and Hewwies and Digby entah into the mattah!" said Gussy. "I have invited you as my guest—"

"Hi, Gussy!" bawled Blake from the end of the passage.

"Leave that chap alone and come along to the study!"

"Weally, Blake—"

"I think I understand," said Arthur, with a quiet nod.

"Thanks all the same for the invite, D'Arcy, but it can't be done."

He passed along the passage and turned into Study No. 2. And D'Arcy jammed his eyeglass into his eye and stalked off in search of Blake. He was determined to give Blake a piece of his mind, not that Jack Blake would bother much about that.

When Arthur entered his study he found Frere there. But there was no sign of tea. Hitherto, Frere had generally busied himself with the cups and saucers and with the spirit stove. But now he glanced up and nodded curtly.

"I'm having tea with some of the other fellows," he said shortly.

And with that he went out and closed the door.

Arthur understood.

Frere had gone because he, Arthur, had come in. Arthur wasn't wanted. The fellows were already beginning to avoid him. His own study-mate was influenced by the general talk. And Arthur sat down at the table and groaned inwardly.

"It's Alan's fault!" he muttered. "It's all Alan's doing! My own brother! These chaps wouldn't treat me like this if they hadn't been hearing these rotten yarns about Alan's doings. I'd like to go to St. Frank's, take Alan by the scruff of the neck, and give him a good hiding! Until I came here I had no idea that I had such a rascal for a brother!"

And this was the literal truth. Arthur's eyes had been opened greatly of late. He had always known that Alan was reckless, thoughtless, and generally doggish. But he was beginning to realise that his twin brother was a worthless young scamp. But it was hard lines, indeed, that Arthur himself should be called upon to suffer for Alan's sins.

Tramp, tramp, tramp!

Many feet sounded out in the passage, but Arthur took no notice. He was feeling alone now—dreadfully alone! D'Arcy, perhaps, was the only fellow in the whole school whom he could really call a friend. Tom Merry was decent enough, but Tom was the junior captain, and he had to be careful what he said and what he did. And he had already won popular disfavour by selecting Arthur for the match that afternoon.

Thump!

A crash sounded on the door of Arthur's study, and he looked round, starting to his feet as the door burst open, and a crowd of juniors pushed their way into the room. They were headed by Scrope, Mellish, Baggy Trimble, Gibbons, and a few other nonentities. None of the prominent fellows were here. Even Racke had not associated himself with this rabble.

Arthur rose unsteadily to his feet.

"What—what do you want?" he asked.

"We want you!" said Scrope promptly. "Grab him, you chaps!"

"Yes, rather!" yelled Trimble. "Let's drag him down the passage into the Common-room, and give him the ragging he deserves! We don't want his rotten class at St. Jim's!"

Arthur could do nothing. He knew that these juniors had come here to rag him, to make his misery even worse than it already was. And to fight them all was impossible. He could try, of course, but that would only make matters worse for him. And his leg, too, was giving him such agony now that even fighting was not to be thought of. He could not steady himself. His leg had swollen badly, and the bruised part was almost black. Strictly speaking, Arthur ought to have seen a doctor, and he knew it. But it was too late for anything like that now. He would have to suffer the pain, and do what he could to alleviate it. At the first opportunity he would rub it again with liniment or ointment. But to resist these ragers was impossible.

"Grab him!"

"Don't let him make a bolt for it!"

"We'll show him something, the hypocrite!"

The next moment all the juniors were swarming round Arthur, and they were rather surprised when he refrained from hitting out at them. Without any resistance he allowed himself to be seized.

"All right!" he said wearily. "Go ahead! Only get it over quickly!"

He was, indeed, in such a condition that he little cared what happened to him. He hardly realised that his exercise of the afternoon had been serious in its consequences. His leg was now in such a condition that it required a doctor's attention without any delay. He had strained the muscles very severely, and so stiff was his knee joint that it caused him exquisite pain when he bent his leg.

He was dragged out of the study, and hauled along the passage by the excited, yelling juniors. Heads came out of various studies, to find out what all the row was about.

"I say, you idiots," shouted Tom Merry, "stop that!"

"Mind your own bizney!" roared Scrope. "We're going to give Castleton the hiding of his life!"

"Rather!" piped Baggy Trimble. "We don't want his sort at St. Jim's!"

"I know another sort we don't want at St. Jim's!" retorted Tom. "Why can't you leave the chap alone?"

"Yaas, watah! Leave him alone, you vindictive boundahs!"

D'Arcy came running along the Fourth Form passage, and he attempted to push his way through the crowd. But a number of other fellows had joined the ragers now, and Arthur was hauled along towards the Common-room, and bundled through the doorway. Tom Merry & Co., Blake & Co., and several others came crowding through with grim expressions. They were determined to put a stop to this particular form of persecution.

"Better look out!" shouted Trimble. "Remember how he kicks people on the shins!"

"Yes," said Mellish; "steer clear of his hoofs!"

Arthur was dragged aside, and nobody knew whether it was by design or by accident, but Trimble barged heavily

into Arthur's right side. And Trimble's foot came into sharp, violent contact with Arthur's leg. It wasn't exactly a kick, but it was very much like one.

"You cad, Trimble!" shouted Blake hotly. "I'll—Hallo! What the merry dickens—"

"Bai Jove, hold him!" shouted D'Arcy.

For Arthur Castleton was swaying. Every atom of colour had gone from his cheeks, and he clutched at the air for support. Then, groaning, he fell to the floor in a limp heap.

CHAPTER 16.

The Sportsman!

ARTHUR was pulled up, and he seemed to be only semi-conscious.

"What's the matter, Castleton?" asked Tom Merry sharply, as he helped to support the new fellow. "Are you ill?"

"It's—it's all right!" muttered Arthur, between his set teeth. "It's nothing—nothing at all!"

"Wats!" said Arthur Augustus D'Arcy. "The poor old scout is absolutely wiltin', deah boys! He's gwoggy at the knees!"

"Trimble kicked him!" said Blake fiercely.

"I didn't!" yelled Trimble, in alarm. "It was an accident! I was only pushing—"

"Oh, shut up!" interrupted Manners curtly. "We'll deal with you later!"

They could all see that Castleton was very seriously affected. His face was like chalk, and there was a wild expression in his eyes. But for the fact that he was supported, he would have fallen to the floor again. And that little push of Trimble's—or kick, perhaps—could not have had such an effect as this. There was more in this than met the eye.

"It's his leg!" said Tom Merry, as he glanced down. "I believe it's swollen!"

"No!" gasped Arthur. "There's—there's nothing—"

"You dry up, my son!" said Tom. "Let's have a look at that leg of yours!"

"Yaas, watah!" said Gussy. "He didn't collapse until Twimble kicked him in the leg! I believe there is somethin' the mattah with Castleton's leg!"

"Marvellous, Gussy!" said Blake.

"Weally, Blake—"

Arthur was forced into one of the chairs, and Tom Merry and Talbot stood no nonsense. They gently raised Arthur's trouser-leg and pulled down his sock. Then they uttered shouts of horror.

"Good heavens," exclaimed Tom Merry, "look at this!"

"Oh, my goodness!"

"His leg's black and blue!"

"Yes, and swollen to nearly double its ordinary size!" shouted Blake. "How the dickens did you do this, Castleton? Did somebody kick you during the match?"

"No!" muttered Arthur. "I—I wish you wouldn't—"

"Dear men, you are all frightfully dense!" drawled Ralph Reckness Cardew. "Surely you can recognise the truth? Here, if I am not mistaken, is an excellent explanation of Castleton's bad form durin' the match!"

"What do you mean?" asked Levison sharply.

"Isn't it obvious?" asked Cardew, in his cool way.

"Surely you remember that the Head, in the fullness of his heart, is inquirin' for a boy with an injured leg, so that he can reward him?"

"What!"

"You—you don't mean—"

"Why not?" asked Cardew.

"Castleton," exclaimed Tom Merry, seizing Arthur by the shoulder and looking into his face, "are you the fellow who saved the Head's life last night?"

Silence.

"Castleton," insisted Tom, "why don't you answer?"

"Oh, don't make a fuss!" muttered Arthur at last. "I suppose it's too late to keep it up any longer, but there was nothing in it—nothing at all. Anybody else would have done the same thing. I—I only ran forward and pulled the Head back. Please don't say anything about it to anybody!"

"Good gwacious!" gasped Gussy. "No wondah Castleton was wunnin' down the hewo last night! And we thought he was unsportin'! Of course, he knew all the time that he was the fellow!"

"And his leg has been like this ever since yesterday, and he didn't give any sign of it!" said Blake wonderingly.

"Why the dickens didn't you tell us, Castleton?"

"I think we can guess," said Tom Merry quietly. "He's one of those modest fellows, and he didn't want to be acclaimed as a hero!"

"You've hit it on the nail, dear man!" said Cardew. "Anybody but a born idiot could tell that Castleton is made of the right stuff! I don't wonder he made such

The GEM LIBRARY.—No. 1,023.

ANSWERS

Every Saturday.....PRICE 2:

a mess of the football this afternoon! Poor chap, he must have been in the utmost agony throughout the game!"

There was a sudden revulsion of feeling.

Everybody was looking at Arthur Castleton in wonder—not only in wonder, but in admiration. He was the fellow who had saved the Head's life, and yet he had said nothing about it—he had kept his secret until now. Modesty had caused him to hold his tongue.

Mellish, Scrope, Trimble, and the other members of the ragging party were dumbfounded. They had little realised that their efforts would bring about a result of this sort.

Tom Merry himself was aghast.

"But—but this happened last night, Castleton?" he said.

"You injured your leg last night?"

"Yes!" muttered Arthur.

"Then why, in the name of all that's sensible, didn't you stand down from the match?" asked Tom. "Why didn't you ask me to excuse you? What was the idea of playing with a leg like this? You might have crippled yourself for life!"

"It's not so bad as that!" said Arthur, in great distress. "I shall be all right in a day or two! Please don't make a fuss!"

"I think I can understand," said Talbot. "Don't you see, you fellows? If Arthur had asked you to let him off,

Tom, he would have had to give a reason. What reason? An injured leg?"

"And that would have stamped him as the unknown hero!" nodded Cardew. "Ah, me! Modesty is a wonderful thing! Dear men, this chap is one in a thousand! If I was wearin' a hat at the moment, I would take it off to him!"

"It—it wasn't only that!" said Arthur desperately. "I—I didn't want to lose my chance, Merry! You told me I was booked for to-day's match, and it—it would have seemed pretty rotten if I had asked to be excused!"

"Rot!" said Tom Merry. "You said nothing because of your modesty, so don't deny it! You didn't want anybody to know that you had saved Dr. Holmes' life!"

"Yaas, wathah!" said Arthur Augustus. "And this is the chap you were all turnin' against! This is the fellow you told me not to associate with, Blake!"

Jack Blake nodded.

"I know I did!" he said frankly. "And I was a blithering idiot! Castleton, I apologise! I hope you'll forgive me, old man!"

"There's—there's nothing to forgive!" said Arthur, acutely uncomfortable.

"Well, come along! We'll carry you upstairs, and then we'll fetch Mr. Railton!" said Tom Merry briskly. "You can't walk about with a leg like this any longer! We shall have to get the doctor to it as quickly as possible!"

Everybody was enthusiastic. The revulsion of feeling was genuine. The juniors walked round Arthur Castleton, full of admiration. He was the hero who had saved Dr. Holmes' life in the lane last night at the risk of his own, and ever since then he had kept silent. As the full meaning of that silence came to the fellows, they were even more impressed. For it had involved the football match, and Arthur had lost all his chances in the team rather than admit his heroism!

"Please—please," exclaimed Castleton, "there's no need for you to carry me upstairs! I shall be all right! And I don't want you to say anything about this, either! Please keep mum! Please don't tell Mr. Railton!"

"Nothing doing, old man!" said Blake promptly.

"Wathah not!"

"Can't be done, Castleton!" said Tom Merry, shaking his head. "We'd like to oblige you, but this is too good to be kept secret!"

"It couldn't be kept secret, anyhow!" said Cardew. "Have you forgotten that Trimble is here!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"But Trimble isn't here!" grinned Clive. "He has already bunked out, and by this time he is spreading the news all over the House! You know what Trimble is!"

"Well, good luck to him!" said Cardew. "If he would only confine himself to spreadin' news of this sort, nobody would grumble!"

And after that Arthur was in a sort of a whirl.

He was carried upstairs by gentle hands and placed in bed in the Shell dormitory. And then Mr. Railton came to him, and soon afterwards the Head himself arrived.

"So you are the boy who saved me, Castleton?" Dr. Holmes said gently.

"I—I didn't want you to know, sir!" said Arthur. "There was nothing in it! I saw you were in danger, so I pulled you free, that's all!"

"But a very big all, my dear boy!" said the Head. "You might easily have been killed yourself by your act of courage! I shall make it my duty to write to your parents and to inform them of your great heroism!"

"Oh, don't do that, sir!" pleaded Arthur.

"But I shall!" insisted Dr. Holmes. "It is only right that they should know. And for the next day or two you must go into the school sanatorium. You must recover fully before taking your place among your fellows again. I cannot express my thanks to you, and—"

"Oh, please, sir!" said Arthur miserably.

And the Head, realising that he was distressing this modest youngster, said no more.

In the school itself Arthur Castleton's popularity was great. And when he came out of the sanatorium, two days later, limping, but well on the road to recovery, he was surrounded by everybody. They all wanted to be friendly now. And Tom Merry made it quite plain that Arthur would be given another chance in a match as soon as his leg was fit.

And Arthur began to feel happy again.

In spite of all this, however, there was still that little mystery clinging to him. His every action proved that he was as true as steel—as straight as a string. Actions were speaking louder than rumours! But those rumours lingered. There were many points which puzzled the juniors, and they were points which would probably continue to puzzle them. For how could anybody guess that there were two Castletons? That was Arthur's little secret.

THE END.

NEXT WEEK'S GRAND STORY.

The GEM 2^d



Baggy Trimble's Latest Stunt for Raising the Wind!

Baggy Trimble, the fat and fatuous junior of the Fourth Form, is always open to try out a scheme if there's any easy money attached to it. And once Baggy discovers that Arthur Castleton has been generous enough to give an itinerant musician a whole fiver—that sets Baggy's fat wits working overtime! Why shouldn't he bag a fiver in the same way?

What the outcome of the fat junior's latest wheeze is you will learn from

"THE CHANGELING OF ST. JIM'S!"

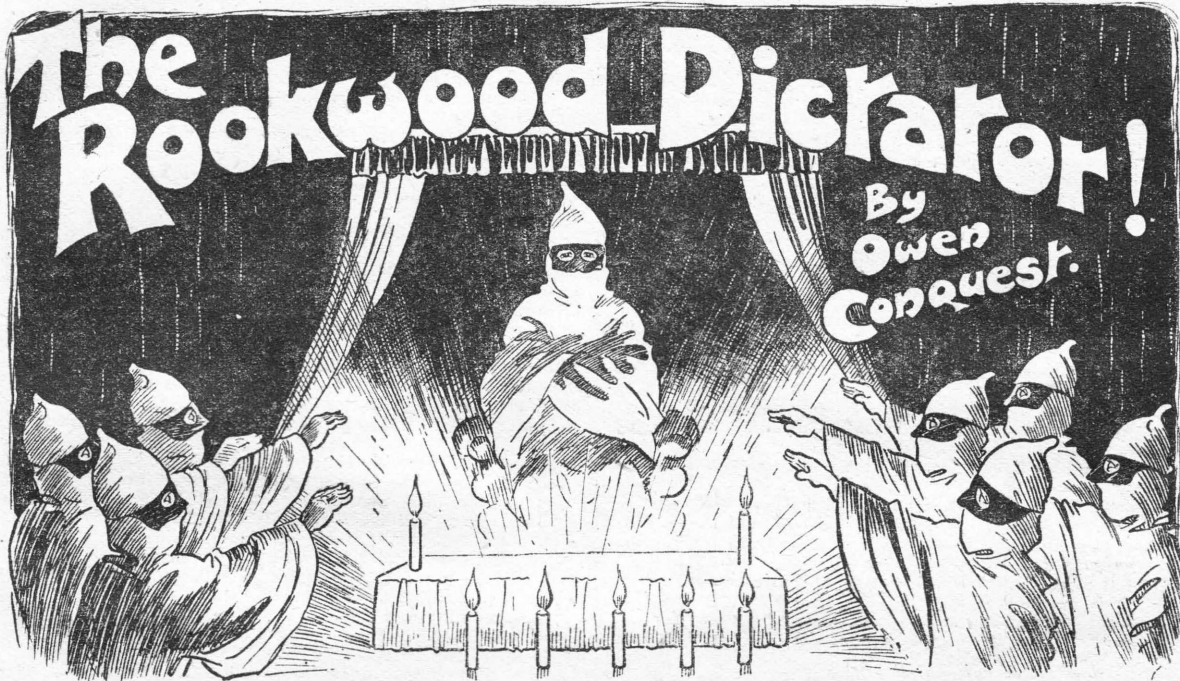
the next story in the astonishing "Castleton" series which appears in

THE "GEM" LIBRARY.

ON SALE NEXT WEDNESDAY.

Order Early, Boys—Saves Disappointment.

SCORING OFF THE BULLIES! FASCIST BAND OF AVENGERS AT ROOKWOOD!



An Absorbing Story of School Life and Adventure, introducing Jimmy Silver & Co., the chums of Rookwood.

(Introduction on page 26.)

Asking for It!

"SILVER! What do you mean by coming over here and creating a disturbance?" rapped Knowles. "Ow! Oh dear! Nothing!" gasped Jimmy, dismally mopping his nose where somebody's boot had caught it.

"Wait a minute till I come down!" rapped the captain of the Modern side.

"Oh, my hat!"

"Hard cheese, old beans!" murmured Tommy Dodd sympathetically.

Jimmy Silver & Co. waited dismally until Knowles appeared in the doorway, gripping his ashplant.

"This will teach you a lesson in orderliness!" he remarked coolly. "Silver first!"

In mute dismay, Jimmy Silver held out his hand.

He received two stinging cuts, and gasped.

Lovell came next, and received the same. Raby and Newcome and Conroy followed. When he came to Mornington, still gasping from his previous infliction, Knowles paused. He seemed to catch something of the gleam in Mornington's eye.

"Cut off!" he snapped.

And the Classical juniors, gasping, obeyed.

"Here comes Knowles!" remarked Arthur Edward Lovell. "Never mind Knowles, old fellow! I'm just a little bit fed-up with Knowles!"

"Oh, all right!"

"Look out!"

Jimmy Silver took a run at the ball and let drive. It was a good shot, but Lovell, between the sticks, got his fist to it, and the leather rebounded almost to Jimmy's feet.

Classes were over for the day, and the Fourth were putting in some footer on Little Side before tea. For the time being they had completely forgotten Carthew and Knowles.

Mornington, putting two and two together, suggested that it was at Carthew's request that Knowles had descended on them so heavily for "ragging" with the Moderns. It was more than probable, having regard for Carthew's chumminess with Knowles and Catesby and Frampton of the Modern side.

But while footer practice was "on," prefects were at a discount, so to speak.

And Jimmy Silver took no especial notice as Knowles strolled on to the junior pitch and stood for a few moments watching the play.

Jimmy Silver shot again, and this time Arthur Edward Lovell did not get the ball away. It curled past him, and spun in the top of the rigging.

"My hat! Well shot, Jimmy!" gasped Lovell, throwing his gloves to Conroy.

"Play!"

Conroy did his best, and he was a good goalkeeper. But the ball came in with the force of a cannon-shot, and almost before he knew it, it was spinning in the back of the net.

Jimmy Silver chuckled.

"Silver!"

"Oh, my hat! Knowles!" breathed Raby.

"Hallo! Do you want me, Knowles?" asked Jimmy.

"Your shooting isn't so bad for a junior, Silver! You can come along and give me a few shots on Big Side."

Really, "Uncle James" ought to have appeared surprised and delighted to comply with Knowles' lordly request, but he was not. Jimmy Silver, in fact, often put in shots on the senior pitch for such mighty panjandrums as Bulkeley and Neville, so he was used to the honour. And he was busy licking his team into shape for the postponed match with Bagshot—an arduous task, without interruptions from Knowles.

Still, it could not be helped. And it was undoubtedly kind of Knowles to call on him.

"Right-ho, Knowles! Coming!" answered the Rookwood junior captain.

"Oh, and I forgot my cap!" remarked Knowles airily.

"Just run up to my study and fetch it, will you?"

Jimmy Silver stared for a moment.

Knowing that the Modern skipper was a close friend of Carthew's, he could not help suspecting him of being in league to get Carthew's own back for his treatment at the hands of the mysterious Fascists. "Fagging" for seniors was among those things "not done" in the Fourth, and Jimmy hesitated.

"Don't waste time!" ordered Knowles irritably.

Uncle James drew a deep breath. But he did not want to appear disobliging. He trotted off meekly to the House, and returned in a few minutes with Knowles' cap.

"Thanks!" remarked Knowles coolly. "Oh, by the by, I left my gloves on the table close to the cap!"

"The cap was on a peg, so it couldn't have been near the gloves," answered Jimmy calmly. "As it happened, I didn't see them."

"Well, don't hang about!" said Knowles, with a gleam in his eyes. "I want them!"

"Don't go, Jimmy!" whispered Lovell angrily. "He's trying to make a fool of you!"

"Buck up!" snapped Knowles.

Uncle James pondered for a moment, but he set off quietly to fetch the gloves. When he returned with them his expression was perfectly meek.

"Now we'll have some of your shooting!" remarked Knowles, with his most patronising air. "Catesby and Frampton want a little goalkeeping practice, too!"

"Jimmy they're making a fool of you!" growled Lovell.

"Come along and watch, and don't jaw!" retorted Uncle James confidently.

He followed Knowles, and Lovell and Raby and Newcome and several other fellows followed him to watch.

On the senior pitch, Knowles and Catesby and Frampton were preparing to receive shots from Jimmy Silver. Knowles had donned cap and gloves, and was marking his line before goal when the onlookers arrived.

"Ready, youngster! Don't be afraid to let fly!"

"Clean through the net, Jimmy!" chirruped Lovell.

Uncle James of Rookwood set his teeth. He had taken Knowles' impertinence lying down, but now it was his turn. Knowles himself was quite good in goal, but Catesby and Frampton were negligible. Jimmy had an idea that he could make the Moderns rather sorry they had picked on him before he had finished.

He put all he knew into the first shot.

Knowles, with a cool grin, shaped to take it, expecting to effect an easy save and toss the ball back to the marksman, with a chuckle. What happened was that the leather flashed past him, and there was a chuckle from the juniors round the ropes.

"What price that?" roared Lovell enthusiastically.

"Goal!" grinned Raby.

Knowles was looking more serious as he prepared for the next shot. Jimmy Silver was looking serious, too. He had resolved on a hat-trick.

"Play!"

The ball flew, and Knowles grabbed. But he grabbed in the wrong place, and the leather dropped, spinning, in the back of the net.

"Goal, by gum!" gasped Lovell, in delight. "Keep it up, old man!"

Knowles set his teeth to face the third.

He threw himself full length at it, determined to save this one and silence the chuckles of the juniors round the ropes. But there was a cunning spin on the ball, and it evaded the prefect's grasp as he dived at it. Knowles sprawled in the mud, and the ball entered the net for the third time. Jimmy Silver broke into a laugh.

"Hard luck, Knowles!"

The prefect scowled angrily.

"Get away from the ropes, there, you young rascals!" he shouted, shaking his fist. "Get away, do you hear?"

"Oh dear! We've got to go!" groaned Lovell.

"Knowles thinks the sight is too pathetic for our young eyes! Come on, chaps!"

The Modern skipper watched angrily as the juniors disappeared towards the House. Then he nodded curtly to Jimmy Silver.

"Carry on! You've been having luck!"

Whether he had had luck or not, during the next few minutes Knowles found himself beaten many more times than he appreciated. But he stuck to it grimly, and, as the junior captain began to tire, he began to save with more regularity.

Jimmy was the champion penalty taker of the junior team, but even he could not keep on for ever.

"I think that'll do," remarked Knowles at last. "Catesby, you take a go!"

"Oh, my hat!" gasped Jimmy Silver.

He was tired; but Catesby was waiting, and there was no help for it.

The first two drives sang past Catesby, but, under Knowles' eye, he kept on. Jimmy Silver turned a dripping face to the Modern skipper after a few more minutes, gasping with exertion.

"I say, Knowles, haven't you had enough?"

"Keep on till I tell you to chuck it!" ordered Knowles grimly. "Play up! I don't encourage slacking!"

Jimmy set his teeth and kept on. But it was an effort to shoot now. And even Catesby began to save with some ease.

"Now give Frampton a turn!" rapped Knowles coolly. "Dash it all, I'm nearly done now!" ejaculated the Rookwood junior captain angrily.

"You'll keep on till I tell you!" snapped Knowles meaningly. "I've got an ashplant here if you slack down!"

Jimmy Silver bit his lip. He understood now why Knowles had ordered his friends away from the practice pitch. He did not want witnesses to this little scene.

The junior glanced round, in the hope of spotting some senior who would rescue him, but there was none. They were all at tea. With a heavy heart, Jimmy began to shoot again. He had thought of bolting, but with three seniors at hand, his chances would have been negligible.

Though his legs ached as if they would give way beneath him, Jimmy continued to shoot to Frampton, who enjoyed himself thoroughly. Frampton could not have touched Jimmy's shots in the ordinary way, but he could stop what was being sent in now, and he did, grinning.

The sweat was pouring from Jimmy Silver when Knowles took up the ball.

"That'll do for this time, youngster! I shall want you about the same time to-morrow! You understand?"

"I understand!" answered Jimmy Silver grimly.

"Right-ho! Cut off! And if you complain about this, look out for yourself, that's all!"

The junior did not answer.

It was as much as he could do to drag himself as far as the end study and flop down in the easy-chair.

"Just coming out to look for you," said Lovell. "By Jove, has that rotter Knowles been lamming you?"

Recuperating in the easy-chair, Jimmy Silver explained briefly. His chums' looks grew grim as he proceeded.

"Oh!" said Arthur Edward Lovell, at the finish. "So that's the game, is it? That's how Carthew reckons to get his own back on us—what?"

"Looks like it," assented Raby.

"Shall I call in the fellows, Jimmy?" asked Newcome.

Jimmy Silver nodded, and Newcome left the study. When he returned, it was with Mornington and Conroy and Pons and Oswald. They were all looking grim. When Uncle James had explained the situation, they looked grimmer.

"By gad, that about does it!" remarked Mornington coolly. "In my capacity of—"

"Lock that door!" rapped Lovell.

"I suggest that we put Knowles an' Catesby an' Frampton on the list for immediate attention!" said Mornington, when Raby had turned the key.

"Carried unanimously!" agreed Lovell. "But I think I ought to take the lead this time, Morny! It isn't fair for you to take all the risk. This study can look after itself."

"Dear man," smiled Mornington urbanely. "Leave it to me! Jimmy has been ragged, an' we're proposin' payin' Knowles an' his cronies back in coin! Whom do you suppose they will suspect at once?"

"Us," said Raby ungrammatically.

"Exactly! Therefore, I advise you to leave the whole affair in my hands as before. When they pick me as a giddy victim, you men can exact the revenge! All agreed?"

"I suppose so," said Jimmy Silver. "It's jolly sporting of you to take the lead like this, Morny!"

"Bosh!" snapped Mornington coolly. "We're only actin' on the rules of the giddy organisation. I'm revellin' in it, I know that! Now, my idea is that we act this evenin' while prep is supposed to be goin' on!"

"It'll save getting up after lights out," agreed Oswald.

"An' it will enable Jimmy an' Lovell to prove an alibi," put in Mornington calmly. "Lend me your ears!"

(Another fine instalment next week, boys.)

WHAT HAS GONE BEFORE.

LOVELL minor, a fug in the Third Form at Rookwood, in debt to CAPTAIN PUNTER, appeals to his major, ARTHUR EDWARD, for monetary assistance. Lovell major bluntly refuses, but in company with his chums, JIMMY SILVER, RABY, and NEWCOME, known as the Fisticul Four, he meets the rascally bookmaker and forces him to give up the fug's I.O.U. To level matters, Punter offers to liquidate the debts of CARTHEW, the bully of the Sixth, providing he will help him score off Jimmy Silver & Co. Carthew realises he must obey the captain or face the consequences of an exposure at the school.

And whilst the bullying prefect is pondering uneasily over the subject, Jimmy Silver & Co. are scheming a deep plot against him which they feel sure will level all the odds between them.

This scheme is carried out one night. Carthew is awakened by the appearance of a band of hooded figures calling themselves the Fascist Band of Rookwood, who make him a prisoner and carry him off to a room especially prepared for the occasion. Here Carthew goes through the rigging of his life, and is then carried back to his study tied to a chair, and left in that position all night. In the morning he is released, and he takes his complaint to Mr. Dalton. But inquires do not reveal the identity of the mysterious Fascist Band or its leader.

That day Jimmy Silver & Co. are ragging Tommy Dodd & Co. on the steps of the New House, when a window is thrown up, and Knowles, doubtless glad of an excuse to punish the juniors he dislikes, looks out and calls the noisy ragers to order.

(Now read on.)



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.

THE "SAINTS AND FRIARS" MOVEMENT!

ALTHOUGH South Africa is thousands of miles away from the spot where the good old GEM is printed, it holds some wonderfully loyal supporters in Monty N. Granger and his chums. Granger tells me that they like Tom Merry & Co. and Harry Wharton & Co. so much that they have split themselves into two groups—St. Jim's and Greyfriars, or Saints and Friars for short. The two "rival" groups challenge each other to do battle on the footer and cricket fields. My correspondent leads the Greyfriars section as Harry Wharton, and Tom Griffiths is the leader of the Saints, and, judging by Granger's letter, they get heaps of fun out of these contests. Quite near their homes is a racecourse, which is open to the public when racing has an "off" day, so to speak, and on this track the Saints and the Friars are going to race over a distance of eight furlongs. These cheery chums are also keenly interested in acting, and they have, by mutual arrangement, chosen to produce a Rookwood play which appeared in the "Holiday Annual" a few years back. It really is good to hear that Tom Merry & Co.

and Harry Wharton & Co., of "Magnet" fame, are so popular with these reader pals in South Africa, and I'm sure all Gemites will join me in wishing the "Saints and Friars" the best of luck and comradeship.

THE "SCHOOLBOYS' OWN LIBRARY!"

Just a reminder, you chaps, that there are two new numbers of this popular Library on sale now at all book-stalls. No. 59, "The Greyfriars Sailors," is a fine story of Harry Wharton & Co. of Greyfriars. No. 60, entitled: "The Scapegrace of Rookwood," features Jimmy Silver & Co. and Valentine Mornington of Rookwood. I strongly recommend these two fourpenny Libraries to all my chums.

NEXT WEDNESDAY'S PROGRAMME!

"THE CHANGELING OF ST. JIM'S!"
By Martin Clifford.

This is the title of next week's stirring long story of Tom Merry & Co., which is a fitting sequel to the one you have already read in this issue. It deals further with Arthur Castleton, the strange new boy. Don't miss reading it.

"THE ROOKWOOD DICTATOR!"
By Owen Conquest.

Another rattling fine instalment of our school serial.

"HIDDEN NAMES!"

There'll be the third of our series of novel puzzles which will provide a pleasant few minutes for you. The solution of Puzzle No. 2 will also be published next week. Finally, you footer fans have "Pot Shots" to look forward to. Order early, chums.

Chin-chin,

Your Editor.

JOIN THE ROYAL NAVY AND SEE THE WORLD.

Boys are wanted for the Seaman Class (from which selections are made for the Wireless Telegraphy and Signalling Branches). Age 15½ to 16½ years.

MEN also are required for

SEAMEN (Special Service) - - - - - Age 18 to 25
STOKERS - - - - - Age 18 to 25

GOOD PAY - - - - - ALL FOUND
EXCELLENT CHANCES FOR PROMOTION

Apply by letter to the Recruiting Staff Officer, R.N. and R.M.: 5, Suffolk Street, Birmingham; 121, Victoria Street, Bristol; 15, Crown Terrace, Downhill, Glasgow; 30, Canning Place, Liverpool; 55, Whitehall, London, S.W.1; 289, Deansgate, Manchester; 116, Eye Hill, Newcastle-on-Tyne; or 6, Orchard Place, Queen's Park, Southampton.

STOP STAMMERING! Cure yourself as I did. Particulars Free.—FRANK E. HUGHES, 7, SOUTHAMPTON ROW, LONDON, W.C.1.

ACTIVE AGENTS WANTED to sell Private Christmas Cards. Experience not essential. Highest Commission. Valuable Prizes. Free Sample Book. Choice Selection. Apply DENTON & CO., Dept. D18, Accrington.

300 STAMPS FOR 6d. (Abroad 1/-), including Allpost, Tri-angular, Old India, Nigeria, New South Wales, Gold Coast, etc.—W. A. WHITE, Engine Lane, LYE, Stourbridge.

1/6 THE BULLY BOY 1/6

20-Shot Rapid Repeater Action Pea Pistol. Fires a Pea 25 feet at the rate of 100 a minute. A Regular Pocket Lewis Gun! Bright nickel finish; each in box with ammunition. A better shooter than you have ever had before! Send 1/6 and don't miss our latest quick-fire! Colonial Orders (Stamps not accepted) 9d. extra. J. BISHOP & CO., 41, Finsbury Sq., London, E.C.



£2,000 WORTH CHEAP PHOTO MATERIAL.—Samples catalogue free; 12 by 10 Enlargement, any photo, 8d.—HACKETT'S WORKS, July Road, LIVERPOOL.

FREE FUN! Ventriloquists' Instruments given FREE to all sending 7d. (P.O.) for latest Amusing Novelty and List.—P. SIMPSON CO., 10, Clarence Gdns., Llandudno, N.W.

HISTORIC STAMPS FREE!

(Knights of Old, etc.) 5 gratis to genuine Stamp Buyers sending postage (1d.) and requesting trial selection of "BETTER" STAMP APPROVALS—uncancelled for Variety and Value (4d. in 1/- disc.) from ALIX HARLAND, Philatelist, Westcliff Terrace, RAMSGATE.

All applications for Advertisement Space in this publication should be addressed to the Advertisement Manager, UNION JACK SERIES, The Fleetway House, Farringdon St., London, E.C.4.

GREAT RECORD BARGAIN!!
Sole Price, THE NEW 1927 IMPROVED MODEL OF THE FAMOUS
1/9 "MONARCH" DELUXE CAMERA
Reqd. LARGE CAMERA
Only! Fitted Genuine GUARANTEED MENISCUS LENS, Reflex Post 3d. View-finder, Spring Lever Shutter, Lever Guard, Leatherette Handle and absolutely GUARANTEED TO TAKE PERFECT LARGE PHOTOS, size 3½x2½ ins. BRITISH MADE and supplied complete with all Accessories.—Best Quality Plate, Developing and Printing OUTFIT with easy instructions for use. Send P.O. 2/- to-day for complete Camera and Outfit. See Catalogue, 1,000 Big Bargains, Post Free!
THE LEEDS BARGAIN CO. (U.S.), 31, Kendal Lane, LEEDS.

STAMP COLLECTOR'S OUTFIT FREE!!
Duplicate Stamp Album, 60 different Stamps (25 unused), Perforation Gauge and Case, Stamp Mounts, British Colonials, etc. A wonderful opportunity! Send postage and request Approvals.
LISBURN & TOWNSEND, LONDON ROAD, LIVERPOOL.

HOME CINEMATOGRAPHS
Machines from 5/- to £16. Lighting Sets, Rewinders, Spools and all accessories. Films all lengths & subjects. Sample Film 1/- post free.
ILLUSTRATED PRICE LISTS FREE
CALL OR WRITE—
FORD'S (Dept. A.P.), 13, Red Lion Sq., London, W. C. 1.
Entrance Dane Street.

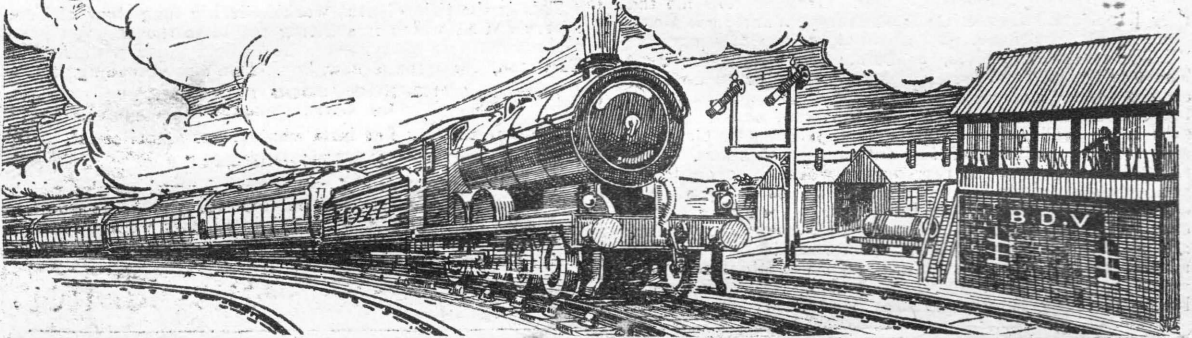
DON'T BE BULLIED
Send Four Penny Stamps for **TWO SPLENDID LESSONS** in **JUJITSU** and Handsome Photo Plate of Jap Champions. The Wonderful Japanese Self-Defence without weapons. Take care of yourself under ALL circumstances; fear no man. You can have **MONSTER** Illustrated Portion for P.O. 3/9. **SEND NOW** to "YAWARA" (Dept. A.P.), 10, Queensway, Hanworth, Feltham, Middlesex. Practical Tuition, Richmond and London Schools Daily.

HEIGHT INCREASED 5/- Complete IN 30 DAYS. Course.
No Appliances. No Drugs. No Dieting. The Melvin Strong System NEVER FAILS. Full particulars and Testimonials, stamp—Melvin Strong, Ltd. (Dept. S.), 10, Ludgate Hill, London, Eng.

HAVE YOU A RED NOSE ?
Send a stamp to pay postage, and you will learn how to rid yourself of such a terrible affliction free of charge. Enclose stamp. Address in confidence: T. J. TEMPLE, Specialist, "Palace House," 128, Shaftesbury Avenue, LONDON, W.1.

CUT THIS OUT
"GEM" PEN COUPON. VALUE 3d.
Send 5 of these coupons with only 2/9 (and 2d. stamp) direct to the **FLEET PEN CO. 119, Fleet Street, E.C.4.** By return you will receive a handsome lever self-filling **FLEET FOUNTAIN PEN** with solid gold nib (fine, medium, or broad), usually 10/6. Fleet price, 4/-, or with 5 coupons only 2/9. De Luxe Model 2/- extra.

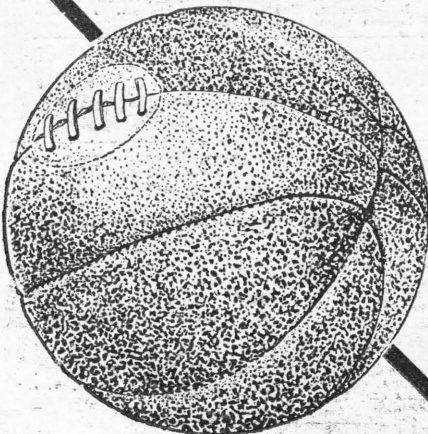
Boys! - make your dreams come true



COMPLETE SCALE MODEL RAILWAYS as sold by **BASSETT-LOWKE LTD** of Northampton **FREE for B.D.V. coupons**

Also Rails, Stations, Wagons, Carriages, Brakes, Vans, Signal Boxes, Points, Sidings, Tunnels, Signals, and every necessary part for the building of a COMPLETE MODEL RAILWAY. Simply collect the coupons (found generally at the back) of every packet of B.D.V. Cigarettes, hold the coupons until you have the required number for the engine, truck, bridge, etc., and then send them in, when your free gift will be immediately forwarded to you, post or carriage paid to your door. Ask Daddy, and Big Brother, and Uncle Bill, and Sister Sue, and Sister's Sweetheart, and the next-door neighbour, and every smoker you know to smoke B.D.V. Cigarettes and save you the coupons. You can get all your friends to help you collect. In a very, very short time you will have sufficient to begin getting free gifts. The more coupons you collect the more gifts you can secure. Get your chums to club with you if you like and run a combined railway.

AND THIS STURDY MATCH FOOTBALL FREE FOR 180 COUPONS



Beautifully made of good leather and bladder of pure Para rubber. It's a full size ball, and a dozen boys can collect 180 coupons in no time. Get together now, and send for this real match-winner! Send your coupons to:-
GODFREY PHILLIPS LTD. (Gift Dept. 45),
54, White Lion Street, E.1.

B.D.V. CIGARETTES

"- just like hand made" COUPON

10 for 6d. 20 for 11½d.

Plain or Cork Tips.

B15.G15.

To **GODFREY PHILLIPS, Ltd.**, 54, White Lion St., London, E.1.
Dear Sirs.—Please send me **FREE B.D.V. Gift Book** worth **Five** Coupons.
NAME
ADDRESS