

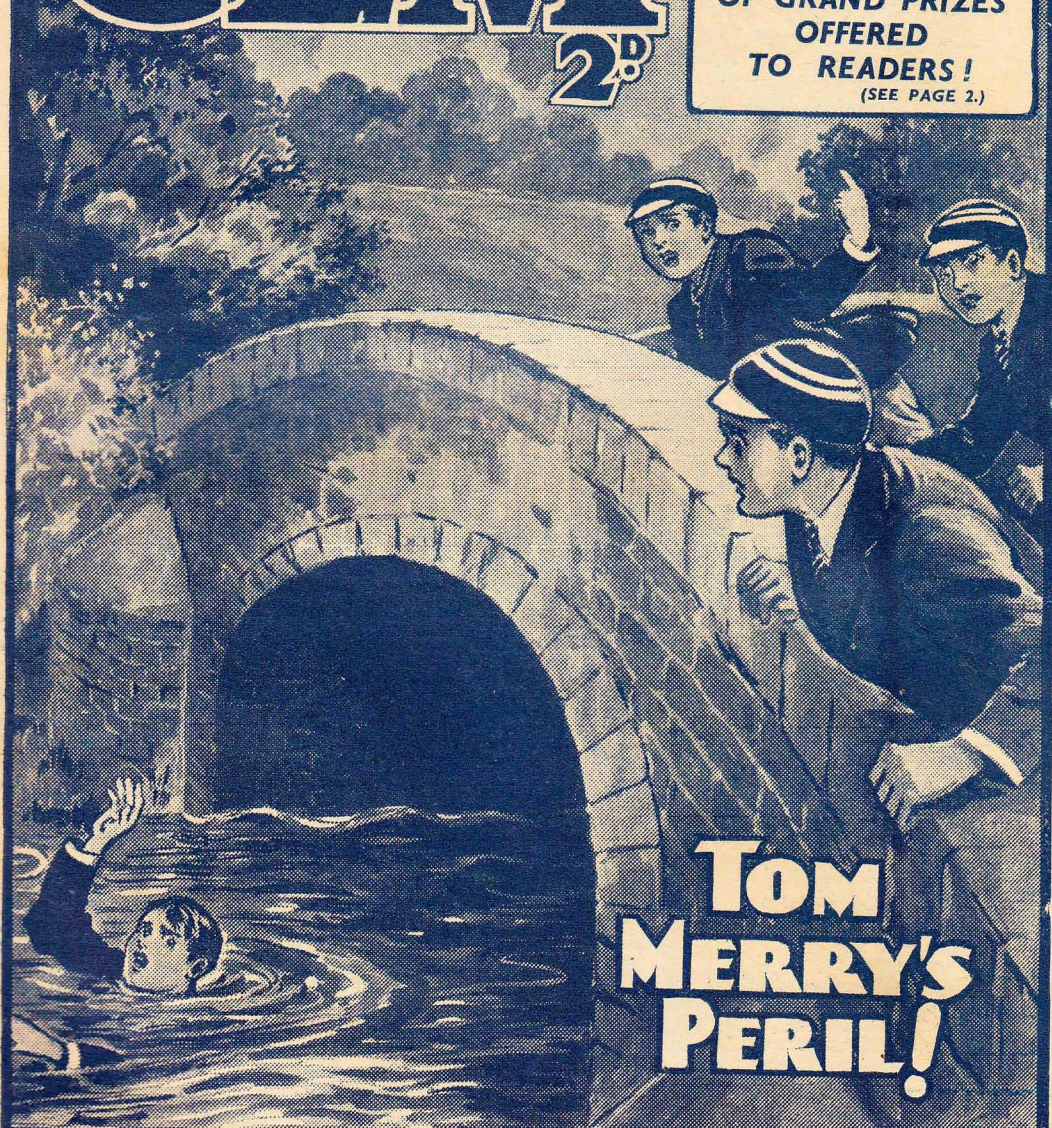
GRUNDY THE VENTRILOQUIST! Humorous Yarn of Sport, Fun, and Adventure at St. Jim's— **INSIDE.**

The GEM

2^d

JOIN TO-DAY
IN OUR
**FREE STAMP
COLLECTING
SCHEME!**

**THOUSANDS
OF GRAND PRIZES
OFFERED
TO READERS!**
(SEE PAGE 2.)



**TOM
MERRY'S
PERIL!**

THE GREAT ARMAMENTS RACE

10 More First Prizes of New Bikes!

4,000 Other Grand Prizes Still to be Won FREE

MORE Prize News for you, pals! We're all set for the second month's lap in our Stupendous Stamp-Collecting Race. There are still Ten More "Hercules" Bikes and 4,000 other super Prizes to be won. They're FREE, too!

Every week in GEM, we are continuing to print free Armaments Stamps—BATTLESHIPS, SEARCHLIGHTS, GUNS, and so on. There are now six different kinds to be collected. Just cut them out and stick to as many others as you can get hold of. And remember, pals, all the stamps you collected last month (except Bombers and Submarines, which we called in) can be used for this month's contest as well.

This issue contains twenty stamps in all—ten on this page and ten more on page 35—while, if you also read other popular boys' papers like "Magnet" and "Modern Boy," you will find more of these stamps in them to help give you a big total.

At the end of June we shall again ask you how many of one or more kinds of stamps you've collected. Which stamps we shall ask for will be a close secret until then.

So go all out to get as many of these stamps as you can. Get your pals to do it, too—swap stamps with them if you like and make the "race" more exciting for everybody.

At the end of June another Five Bikes and up to 2,000 of the other tip-top prizes will be given away! The biggest collections of stamps called for will win—and readers will be asked to say which prizes they want, too!

No stamps to be sent in yet—we will tell you how and where when the time comes!

OVERSEAS READERS, TOO! You pals who are far away—you're in this great scheme also, and special awards will be given for the best collections from overseas readers. There will be a special closing date for you.

N.B.—You can also collect or swap Armaments Stamps with pals who read "Sports Budget," "Thriller," "Detective Weekly," "Magnet," "Modern Boy," "Triumph," "Champion," and "Boy's Cinema."

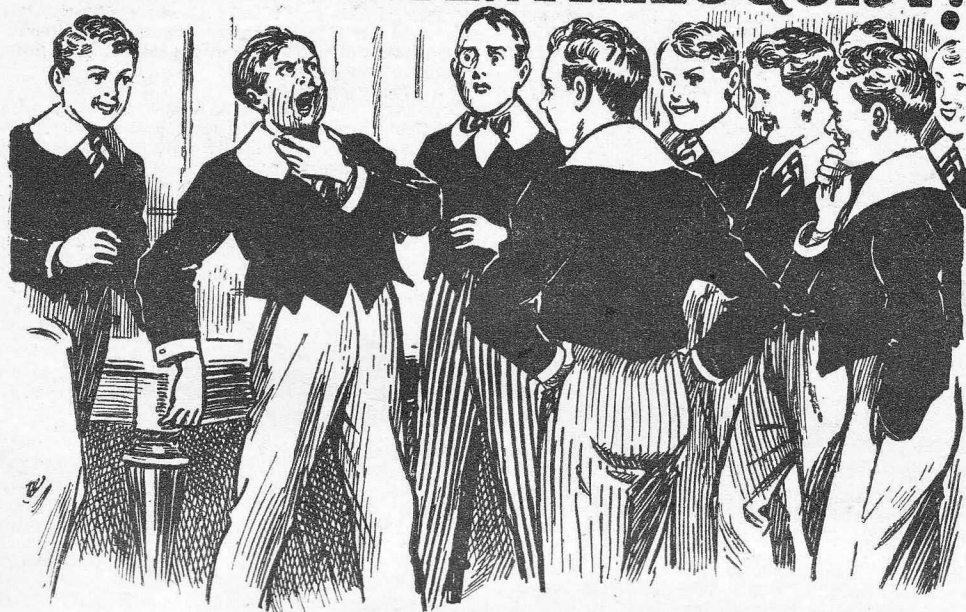
Rules (to be strictly adhered to.) Five First Prizes of £4 7s. 6d. "Hercules" Cycles and up to 2,000 other prizes will be awarded in order of merit **each month** during the contest to the readers declaring and sending the largest collections of the stamps called for. Cash value of any of the first prizes may be divided in case of a tie or ties for such prizes. Ties for any other prizes will be decided by the Editor. All claims for prizes to be sent on the proper coupon (given at the end of each month). No allowance made for any coupon or stamps mutilated or lost or delayed in the post or otherwise. No correspondence! No one connected with this paper may enter, and the Editor's decision will be final and legally binding throughout.



MORE STAMPS TO KEEP ON PAGE 35, PALS!

WHEN GEORGE ALFRED GRUNDY STARTS THROWING HIS VOICE HIS SCHOOLFELLOWS THINK HE'S THROWING A FIT!

GRUNDY *the* VENTRILOQUIST!



Grundy's first proceeding was to open his mouth and squeeze his throat, and then to twist up his features in an alarming manner. If the juniors had not known that he was going to ventriloquise, they would certainly have thought that he was going to have a fit!

CHAPTER 1.

A Sudden Alarm!

"GWEAT Scott! Help!"
 "What's the row?"
 "Help, deah boys! Gwunday's in a fit!"
 D'Arcy of the Fourth stood at the door of the Common-room in the School House at-St. Jim's, and shouted in alarm.

It was a fine afternoon in early summer, and most of the fellows were out of doors, lessons for the day being over.

Grundy of the Shell had had the Common-room to himself till D'Arcy came in.

Arthur Augustus D'Arcy came sauntering in elegantly, thinking of nothing in particular. But he gave a sudden jump, and uttered a startled yell at the sight of George Alfred Grundy.

Grundy was standing before the glass, with his mouth open, his features twisted almost out of recognition, his complexion purple.

He seemed to be striving to utter some sound, but no sound would come from his throat.

No wonder D'Arcy of the Fourth was alarmed. No wonder he stood rooted in the doorway of the Common-room and shouted for help.

Tom Merry, Manners, and Lowther were in the passage, and they came racing along at once.

"What on earth—"

"Poor old Gwunday! Look at him!" gasped D'Arcy.

"Great pip!"

"Grundy!"

"Pway help

him somehow, deah boys!" said D'Arcy helplessly. "What do you do to a fellow in a fit?"

A low moan came from Grundy.

"Woohoo!"

His face was quite purple as he uttered it.

"My hat!" ejaculated Tom Merry. "Poor old Grundy! Yell for some water!"

He dashed towards Grundy.

"Watah!" shouted Arthur Augustus frantically. "Watah, deah boys! Watah!"

"Hallo!" yelled Blake, from the staircase. "What do you want, Gussy?"

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By

MARTIN CLIFFORD.

Grundy's got another bee in his bonnet—it's ventriloquism this time! And if he's not a howling success, he certainly causes a riot of fun!

"Watah, deah boy!"
 "Use some of that you've got on your brain, old chap!"

"You uttah ass, Blake!"
 Tom Merry reached Grundy of the Shell. Tom sometimes had his rubs with George Alfred Grundy. But all that was forgotten now. Grundy might be every conceivable kind of an ass, and as obstinate as a mule. But he evidently needed looking after now, and Tom Merry was prepared to look after him.

He threw his arms protectingly round Grundy's broad shoulders.

"Lean on me, old chap!"
 "Whoo-hoo-wooh!" moaned Grundy.
 "Watah! Watah! Gwunday's in a feahful fit!"

Lowther was rushing away for water. Arthur Augustus seemed to think it sufficient to shout for water without making any movement to obtain it.

24 MORE ARMAMENTS STAMPS

in the
"MAGNET"

and
 20 in **"MODERN BOY"**

On sale next Saturday - - - - - 2d.

Wilkins and Gunn came running in. They were Grundy's chums and studymates, and though the great Grundy sometimes exasperated them, they really had a regard for George Alfred. They were not surprised to hear that he was in a fit. Nothing Grundy did would have surprised them.

They found Grundy wriggling in the protecting arms of Tom Merry, the captain of the Shell.

"Woo-hoo!" said Grundy. "Gerraway!"
 "Poor old Grundy!" said Wilkins. "Lean on me!"

"Gerraway!" shrieked Grundy.
 "Look here, aren't you in a fit?" exclaimed Wilkins, rather indignantly. "We've come to help you!"

"Look at his face!" gasped Gunn. "Awful!"
 Lowther rushed in with a jug of water.
 "Here you are!"
 Swoosh!

The contents of the jug were shot into George Alfred Grundy's purple, heated face.

Grundy staggered back with a choking yell.
 "Gerooch!"

"Poor chap!" said Wilkins. "People always make those queer noises in a fit, I believe. Fancy old Grundy starting fits!"

"Put him on the sofa," said Tom. "Lend a hand, you chaps! He's jolly heavy! He seems to be getting better."

Grundy was gouging water out of his eyes and spluttering wildly. Tom Merry, Wilkins, and Gunn seized him, to lay him gently on the sofa.

"Leggo!" raved Grundy. "Yah! Oh! Groogh! I'll smash you!"

"Yaroooh!" roared Wilkins as Grundy hit out, and Wilkins went rolling along the floor. "Yow-ow-ow! You ungrateful beast— Yow-ow-ow!"
 Biff!

Tom Merry caught Grundy's left with his chin, and sat down with a bump.

Gunn jumped away in alarm. He did not want to make a third in that game.

Grundy gouged the water from his eyes and

glared furiously at the juniors. He did not seem to be in a fit now. But he was evidently in a fearful rage.

"You burbling idiots!" he roared. "Wharrer you at? Lemme alone! My hat, I'll pulverise you! What silly idiot chucked that water at me?"

"Well, I like that!" said Lowther warmly. "If you must have your beastly fits in the Common-room, you might be decently grateful to fellows who help you out of them!"

"You silly jabberwock! I'm not in a fit!"

"Weally, Gwunday, you know perfectly well that you were in a fit!" said Arthur Augustus. "You alarmed me feahfully with your howwible expression."

"You silly ass!" hooted Grundy, mopping his wet face with his handkerchief. "You set of burbling idiots! Yah!"

"I wegard you as an ungwateful beast, Gwunday, and the next time you have a fit, I shall wefuse to take the slightest notice of you!" said Arthur Augustus indignantly.

"I tell you I wasn't in a fit!" shrieked Grundy. "Wats!"

"It's all right, old chap," said Gunn comfortingly. "There's nothing to be ashamed of in having fits; fellows can't help them. If you're subject to fits, it can't be helped."

"If you say I'm subject to fits, I'll—I'll——"

"Well, aren't you?"
 "No, you silly chump!" roared Grundy. "I'm not!"

"Then what were you making horrible faces for, and moaning like a dying pig?" demanded Lowther.

"You burbling asses! I was practising!" hooted Grundy.

"Practising having fits!" exclaimed Tom Merry, in astonishment.

"Bai Jove! What a peculiah taste!"
 "No, you chumps! No, you dummies! I was practising throwing my voice."

"Wha-a-at!"
 "I am a ventriloquist!"
 "A which?"

"Ventriloquist!" shouted Grundy. "Now do you understand, you howling fatheads? I was just getting into the way of it and throwing my voice a treat when you came and interrupted me like a lot of silly owls! Why, what are you cackling at, you dummies?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"
 There was a roar of merriment in the Common-room.

Grundy having fits was weird enough, but Grundy the ventriloquist was weirder still.

Tom Merry & Co. simply yelled while George Alfred Grundy mopped the water out of his neck and glared at them in surprise and wrath.

CHAPTER 2.

Grundy's Latest!

"G WUNDAY the ventwiloquist! Ha, ha, ha!"

"Good old Grundy!"
 "Same old burbling ass!"
 "Ha, ha, ha!"

"You silly chumps!" exclaimed the exasperated Grundy. "Blessed if I can see anything to cackle at! I happen to have a gift for ventriloquism, and I'm going to develop it by practice, that's all. It just happens to be one of my gifts!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh dear!" said Tom Merry, wiping his eyes. "You'll be the death of us yet, Grundy. Why were you born such a funny merchant?"

Grundy snorted.

"I suppose I can expect jealousy and detraction in everything, the same as in the footer and cricket," he said. "You jolly well won't be able to stop me with your cackling—I know that. When a chap's got a great gift it's his duty to develop it and make the most of it. That's what I'm going to do. Later I shall get up ventriloquial entertainments."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I shall require some practice first, however. If you'd leave off cackling like a set of fools I'd show you the progress I've made."

"Silence for George Alfred!" said Lowther, holding up his hand. "Let's see Grundy throw his voice. Throw it out of the doorway, Grundy."

"I can do that."

"And throw yourself after it."

"You silly ass—"

"Hold on!" said Kangaroo of the Shell. "You say you can throw your voice out into the passage, Grundy?"

"Certainly I can!"

"Suppose somebody shut the door on it?"

"Eh?"

"How would you get it back again?"

"Look here, don't be a funny idiot!" roared Grundy. "Shut up and give a chap a chance. Now, I'm just going to begin."

The grinning juniors were silent, and George Alfred proceeded to throw his voice in ventriloquial style.

His first proceeding was to open his mouth and squeeze his throat, and then to twist up his rugged features in a most alarming manner.

If the St. Jim's fellows had not known that George Alfred was merely going to throw his voice they would certainly have thought that he was going to have a fit.

From Grundy's squeezed throat came a low, moaning voice.

"Are you there?"

"Yaas, we're here!" said Arthur Augustus.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Grundy glared at the swell of St. Jim's.

"Don't interrupt, you ass!"

"But you addressed a question to us, Gwunday!"

"That was my voice outside the door."

"Gweat Scott!"

"Was your voice outside the door that time?" asked Blake.

"Of course it was! I threw it."

"Then why did it sound as if it came from your mouth as usual?"

"It didn't!" said Grundy.

"Oh, I see! I thought it did!"

"Something wrong with your ears, perhaps. I should advise you to consult a doctor!" snorted Grundy. "Now, listen again, and don't interrupt."

Grundy's face reassumed its alarming expression and he threw his voice again. As he declared that he was throwing it it must be supposed that he did throw it; but undoubtedly the impression on the audience was that the voice proceeded from George Alfred's own throat, and not from outside the door at all. But perhaps Grundy knew best.

"Are you there?"

Grundy's face unbent.

"Yes, I'm here," he said in his natural voice. "What do you want?"

Evidently it was a ventriloquial dialogue between Grundy and an imaginary person in the passage.

He screwed up his face again and moaned out in a voice which he fondly imagined to be ventriloquial:

"I want to come in!"

"There!" said Grundy triumphantly. "What do you think of that?"

Arthur Augustus D'Arcy looked puzzled.

"May I ask one question, Grundy?" he asked.

"Yes, if you like."

"What do you mean by sayin' you want to come in when you are in already?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You fathead! That was supposed to come from outside—that was the ventriloquial voice thrown into the passage."

"Bai Jove!"

"Didn't it seem to you fellows to come from the passage?" demanded Grundy wrathfully.

"No jolly fear!" chuckled Lowther. "It seemed to come from your own gullet!"

"Better have your ears seen to," said Grundy

THE GEM SPELLING BEE

WORD TEASERS TO TEST YOU!

Sort out the mistakes in this list of ten words:

INEXHAUSTABLE
 TRANSIANT
 ENUMERATE
 RESCIND
 PROCEDURE
 DISSIDENTIANT
 WILEY
 SPECTRE
 MURMER
 ATTENDENT

Correct with a pencil those words which you think are wrongly spelled, and then take a look at the corrected list on page 31. Go to the top of the class if you've got them all right!

disdainfully. "They're long enough, but they don't seem to hear very well."

"Why, you cheeky ass—"

"Didn't you think that voice came from outside, Wilkins?"

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled Wilkins. "Not quite!"

"Didn't you, Gunn?"

"Ha, ha, ha! No!"

"I wegard you as an ass, Gwunday!"

George Alfred Grundy bestowed a glare upon the doubting Thomases, who preferred to believe their own ears rather than Grundy's assurances, and strode from the room.

He left the juniors howling with laughter. Grundy had surprised his schoolfellows by starting as a hypnotist once upon a time. But Grundy as a ventriloquist, as Lowther remarked, fairly took the bun.

The great man of the Shell strode away angrily to his study, leaving the juniors howling over Grundy's latest.

CHAPTER 3.

Wonderful!

WILKINS and Gunn came into Grundy's study later on in a rather hesitating manner.

They had been as much tickled as anybody else over Grundy's latest. They remembered rather late that Grundy didn't like being laughed at. He had a habit of taking himself quite seriously. And as tea in the study that evening depended upon Grundy, Wilkins and Gunn felt that they had laughed not wisely, but too well.

A certain amount of "soft sawder" would be required to placate the great Grundy.

They expected to find him surly, and in that expectation they were not disappointed. Grundy was making weird faces and uncanny noises before the glass when they came in. Knowing now that it was only ventriloquism, they were not alarmed. But when he looked at them he was frowning ominously.

"What do you want?" asked Grundy unpleasantly.

"Tea, you know," said Wilkins, with a feeble smile.

"Past tea-time, you know," remarked Gunn.

Grundy pointed to the door.

"Get out!" he said briefly.

"Wha-a-at!"

"I don't want cackling poultry in my study," said Grundy. "I'm fed-up with you! Travel!"

"Look here! I suppose this is our study as much as yours?" said Gunn warmly.

"I'm willing to settle that point with you, if you like," said Grundy, pushing back his cuffs.

"Now, look here, old chap—"

"Don't call me old chap!"

"Ahem! You see—"

"Yes, I see a pair of cackling idiots!" said Grundy. "Some fellows are backed up by their pals when they're doing a really clever and entertaining thing. I must say I never thought you fellows would join in the detraction and jealousy that seems to dog my footsteps everywhere. I had a good bit of it when I was at Redclyffe, but I find it's worse at St. Jim's. But I suppose a chap who's a bit out of the common must expect it."

"Ahem! Yes," agreed Wilkins. "The—the fact is, Grundy, you are a bit out of the common, you know. It's safe to say that there isn't another chap in St. Jim's quite like you."

Wilkins felt that it was quite safe to say that. It was undoubtedly the bare truth. Whether it was to be taken in a complimentary sense was another matter.

"Well, I'm glad you can see that, at all events," said Grundy. "But I must say I'm disappointed in you. I looked on you as pals. I was quite willing to let you share in the credit I brought on this study. I was going to give you some special little entertainments with my ventriloquial gifts."

Grundy spoke in a tone more of sorrow than of anger.

"That's jolly good of you," said Wilkins. "Look here, you show me how you do it, while Gunn goes down to the tuckshop to get something for tea."

"I don't mind," said Grundy, unbending considerably. "I've got a lot of ideas on this subject, you know, when I've had a little more

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practice. I'm going to make the umpire say 'Out!' when Tom Merry's at the wicket. That'll make him skip."

"Oh, my hat! I—I mean, yes! What a ripping wheeze! Of—of course, you'll throw your voice into the umpire's mouth, I suppose?"

"That's it. Then I'm going to attend the pacifists' meeting at Wayland Town Hall. I'm going to throw my voice on the platform, and make 'em say all sorts of things, and muck up the meeting."

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Wilkins and Gunn.

They were really tickled, not so much at the scheme as at Grundy's idea that he could do it. If the amateur ventriloquist started throwing his voice in Wayland Town Hall, the result was certain to be funny, anyway.

Grundy himself grinned, well pleased with this tribute from his chums.

"Well, you cut off, Gunn, and get in some tuck," he said. "Change that ten-bob note, will you?"

"Right you are!" said Gunn.

Gunn departed with the note in a state of great satisfaction. He was very willing to do the shopping while Wilkins had the ventriloquism inflicted upon him.

"Now just you listen to me," said Grundy. "I'm going to make my voice come from under the table."

"Go it!" said Wilkins resignedly.

Grundy went it.

"Gr-r-r-r!"

"Good!" said Wilkins enthusiastically. "That sounded exactly like a voice under the table."

"You ass! That was the growling of a dog under the table!"

"I—I mean—that's what I mean."

"Now listen to this—chap calling for help in the chimney," said Grundy.

"'Elp!"

"Ripping!"

"You see, you can't pronounce 'h's' with the ventriloquial voice," Grundy explained. "You have to drop the 'h's.' Would you have taken that for a chap stuck in a chimney, and calling for help, Wilkins?"

Wilkins nodded.

He had read somewhere that it was the best policy to humour lunatics.

"Now I'm going to throw my voice out of the window."

"I hope to goodness it will stay there," murmured Wilkins.

"Eh? What did you say?"

"I said it's wonderful, old chap! What surprises me is that you can do these things so rippingly after so little practice."

"Some fellows have the gift," said Grundy modestly. "That's how it is. I don't brag of it. It's just a gift."

"I—I see."

"'Elp me in!" said the ventriloquial voice, which Grundy fondly imagined appeared to proceed from the open window.

Wilkins rushed to the window.

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Grundy. "There's nobody there, Wilkins. That was me."

"You!" exclaimed Wilkins, apparently in great astonishment.

"Ha, ha, ha! Yes, I told you I was going to do it."

"Well, that beats it!" said Wilkins.

"I'm getting on," said Grundy. "I take back

some of the things I've said to you, Wilkins. You're a jolly sensible chap."

Wilkins suppressed a gurgle.

"Hallo! Here's Gunn!" said Grundy. "I wish you'd been a minute earlier, Gunny. I made Wilkins believe there was a chap trying to get in at the window."

"Did you?" gasped Gunn.

"It was marvellous," said Wilkins. "You'd never have thought Grundy could do it, would you, Gummy?"

"Never!" said Gunn.

"It only shows what a chap can do when he's got the gift," said Grundy. "I shall astonish some of them before long, I can tell you!"

"You will," said Wilkins. "Especially at

Wilkins and Gunn were smiling, but Grundy was looking very serious.

Tom Merry was looking on at the practice with a keen eye.

The Greyfriars eleven were shortly coming over to St. Jim's, and Tom Merry was keeping his men well up to practice.

The match with Harry Wharton & Co. of Greyfriars was always among the hardest of the season, and the St. Jim's junior cricketers needed to be at the top of their form for it.

The captain of the Shell had no eyes for Grundy, but Grundy had eyes for him. He tapped Tom Merry on the shoulder.

"Don't bother!" said Tom, without turning his head.



"Here are you!" exclaimed Lowther, rushing up with a jug of water. Swoosh! The contents of the jug were shot into George Alfred Grundy's purple, heated face, and he staggered back with a choking yell. "Geroooh!"

the town hall meeting. I say, that ham looks prime, and those tarts ripping!"

Grundy & Co. sat down to tea with much satisfaction. It was quite a gorgeous spread, and well worth the trouble of pulling Grundy's egregious leg. But when tea was over and Grundy was prepared to begin again, Wilkins and Gunn suddenly remembered an appointment over in the New House, and rushed away in great haste, leaving the ventriloquist of St. Jim's to practise on his own.

CHAPTER 4.

Not Quite a Success!

TOM MERRY & CO. were on Little Side, after school the following day, when Grundy of the Shell came down, with Wilkins and Gunn.

"I want to speak to you, Merry."

"I'm busy, fathead!"

"Well, it won't wait. It's about the Greyfriars match next Wednesday."

Tom Merry did not answer. His eyes were upon Jack Blake, who was facing the bowling of Fatty Wynn of the New House. He had no time to waste upon Grundy.

But George Alfred was not to be denied. He tapped Tom Merry on the arm again.

"About the Greyfriars match," he repeated.

"Oh, rats!"

"Are you going to give me a chance in the team?"

"No, ass!"

Tom Merry moved farther away.

Grundy looked darkly at his two chums.

"He's asking for it, isn't he?" he said.

Wilkins nodded.

"I'm going to imitate his voice," said Grundy. "Ventriloquists have to do that, you know. Imitating his voice, I'm going to throw my voice so that it will come from him—see?"

"I—I see!" gasped Wilkins.

Grundy cleared his throat with a little preparatory cough. Then he began.

Jack Blake had just driven the leather away, and Figgins in the field made a jump at it and nearly caught it. But it fell to the grass.

"How's that?" grinned Julian of the Fourth.

"Out!"

The juniors jumped.

Grundy of the Shell was under the weird impression that he uttered that word in Tom Merry's voice, and made it appear to proceed from Tom Merry's mouth.

But to every other fellow there it was quite plain that the word came in Grundy's voice from Grundy's lips. The juniors stared at him.

"Out?" repeated Digby.

"Out, you ass!"

"What do you mean, Grundy? Figgins missed the catch!"

"He's dotty!"

"My hat! What an umpire he'd make!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Grundy snorted. Evidently he had missed it that time, and the St. Jim's fellows did not even know that he was ventriloquising.

Wilkins and Gunn nearly doubled up.

Figgins tossed the ball in to Fatty Wynn, and the Welsh junior bowled again to Blake.

This time the middle stump went flying, and the Falstaff of the New House chirruped:

"How's that?"

"Not out!"

Again Grundy fondly imagined that he was imitating Tom Merry's clear, pleasant voice, and causing the statement to proceed from the captain of the Shell.

Again he was, so to speak, off the wicket.

"Not out this time!" chuckled Julian. "Oh,

Grundy!"

"Out!" said Tom.

"Run away and read 'Cricket for Beginners,' Grundy!" said Herries.

Grundy glared.

"Didn't you recognise Tom Merry's voice?" he asked.

"My voice!" exclaimed Tom.

"He's ventriloquising!" gasped Wilkins, unable to keep the thrilling secret any longer. "He's—ha, ha, ha—ventriloquising!"

"Gweat Scott!"

"Ventriloquising! Oh, my hat!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

There was a roar of laughter as Grundy's deep design dawned upon the juniors.

George Alfred glared at them furiously.

"You cackling asses!" he began. "I'm not quite in practice yet, perhaps—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"But you just wait a bit—wait till I've had a bit more practice—"

"You're not going to have any practice here!" grinned Tom Merry. "The cricket field isn't the place for a silly ass to play the giddy ox! Somebody take a bat and drive him off!"

"Look here—"

"Off you go!"

"I tell you— Yaroooh! Keep that bat away!" roared Grundy. "Don't poke me with that stump, Kerruish! I'll— Gerraway, Julian! I—I— Yah!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Grundy fairly fled.

There was no more ventriloquism on the cricket field that day.

Grundy spent the next hour or two rubbing the places where the bats and stumps had lunged at him, and he had no time even to throw his voice.

CHAPTER 5.

An Unfortunate Jape!

"GRAMMARIAN bounders!" murmured Tom Merry.

The captain of the Shell was on Rylcombe Bridge, coming home from Wayland on the following day, when he spotted three youths in Grammar School caps coming towards him from the direction of Rylcombe.

Gordon Gay, Frank Monk, and Wootton major quickened their steps as they sighted him.

The heroes of the Grammar School were always ready for mischief, and they were quite pleased to discover Tom Merry "on his own" in a lonely spot.

They came up with smiling faces.

"Nice afternoon, Tommy!" said Gay urbanely.

"Admiring the view?" asked Monk.

Tom nodded.

"Yes, until you spoil it by bringing your faces along," he replied.

"Cheeky!" said Wootton major.

"Not in a hurry, are you?" asked Gordon Gay, smiling.

"Yes, in rather a hurry!" said Tom, laughing.

"None of your little jokes, you fatheads!"

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and you'll like it!

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"Can't you stop a minute with your old pals?" urged Gordon Gay. "We only want to turn your jacket inside out, and chalk your chivvy, and tie your hands together, and a few little things like that."

And the Grammarians chuckled. Tom Merry drew back to the stone parapet of the bridge, and put his back to it, so that he could not be taken from behind.

"Cheese it!" he said tersely. "I shall hit out!"

"Going to thrash us all round?" grinned Monk.

"Well, I'll try!" said Tom.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The three Grammarians advanced to the attack. They were perfectly good-humoured, but their intentions were a little too humorous for the captain of the Shell.

Tom Merry did not intend to walk home to St. Jim's with his face chalked and hands tied, if he could help it.

"Mind, I shall hit!" said Tom warningly.

The Grammarians only laughed, and rushed on to the attack.

Tom Merry kept his word. He hit out, and Frank Monk dropped on the bridge, with a roar. Then he was struggling in the grasp of Gordon Gay and Wootton major.

"Yow-ow!" roared Monk. "Why, I'll smash the silly ass! Look at my nose! Yoop!"

Tom Merry struggled hard.

He made a great effort to throw off Gordon Gay and Wootton, and he succeeded, the two Grammarians staggering back, panting.

Tom Merry staggered back himself, spent by the effort.

"Collar him!" roared Gay.

"Collar the boulder!" gasped Monk. "I'll give him squashing a fellow's nose."

The Grammarians rushed on Tom Merry again. Tom dodged them and ran along the bridge. The three Grammarians rushed on his track.

Beside the bridge, a steep bank, clothed in thickets, sloped down to the glimmering waters of the Rhyl.

Tom Merry plunged down the bank to escape the pursuers.

The Grammarians halted abruptly.

"Hold on!" exclaimed Gordon Gay. "That bank's jolly dangerous."

Tom Merry was plunging down the steep bank.

He caught at the bushes to stop his wild career, but they gave in his grasp, and he went plunging down almost headlong.

He had taken that plunge down the bank to escape the Grammarian practical jokers, without stopping to think.

But as he went stumbling down he realised that he had escaped out of the frying-pan into the fire. Down he went, tearing through the bushes, his hands scratched and his clothes torn, to the steep edge by the water.

Splash!

"My hat! He's in!" shouted Gordon Gay.

"Great Scott!"

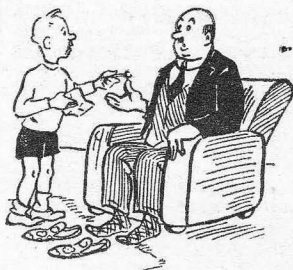
The Grammarians ran on to the bridge again, looking down with anxious eyes.

The jape had had a serious ending.

They knew that Tom Merry was a first-class swimmer; but the stream under the bridge was deep and swift.

The captain of the Shell was breathless and spent from his struggle and the rapid tumble down the bank.

The three Grammarians caught a glimpse of



"Here are your slippers, dad, and your pipe, and—er—here's my school report."

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him struggling in the water as he was swept away under the bridge by the strong current.

Gordon Gay rushed across the bridge, his eyes on the river on the lower side.

Tom had already been swept through, and was whirling down the stream, swimming, but battling with small success with the current.

"He'll be drowned!" gasped Gordon Gay.

"Cut along the bank!" panted Wootton major.

The three Grammarians dashed off the bridge and scrambled down the bank on the lower side, where the water's edge was less steep.

But Tom Merry had been whirled far by the time they reached the water.

They scrambled along the bank in wild anxiety for the junior of St. Jim's. But they knew that they could not reach him.

Tom was fighting hard with the current; but the grip of the rapid stream was upon him, the roar of the water was in his ears, and his strength was almost spent.

As he fought for his life in the rushing water it was borne in upon his mind that he was fighting in vain.

CHAPTER 6.

Grundy to the Rescue!

WILKINS came into Grundy's study in the Shell passage.

George Alfred Grundy was standing before the glass, making weird contortions with his face and emitting extraordinary sounds from his throat.

The ventriloquist of St. Jim's was at work again.

Wilkins grunted.

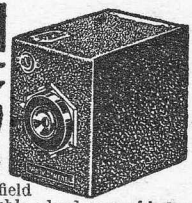
He was growing fed-up with Grundy's ventriloquism.

(Continued on the next page.)

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triloquism—in the study, at all events. He indignantly compared the study to a monkey-cage in the Zoo since Grundy had taken up the ventriloquial art.

"For goodness' sake, chuck it, Grundy!" said Wilkins peevishly. "It makes my flesh creep to hear you making that awful row. Sounds like a man being hanged by gum!"

Grundy gave him a withering glare.

"I'm throwing my voice, you ass!" he said.

"I wish you'd throw it away, and have done with it!" grumbled Wilkins. "This study isn't fit to live in since you started that rot."

Grundy pushed back his cuffs.

"That what?" he asked.

"Ahem! I mean that ventriloquism."

"You're a silly ass, Wilkins!"

There was a peculiar sound from the passage.

"Groogh! Ho-hoo-grooogh! Wee-we-wee! Woop!"

Wilkins grinned, and Grundy looked out of the study wrathfully.

Wally and Joe Frayne of the Third were in the passage, squeezing out these extraordinary sounds. The fags were evidently imitating Grundy's ventriloquial efforts.

Grundy made a rush at them, and the heroes of the Third melted away down the passage, yelling with laughter.

The St. Jim's ventriloquist, with a frowning brow, took his cap and left the School House.

A prophet, as was said of old, has no honour in his own country, and it seemed to be the same with an amateur ventriloquist.

Grundy the voice-thrower was certainly not honoured or admired in the School House of St. Jim's.

The whole House persisted in taking his ventriloquism as a joke.

Grundy strode out of the gates and followed the path by the river.

Practice in the House had become very disagreeable to him—what with the impatience of his studymates, the laughter of his Form-fellows, and the impertinent imitations of the fags.

In a secluded spot by the river, Grundy set up a pocket mirror on a tree-trunk and started practice.

His face assumed all sorts of weird contortions, and he emitted sounds that would certainly have caused alarm if there had been any pedestrians on the lonely path.

He paused at last, gasping.

"I'm getting on!" he murmured. "I'm sure my voice seemed to come from across the river that time. I fancy I'm a pretty good ventriloquist already, and I shall be all right in time for the meeting. I'll make 'em sit up!"

And Grundy began again.

"'Elp!"

Exigencies of voice-throwing compelled Grundy to drop the aspirate. He was "throwing his voice" across the river—to his own satisfaction. He was convinced that that cry came from the river, and not from his own direction, and he tried again.

"'Help!"

Grundy jumped.

Certainly that cry came from the river; there was no mistake about that.

"'Help!"

It was the cry for help again, and Grundy had not ventriloquised.

It dawned upon Grundy that the cry really came

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from the river, and he turned his head and swept the shining Rhyl with his eyes.

The next instant he forgot all about ventriloquism.

"My hat! Tom Merry!" he gasped.

He stared blankly at the struggling junior.

Tom Merry, still struggling feebly, was being whirled along by the current towards the spot where Grundy stood.

The struggling junior had caught a glimpse of Grundy on the bank, and shouted to him.

Grundy was not a quick-witted youth, but as Tom came whirling on Grundy woke to action.

The great man of the Shell was not a good swimmer; but he firmly believed that he was, and he certainly had heaps of pluck.

He tore off his jacket and plunged in.

Tom Merry had been striving to reach the bank and catch hold of the rushes, but the current had baffled him. But he was only a dozen feet out, and Grundy, with a rapid plunge, reached him and grasped him.

"Hold on to me!" spluttered Grundy.

He plunged shoreward, holding on to Tom Merry.

Fortunately he got his grasp on the drooping branch of a willow, and held on to it, supporting Tom with the other hand on the Shell captain's collar, and keeping his head above water.

Tom Merry panted for breath.

"I've got you!" gasped Grundy. "My hat! Blessed if I know how we're going to get out of this, though!"

There was a shout along the bank.

Gordon Gay, Monk, and Wootton came racing breathlessly along.

"Hold on!" yelled Monk.

"Stiek to him!" panted Gordon Gay.

"I'm sticking!" called back Grundy.

"We'll help you in a minute."

Gordon Gay clambered into the willow and reached down from the branches, and relieved Grundy of his burden.

Wootton and Monk received Tom Merry from his hands and drew him safely on the bank.

"Now lend me a hand!" gasped Grundy.

"Blessed if I can get out!"

"Right you are!"

Gay grasped the Shell fellow, and with his aid Grundy clambered into the willow.

In a few minutes more both were safe on the bank.

Tom Merry sat upon the bank in a pool of water, deadly white, but already recovering.

"Grundy!" he gasped. "You—you saved my life, I believe!"

"Oh, you'd have got out!" said Grundy. "I've jolly well spoiled my bags; I know that."

Tom Merry grinned.

"I—I say, Merry, we're sorry," said Gordon Gay penitently. "We couldn't guess you'd be such a silly ass as to tumble down the bank!"

"All serene!" said Tom. "All's well that ends well. It might have been jolly serious for me if Grundy hadn't been here, though."

"By Jove, it would!"

"You'd better take a run, or you'll catch cold, both of you," said Monk.

Tom Merry rose, with Gay's assistance. His strength was returning.

"All serene!" he said. "I can't manage now. Come on, Grundy; you'd better come and get your bags changed."

LAUGH THESE OFF!

—with Monty Lowther.



Hallo, Everybody!

They say it is unwise to keep a macintosh rolled up for long periods. For one thing, you get so beastly wet.

P.C. Crump stared portentously at the 'Varsity student who had crashed into a telegraph pole in a new car. "You'll catch it for this, young fellow-me-lad," warned Crump; "they'll endorse your license." "Oh, no they won't," said the student airily; "I haven't got one!"

As Jameson of the Third wrote in an exam: The Matterhorn was a horn blown by the ancients whenever anything was the matter.

'Nother howler: The Royal Mint was what the king always took with his dinner.

I hear critics often complain that radio singers are flat. An "In Tune To-Night" feature seems called for.

A newspaper report states that the old type of German general is slowly disappearing. Von by von?

I see a judge complained that his court was full of draughts. Too many gusty speeches?

Prisoners in the goal near Wayland complain

that their beds are not long enough. They find it difficult to do a stretch in comfort.

News: The gossip writer on the "Wayland Gazette" is feeling annoyed. He received a bill from a firm of typewriter repairers: "To oiling and repairing one tripe-writer."

"Short, sir?" the Rylcombe barber asked Mellish of the Fourth, who is always hard up. "Yes, I am," replied Mellish, "so if you don't mind, I'll pay you the next time I come in."

A lot can be learned by talking to strangers, says a reader. Oh, yes! Try ringing up a few wrong numbers some time.

People who work by night have a slight tendency to be morbid, we read. That may explain why burglars always look so unhappy when caught.

Story: "Here is ten shillings," said the harassed motorist, who had just brushed against an aged Rylcombe villager. "I will give you more later." "What!" exclaimed the villager. "Do you think you can run over me on the instalment system?"

They say there are three rules in the House of Commons: Stand up, speak up, shut up. Pity they don't obey the last rule first.

Kerr tells this: "I want a glass of water, and a plate, with a knife and fork," said the Scot, entering a cafe. "I have brought my own sandwiches." "Certainly," said the waitress, "and would you like the band to play 'Annie Laurie'?"

The moon got in my eyes. How? Walking down cherry blossom lane to look at the water lilies in the moonlight.

Signing off till next Wed. at this time, chaps.

And the two Shell fellows started for St. Jim's at a good pace.

"I say, Grundy, old chap," said Tom Merry, as they reached the school gates, "I'm awfully obliged to you!"

"What rot!" said Grundy. "I suppose I couldn't let you drown. It was rather rotten having my ventriloquial practice interrupted like that, I must say, though."

"Oh!" said Tom. "Is that what you were doing?"

"Yes; I find it goes better in the open air, and it's better away from a lot of chipping idiots, too!"

"I won't chip you any more about it," said Tom.

"Oh, I don't mind! A fellow with a real gift can afford to laugh at the criticism of silly asses," said Grundy.

"Ahem! It was ripping of you to come in for me," said Tom. "We might both have been drowned."

Grundy shook his head.

"Oh, no; not likely!"

"It was a dangerous place for a poor swimmer to go in," said Tom.

"I'm not a poor swimmer!" said Grundy. "I'm about the best swimmer at St. Jim's, if you come to that. I wasn't in any danger."

"Oh!"

"Look here, Tom Merry, if you're going to run down my swimming the same as you do my cricket—"

"No fear!" said Tom. "I won't run down your swimming, old chap. But facts are facts, you know."

"And silly asses are silly asses!" growled Grundy.

"So they are," said Tom. "Look here, Grundy, I'm much obliged to you, and if I could do anything for what you've done for me, you've only got to say the word."

"Oh, all serene!" said Grundy.

And they went into the School House, and hurried to the Shell dormitory, and lost no time in changing their clothes.

CHAPTER 7.

Grundy's Duty!

"GRUNDY, old man——"
Wilkins and Gunn burst into the study, where George Alfred Grundy sat down to do his prep, in a state of great excitement.

Grundy stared at them.

"Hallo! What's the row?" he asked.

"We've just heard about it!" gasped Wilkins.

"Grundy, old son, it was ripping of you!"

"Splendid!" exclaimed Gunn.

George Alfred looked puzzled.

"What the dickens are you jabbering about?" he asked.

"I mean, what happened this afternoon——"

"Fishing Tom Merry out of the river, you know. It was splendid!"

"Oh, that! That was nothing—for a splendid swimmer like me!" said Grundy.

"A—a splendid swimmer like—like you!" stammered Wilkins. "Why, you can't swim six strokes!"

"You cheeky ass!" roared Grundy. "If you've come here to talk rot——"

"N-no! I—I say, Grundy, it was no end plucky what you did!"

"Well, I am plucky, aren't I?" said Grundy. "Nothing surprising in that! The trouble was that it interrupted my ventriloquial practice, when I was getting on so rapidly."

"Tom Merry's saying very nice things about you, old chap," said Gunn.

"Well, I suppose it was rather lucky for him I'm such a splendid swimmer!" said Grundy. "I suppose he admits that much now? I wish he had sense enough to see that I'm as good at cricket as I am at swimming!"

"Well, so you are, anyway," said Wilkins, closing one eye at Gunn.

Wilkins was about right on that point.

"The fact is," said Grundy, "I've been thinking. Although I've discovered that I have a great and rare gift as a ventriloquist, I don't think I ought to let cricket slide simply for that. There's the school to be thought of, too—the cricket record, you know. On the whole, I ought to play in the Greyfriars match, if it can be worked."

"If!" said Gunn.

"You see, I think it can," said Grundy, resting his chin on his hand and looking at his chums. "This is how it is. Tom Merry was glad to be fished out of the river, of course. Well, he said he'd do anything for me in return that he could. That was only right. Naturally, I shouldn't think of holding him to that to gain any advantage for myself. That would be mean—but for the sake of the school I think I ought to do it."

"Eh?"

"The Greyfriars team are hot stuff, and I've got very strong doubts whether our eleven is quite up to their form. If I play in the team, you see, that sets it all right. We shall lick them. The question is, should I be justified in holding Tom Merry to his promise, for the sake of the school?"

"I—I think I'd be generous, and—and not hold him to it," stammered Wilkins. "That would be more—more like you, Grundy."

Grundy nodded.

"Quite so, so far as I'm concerned personally. But it's a question of strengthening the team, so

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as to beat Greyfriars. Tom Merry can't see my quality as a cricketer, owing to his ignorance of the game. But he'll be glad when he sees the result of my playing. So if I can make him play me, it will be really doing him a favour, and he'll be glad afterwards. However, I shall think it over and do what I consider my duty."

Grundy turned to his prep again, leaving his chums speechless.

Wilkins and Gunn could guess what the result would be if Tom Merry was induced to play George Alfred Grundy in the Greyfriars match on Wednesday. So could everybody, excepting George Alfred himself.

At supper that evening Grundy announced his determination.

"I've made up my mind," said Grundy confidentially. "I'm going to play for St. Jim's. It's my duty, and I'm going to do it."

"But—but will Tom Merry agree?" murmured Wilkins.

"Oh, he must, after what he said!"

"But—but he'll think it rather—rather mean."

"Perhaps so, till I've helped to beat Greyfriars. Then he'll recognise that I was really doing him a good turn," explained Grundy.

"Oh!" said Wilkins.

"However, I shan't mention it to him yet," said Grundy. "He would want me to practise on Saturday afternoon. You see, I don't need a lot of practice like the other chaps. And I've got an engagement for Saturday. I'm going to muck up the pacifists' meeting with my ventriloquism."

"Oh!" gasped Wilkins.

He said no more.

George Alfred Grundy was not to be argued with.

CHAPTER 8.

On the Warpath!

"BAI Jove! I'm goin'!"

Arthur Augustus D'Arcy made that remark on Saturday afternoon.

"Same here!" said Julian.

"And here!" remarked Lowther. "It will be as good as a cinema, or better."

"Yaas, wathah!"

The news of Grundy's intended raid on the pacifists' meeting had spread.

Grundy disapproved of pacifists, and, as Monty Lowther remarked, if a mighty brain like Grundy's disapproved of them, there was nothing more to be said on the subject.

Grundy, when he first heard of that meeting at Wayland Town Hall, had suggested a raid and a general ragging of the opposition, offering himself to take on the leadership.

Somehow or other the juniors did not seem to be pining for George Alfred's leadership, and his offer was declined without thanks.

Monty Lowther gently suggested to him that it would be judicious to mind his own business, but Grundy snorted at that advice.

As a raid was not feasible, Grundy had fallen back upon his marvellous gifts as a ventriloquist for "mucking up" the meeting which certain persons had the audacity to hold against his approval.

And quite an army of School House fellows determined to follow Grundy to the town hall and see him ejected "on his neck," that being the general anticipation.

But here Tom Merry put his foot down.

With the Greyfriars match coming off on the following Wednesday, cricket was the order of the day.

The members of the school eleven were required to stick to the nets.

But a good crowd of fellows followed George Alfred when he started on his expedition.

Wilkins and Gunn, of course, went with their great leader. They were prepared, in a friendly way, to bring home what was left of Grundy after his performance at the town hall.

Julian and Clive, Kerruish and Reilly, Hammond and Herries, and several more fellows marched after Grundy, who gave them a condescending smile as he noted them on his track.

It was not at all surprising to Grundy that the

Bunglwallah Fusiliers. Grundy saluted the old gentleman respectfully.

Major Popham's ideas were exactly like his own. Unfortunately, the major recognised Grundy as an impertinent person, who had knocked his hat off with a snowball in the winter, and the major bestowed a glare upon Grundy in reply to his respectful salutation. So, in spite of the identity of their views, there was no sympathy between these two determined opponents of the meeting.

"Hallo! They're beginning!" said Wilkins.

The platform had filled.

There were several ladies and some men with long hair, and a very special speaker imported from London.

The speaker, Mr. Rabbit, advanced across the



Grundy got his grasp on the drooping branch of a tree and held on to it, supporting Tom Merry with the other hand and keeping his head above water. "I've got you!" gasped Grundy. There was a shout along the bank as Gordon Gay & Co. came racing to the scene.

fellows were interested in his proceedings. His impression was that they were coming to see the way he was going to dish the pacifists. He did not guess what they were really going out to see.

There was a crowd outside the town hall when the St. Jim's party arrived on the scene in the old High Street of Wayland.

When the doors were opened Grundy & Co. filed in with the rest, and Grundy's broad shoulders secured him a front place.

The hall was pretty well filled.

Some had come to cheer, and some had come to "boo," and there was a party of determined-looking old gentlemen—who were there to "heckle" the speakers to any extent.

Grundy dropped into a seat beside a stout, white-moustached old gentleman, whom he recognised as Major Popham, a retired officer of the

platform, and was greeted with cheers from one part of the audience, and "boos" and hisses from the rest.

However, he started on his speech. Major Popham punctuated it with snorts of disgust.

Kerruish, who was seated in the next row behind Grundy, nudged the great man of the Shell in the back.

"We're waiting," he whispered.

"Go it, Grundy!"

Grundy cleared his throat with a little cough.

"I—I say—" murmured Wilkins.

"I'm going to begin," said Grundy.

"Hadn't you better—"

"Don't interrupt me, Wilkins!"

Wilkins gave it up.

Grundy coughed again. He was feeling a little

nervous in the crowded hall, in spite of his confidence in his powers as a ventriloquist. But Grundy was not the fellow to back down.

Mr. Rabbit was growing eloquent.

"If freedom is banished from Britain," he said, "where will it take refuge? The horror of war and militarism has settled upon us like a blight, and democracy is threatened. Where will liberty find a refuge, when war has crushed England to the dust? I say, and I repeat—"

"Bow-wow!"

Grundy was throwing his voice.

Grundy fondly imagined that he was imitating exactly the voice of the eloquent Mr. Rabbit, and that he was "throwing" that ejaculation fairly into Mr. Rabbit's mouth.

He paused for the roar of laughter. But it did not come. Several eyes turned on Grundy, that was all.

Mr. Rabbit went on with undiminished eloquence, apparently having an inexhaustible supply of breath and telling phrases, and quite unconscious of the ventriloquial effort of George Alfred.

Grundy looked puzzled.

"Did you hear that?" he murmured to Wilkins.

Wilkins nodded.

"I made it come fairly out of that idiot's mouth, didn't I?"

"Oh, yes, it came out of the idiot's mouth," said Wilkins, without specifying which idiot he referred to. "I shouldn't try again, though!"

"Rot! I'm going on," said Grundy. "I'm going to make a dog bark right under his feet, and make him jump!"

"Oh crumbs!"

"Go it!" grinned Kerruish.

Grundy cleared his throat, and the St. Jim's juniors waited joyfully for the dog to bark; while Mr. Rabbit, like the little brook, went on for ever.

CHAPTER 9.

A "Muok Up"!

"G-R-R-R-R-R-R!"

It was a really good imitation of the growl of a savage dog.

Grundy had practised it with success.

But Mr. Rabbit did not jump.

Excepting to Grundy's own ears, that growl did not seem to proceed from anywhere near the speaker on the platform.

It seemed to proceed, in fact, from the spot where it did proceed—that is, from where George Alfred Grundy was seated.

The old gentleman beside him gave a sudden jump, and drew in his long legs nervously.

He glared at Grundy.

"You young scamp, have you brought a dog in here?"

"I!" ejaculated Grundy. "That—that dog growled on the platform."

"Nonsense!"

"Where are your ears, sir?" said Grundy warmly, fully convinced that he had made the growl proceed from the platform, in his great confidence in his ventriloquial powers. "Are you deaf?"

The major snorted, and grasped his umbrella, as if inclined to lay it about the Shell fellow.

He refrained, however, and turned his head away, and contented himself with interrupting Mr. Rabbit's eloquence with successive snorts.

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"Better chuck it!" murmured Wilkins.

"Don't be an ass, Wilkins! I'm just going to begin."

"Oh dear!"

"G-r-r-r-r-h-h-r-r-r!"

It was a terrific growl this time, and it came right from the major's elbow, and it was not surprising that it made the old Bunglewallah Fusilier jump.

He fairly spun round on Grundy.

"How dare you bring a savage dog here!" he exclaimed. "Take the animal away immediately! I will not be bitten by a savage dog! Take that animal out of the hall instantly!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Grundy grinned.

The major's wrath was a tribute to Grundy's powers as an imitator, if not to his powers as a voice-thrower.

"Do you hear me?" roared the major. "Do you want me to chastise you, you impertinent young monkey?"

"Oh, draw it mild!" said Grundy warmly. "I ain't a blessed Sepoy in your regiment, sir, and you can't bully me."

"Hear, hear!" chuckled the delighted juniors.

It struck them as funny for Grundy, who had come to "muck up" the pacifists' meeting, to start by getting into a row with the grim old war veteran.

"What—what!" stuttered the major, purple with rage.

"You're jolly well not going to rag me!" said Grundy. "Who are you, anyway? Keep all that for the poor beggars who have to stand it!"

Thwack!

The major at that moment would probably have given a great deal to have had George Alfred Grundy in his regiment.

But as Grundy wasn't in his regiment, and could not be put into "clink," or given a double fatigue duty, or confined to barracks, or subjected to any other military punishments, the major had recourse to his umbrella.

The umbrella whirled in the air, and came down across Grundy's broad shoulders with a sounding whack.

Grundy gave a roar of pain and wrath.

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled the juniors. "Go it, whiskers!"

"Go it, Grundy!"

George Alfred Grundy jumped up in a fury.

"You silly old ass!" he roared. "If you weren't old enough to be my great-grandfather, I'd mop up the floor with you!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Thwack! Thwack! Thwack!

The major was not satisfied yet. There were yells in the crowded hall.

"Sit down!"

"Silence!"

"Turn him out!"

Thwack, thwack, thwack!

Grundy, with all his proper respect for age, could not be expected to stand that.

There was a good deal of strength in the right arm of the old Bunglewallah Fusilier, and the umbrella cracked across Grundy's back.

Grundy lit out with one of his celebrated drives and caught the major on the point of the chin.

There was a crash as the major went down among the seats, sprawling.

"Hurrah!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Go it, Grundy!"

"Order!"

The Underseas Mail!

The mail must go through! It did—by submarine!

IF you can find space in your album for a few original stamped envelopes—or “covers,” as they are known in stamp-collecting jargon—include as many as you can. They all have a story to tell, even the commonest, and when you come to envelopes which have been posted in times of crisis, you have, in actual fact, oblong fragments of history itself.

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More romantic, of course, have been and are the specially marked covers carried on historic flights. If you're ever fortunate enough to lay hands on one of these, guard it well. In years to come such a cover is likely to prove really valuable.

So highly esteemed, indeed, have covers of this kind become that there are enthusiasts who collect nothing else.

As might be expected, the Great War provided a host of interesting and graphic covers. Some of the rarest were those carried by the German Ocean Shipping Company.

By 1916 the Allies had blockaded Germany well and truly, and the Germans, ever hopeful that the Americans would side with them, felt it essential to try to keep in close postal touch with the U.S.A.

Their only way of doing this was by submarine. Accordingly, in 1916 a German U-boat, filled with

mails, slipped out of Bremerhaven and managed to get through to America.

Our blockading, it seems, was intensified shortly after this, for, when early in 1917 another “sub”-load of letters was prepared, the vessel's sailing was cancelled at the last minute.

All mail for these amazing ventures was marked “T.B.” (short for the German “Tauchboot”—“submarine”) and D.O.R. (“Deutsche Ocean Rederei”)—the “German Ocean Shipping Company”), and each letter cost two marks (then 2s.) additional to the ordinary postal rate, to go by this underseas service.

“FIRST-DAY” COVERS.

A recent craze which has given cover-collecting a new fillip has been that of securing what are known as “first-day” covers. When a new mode of mail transport or a new series of stamps is inaugurated, many collectors strive to obtain covers postmarked on the first day of the new service or stamped with the new stamps.

Personally, this craze seems very much like that of “first-night” playgoers, but, if it appeals to you, by all means go in for it. Make sure, however, about the integrity of the source from which you obtain your “first-days,” for, unfortunately, providing these covers—usually at a fair premium—has been proved to be open to underhand dealing.

In at least one case it has been found that covers have received first-day markings several days after a new series of stamps were put on sale. And then, of course, one has always to be on the look-out for the forger, whose cunning can turn an ordinary envelope into a time-worn antique, which can command quite a fair price as a rarity.

“Sit down!”

The major was up in a moment. He was purple and gasping. He fairly hurled himself on Grundy.

“Gerroff!” roared Grundy. “I don't want to mop you up, you old fool! Gerroff my neck, you old duffer!”

“Ha, ha, ha!”

But the major did not “gerroff.”

Grundy had to fight, there was no help for it. Several stewards were rushing towards the spot. Mr. Rabbit's eloquence had ceased at last; there was a wild uproar in the hall, and voices could not be heard.

Half a dozen pairs of hands were laid upon both Grundy and the major, and they were rushed and bundled away towards the nearest door.

The major's hat disappeared under trampling feet as he was whirled away. He went flying out of the doorway.

Grundy followed him, with his collar hanging on by one stud, and his jacket split up the back.

The major sat up on the pavement, and Grundy of the Shell sprawled over his long legs.

“Groogh!” gasped the major. “By gad!”

“Oh crumbs!” spluttered Grundy. “Yaroooh!”

“Oh, my hat!”

The St. Jim's juniors had followed them out, yelling with laughter.

Wilkins and Gunn dragged Grundy to his feet.

“Cut, before he starts again!” gurgled Gunn. Grundy gasped.

“The—the silly old ass! Yaroooh!”

“Ha, ha, ha!”

“There's nothing to cackle at, you duffers! That old fool has mucked up the whole show!”

“Let me get at him!” gasped the major, scrambling up and rushing at Grundy.

Reilly put his foot out in time, and the fiery old gentleman rolled on the pavement again.

Then Grundy was rushed away by his comrades. It was a little too dangerous to remain at close quarters with the major. Grundy's enterprise was at an end. The pacifists' meeting proceeded without any further ventriloquial efforts by the St. Jim's ventriloquist.

CHAPTER 10.

Held to His Word!

“HALLO! Come in!”

Tom Merry, Manners, and Lowther were in their study at tea, when Grundy of the Shell looked in.

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Tom's manner was unusually cordial as he asked the great Grundy into the study.

He had not forgotten the incident of the river. Manners and Lowther put on their politest smiles. They had made up their minds to be very nice to Grundy as long as they could stand him.

Grundy nodded affably.

"Had a good afternoon?" queried Lowther.

The Terrible Three had already heard of Grundy's success at the meeting, but they nobly forbore to smile now.

"No, rotten!" said Grundy, frowning. "A silly old ass mucked it all up. The old duffer was on my side, really, only he was a fearful ass. But never mind that. I've dropped in to speak about what you said to me the other day, Merry."

"Go ahead! Take a seat, and have tea!"

"Thanks, I've had my tea! By the way, how are you making up the cricket eleven for the Greyfriars match?"

Tom groaned inwardly.

"Well, it's made up, old fellow," he said. "There's Talbot, and Kangaroo, and myself, and Blake, D'Arcy, Reilly, Figgins, Fatty Wynn, Koumi Rao, Redfern, and Lawrence."

"Not a bad team," said Grundy.

"No; quite good, I think."

"Might find a better man than D'Arcy, though."

"Ahem! Gussy doesn't think so."

"Gussy doesn't know much about cricket."

"Ahem!"

"Now, you remember what you said to me the other day?" said Grundy.

The captain of the Shell nodded.

"You'd do anything you could for me, if I asked you, you know."

"Yes, and I meant it."

"Well, I'm going to ask you something."

"Go ahead!"

"Play me in the Greyfriars match!"

"Wha-a-at!"

Tom Merry's jaw dropped.

"That's what I want," said Grundy. "Mind, I'm not taking advantage of your promise to shove myself forward. Don't think that for a moment. But I'm convinced that you need me in the team to beat Greyfriars."

"But—but—"

"You don't agree with me?"

"No fear!"

"It's a difference of opinion, you see," said Grundy calmly. "You'll think differently after the match."

"My hat!" murmured Monty Lowther.

Tom Merry looked a picture of dismay.

"I—I wasn't referring to the cricket, you know, when I spoke to you the other day, Grundy," he stammered.

"I know you weren't. But you said you'd do anything I asked you, and what I ask you is to put me in the Greyfriars match."

"I—I can't!"

"I shouldn't have thought you were a fellow to back out of a promise, Tom Merry," said Grundy. Tom crimsoned.

"I'm not. But—but I can't do this. I'll do anything else—anything I can. But I can't let you chuck away the biggest match of the season!" Grundy laughed.

"That's only your ignorance," he explained. "I'm the best junior cricketer at St. Jim's—in fact, equal to most of the seniors."

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"Oh crumbs!" said Manners.

"Look here, I can't put you in!" said Tom desperately. "The cricket committee would have something to say about it."

"I suppose you're not the kind of captain to be overruled by the committee?" said Grundy disdainfully.

"Well, no, but—but—"

"Well, put me in!"

"The fellows would scalp me!"

"Not when we win the match," said Grundy.

"But—but we couldn't win it with you playing for St. Jim's!"

"I've already explained that that's only your ignorance of the game," he said. "Do let that drop!"

"Ye gods!" murmured Monty Lowther.

Tom Merry felt that he was cornered. He looked helplessly at his chums. Manners and Lowther looked at him. They were as nonplussed as their leader.

"Oh, don't look down in the mouth about it!" said Grundy encouragingly. "It will be all right. You can rely on me for that."

"Oh, you silly ass!" groaned the captain of the Shell.

"Eh?"

"Look here, I can't play you! Go and ventriloquise!" said Tom. "That's really more your mark, Grundy."

Grundy snorted.

"If you choose to break your word, I can't hold you to it, of course!" he said. "I despise you, that's all! Good-evening!"

Grundy turned to the door.

"Hold on!" said Tom.

"Well?"

"Look here, you know I wasn't referring to cricket matters when I spoke, and you oughtn't to make a claim like this!" said Tom savagely.

"You needn't say any more!" said Grundy loftily. "I release you from your promise, if you don't choose to keep it. I shall have my own opinion of you, though."

"That's not good enough!" said Tom Merry.

"If you hold me to my word, I'll keep it. If you insist on a place in the eleven, I've got to give it to you!"

"That's all right, then. I play on Wednesday?"

"If you insist—yes!"

"Well, I insist, of course!" said Grundy.

"Then you'll play. Buzz off now, for goodness' sake; your face worries me!" growled Tom Merry.

Grundy laughed and quitted the study, in high good humour.

Tom Merry gazed dolefully at his chums.

"What will the fellows say?" he said.

"They'll say you're a silly ass," said Monty Lowther, "and so you jolly well are, I must say!"

"I had to keep my word, hadn't I?"

"Well, yes; but you shouldn't have given it in the first place."

"He fished me out of the river," said Tom.

"Oh, bother him!" said Manners. "This means that the Greyfriars match is a goner!"

"Can't be helped," said Tom. "After all, we may manage to pull the game out of the fire, even with a passenger like Grundy to carry."

"Not likely."

"We'll do our best," said Tom.

But the captain of the Shell was not feeling very hopeful. And he was feeling decidedly uneasy—and with reason—as to what the rest of

the team would say, especially the player who would be left out to make room for Grundy. It was not a happy evening for Tom Merry.

CHAPTER 11.

Gussy Rises to the Occasion!

“POTTAY!”
 “Off his rocker!”
 “Silly ass!”

These comments, and many more of the same sort, were passed by a crowd of juniors gathered before the notice-board in the hall in the School House.

The juniors were astounded. On the board was a notice in Tom Merry's hand.

It was a list of the cricket eleven for the Greyfriars match on Wednesday; and added to the list was the name of George Alfred Grundy.

As there were already eleven names in the list, the addition made a total of twelve—who certainly could not all play in the great match. Evidently one of the earlier members would have to be left out—and, equally evident, the junior captain had not yet decided which.

“Gwunday! Bai Jove!” said Arthur Augustus, his eyeglass dropping from his eye in astonishment. “That ass! That feahful duffah!”

“It must be a joke,” said Blake.
 “And a jolly bad joke!” remarked Digby.
 “Somebody's written the name in, from a misguided sense of humour,” said Julian, with a shake of the head.

“No; it's Tom Merry's hand.”
 “Well, it beats the band!” said Figgins of the Fourth. “Grundy in the team—which means a cricketer left out to make room for him. If it's a New House chap left out there's going to be trouble, I can tell you!”

“Weally, Figgins, if a chap is left out at all, it's bound to be a New House chap. Tom Merry would hardly leave out a good man.”

“Ha, ha, ha!”
 “You—you monocled ass!” ejaculated Figgins wrathfully.

“I wefuse to be called a monocled ass, Figgins—”

“Well, he can't be leaving me out,” remarked Patty Wynn. “You School House bounders can't bowl. And it can't be Figgy—the best bat in the team. Or Reddy, or Lawrence, or Koumi Rao. Quite impossible!”

“Gussy, most likely,” said Kerr.
 “Wats! I should uttably wefuse to be left out.”

“But what's the howling ass putting Grundy in at all for?”

“Goodness knows!”
 “Time a New House chap became cricket captain, I think,” said Figgins, with a sniff.

“Well, that's rot!” remarked Talbot of the Shell. “But this is a surprise, and no mistake!”

“I shall speak to Tom Mewwy vewy seriously about this,” said Arthur Augustus. “I weally considah that the cwicket club is called upon to pwotest.”

And Arthur Augustus went in search of Tom Merry, with the idea of remonstrating with him very seriously. He found the captain of the Shell in the quadrangle. It was after lessons on Monday, and the Terrible Three were strolling under the elms, but Tom Merry did not look very cheerful.

“Tom Mewwy, deah boy——”
 “It's going to begin now,” groaned Tom Merry.
 “Well, what is it, D'Arcy?”
 “You're puttin' that fwrightful ass Gwunday into the team on Wednesday!”

“Yes.”
 “And you'll have to make woom for him by leavin' out a fellow who can play cwicket.”

“Yes.”
 “As a membah of the club, I have a wight to an explanation,” said Arthur Augustus with a great deal of dignity.

Tom Merry explained, and the swell of St. Jim's listened in astonishment.

His noble brow cleared considerably.
 “A vewy unfortunate posish,” he remarked.
 “It is vewy wotten of Gwunday to pin you down like that, deah boy!”

“He doesn't mean it to be rotten,” said Tom, with a sigh. “The silly ass thinks he is going to save the match, and he's doing this for the sake of the school.”

“Bai Jove!”
 “So there's no help for it,” said Tom. “I hope we shall win, all the same. But if the chaps ask



THE MACHINE-GUNNER WHO BECAME A LUMBERJACK!

Half-a-crown has been awarded to W. Smith, 81, Franklands Village, Haywards Heath, Sussex.

me to resign I shall do it. They've a right to ask that. But if I captain the team I must play Grundy.”

Arthur Augustus shook his head.
 “It would be wuff to make you wesign, deah boy; and, besides, we wequiah your services in the match,” he said. “But the twouble is, a chap will have to stand out to make woom for that cwass ass. Whom are you goin' to ask?”

Tom Merry coughed.
 “Well, as a matter of fact, Gussy, I'm going to ask you.”

Arthur Augustus jumped.
 “Me!” he ejaculated.
 “Yes, old chap.”

“I pwesume you are jokin', Tom Merry,” said the swell of St. Jim's frigidly.
 “I am quite serious.”

“I wefuse to wegard such a vewy wiculous pwoposition as sewious at all. You had better guess again, Tom Mewwy,” said D'Arcy loftily.

“Look here, Gussy——”
 “Wats! I twust you do not mean to imply, Tom Mewwy, that my services as a cwicketah are the least valuabale in the team?” said D'Arcy warmly.

“Not at all. I'm asking you because——”
 “Well, because what?”

"Because I can depend on you to play the game and back me up in keeping my word to that ass Grundy. You're the only chap who's too polished to make a rotten fuss about it," explained Tom Merry.

Arthur Augustus was touched upon his weakest spot. In spite of himself, his aristocratic brow relaxed.

"Bai Jove! If you put it like that, Tom Mewwy—"

"I do put it like that, old fellow."

"In the circe, then, I will wescue you ffrom your difficult posish by wesignin' my place in the eleven," said D'Arcy gracefully.

"Thanks!" said Tom Merry, really gratefully.

"I've no right to ask a chap to step out to make room for Grundy. I've simply landed myself with that fathead, through—well, through being rather an ass myself. But I can't break my word to the howling idiot, can I?"

"Certainly not, deah boy! Wely on me!"

It cost the Honourable Arthur Augustus an effort, but he was equal to it. That difficulty was settled. Arthur Augustus, with his own hand, crossed out his name in the cricket list, leaving eleven.

The force of polished politeness could no further go.

The rest of the team were relieved from fears for themselves, but they were still of opinion that Tom Merry was fully qualified for a front seat in a lunatic asylum.

But Arthur Augustus proceeded to explain why Tom Merry had done that most remarkable thing, and the remarks that were made in consequence about Grundy would have made that cheerful young gentleman's hair curl, if he had not been so eminently satisfied with himself.

A crowd of fellows rushed off to Grundy's study to tell him what they thought of him.

They found Grundy with his mouth wide open, emitting horrid and terrified moans and squeaks.

Kangaroo caught him by the shoulder and shook him, and Grundy's squeaks changed to a roar.

"Yow-ow! You ass! Leggo! You've spoiled it!"

"Eh? Spoiled what?" ejaculated the Cornstalk.

"I was just throwing my voice under the table!" howled Grundy.

"Oh, you ass!"

"You silly chump!"

"Look here, Grundy," exclaimed Talbot, "you can't play in the Greyfriars match! It's jolly mean to nail Tom Merry down to that, just because you fished him out of the river!"

Grundy snorted.

"Suppose another fellow did a thing like that?" exclaimed Gore of the Shell. "What would you say if I did it, Grundy?"

"I should say you were a mean cad to do it," said Grundy—and so you would be!"

"Then what do you think about yourself?" demanded Gore.

"That's different. I can play cricket."

"Can't I?" yelled Gore.

Grundy shook his head.

"Why, you—you—you—" spluttered Gore, almost speechless with indignation. "Why, your cricket would make a tabby cat laugh!"

"Nuff said!" snorted Grundy. "I'm doing this for the sake of the school! I'm going to see that match won!"

"Won—with you in the team?"

"Yes, because I shall be in the team!"

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Half a dozen pairs of hands rushed and bundled Grundy flying out of the doorway, Grundy quickly following his split

"Oh, it's no good talking to him!" said Clifton Dane. "Bump him!"

"Look here, hands off! Leggo—"

"He's chucked his voice under the table!" said Kangaroo. "Now chuck him after it!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Yaroooh!"

George Alfred Grundy was bumped on the carpet, and then a dozen boots drove him under the table.

The indignant juniors left him there. They streamed out of the study, and Grundy crawled out, feeling very dilapidated and dusty, and breathless with wrath and indignation.

Wilkins and Gunn looked in, and stared at the sight of Grundy sitting on the hearthrug, pumping in breath.

Grundy blinked at them.

"Groogh!" said Grundy. "Oh! Oh! It's simply sickening—this disgusting jealousy of a chap's form at cricket. But I'll show 'em. Let 'em wait till Wednesday, and then they'll see some cricket!"

"You—you're really going to play?" asked Wilkins.

"Of course I am, fathead!"

"I say, it would be rather generous to let Tom Merry off!" suggested Gunn.

"I can't afford to throw away a school match to please a silly ass like Tom Merry."

"Oh!" said Wilkins and Gunn, quite overcome.

"It's up to me to win that match!" said



the major to the nearest door. Then the major went with his collar hanging on by one stud and his jacket back!

Grundy. "When I knock up a century or so, they'll come round, I suppose!"

"When!" murmured Wilkins.

"And when they see me perform the hat-trick they'll be jolly glad they've got me in the team!"

"They will—when!" agreed Wilkins.

And Grundy dusted himself down, and proceeded to squeak and groan ventriloquially till he drove his studymates, stopping their ears, from the study.

CHAPTER 12.

Greyfriars v. St. Jim's!

WEDNESDAY came round, a bright and cheerful summer's day, ideal weather for cricket.

George Alfred Grundy was in great spirits. In his keenness about the Greyfriars match, he even forgot his wonderful powers as a ventriloquist and ceased throwing his voice about in his usual reckless way.

St. Jim's juniors were looking forward to the match in a very doubtful frame of mind.

It was too bad that the biggest match of the season should be "mucked up" in this way by the biggest duffer at St. Jim's "wedging" himself into the eleven. But the Saints agreed that Tom Merry had no choice but to keep a promise to Grundy.

The team—excepting for Grundy—was in great

form, and the cricketers still hoped to pull off the match, in spite of Grundy's valuable assistance.

Arthur Augustus D'Arcy looked a little glum that sunny morning.

The Greyfriars match was a whole-day affair, and the members of the eleven were granted freedom from lessons that day, while the other fellows went into the Form-room as usual.

A whole holiday instead of a half was, of course, a great catch; and for that reason, if no other, fellows would have been glad enough to squeeze into the eleven.

Arthur Augustus had given up the extra holiday and the chance of distinguishing himself in a big match—which was all the harder, as Cousin Ethel was coming down for the afternoon to see the later play. In fact, there was to be a large gathering of relations of the players, and Arthur Augustus was missing a great chance of the limelight.

But Tom Merry had told him that he depended upon his polished manners—as, indeed, he did—and the swell of St. Jim's was not found wanting. He nobly controlled his feelings.

After breakfast, however, he felt that it would do no harm to speak just one word to Grundy. It was barely possible that even Grundy might realise by this time exactly how egregious an ass he was.

Arthur Augustus came up to him with his politest smile.

"Wippin' day for ewicket, Gwunday!" he remarked.

"Topping!" said Grundy affably. "Ripping to get off lessons, too! Of course, that isn't why I got into the team. I simply want to make sure of a win for St. Jim's!"

"Exactly!" murmured Arthur Augustus. "I—I suppose you haven't changed your mind, Gwunday, deah boy?"

Grundy stared at him.

"Changed my mind?" he repeated. "No jolly fear! You see, this will be a good thing for the school all round. After the way I shall show up in this match, Tom Merry's bound to play me in other matches. That means a splendid record for St. Jim's for the whole of the cricket season."

"Ahem! I—I was thinkin' that, considerin' what a wippin' ventwiloquist you are, Gwunday, you might think of goin' ovah to Wayland and entahntainin' the people in hospital."

Grundy sniffed.

"I've offered to do that, and my services have been declined," he said. "You know what the authorities are! No brains! They actually don't want me!"

"They don't know what an entahntainin' chap you are, Gwunday. Suppose you go and see them about it again? I should be quite willin' to wesume my place in the eleven."

Grundy grinned.

"I dare say you would," he agreed. "But I'm not going to let this match be lost for the school. You see, you can't play cricket—not what I call play, you know."

And Grundy walked away, leaving the swell of St. Jim's speechless.

"Bai Jove!" gasped Arthur Augustus D'Arcy at last. "Bai Jove! Of all the feahful maniacs, I—"

Words failed Arthur Augustus.

When the bell rang for morning lessons, Arthur Augustus took his way to the Form-room, with slow and sad steps, with the rest of the

Fourth, excepting those who were in Tom Merry's team.

Tom Merry tapped him on the shoulder as he went in, and D'Arcy gave the captain of the Shell a lugubrious smile.

"Cheerio!" said Tom. "You're a brick, Gussy!"

Arthur Augustus nodded.

"Yaas, I suppose so," he assented. "For goodness' sake don't put that uttah ass on to bowl, Tom Mewwy! I'm beginnin' to feah that I was wathah an ass to stand out of the eleven, affah all. Pewwaps, on second thoughts, Blake might pwefer to do so in my place."

"Mighty big perhaps," remarked Jack Blake.

"Or pewwaps, Kangawoo, you might like——"

"Bow-wow!" said Kangaroo.

"Or you, Talbot——"

"I don't think," smiled Talbot.

"Weally, you know——"

Mr. Latham came along the passage, and Arthur Augustus had to go into the Form-room.

But he shook his head very seriously. He was not at all satisfied as to what would happen to the game in his absence.

Tom Merry & Co. proceeded to Little Side, to wait there for the arrival of the Greyfriars team.

Grundy was walking as if on air, and his face was beaming with confidence and good humour. The other fellows forbore to chip him. It couldn't be helped now. And, as Figgins remarked, it was only carrying a passenger in the team, though, indeed, a heavy passenger. So they had to make the best of it.

Grundy slapped Tom Merry heartily on the back.

"Buck up!" he said. "I'll tell you what, Merry. This match will be over pretty early, and——"

"It won't," said Tom. "One wicket going for a duck's egg won't shorten it so very much."

"Oh, don't be funny!" said Grundy. "I'm alluding to my bowling. The Greyfriars fellows won't keep up their sticks very long, I can tell you, when I get fairly going. Now, my idea is this. As the match will be over pretty early, in the circumstances, it would be a good idea to entertain the Greyfriars fellows after the game to pass the time. It will be a consolation to them for being licked, too. Suppose I give a ventriloquial entertainment in the Common-room——what?"

"Oh, my hat!"

"As a punishment to them for licking us?" asked Figgins.

"You silly ass!" roared Grundy.

"Hallo, here comes Greyfriars!"

The coach from the station had arrived.

Harry Wharton & Co. of the Greyfriars Remové came on the ground, bright and cheerful.

Tom Merry greeted the Greyfriars cricketers cordially.

The stumps were already pitched, and the rival cricketers lost no time in starting the game.

Harry Wharton and Tom Merry tossed for choice of innings, and the Greyfriars skipper won the toss.

"We bat," he said.

Tom Merry nodded.

Grundy touched him on the shoulder.

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"I suppose you'll give me the first over?" he whispered.

"Oh, rats!" said Tom.

"Well, where am I going to field, then?"

"Anywhere you like," growled the captain of the Shell.

And Grundy snorted.

CHAPTER 13.

The Great Match!

TOM MERRY led his men into the field. Harry Wharton and Bob Cherry of Greyfriars opened the innings for the visitors.

Grundy went into the long field, with a look of disgust. Apparently his programme of terrific bowling was not to come off.

Fatty Wynn, Blake, and Figgins shared the bowling among them, and they were all good, especially the Welsh junior, who was at the top of his form.

But the Greyfriars batting was first-class, and they met the bowling, good as it was, very well, and gave the field few chances.

Wickets went down, but runs went up at a fast rate of scoring.

Wharton knocked up 35 before he fell, and Bob Cherry made 20, and Vernon-Smith 15. Field bagged 20, and Brown 18.

Eight down for 120 when lunch-time drew near.

Hurree Singh had made a duck's egg to Fatty Wynn's bowling, and his dusky face looked dolorous as he went off, and Koumi Rao gave him a look of sympathy. But that was the only duck's egg in the innings.

Grundy approached Tom Merry as the field crossed over.

"What about me?" he asked.

Tom Merry made a gesture of impatience.

Grundy was being played, and that was all he had bargained for. He was fielding rottenly, and he had his innings to come. He had no right to claim to bowl.

The St. Jim's side needed their best bowling; but Tom Merry felt that he had to give Grundy a chance. His hasty promise must be redeemed.

"Give Grundy the ball, Blake!" said Tom shortly.

"That fathead?" said Blake.

"Yes; for an over."

"Oh, my hat!"

Grundy took the ball and glanced towards the pavilion, where many spectators were looking on.

He went on to bowl against Frank Nugent of Greyfriars.

He bowled, and Nugent grinned. He could see that Grundy was no bowler. Nugent let himself go at the ball, and it flew through the air, and Tom Merry made a jump at it in vain.

Away it went to the boundary.

The ball came in, the batsmen resting idly at the wickets.

Grundy sent the ball down again.

Smack!

Away went the whizzing leather, and again the batsmen rested where they were.

Tom Merry exchanged a look with Blake.

"This is a giddy frost," he murmured.

(Continued on page 22.)



In Town To-day

**Introducing Bernard Glyn
to the Microphone. By a
B.B.C. TALENT SCOUT.**

INTERVIEWER: Will you please turn your head a little more to the microphone, Glyn?

GLYN: I rather think it will sound better if I sit here.

INTERVIEWER: But surely you don't know more about wireless than we do, Glyn?

GLYN: As a matter of fact, Mr. Interviewer, I have a suspicion that I do. Perhaps that sounds as though I'm boasting, but take a look at this little gadget, will you?

INTERVIEWER: A sort of looking-glass, with a battery attached.

GLYN: I see you are wondering what the glass is for. I'll connect you up. I invented this thing specially for my broadcast.

INTERVIEWER: We knew you were a keen amateur inventor, Glyn. You made a mechanical figure resembling D'Arcy of the Fourth once, and a mechanical dog, like Herries' bulldog, Towser. But what will this apparatus spring on listeners?

GLYN: Watch for one moment. I just clamp it to the microphone—like so. It's always adjustable anywhere, any time.

INTERVIEWER: I only hope it will go—

GLYN: Chiming in, I'm calling it the Glyn Television Adapter. It's really a self-contained television set. You just speak into it in the ordinary way, and the television adapter sees to it that your facial image is transmitted with your voice over the ether.

INTERVIEWER: Remarkable—if it works.

GLYN: Either it will revolutionise the ether, or my calculations will prove to be ethereal.

INTERVIEWER: But how will people with ordinary wireless sets receive the image?

GLYN: They won't. But those images Kangaroo and Clifton Dane, my chums at St. Jim's, are operating a special receiving set which I have constructed, and they will tell me the result of the test.

INTERVIEWER: Right you are, Glyn. Switch on.

GLYN: We're off! We're on the air. I hope my hopes for this invention are not too inflated. It will be a nasty jolt for me if they explode with a bang. Do you mind if I send a personal message over the air, Mr. Interviewer?

INTERVIEWER: Go right ahead.

GLYN: Hallo, Kangy! Be sure and keep that giddy indicator down below the hundred mark. If you get the receiving set all het up too quickly it's liable to jam. Have you got that wedge under the study table leg? If the table wobbles, the image is likely to be distorted. And see the aerial is O.K. Remember, Figgins of the New House tied some tin cans to it when we were testing.

INTERVIEWER: Do you think any boy can become a successful inventor, Glyn?

GLYN: Certainly! But he may have grown into an old, old man before his dreams are realised. You need patience, and the ability to stand endless disappointments. Each time your hopes go up in smoke you have to start all over again.

INTERVIEWER: Don't you think quick results are ever obtained?

GLYN: Well, you can't hot up an invention by quick-fire methods. You've got to reflect, and in this case you have to take a chance on your reflection being a perfect likeness—or just another cracked plate.

INTERVIEWER: Hallo! That light means an urgent telephone call. It's Noble of St. Jim's—your studymate.

GLYN: I'll take it. Thanks! Hallo, Kangy! Did it come over? Was my face pink or red? What??? An explosion??? Blew out of the window???? I warned you not to get it het up too fast. What's that? My face just didn't blow in at all, but Dane and yourself are wearing smoky black faces at the moment? Sorry, chaps! Sorry, Mr. Interviewer! It appears the receiving set just blew out. So I suppose I'd better blow out, too. But the television adapter was all right. I feel sure of that. It was the receiving set that was at fault. I'll have to try again. Sorry, Mr. Interviewer, if the broadcast has turned out a phut!

INTERVIEWER: On the contrary, Glyn, I admire your pioneering spirit, and sincerely hope that your researches will bear better results.

GLYN: Thank you, Mr. Interviewer! And then perhaps my act will be one of the star turns of the programme.

"Grundy's bowling like a kid in the First Form."

Grundy went for the wicket, and each time he went for the wicket, Nugent went for the boundary.

The Greyfriars batsmen grouped before the pavilion grinned as he hit away the "soft stuff," time after time.

"What the dickens have they put that ass on to bowl for?" Bob Cherry murmured to Wharton, in wonder.

Wharton shook his head.

"Blessed if I know! They've got good bowlers. Must be a joke."

"It's a joke that'll cost them something, then," said Bob.

Grundy's over cost the St. Jim's side exactly 24 runs. Even Grundy looked rather red at the end of it. He had distinguished himself in a way, but he could not swank very much over the result.

"Satisfied?" snapped Tom Merry, as the field crossed over.

"Oh, rats!" said Grundy. "I'll do better than that in the next over."

Tom Merry gave an angry laugh.

"You utter idiot! There's not going to be any next over for you! Do you think we can afford to make Greyfriars a present of 24 runs at a time?"

"Look here——"

"Oh, shut up! You've probably lost us the match already. I think you might be satisfied with that!"

A hundred and sixty was the total of the Greyfriars first innings—a result that made them feel very cheerful, for St. Jim's would find it very hard to beat.

The cricketers adjourned for lunch at that point. Morning school was over now, and the St. Jim's fellows came out in a crowd.

Arthur Augustus D'Arcy inquired anxiously as to the score. And he looked serious when he heard it.

The cricketers lunched in the dining-hall of the School House. After lunch they went down to the field again. Now the ground was surrounded by a big crowd of the St. Jim's fellows to watch the play, and the visitors were arriving in great numbers.

Tom Merry's old governess, Miss Fawcett, had come to see her dear boy distinguish himself, and Arthur Augustus' Cousin Ethel came with her.

Sisters and cousins and aunts galore made the old pavilion bright with colour.

The St. Jim's innings was exciting. The Greyfriars bowlers, especially Hurree Jamset Ram Singh, were hot stuff, and the field were alert and watchful.

Tom Merry was bowled by Hurree Singh after scoring fifteen runs, Blake was caught out by Bob Cherry for five, and Kangaroo was caught after a score of twelve. Then Grundy came in. It had been Tom's intention to leave Grundy till last, but George Alfred had objected, and Tom felt that he could not pass over his objections, and Grundy was put fifth on the list. He came in with a swagger, intending to show St. Jim's and Greyfriars just what he could do.

He did show them, and it did not take long!

Hurree Jamset Ram Singh sent down a ball that knocked his middle stump out before Grundy knew that it was there.

"Well bowled, Hurree Singh!"

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"Yah! What price duck's eggs?" shouted Wally D'Arcy of the Third.

"Boo! Go home!"

Grundy of the Shell walked out, with a crimson face.

Koumi Rao was next man in. The Jam lived through the rest of the over; but a little later he was caught by Frank Nugent with only four runs to his credit.

The Jam's dusky face was gloomy as he joined Figgins at the pavilion.

"This is rotten, my friend!" he said.

"Pretty rotten!" agreed Figgins.

"I feel small and diminished," said Koumi Rao. "I was sure that I should play a good game for the school. I have played a rotten game. I am sorry!"

"You'll do better next time!" said Figgins comfortingly. "It can't be helped!"

The luck of St. Jim's was certainly out in that innings. The score was a bare eighty.

With so much leeway to make up, the Saints had a big fight before them if they were to get anything like equal.

Greyfriars batted again, and it was impressed upon Fatty Wynn that he had to perform the hat trick immediately and on the spot, under threats of being lynched after the match if he didn't.

Whether it was the danger of being lynched or not, Fatty Wynn certainly showed up at his best, and he did give his expectant chums the hat trick in the first over.

The faces of the Saints brightened up very considerably. This was a good beginning.

Grundy did not bowl any more; he was restricted to muffing catches in the field.

Greyfriars were all down at last for ninety, making 250 for the two innings.

Tea was the next item on the programme. Harry Wharton & Co. looked very cheerful over tea. They regarded the match already as good as won.

St. Jim's wanted 171 to win, and it did not look as if they would get them.

But Tom Merry & Co. were prepared to fight to the last.

Tom Merry opened the innings after tea, with Talbot. Even Talbot, mighty hitter as he was, had not done very well in the first innings.

Talbot received the first over from Hurree Jamset Ram Singh, and it gave him six. Then Field bowled to Tom Merry, and the score jumped to fourteen. The St. Jim's crowd gave a cheer.

Matters were looking up at last. Talbot was at his best, and the score mounted fast. Tom Merry fell to Field's bowling at last, and Kangaroo came in.

The Cornstalk did useful work before he was caught out by Harry Wharton.

Then came Grundy, and a duck's egg. Grundy had succeeded in securing his "pair of spectacles" for the match, and a yell of laughter greeted him as he went off, with a crimson and angry face.

Whether Grundy still regarded himself as a first-class cricketer was a question; but there was no doubt that St. Jim's had suffered severely from including him in the team.

CHAPTER 14.

Trying it on Mr. Linton!

BUT if the great George Alfred Grundy had suffered temporary eclipse on the cricket field, he had still left to him the consolation that in his ventriloquism he possessed an unfailing power of gaining distinction.

He found Wilkins and Gunn near the pavilion, and commandeered them at once.

"Come on, you two, and I'll show you something!" he growled.

"My hat! I hope it will be better than you showed us out there just now!" said Wilkins.

Grundy scowled at Wilkins.

"That sort of thing might happen to anybody," he said darkly. "Don Bradman himself has been known to get out for a duck before now. As a matter of fact, I wasn't really ready."

"That's where Don Bradman scores over Grundy," said Gunn. "He is ready when he's taken guard. He knows what a bat's for."

"Do you mean to say that I don't know what a bat's for, you ass?" snapped George Alfred.

"N-no! At least— Oh, yes, of course you do, old chap! Only—"

"Only what?" demanded Grundy, stopping short and giving Gunn the stoniest of stony stares.

"Oh, nothing! Don't be so jolly ready to take offence, Grundy."

"Rats! There never was a more reasonable chap than I am. Wilkins knows that, don't you, Wilky?"

Wilkins muttered something that might have been assent—or might not.

"What are you going to show us?" asked Gunn.

"Well, it struck me that this was a first class chance to display my ventriloquial powers. There's a lot of people round the ground, and—"

"Good egg, old chap! Try it on some of the

fags!" said Gunn cheerfully. "Then it won't matter if it turns out a giddy frost."

"Frost be jolly well banged!" snorted Grundy in wrath. "A fellow with ventriloquial powers like mine—powers that I might say amount practically to genius—"

"Ought to go and boil 'em!" whispered Gunn to Wilkins.

"What's that you say, ass?"

"Oh, nun-nun-nothing, Grundy! Only that you are no end clever at the game, and all that, of course. We're missing all the fun. The match has got to a jolly interesting stage, with old Talbot going so strong. Chuck the idea for a little while, old chap! Let's go back to the pavilion and—"

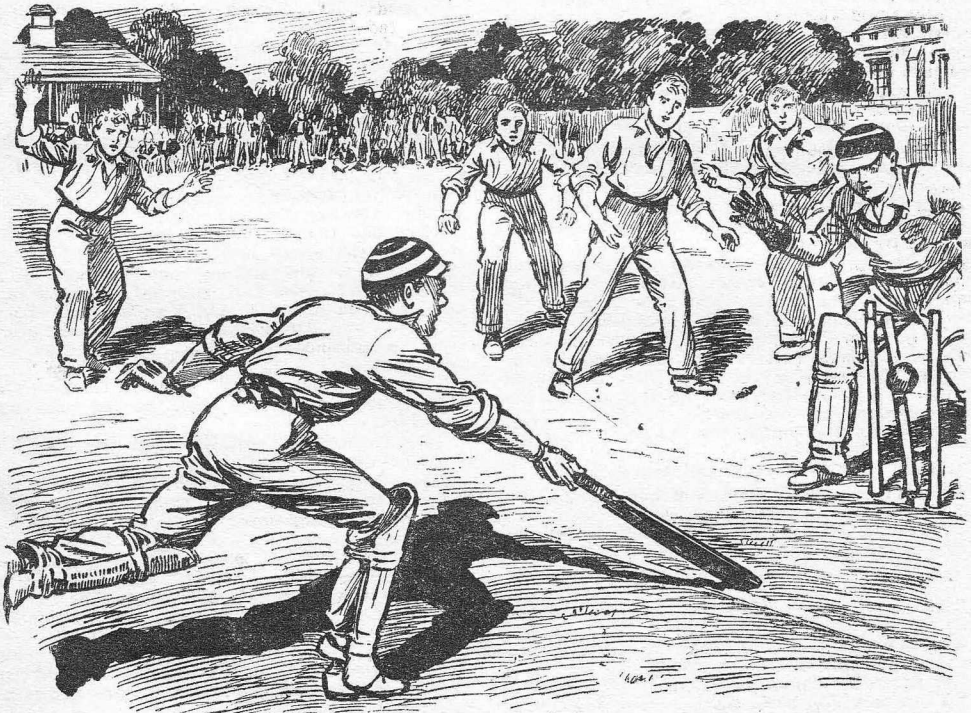
"Yes, let's!" chimed in Wilkins. "There's a time for everything, as Solomon or some other sharp johnny said, and—well, you know, this really isn't the time."

Wilkins finished rather weakly, for the eagle eye of George Alfred Grundy was upon him, and under that eagle eye Wilkins quailed.

It was not that Wilkins or Gunn feared Grundy, though he could have licked either. But Grundy's almost unlimited supply of pocket-money made the study which the three shared a land flowing with milk and honey.

"There's old Linton!" said Grundy, nodding towards where the master of the Shell stood in conversation with a middle-aged lady of severe and forbidding aspect.

"Yes," answered Gunn. "Who's the old dragon with him?"



The St. Jim's crowd held their breath as the batsman ran. The leather came whizzing in, not to the wicket-keeper, but straight at the stumps. Crash! Talbot's bat seemed to ground on the crease at the same moment as the wicket was broken. Was he out?

"Dunno! How should I?" growled Grundy. "What's the odds, anyway? I'm going to throw my voice so that—"

"I say—don't! Drop it, Grundy! You'll make a frightful mess of it—"

"And—and a lady, too!" said Wilkins. "Oh crumbs! You can't do that, Grundy!"

"Oh, can't I? You'll see!"

Gunn and Wilkins looked wildly round; but before they had a chance to escape Grundy had started.

"Bow-wow-wow!"

To Grundy it really seemed that the sound was as the sound of a dog barking close to Mr. Linton's legs; but to his two comrades it did not sound like a dog at all, and it quite plainly came from Grundy.

Mr. Linton wheeled round, his face full of wrath.

His eyes fell upon Grundy at once.

Grundy could not understand why. Wilkins and Gunn could. The weird contortions of Grundy's face were quite sufficient to give him away.

"Boy!" roared Mr. Linton.

Grundy was just going to throw his voice again; but he stopped short. His jaw fell and his eyes goggled.

"D-d-d-do you mean me, sir?" he asked, almost reproachfully.

The severe lady was glaring at him in no half-hearted way.

"Grundy," said Mr. Linton severely, "you will come to my room this evening!"

"But—but—but I don't understand, sir!" gasped Grundy, to whom it seemed an absolute impossibility that the Form-master should have tumbled at once to the fact that he was responsible for that weird noise. "What have I done?"

"Another word, Grundy, and—"

"But, sir—"

"It is my firm belief that the boy is insane!" said the lady, looking at Grundy with a mixture of pity and contempt which that junior found very galling indeed.

Grundy was too gallant to be rude to a lady, and he felt that he could not answer this charge without being rude.

So he ignored the charge altogether and tackled Mr. Linton again. Grundy could not believe that the master had seen through the wheeze at once. It seemed incredible, for he knew quite well that he had thrown his voice in a manner which would have done credit to the most expert ventriloquist—or, at least, he thought he knew it, and that came to the same thing where Grundy was concerned.

Just at that moment Herries came up, with his bulldog at his heels.

Grundy saw his chance, and seized it.

"Wasn't it a dog's bark you heard, sir?" he asked.

It was an evasion, certainly, but it did not strike Grundy as being a lie. For it had been a dog's bark—at least, Grundy had intended it to sound as such.

"The boy is untruthful, not insane," said the lady.

Grundy wondered why anybody could be so perverse and difficult to convince.

But again he disregarded her.

"There is a dog here, sir," he said, indicating Towser.

"Here, I say!" expostulated Herries angrily.

"You're not going to put your rotten ventriloquist

jape on to Towser, you know, Grundy! That's a bit too thick!"

Next moment Herries was sorry he had spoken, for he saw that, without meaning to do so, he had given Grundy away.

Mr. Linton looked more stern than ever, and the expression on the face of his lady friend fairly made Grundy wilt.

"I—I—I—didn't say it was Towser!" said Grundy weakly.

"It couldn't have been, because he never barks at anyone," retorted Herries. "Towser's got manners."

"But—but I—I thought—er—didn't you hear a dog bark, Gunn?"

"Oh, don't drag me into it!" groaned Gunn, sotto voce. But Gunn was loyal through thick and thin. Aloud he said: "I—I did hear something a—er—a bit like a dog, sir. But I don't think it was Towser!" he hastened to add, meeting the fixed glare of Herries.

"This boy is as untruthful as the other," said the stern-faced lady, and poor Gunn groaned.

But Mr. Linton, who better understood the code of schoolboy honour, seemed disposed to regard Gunn's attempt to back up his chum as a venial offence.

"It was not in the very least like a dog," he said, with conviction. "Is it possible, you absurd boy, that you look upon yourself as a master of the difficult art of ventriloquism—an art which, I am given to understand, can only be acquired by those exceptionally gifted, and even in such cases requires far more application than, within my knowledge, you have ever bestowed upon either your books or your games?"

Grundy was wounded in his tenderest spot.

He drew himself up haughtily.

"I am exceptionally gifted, sir!" he said.

"Ask Wilkins—"

"No, please don't!" murmured Wilkins. "Keep me out of it, old man. I'm not on in this act."

"Ask Gunn—"

Gunn only groaned.

"Ask Herries—ask anybody!"

"The boy is mentally deranged, I am sure of it!" said the severe lady.

"Do not be alarmed, my dear madam—"

"Alarmed? Stuff and nonsense! Do you suppose, for one moment, that I should feel afraid of a little boy, Mr. Linton! I have a very great mind to administer a sound castigation on the spot."

"Wonder which spot?" grinned Herries—but Herries took good care that the lady did not hear him.

"Really, madam," said Grundy feebly, "I—I'm surprised that—"

"You would be a great deal more surprised if I had to deal with you!" rapped out the lady. "Did your mother never realise that you needed spanking?"

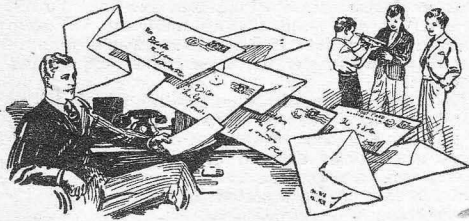
"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Excuse me, Mrs. Partlett," said Mr. Linton politely, when the laughter had died down.

"This lad is not really vicious or depraved; he is only incurably silly and self-conceited."

This was worse than ever! The unfortunate Grundy groaned aloud. Why, didn't everybody know that if he had a failing it was excess of modesty!

"Do you admit, Grundy, that you were impudent enough to attempt the practice of your supposed ventriloquial powers upon me, and at a time when I have a lady with me?"



THE EDITOR'S CHAIR

Let the Editor be your pal. Drop him a line to-day, addressing your letter: The Editor, The GEM, The Fleetway House, Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4.

HALLO, Chums! Judging by what you tell me in your letters, the stamp-collecting scheme is "going over big." As one reader wrote, "It is simplicity itself, and every chap has an equal chance. I'm all out to win one of those prizes!" That's the spirit!

Don't forget that our companion papers, "The Magnet" and "Modern Boy," are also printing the Armaments stamps. If you take these ripping papers, it means that you will have sixty or more stamps every week.

I hope all of you have sent in your Submarine and Bomber stamps by now for the first month's prize-giving. All stamps should have been in by to-day. But don't stop collecting. There are Ten Bikes, and up to four thousand other prizes to come!

"HIS BLACK SHEEP BROTHER!"

Next Wednesday's great St. Jim's story, under the above title, features Manners minor, the spoilt and obstinate young brother of Harry Manners. The Third Form fag is a wayward youth, and when he becomes pally with Gerald Cutts, Tom Merry & Co. are not slow to guess that he is being led further astray by

"They're not supposed, sir," faltered Grundy. "I am a ventriloquist—really, I am!"

"I should require much better evidence than I have had before I believe that," replied Mr. Linton dryly.

"I've proved it over and over again!" said Grundy desperately. "Ask Gunn, ask Wilkins, ask—"

He looked round for his loyal henchmen; but they were no longer visible. They might have melted into thin air for all Grundy could see of them.

As they explained later, they did not see what good they could do him by staying.

"Do you admit it?" snapped Mr. Linton.

"Whether he admits it or not is of no importance," said Mrs. Partlett, with cutting scorn. "The fact is obvious. But it is my fixed belief that the boy's mind is affected."

That was really more than Grundy could stand.

"I'm not!" he howled. "I'm no more mad than you are. I—"

"Silence, Grundy!" snapped Mr. Linton.

"Well, sir, she's no right to accuse me of being potty!"

"Silence, Grundy!"

Kildare came up.

He seemed to take in the situation at a glance.

"What's the trouble, sir?" he asked.

Mrs. Partlett did not regard the skipper of St. Jim's at all favourably, although he had raised his cap politely to her as he spoke to Mr. Linton.

cad of the Fifth Form. They promptly chip in and make things so unpleasant for Cutts that the Fifth Former is held up to ridicule at St. Jim's. Cutts vows vengeance, and his treacherous scheme takes the form of being revenged on Manners by disgracing his "black sheep" minor. Martin Clifford tells this powerful tale in his most forceful and compelling style. Don't miss it!

"RIVAL SCOUTS!"

The scouting contest between the Greyfriars chums and Trumper and his patrol promises to provide plenty of fun and excitement. Harry Wharton & Co.'s wheeze for getting a junior through the "enemy" lines by dressing him up as a girl is novel and daring, but they little guess—least of all Nugent, who becomes the girl!—what is to be the amazing outcome of their plan to defeat the Pegg Scouts. For the disguised Nugent runs into Miss Primrose and her pupils of Cliff House, and they think he is a new girl for the school. What happens I will leave Frank Richards to tell you about next week.

To complete this tip-top issue, there will be more illustrated jokes, another fine stamp article, and Monty Lowther's usual budget of laughs. Wally D'Arcy will be "In Town To-day," and in addition to another Spelling Bee, there will be twenty more Armaments stamps for your collection. Don't forget to reserve your GEM early.

STAR SCHOOL STORIES.

Before I sign off, chums, I'd like to remind you that three more grand numbers of the "Schoolboy's Own Library," price 4d. each, will be on sale to-morrow, and they'll sell like hot cakes when the news gets around what great stories they contain. Firstly, there's a gripping yarn with Harry Wharton as "The Worst Boy at Greyfriars." Secondly—this will please GEM readers—"The Price of Loyalty" is an unbeatable St. Jim's story of a junior who stood y a pal in trouble, even to the extent of facing the "sack." Finally, we have "The Terror of the Tagossa," a smashing tale of big-thrill adventure with the St. Frank's chums.

All the best,
THE EDITOR.

The Form-master, on the other hand, seemed greatly relieved by his appearance.

"Thank you, Kildare," he said. "I propose attending to Grundy later in the day. For the present, I should be grateful if you would remove him to another part of the field, and it would be as well if you could manage to impress upon him that his conduct has been not only foolish but ungentlemanly in the extreme."

"Yes, sir," said Kildare. "Come on, Grundy!"

George Alfred, seething with anger, was walked away, with the hand of Eric Kildare heavy on his shoulder.

"Now, Grundy," said the captain firmly but not unkindly, "what have you been up to this time, you young idiot? Do you know who that lady is?"

"I don't know!" answered Grundy sullenly. "And I don't want to know. She's about the worst old dragon I've ever struck!"

"Oh, I dare say you'll cotton to her more when she's Mrs. Linton!" said Kildare angrily.

"Great Scott! Oh, I say, that can't be right, Kildare! Old Linton would never be such an utter ass!"

Kildare laughed.

"Who knows?" he said.

Then, questioned by Kildare, Grundy confessed his crime, though he evidently still failed to understand how Mr. Linton had been able to spot him at once.

"I ought to see you safely off the field," said

(Continued on the next page.)

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Kildare. "But as you're playing—though how Merry was ever such an ass as to give you a place, licks me—I suppose I must let you stay. No more of your so-called ventriloquism till after the match, mind you! If you had any sense you'd drop it altogether. But you haven't any, so I suppose it's no use telling you that!"

Feeling much smaller than usual Grundy returned to the pavilion. It seemed to him as though hours had passed, and he was quite surprised to find Talbot still in.

CHAPTER 15.

A Close Finish!

"**TALBOT'S** stickin' it out," remarked Arthur Augustus, as the Shell fellow drove the ball away to the boundary. "I couldn't do bettah than that myself! How many is that for Talbot?"

"Forty-six."
"Bai Jove! That's wippin'! If I had played I was goin' to score a centuwy, you know. Pewwaps Talbot will get neah it."

"It's more likely, anyway," said Blake.

"Weally, Blake—"

"Bravo, Talbot! Hurrah!"

Talbot's score was jumping up. The other batsmen came and went, but Talbot seemed im-



Rose, 92, Romsey Road, Dagenham, Essex.

Bill: "I've been travelling on this line for five years, yet I've never given up my seat to a lady."

Bob: "Well, that's bad manners."

Bill: "It's not that—I've never had a seat!"

Half-a-crown has been awarded to J.

movable—except when he was running, and then he was like lightning. It looked as if Talbot would be "not out," and his century seemed quite likely.

The score was a hundred and ten when the word was given for the last man in.

Koumi Rao was last on the list this time.

"Beaten!" groaned Tom Merry, as the Jam of Bundelpore went in to the wicket. "But Talbot is well set, and perhaps the licking won't be too awful!"

"Don't be too sure we're going to be licked," said Higgins sagely. "The Jam will back up Talbot. He had bad luck last time. The game isn't lost till it's won!"

Talbot had the bowling, and that over gave him sixteen. Then Koumi Rao ran a single, and the bowling fell to the Shell fellow again.

The faces of Tom Merry & Co. brightened up. Talbot was well set, and if the Jam was only able to keep up his end, it was barely possible that Talbot would pull the game out of the fire.

Ten more for the over. The score stood at 137. And Talbot wanted two more to make his century. But the bowling came to Koumi Rao now, and

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Hurree Jamset Ram Singh had the ball. And, in spite of the good feeling between the two Indian juniors, Hurree Singh was naturally doing his very best to get his esteemed friend Koumi Rao out.

But the Jam, manfully controlling his desire to shine, played a very cautious game. He stopped two balls, and took a single for the third. The St. Jim's fellows cheered him loudly, and their cheers rose to a roar as Talbot hit away the next ball for two, and completed his century.

The Greyfriars fellows were working hard now. St. Jim's required thirty more to tie, and it looked as if they might get them.

Talbot was impregnable, but Koumi Rao was an unknown quantity. But the Jam was doing remarkably well. When he had the bowling he was cautious, and took no risks, and passed it on to Talbot whenever he could. And when Talbot had the bowling, he hit out in great style.

There was intense excitement round the ground now.

The possibility of winning the match now was exciting, and every hit was greeted with loud cheers and a ripple of hand-clapping.

"One hundred and sixty-six!" gasped Blake, at last. "Looks like a chance for little us—what? Go it, Talbot!"

Clack!

Away went the ball, and the batsmen were running.

One—two—three—and yet again!

The ball was coming in, direct for the batsman's wicket, and the onlookers held their breath. Talbot was racing home. He felt, rather than saw, the leather coming in. He made a wild spurt, and plunged home; his bat clumped in on the crease, and the next second there was a crash of a falling wicket!

"How's that?"

But the umpire shook his head.

"Not out!"

"Hurrah! Hip-pip-hurrah! Well run, Talbot!"

Jack Blake seized hold of Arthur Augustus D'Arcy and waltzed him round, in the exuberance of his delight.

"It's a tie!" chortled Blake.

"Bwavo! Bai Jove! Leggo, you ass!" shrieked Arthur Augustus.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The next over was greeted with breathless excitement. One run wanted; and Hurree Singh, the demon bowler, was bowling to Koumi Rao. Would the Jam be found wanting at the finish?

Every eye was on the Jam.

Grundy sniffed.

"If only I were at the wicket now!" he said to the juniors near him in front of the pavilion.

Arthur Augustus turned his eyeglass upon Grundy.

"You uttah ass!" he exclaimed.

"That nigger will be knocked out by the other blessed nigger!" growled Grundy. "I lost my wicket by a fluke—a sheer fluke! Flukes will happen!"

"When you're batting!" remarked Blake.

"It would have been all right, though, if I had been given some more bowling," said Grundy. "If this match is lost, I suppose even Tom Merry will agree that it was his own fault. I was willing to bowl any number of overs."

"Bai Jove!"

"Look!" gasped Blake.

The ball had whizzed down from the hand of Hurree Jamset Ram Singh of Greyfriars.



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- K. C. Clark, 3, Portland Place, Cambridge; age 15-17; films, sport, magazines; U.S.A., Canada.
- Neville Buchholz, Box 90, East London, South Africa; age 15-19; exchanging stamps and interested in motorcars; anywhere.
- R. Fine, 466, O'Connor Street, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada; age 11-20; stamp collecting; anywhere.
- R. Forman, Tresco, Middle Road, Ravenhill, Swansea, Glamorgan; stamps, international affairs, wireless, sports, French and German; British Isles, any part of Empire, and U.S.A.
- L. Cellingman, 22, Hendon Street, Yeoville, Johannesburg, South Africa; any age; cricket, stamp collecting, and old GEMS; any country.
- G. Toone, 53, Westwood Road, Sneinton Dale, Sneinton, Nottingham; age 12-16; anywhere except British Isles and Canada.
- W. O'Callaghan, 132, Cowgate, Norwich, Norfolk; films, autographs; home and abroad.
- "Goofy," 81, Oak Road, Crumpsall, Manchester 8, wants members for "Eagle Correspondence Exchange Club," age 12-20; anywhere.
- G. Thackray, 10, Bell Square, Burley, Leeds 4; age 13 upwards; stamps, swimming, Rugby; Canada, France, Ireland, Gold Coast.
- A. Parkinson, 14, Ridley Street, Leicester; age 14-18; football, cricket, exchanging autographs.

- W. Painter, White Lake, Wisconsin, U.S.A.; age 17-21; stamps, journalism, sports, medicine, books, photography; any part of the world except U.S.A.
- P. R. Howell, 2, St. Mary's Road, Whitechurch, near Cardiff, Wales; pen pals; age 12-14.
- S. J. Peach, 1, Wadsworth Road, Stoke Newington, London, N.16; age 16-18; newspapers and books; any part of the world; answer guaranteed.
- D. Oake, 192, Wandsworth Road, London, S.W.8; age 13-16; model railways.
- R. Barnes, 25, Kenton Lane, Kingsbury, London, N.W.9; age 18-20; stamps, wireless, and television; anywhere.
- J. Edwards, 51, Harrington Place, Sheffield 2; would like to dispose of several copies of GEM, "Magnet," "Nelson Lee," etc.
- D. Grant, 68, Winiaton Road, Bromley, Kent; age 14-18; British Empire, India, Gold Coast, America.
- Miss J. Rowan, 6, London Road, Blackpool; age 13-15; girl correspondents; England.
- M. Moskovitz, 91, Hanover Street, Cape Town, S. Africa; age 14-18; match brands, stamps, cigarette cards; anywhere.
- B. H. Glover, 133, Edleston Road, Crewe, Cheshire; age 14-16; camping, cycling, scouting.
- Miss M. Hunt, Miss Pywell, Miss Jenkins, c/o 20, Rawcliffe Street, Moss Side, Manchester 14; girl correspondents; age 14-16; hobbies, films, books; overseas.
- R. Williams, junior, 329, Ilford Lane, Ilford, Essex; stamps; overseas.
- E. T. Brown, 79, Ivyhouse Road, Dagenham, Essex; age 15-17; films, autographs; anywhere.
- Mr. E. J. Williams, 18, Archer Street, Wilmorton, Derby; would like to correspond with a French boy age 17-18 who is interested in perfecting his English.
- D. A. Smith, 9, Lansdowne Place, Rugby, Warwick; age 13-17; scouting, camping; anywhere abroad.
- Miss D. Chadbourne and Miss J. Blanche, Furnival House, Cholmondeley Park, Hightgate, London, N.; girl correspondents; age 15-20; films, cycling, hiking, tennis, and hockey.
- F. Herbert, 74, Denning Avenue, Waddon, Croydon, Surrey; age 12-14; stamps; British Colonies.
- Miss J. Venables, 77, Lichfield Road, Bloxwich, near Walsall, Staffs; girl correspondents age 14-16; London, Canada, S. Africa, Australia, New Zealand.

PEN PALS COUPON
4-6-38

Click!

The leather sped on its way; the batsmen were crossing over like lightning. The St. Jim's crowd scarcely breathed.

Whiz!

The leather came in from Bob Cherry, not to the wicket-keeper, but straight at the wicket.

Crash!

Talbot's bat seemed to ground on the crease at the same moment. Was he out?

"How's that?"

"Not out!" said the umpire.

"Hurrah!"

"Hip-pip-hurrah!"

There was a terrific roar from St. Jim's. The match had been won, the game pulled out of the fire.

St. Jim's, carrying a passenger, had beaten Greyfriars. Fellows tossed up their caps, not caring where they came down or whether they came down at all. The green field was black with the crowd now; the game was over, and St. Jim's had won!

Tom Merry clapped Wharton on the shoulder.

"A close thing!" he said.

"But a miss is as good as a mile," said Wharton, rather ruefully. "Anyway, it was a ripping game!"

"Yaas, wathah!"

"And St. Jim's has won," remarked Grundy.

"I think you'll remember, Tom Merry, that I told you St. Jim's would win if you played me."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

CHAPTER 16.
A Last Attempt!

THERE was no time for Grundy to give a ventrioloquial entertainment before the Greyfriars coach rolled away—even if the fellows had been willing.

Grundy had not shone in the cricket match; even Grundy had to admit that, though he attributed it wholly to the fact that he had not been given enough bowling. Had he been allowed plenty of overs, it would not have been such a close finish—Grundy was assured of that. But the Saints only chuckled when he told them so.

The match had been won, in spite of Grundy, and they could afford to forgive the egregious George Alfred now.

Tom Merry & Co. bade a hearty good-bye to the Greyfriars visitors, as they mounted into their coach.

Grundy was in the crowd, and he gave a little cough, and Wilkins caught hold of him. He knew what that little cough meant.

(Continued on page 36.)

THE GEM LIBRARY.—No. 1,581.

THE MYSTERY OF FRIARDALE WOOD—FOUR GREYFRIARS JUNIORS VANISH ONE BY ONE!



Harry Wharton's fists made play like lightning, and three or four Scouts went down under his drives. But then Harry found himself in the grasp of his assailants, with two of them dragging him down.

Hidden Foes!

“**W**HAT the dickens is that, I wonder?” It was Harry Wharton of the Greyfriars Remove who asked the question as he looked round him with a puzzled expression. It was a half-holiday at Greyfriars, and the chums of the Remove were spending it in Friardale Wood. After a long ramble down the banks of the Sark, they had stopped to rest under the trees, and then a bag was opened and a substantial lunch produced, to which the hungry juniors were all doing full justice.

All the chums of Study No. 1 were there—Harry Wharton, the captain of the Remove, Bob Cherry, Frank Nugent, and Hurree Jamset Ram Singh, the Nabob of Bhanipur. Last, but not least, was Billy Bunter, who was busily engaged upon one of Mrs. Mible's largest pork pies, with a grin of great enjoyment on his shiny fat face.

Bob Cherry was opening a tin of condensed milk, holding it between his knees as he sat in the grass and jabbing at it with a penknife, having carelessly left the tin-opener at Greyfriars in the study. Bob, to judge by the perspiration on his brow, was finding his task a trying one. Nugent looked on and offered him advice, which was received with no acknowledgment but an ungracious grunt or two.

Round the juniors the trees were thick, with ferns and bushes growing between, and it was impossible to see far into the wood in any direction.

“What is it, I wonder?” said Harry again. “Did you hear it?”

Bob Cherry looked up, glad of a rest.

THE GEM LIBRARY.—No. 1,581.

Rival Scouts!

By FRANK RICHARDS.

(Author of the grand long yarns of Greyfriars appearing every Saturday in our companion paper, the “Magnet.”)

“What is which?” he asked. “I didn't hear anything except Nugent talking like an ass! Nothing new in that, of course!”

“I was only suggesting that you should try the short blade,” said Nugent mildly. “It's stronger than the long one; and the way you're jabbing, you know—”

“Oh, rats!”

“There's somebody hanging round the place,” said Wharton. “Three or four times I've heard a rustle in the thickets. Blessed if I know what anybody should want to come nosing about for!”

“Some of the Upper Fourth fellows, perhaps, out for a lark.”

“More likely some of the village kids,” said Nugent. “Hallo, there! Who are you? And what do you want? Show yourselves!”

There was no reply.

The curious rustling that had awakened Wharton's attention had ceased, and no sound came from the deep woods save the twittering of the birds.

“Must have been mistaken,” said Nugent.

Harry Wharton shook his head.

“I wasn't! I heard it distinctly enough. But I dare say they've cleared off, whoever they are.”

“I say, you fellows—”

“Blessed if I can get this tin open!” said Bob Cherry. “I'll just jab a hole in the lid, and we can squeeze the milk out! There! Oh!”

Snap!

“I told you—” began Nugent.

“Oh, ring off! Isn't it bad enough to break the best blade in my penknife without having a silly ass say he told me so?” exclaimed Bob Cherry, very much annoyed. “I'll try the other blade.”

“Well, I said from the start that—”

“Br-r-r!”

Bob Cherry succeeded in jabbing a hole in the top of the tin of milk, and, by denting in the side, he induced the sticky liquid to run out. It ran into tin mugs, to which water was added to form a pleasant drink. Bob Cherry shut up what was left of his penknife with an air of satisfaction.

“I knew I should do it in the long run,” he remarked.

“Yes; but if you had used the short blade first you—”

“Look here, do you want some of this condensed milk down the back of your neck?” demanded Bob Cherry warmly. “If you don't, you'd better ring off!”

“I say, you fellows—”

“Hallo, hallo, hallo! Is that you, Bunter?”

AN EXCITING YARN OF SCHOOL AND SCOUTING ADVENTURE, STARRING YOUR OLD FAVOURITES OF THE REMOVE.

Fancy Bunter stopping to speak when he's got grub before him!"

"Oh, really, Cherry—"

"Wire in, Bunt, while you've got a chance! I'm going to start on the pork pies as soon as I've finished with the sandwiches!"

"I say, you fellows, I believe I can hear somebody in the wood."

"So can I," said Harry. "I was not mistaken; they're still there."

"It may be a raid," said Bunter anxiously. "That's what's bothering me. The village kids of Friardale might collar our grub if they had a chance. Then there's those kids at Pegg. We're at war with the Boy Scouts there, and they—"

Bob Cherry uttered an exclamation.

"By Jove, I never thought of them! Now I come to think of it, they have a half-holiday the same day as we do, and they come into the woods for practice. Of course, it's those kids playing at Scouts that we can hear."

"I say, you fellows, hadn't you better look out? It would be no joke if they raided the grub!" said Bunter nervously.

"You can go and look out, Bunter," said Harry Wharton, laughing. "Go and scout in the wood, and bring in all you can find."

"Oh, really, Wharton—"

"Oh, let 'em scout!" said Nugent carelessly. "They won't trouble us."

But Harry Wharton was not so sure. He had started a corps of naval cadets in the Remove at Greyfriars, and they had come to grips—in a good-natured sort of way—with the Boy Scouts of Pegg. He listened, and the thickets gave him the idea that the camp was being surrounded. It was quite possible that the Boy Scouts, out for training in the wood, had come upon the Greyfriars party, and meant to make them involuntarily aid in the training.

If six or seven sturdy young Scouts rushed the camp while the Removites were picnicking, the latter certainly wouldn't have much chance against them.

Wharton rose to his feet.

"Here, look out, you chaps!" he said. "It may be a jape they're going to spring on us. We don't want to be caught napping."

"Right-ho!" exclaimed Bob Cherry, springing up. "Hallo, hallo, hallo! If you kids are looking for trouble, come out and show yourselves!"

But there was no reply. There had been a faint rustling in the wood, but this ceased instantly when Bob called out.

Wharton knitted his brows.

"That shows that we're their object," he said. "They're out for training, and they're going to use our camp here as the objective of an attack."

"Well, I'll jolly soon rout 'em out!" exclaimed Bob Cherry. "Just you wait a minute!"

And Bob dashed into the thickets. His chums waited. They heard a muffled shout, and that was all. They waited for Bob Cherry to return, but he did not come.

Nugent gave a low whistle.

"Phew! Where is he?"

"Bob!" shouted Harry.

But no answer came back. Bob Cherry was gone. Where was he—in the hands of the hidden enemy?

"My hat!" muttered Harry Wharton. "Bob hasn't routed them out; they've collared him

instead! We can't leave him in their hands! Come on, you chaps!"

"Here, I say, you fellows," exclaimed Billy Bunter in alarm, "don't you leave me here alone, you know! Suppose they come—"

"Come with us, then!"

"What about the grub?"

"Blow the grub!"

"Oh, really, Wharton—"

"Come on!" said Wharton.

With Hurree Singh and Nugent, he rushed into the thickets where Bob Cherry had disappeared.

Billy Bunter gave an uneasy glance round, but he could not make up his mind to leave the pork pies. Harry Wharton, Nugent, and Hurree Singh searched through the bushes and shouted to Bob Cherry. But no reply came to their shouting, and they could not see a sign of Bob nor of the enemy.

The skill with which the unknown foes had taken cover and captured and silenced Bob was a pretty plain proof that they belonged to the Boy Scouts of Pegg—the patrol captained by Trumper, the fisherman's son.

The Greyfriars juniors were on their mettle, and they would have welcomed an attack; but it was not made. For ten minutes they hunted through the wood round the camp—in vain. Then, disappointed and a little angry, they returned to the spot where they had left Bunter. But there a fresh surprise awaited them.

The pork pies and the sandwiches, the lemonade and the tin mugs and the milk—all were there untouched, but Billy Bunter had disappeared!

A Scouting Contest!

HARRY WHARTON looked round him and whistled.

"My hat, this is getting rather thick!" Nugent remarked. "It must be the Boy Scouts playing a little jape on us. There must have been a struggle before they got Bunter away from the pork pies, yet we never heard a sound."

"The strugglefulness must have been terrific!"

Wharton's brows knitted a little.

"Hang it!" he said. "We shall have to go for them. They're laughing up their sleeves at us all the time! Let's have another look!"

"Right you are!"

They hunted through the trees for Bunter and Bob Cherry. But there was no sign of them to be seen. After another five minutes of it, the juniors separated, and shouted to each other as they pursued the search in different directions.

But all at once Nugent ceased to answer the shouts.

"Hallo, there!" called out Harry, stopping. "Inky!"

"Hallo, my worthy chum!" came back the voice of the worthy Nabob of Bhanipur.

"Hallo, Frank Nugent!"

But there was no answer.

Wharton and the nabob called to one another again, but Nugent could no longer be heard. It was evident that he was in the hands of the enemy. Yet not a sign had been seen of the foe. They were doing their work well.

"Hang it!" muttered Wharton, half-laughing and half-exasperated. "Where are you, Inky? We'd better stick together."

"Here I am, my worthy chum."

The voice came through a mass of brambles. Wharton plunged through to join his Indian

chum, but on the other side there was no sign of Hurree Singh. Wharton called to him in vain; the nabob's voice did not reply.

Hurree Singh, like the others, had fallen into the enemy's hands.

There was no doubt about it, and Harry Wharton cast uneasy glances round, expecting every moment to see one of the mysterious assailants.

He was the last left of the party, but he did not mean the Pegg fellows to take him by surprise. As he stood near the brambles, there was a rustle, and a hand gripped his shoulder; but Wharton's left flashed out, and a Boy Scout rolled on his back in the bush.

Wharton sprang away.

"Try it again!" he exclaimed.

"Ow!" murmured Dicky Brown, as he sat in the brambles and pressed his hand to his nose. "Ow!"

Wharton was on his guard. A sturdy fellow stepped out of the trees and confronted him—a lad of about Wharton's own age, with a tanned face and a pair of merry, dark eyes—whom Wharton knew at once. It was Trumper, the Scout leader of Pegg. He was clad in the garb of a Boy Scout, with a stout stick in his hand.

He grinned at the Removite of Greyfriars.

"I suppose you guessed it was us?" he remarked.

"Yes. Where are my friends?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, don't cackle!" said Harry. "You've done us, but you haven't captured me yet."

"That's soon done." Trumper imitated the cry of the curlew, the signal of the Boy Scouts of Pegg, and three or four sturdy youths in Scout costume appeared from the wood and surrounded Wharton—at a respectful distance, however. "Now, then, you had better surrender."

"Rats!"

"You can't fight half a dozen of us!" said Trumper impatiently. "Give in while you've got the chance."

"More rats!"

"We'll jolly well rush you if you don't!"

"Rush, then!"

Harry placed his back against the tree, so that he could not be attacked from behind, and faced the Scouts with his fists up, and his eyes gleaming behind them. He was standing up for the honour of the Greyfriars Remove, and he did not mean to surrender.

The Scouts collected upon the spot till there were six stalwart lads ready to back up Trumper. Dicky Brown was mopping his nose with a handkerchief, but the others were all ready for a fight. Trumper glanced over his patrol with an eye of pride.

"Now, then, collar him!" he said. "We don't want to hurt you, Wharton, but we've got to collar you, you see. We're out training. We came on your tracks in the wood and trailed you down and surrounded your camp, and then we settled to capture you all. It's first-rate training, you know, and you are a party of foreign spies for the time being. You must admit that we managed it all pretty neatly; and you'd have been laid by the heels like the rest if Dicky Brown hadn't bungled as usual."

"Oh, hold on!" said Dicky Brown wrathfully. "He dotted me on the boko."

"You ought to have shoved him on the ground."

"But he dotted me on the boko."

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"Never mind your boko. You were an ass! Now, Wharton—"

"Oh, go and eat coke!"

"Collar him!" shouted Trumper.

And he led the rush at Wharton. But though the odds were on their side, the Scouts did not have it all their own way. They had to deal with the finest boxer in the Remove, who prided themselves on being a fighting form.

Wharton never faltered for a second. He hit out, and every blow was planted with accuracy and power. Trumper rolled over in the grass, without having a very clear idea how he got there. Spriggs fell across him and bumped out what little breath was left in him. Dicky Brown received a fresh "dot" on precisely the same spot, and sat down with a suddenness that jarred every bone in his body.

Then Wharton's fists made play like lightning, and for some moments the rest of the Scouts were kept at bay. As a matter of fact, strong and plucky as they were, they knew little of boxing, and Wharton's skill was worth the strength of four. A fourth Scout rolled in the grass, and then Harry was in the grasp of his assailants.

Even then he gave them a tussle, and when he went down, he dragged two foes with him. But the Scouts were piling on him now, and with three of them sitting on him, the Greyfriars junior had to admit himself beaten.

Trumper staggered to his feet, gasping for breath. It was a full minute before he could speak. There was a streak of crimson running from his nose, but there was nothing like malice in his honest, sunburnt face. He evidently admired the way Harry had resisted capture.

"Go easy, you chaps!" he exclaimed. "Don't hurt him."

"You—you've got me!" gasped Harry, half-laughing, and wholly breathless.

"Yes, it looks like it. You might as well have given in first."

"The Greyfriars Remove never gives in."

"Well, we've got you. Serve him the same as the others, you chaps!"

Dicky Brown looped a handkerchief round Wharton's wrists and tied it, then did the same with his ankles. Then the Scouts rose breathlessly, leaving him sitting in the grass against a tree-trunk.

"Bring the others here."

Some of the Scouts went into the wood, and from their places of concealment among the brambles the captured juniors were brought. They were all bound, and each had a handkerchief rammed into his mouth for a gag. These were now taken out, as the need for silencing them was past.

Having regained the power of speech, they began to make remarks. Bob Cherry's remarks were especially emphatic; but Nugent was a good second, and even the Nabob of Bhanipur was expressive. But the Scouts of Pegg took it all good-humouredly. They were the victors, and the laugh was on their side.

"Just wait till we get loose, that's all," said Bob Cherry.

"You won't get loose in a hurry, then," grinned Trumper. "We shan't set you free till you give your parole for the day."

"Bosh! Rats! We won't!"

"Hold on!" said Harry Wharton, laughing. "Don't forget that we're going to see Marjorie & Co. this afternoon, Bob. We can't stay here much longer."

"Well, I don't want to make terms with that worm—"

"Oh rats!" said Trumper, laughing. "You're licked! Don't bear malice."

"Who's bearing malice? I could lick you hollow if I had a chance. Br-r-r! Why, I could scout you chaps off the face of the earth!"

"Cheese it," said Wharton. "We're done, though we really hadn't a chance. We'll make it pax for the day, Trumper."

"The paxfulness is terrific."

"Yes, rather!" groaned Billy Bunter. "Who knows what may be happening to our grub all this time?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"We'll make it pax, then, as you call it," said Trumper. "Let them loose."

The Greyfriars juniors, looking very red and rumped, rose to their feet. They dusted themselves down rather sheepishly, but Billy Bunter did not stop for that. He rolled away at once in the direction of the glade, where the pork pies were awaiting him. He was anxious about those pork pies.

The Greyfriars juniors had given their parole, otherwise there would certainly have been a scrimmage on the spot.

But Harry Wharton, though he was not exactly pleased with the result of the encounter with the Pegg Scouts, was not one to bear anything like malice.

"You chaps must be hungry if you've had an afternoon out," he remarked. "We've got some grub. Will you join us—as far as it goes?"

"Well, that's decent of you," said Trumper. "We will—rather!"

Billy Bunter looked rather dismayed as seven hungry Boy Scouts sat down to the interrupted feast with the Greyfriars juniors. But a warning glance from Bob Cherry stopped the objection that rose to his lips. He comforted himself by wiring into the pork pies at express speed.

The Boy Scouts were hungry, and so were the juniors; but there was plenty of sandwiches. The late encounter, however, was not forgotten. They were friendly enough, but they were rivals.

"You college kids should start some Scout patrols," said Trumper. "We wouldn't mind giving you some points for a start."

Bob Cherry sniffed.

"I rather think we could give you some points, without starting a patrol," he said.

"The ratherfulness is terrific!"

"Yes, it looked like it, didn't it, when we tackled you?" grinned Trumper.

"Oh rats! We were taken by surprise."

"Boy Scouts are never taken by surprise," said Trumper. "Our motto is, 'Be prepared.' And we live up to it."

"Yes, rather," said Spriggs. "Of course, you chaps can't expect to do anything in the Scout line. You're too—well, soft, you know."

"If we hadn't made it pax, I'd jolly well show you!" said Bob Cherry wrathfully. "We could scout against you any day."

"Could you?" exclaimed Trumper instantly. "We take you on, then. We want somebody to scout against. It makes the practice more realistic. If you're as good as your word, we'll get up a contest with you."

"We're ready," said Wharton immediately.

"Good! Now this is the idea," said Trumper. "Suppose you try to send a man through our lines, and we've got to spot him and capture him. It's like sending a man through the

enemy's lines in war-time, you know. We fix on a certain locality, and keep guard there, and you've got to get a man through. What do you think of the idea?"

"Jolly good!"

"Then we'll fix it. You can adopt any disguise you like, any trick, and get a man through to a certain point. If he gets through, you've won. If we stop him, you're beaten, and you sing small."

"We'll take it on," said Wharton. "It will be fun, anyway. When shall it be?"

"Next half-holiday."

"Right! Now for the place."

"Take this wood," said Trumper. "It's big enough to give you a chance. You've got to send a chap from Greyfriars to get through the wood, and down to the shore, and we'll hold the wood. It's giving you every chance. What do you say?"

"We accept."

Trumper rose to his feet, grinning.

"Right you are, then. Any details can be arranged by letter. Thanks for the feed! It was ripping! Get a move on, you chaps!"

And the Boy Scouts marched off into the wood; and the Greyfriars juniors, having packed the remnants of the feed in the bag, strolled away in the westering sun towards Cliff House.

Tea at Cliff House.

HARRY WHARTON was looking very thoughtful. He and his chums had accepted the challenge of the Boy Scouts, but they had no very clear idea as to how they were to accomplish the task they had undertaken. Harry, as leader, had the responsibility of finding ways and means, and the other juniors cheerfully left it to him. And at present Harry did not see how it was to be done.

Trumper and his Scouts had been training for months, and had picked up most of what was to be learned of scoutercraft and woodcraft. They knew the wood from end to end. To pass through their lines, when they were once on the watch, would be a difficult matter.

"Penny for your thoughts, old chap," said Bob Cherry, when Harry had walked on in deep silence for five minutes.

Wharton started and laughed.

"I was thinking about the contest with the Scouts. We've got to manage it somehow, but I'm blessed if I see how!"

"We'll hold a council of war in the study and settle it," said Bob Cherry airily. "That's not the bother at present. We shall be in sight of Cliff House in a few minutes."



Right or Wrong?

Seven words have mistakes in the list on page 5.

- INEXHAUSTIBLE
- TRANSIENT
- PROCEDURE
- DISSIDENTIENT
- WILY
- MURMUR
- ATTENDANT

Another Spelling Bee next week.

"Well, surely that's not a bother," said Nugent.

"I don't mean that, but——"

"Oh, I know! Is your necktie straight? No, it isn't."

"Bosh!" said Bob Cherry.

He took off his collar and necktie, and, kneeling by the rippling Sark, plunged his hands and face in the stream and washed them there. It occurred to the others that they were a little grubby after a long ramble in the wood, and they followed Bob Cherry's example—all except Billy Bunter. He was grubbier of all, but he was quite satisfied to remain as he was. He sat on the bank to wait. Bob Cherry raised his streaming face from the water.

"Poof! This freshens you up," he remarked. "Why didn't you think of bringing a towel in your pocket, Harry?"

"There's your handkerchief."

"Wag your head about, and it will soon get dry," said Nugent. "I've got a pocket comb, and you can comb your hair as straight as it ever is."

The juniors, with streaming faces, knuckled the water out of their eyes. As they did so, a low ripple of laughter fell upon their ears.

Bob Cherry went as red as a beetroot.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! It's—it's Marjorie!"

He dashed the drops from his eyes and blinked at the newcomers. Three girls were coming down the bank of the stream, and they had stopped at the sight of the juniors at their ablutions. Harry Wharton & Co., with their faces and front hair streaming with water, certainly did present a comical appearance.

Marjorie Hazeldene could not restrain that laugh. Clara and Wilhelmina were smiling audibly. Bob Cherry was red, and Nugent blushed, but Harry Wharton laughed. As for Hurree Jamset Ram Singh, it could not be seen whether he blushed or not.

"I'm sorry," said Marjorie penitently. "I oughtn't to have smiled. But—but it was so funny."

"I dare say it is," said Harry. "As a matter of fact, we were coming to see you, and——"

"And we are greatly honoured," said Clara solemnly. "How ever will you get your faces dry again?"

"In the sunful shine the dryfulness will soon be terrific," said Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

Bob Cherry rubbed his face on his pocket handkerchief, and reduced it to something like dryness. He tugged his hair as straight as possible, and then wrestled with his collar, his stud, and his necktie.

The girls were going home towards Cliff House, and Marjorie asked the juniors in to tea. Billy Bunter's fat face brightened up at once. He had lately made a record meal, but he was always ready for another. And the Greyfriars juniors were not likely to decline that invitation, whether they were hungry or not. But, as a matter of fact, they had healthy appetites, and were generally ready to negotiate an extra meal.

Tea was almost ready at Cliff House when the chums of Greyfriars entered the wide, green old garden with Marjorie & Co.

Miss Penelope Primrose, the Principal of Cliff House, frequently had tea laid in the garden now that the afternoons were fine and warm. The sight of the tea-tables, with their white cloths and shining crockery, was a very cheerful one. There

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was a crowd of girls in the garden, all of whom gave the Greyfriars juniors bright smiles. Miss Primrose bade them welcome in her sweet, old-fashioned way.

"Polly wants sugar!"

Harry Wharton looked round quickly as a cackling voice made that statement, close at hand. Miss Primrose smiled.

"It is only Polly," she said.

A big green cage stood on a seat under one of the trees, and a brightly coloured parrot was staring from it with his big round eyes. Polly was Miss Primrose's pet, and was dutifully petted by all Miss Primrose's pupils.

His vocabulary was limited, but to Miss Primrose he was the most wonderful parrot that ever talked. He was supposed to be very old, and there was a current belief at Cliff House that Polly had been a gift from someone connected with a romantic episode of Miss Primrose's youth. "Polly wants sugar! Poor Polly!" said the bird.

"My hat, what a ripping parrot!" said Bob Cherry.

"He is a dear," said Miss Primrose, with a fond glance at her pet. "He says a good many clever things, and sometimes I really fancy that he can think, he says things so appropriately. Whenever he sees the sugar basin he says: 'Polly wants sugar.'"

"In my country we have parrots that talk terrifically," said the nabob admiringly. "There was one in Bhanipur who was taught to talk by a British sailor. He used to say——"

"I think tea is ready," said Miss Primrose hurriedly.

Perhaps she was nervous about her girls hearing what the sailor had taught the parrot to say.

"He used to say: 'Shiver my timbers!' and 'I don't care——'"

"Come on, Inky, and sit down," said Bob Cherry, dragging his chum by the arm.

"Yes; but I'm telling the esteemed and ludicrous Miss Primrose that the parrot used to say 'I don't care a——'"

"Here you are, that's your chair."

Bob jammed the nabob down in a chair with a force that took his breath away. Miss Primrose was looking elaborately unconscious, but some of the girls seemed on the point of going into convulsions. Hurree Jamset Ram Singh was innocent of having caused any alarm, and he stared at Bob Cherry in reproachful amazement.

"My worthy chum, you have deprived me of the breathfulness, and interrupted me in relating to the esteemed Miss Primrose how the parrot said 'I don't care a——'"

"Ring off, you ass!"

"The ringfulness will be terrific when I have finished." Hurree Singh turned to Miss Penelope again with his most agreeable smile, and Bob Cherry saw that it was useless to seek to stop him. "As I was saying, Miss Primrose, the parrot used to say: 'I don't care a bit for sugar.'"

Bob Cherry and his chums gasped with relief. Miss Primrose's face had been a study, but it cleared now. Having got safely over what the parrot said, Hurree Singh turned to his tea.

Billy Bunter, who had listened, with a grin, seemed struck with a sudden idea. He looked at the parrot, blinking solemnly in the red, westerling sun, and chuckled softly. Harry Wharton looked round at him.

"I say, Wharton, I've thought of a good wheeze," muttered the ventriquoist of Greyfriars. "Suppose the parrot talked, hey?"

"He does talk," said Wharton.
 "I mean, suppose I made him say things?"
 grinned Bunter.

Wharton looked puzzled for a moment, and then he remembered Bunter's ventriloquial powers. He was about to whisper dire threats of what would happen to Bunter if he put his idea into execution; but just then Miss Primrose spoke to him, and he had to turn away.

Bunter was too short-sighted to see Wharton's expression. He chuckled again over his secret idea, and awaited a favourable opportunity of making the parrot talk.

It was a merry tea-party. The juniors were made much of, and the Cliff House cakes and jam tempted them to another meal. In the midst of the light ripple of talk there came a cackling voice from the parrot's cage.

"Hallo, hallo! Shiver my timbers!"
 Miss Primrose gave a start.
 "Goodness gracious! What is that?"
 "Shiver my timbers!"

"Bless my soul! It is Polly. I have never heard him say that before!"

Polly blinked at his mistress. He hadn't said anything of the sort, but the voice certainly seemed to proceed from the parrot's cage.

"Polly like sugar?" said Marjorie.
 "I don't care a bit for sugar."
 "Dear me," said Miss Primrose, in wonder.
 "Isn't he a marvellous bird. He has picked that up through hearing our friend say it."
 "The marvellousness is terrific."
 "Poor Polly! Say it again, Polly."
 "Rats!"

Miss Primrose started.
 "Polly!" she said faintly.
 "Rats! Get your hair cut!"
 Miss Primrose sank hopelessly into her chair.

Polly Surprises Miss Primrose!

THE Cliff House girls looked at one another, and the Greyfriars juniors stared blankly at the parrot. Polly had certainly taken on new and wonderful gifts of speech. Miss Primrose was amazed, and she could only stare at the parrot. Polly blinked at her solemnly.

"My goodness!" said Clara. "I've never heard anything like that. What is the matter with Polly?"

Harry Wharton gave Billy Bunter a sharp look. But the fat junior did not see it, and it was impossible for Wharton to speak to him without being overheard, and so giving the whole game away.

It was not exactly the thing for Bunter to be playing a trick on his kind hostess, but it would only make matters worse to let the truth become known. Wharton felt responsible for the conduct of the fellows he brought with him, and he told himself that he might have known what to expect of Bunter.

At the same time, the thing was certainly funny.

"Stuff!" said Polly. "Nothing's the matter."
 "My goodness!"
 "I'm all right—go and eat coke!"
 "Bless my soul!" murmured the Principal of Cliff House faintly. "Polly must be ill."

"Rats!" said Polly. "I'm all right. I want something to drink. Is there anything left in the bottle?"

"Oh dear!"
 "Cack, cack, cack!" crowed Polly. "Get your hair cut!"
 "Oh dear!"

"Kiss me!" said Polly. "Kiss me and call me Algernon!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"
 The juniors could not help laughing, and the girls could not help joining them. Miss Primrose's face was a study.

"This—this is amazing," she said faintly. "I—I have never heard anything like it! Polly—"
 "Oh, ring off!" said Polly. "Where's that drink?"

"Polly, be silent—"
 "No fear! Hurroo! We won't go home till morning!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"
 Miss Primrose looked much distressed. She signed to one of the trim maids who attended the tea-tables.

"Take Polly indoors," she said. "He is ill. Take him in at once."



"Kiss me!" said Polly. "Kiss me and call me Algernon!" "Ha, ha, ha!" The juniors could not help laughing. Miss Primrose's face was a study. "This—this is amazing," she said faintly. She little knew Billy Bunter was responsible.

"Yes, ma'am."
 The cage was lifted from the seat. Polly seemed to object, for he blinked and cackled—genuinely this time. But his protests were not heeded.

"Here, draw the line, you know!" came a voice from the receding cage. "This is rather too thick! I don't want to go in! Blessed if I'm going to stand this! Mind your front hair doesn't come off! Yah!"

Bob Cherry kicked Bunter's leg violently under the table, and the fat junior gave a yell and sprang up. Teacups and tea went flying as he bumped against the table, and Clara's dress had a narrow escape. Nothing more was heard from the parrot, but something was heard from Bunter.

"Dear me!" said Miss Primrose. "What is the matter?"

"Nothing," said Bob Cherry, with a glare at

Bunter. "It's a spasm. Bunter is often taken like that after over-eating."

"Oh, really, Cherry—"

"Sit down, and don't talk!"

"Look here—"

But Bunter, short-sighted as he was, couldn't help seeing the united glares of the juniors, and he sat down and was quiet. He looked sulky, but he comforted himself with tea and cake.

Harry Wharton glanced at Marjorie. A very cold look had come over the girl's face, and Harry knew that she remembered that Bunter was a ventriloquist, and that she knew where the parrot's unexpected remarks had come from. He found an opportunity of speaking quietly to Marjorie a few minutes later.

"I say, Marjorie," said Harry awkwardly, "I suppose you know—"

"About the parrot? Yes."

"I'm sorry! I won't let that young porpoise come here again. I hadn't the faintest idea—"

"I'm sure of that," said Marjorie softly. "But it was wrong to play such a trick upon Miss Primrose."

"I'll talk to him presently about it!" said Harry grimly.

Marjorie gave him a quick look.

"No, don't. I mean talk to him, but—nothing else."

Wharton laughed.

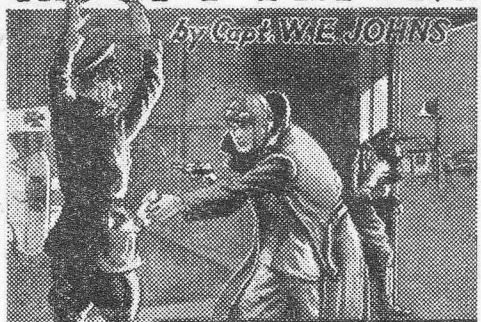
"He ought to have a licking!" he said.

"Oh, no!"

"Right-ho! I'll talk to him, then!" said Harry.

There was no more ventriloquism from Bunter, and a little later the tea-party broke up. Harry had told Marjorie of the coming contest with the Boy Scouts, and the girl was very much interested.

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"You will see something of us on Saturday afternoon if you are on the shore," Harry remarked, as they walked down to the gate. "We have to send a man through Friardale Wood, you know, to get to the shore without being captured. I don't quite know how we shall do it yet, but we're going to try."

Marjorie nodded, with a smile.

"We're going out for a walk with Miss Primrose on Saturday afternoon," she said. "I dare say we shall see you. I shall be interested to hear how you get on with the Scouts. Good-bye!"

They shook hands at the gate. The Greyfriars juniors strode swiftly down the road to Greyfriars and reached the gates well before locking-up. Billy Bunter walked at a little distance from the others, having a feeling that they intended to make some personal remarks on the subject of his ventriloquism. But the juniors were discussing the Scout affair now. Bunter dodged in at the gates and made off, but a heavy hand descended upon his shoulder before he could escape.

"Oh, really, Wharton—"

"You young ass!" said Harry. "I've promised Marjorie not to lick you, or else I'd wipe up the Close with you on the spot. What on earth are you turning on that greasy grin about?" he went on, looking intently at Bunter.

The fat junior was certainly smirking in a curious way.

"Oh, nothing! Only—"

"Only what?" asked Bob Cherry, coming nearer to Bunter with a glint in his eyes.

"Nothing. I don't want to make Cherry jealous. Only Marjorie making you promise that shows—He, he! Of course, you understand?"

"No; I don't think I understand," said Wharton quietly. "What do you mean, if you mean anything?"

"Well—he, he, he!—I told you Marjorie liked me, and—Ow! Cherry, you utter beast, leggo! You're pulling my ear off!" wailed Bunter.

Bob Cherry did not let go—he only pinched the harder; and as Bunter squirmed round in anguish, he applied his boot to the fat junior.

"There, you worm!" he said, releasing Bunter at last. "Is that enough for you?"

"Ow! Oh! Groo! You beast! You're jealous, and—Ow!"

Bunter darted off as Bob came for him again and disappeared at a surprising speed across the Close. Bob looked very red and angry.

"That fat little beast shan't go to Cliff House again!" he exclaimed. "I'm blessed if I know what we stand him at all for!"

And it was some time before Bob Cherry cooled down.

Wun Lung's Suggestion!

HARRY WHARTON wore a thoughtful look during the next day. His chums had cheerfully left him the task of planning the contest with the Boy Scouts of Pegg, and he had to decide on a wheeze. But so far he had not succeeded in thinking of anything that would be likely to succeed. After lessons that day there was cricket practice, but as the chums of the Remove came out of the class-room Wharton called to them:

"Come to the study, you chaps!"

"Oh, stuff!" said Bob Cherry. "What's the game? We've got to play cricket!"

"We've got to hold a council of war."

SAVE THESE STAMPS! See page 2.



"Councils of war are off. Cricket's the word, my son."

"Cheese it, and come on!"

"Oh, all right!"

Bob Cherry grumbled and followed him, and Nugent and Hurree Janset Ram Singh fell into line. Billy Bunter, who was going towards the door, turned round and followed them upstairs. Nugent turned round and looked at him.

"Cut!" he said briefly.

"Oh, really, Nugent—"

"Rats! You're not wanted! Bunk!"

"I suppose a fellow can come into his own study if he wants to!" said Billy Bunter, looking very injured. And he followed the Famous Four along the Remove passage and into Study No. 1. "I say, you fellows—"

"Oh, clear off, you fat earth-worm!"

"I want to cook for you, you know. I can't leave you in the lurch when you've got a feed on. It isn't like you to leave a chum out, either."

"Get out, Bunter! You're no good in a council of war!"

"A—a what?" exclaimed Bunter.

"A council of war, ass!"

"Well, of all the swindles!" said Billy Bunter. "Blessed if I care about your councils of war! I thought it was a feed, or I shouldn't have taken the trouble to fag upstairs after you. Yah!"

And the fat junior rolled out of the study.

"Thank goodness he's gone!" said Bob Cherry.

"That fat young porker is beginning to get on my nerves. I wonder if we could get him to change into some other study?"

"We might get him to, but we shouldn't get any other study to take him," grinned Nugent. "Never mind, Bunter! What about the giddy council of war?"

"Well, it's Thursday to-day," said Wharton.

"We've got to face the Scouts on Saturday afternoon. It's time something was settled. One of us has got to get through the lines on Saturday. Which one of us is to try it?"

"Volunteers," said Bob Cherry.

"I don't mind trying," said Nugent. "I know the wood better than you chaps do, as I've been longer at Greyfriars than any of you. I may be able to dodge them. Only they're such keen young buggars, and then they've a signal that can be

heard nearly from one end of the wood to the other. If one of them spots me, I shall have the whole family on my neck in next to no time."

"That's the trouble," Bob Cherry looked serious. "It seems to me as if we've bitten off more than we can chew. It was really my fault."

"No good talking about that now," said Wharton, in his incisive way. "We're in for it, and we've got to go through with it."

"Right you are! If it were to take place after dark, we could send Inky. He wouldn't be seen after dark," said Bob regretfully.

"My worthy chum—"

"Me come in?"

It was a quiet voice at the door. Wun Lung, the little Chinese junior at Greyfriars, came into the study, with his usual bland and agreeable smile.

"Oh, come in!" said Harry. "What is it?"

"Me no wantee anything. Me helpee you."

Harry Wharton laughed.

"You can't help us, kid. We've got to send a chap through the Scouts in Friardale Wood on Saturday afternoon."

"Me knowee; Bunter tell me yesterday," said Wun Lung. "Everybody knowee."

Bob Cherry grunted.

"Of course, that young ass would jaw! I suppose we shall have the whole Remove grinning at us if we fail to pull it off."

"The griffulness will be terrific!"

"Me tinkee me knowee."

"Do you mean that you've got an idea?" said Harry, more attentively. He knew that the little Celestial had a way of finding solutions for difficulties, and in some of the Remove wheezes Wun Lung's advice had been useful. "Go ahead, kid!"

"You goee in disguise."

"We've thought of that," said Bob Cherry. "Only there's a limit to the disguises we could go in. It's no good putting on a grey beard like a chap in a detective story, or dressing up as a messenger boy, or a Red Indian, you know."

"Me savvy."

"Then what disguise do you suggest?" asked Wharton. "I've run over pretty nearly everything in my mind, and I can't think of one that's at all feasible."

"Girlee."

"Eh?"

"Gooe as girlee," said Wun Lung. "What you tinkee?"

The chums of the Remove stared at him speechlessly.

They had thought of nearly every possible plan of hoodwinking the Boy Scouts, but the thought of a fellow going through their lines disguised as a girl had never even crossed Wharton's mind.

"My hat!" he exclaimed. "Splendid!"

"The splendidfulness is terrific!"

"It's a ripping idea, if we can work it!" said Harry.

"But can we?" said Bob Cherry doubtfully. "You see, how are we to make a boy's face look like a girl's? Boys' faces are rougher, you know, and not so good-looking, as a rule."

"Well, there are plain girls, too," said Nugent. "You would pass, as far as that goes, Bob."

"I wasn't thinking of myself," said Bob, frowning. "A chap may be good-looking, too, but not the same kind of good looks. Then there's the hair."

"What price a wig?"

"The wigfulness is the proper caper, my worthy chums," said Hurree Jamset Ram Singh. "I

GRUNDY THE VENTRILOQUIST!

(Continued from page 27.)

"Chuck it, you ass!" whispered Wilkins.

Grundy shook him off.

"You idiot! I was just going to begin!"

"Look here!"

"Dry up!"

Grundy coughed again. Then a choking voice, which Grundy fondly imagined to proceed from under the coach, said:

"Elp!"

Every eye turned on Grundy.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo, are you ill?" asked Bob Cherry.

Tom Merry stared at Grundy for a moment, and then he understood.

"Help Grundy in, you chaps!" he said. "He's taken queer!"

"I say—" began Grundy.

But he had no time to say anything. Figgins and Blake and Talbot and D'Arcy and two or three more fellows collared him and rushed him across the quadrangle.

The Greyfriars coach rolled away for the station.

Tom Merry & Co. came in. They found Grundy

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think it a wheezy, good idea. Our Chinese-fell chum has come to the rescue in the needful hour like an indeedful friend."

"Good old Chinese!" said Bob Cherry, giving Wun Lung a slap on the shoulder that made him stagger. "It's a ripping wheeze, whether we work it or not."

"Good! Then it's settled?"

"We shall have to think that out," said Harry Wharton. "I think it's a good idea. But which of us is going?"

Wun Lung glided out of the study with his silent step, leaving the chums of the Remove looking at one another dubiously. They had all agreed that it was a good idea. But which of them was to dress as a girl to pass through the enemy's lines?

That was a different matter.

The absurdity of the situation, if the individual should be caught, was apparent to all of them, and no one liked the prospect. But one of them had to take on the task, and it remained to be seen who would volunteer.

(How will the Greyfriars chums fare in the scouting contest with Trumper & Co.? Don't miss next week's exciting chapters.)

sitting on the steps of the School House, gasping for breath, and telling the willing helpers what he thought of them.

"Feel better?" asked Tom.

"I'm not ill!" roared Grundy. "You silly asses—"

"But you cried for help!" said Monty Lowther.

"I didn't, you ass! That was a ventriloquial voice from under the coach—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Look here, I'm fed-up with this!" howled Grundy. "First running down a fellow's cricket, and not giving him a proper chance in a match, and then running down his wonderful gift of ventriloquism—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I'm disgusted with you—simply disgusted—"

"As the young lady says in the novel, 'your feelings are reciprocated,'" said Lowther. "We're disgusted, too. When we're disgusted, we bump a chap. Go it!"

"Yah! Oh! Stoppit! Yoop!"

The merry juniors passed into the House, leaving a breathless figure sitting in the quad. It was Grundy the ventriloquist.

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