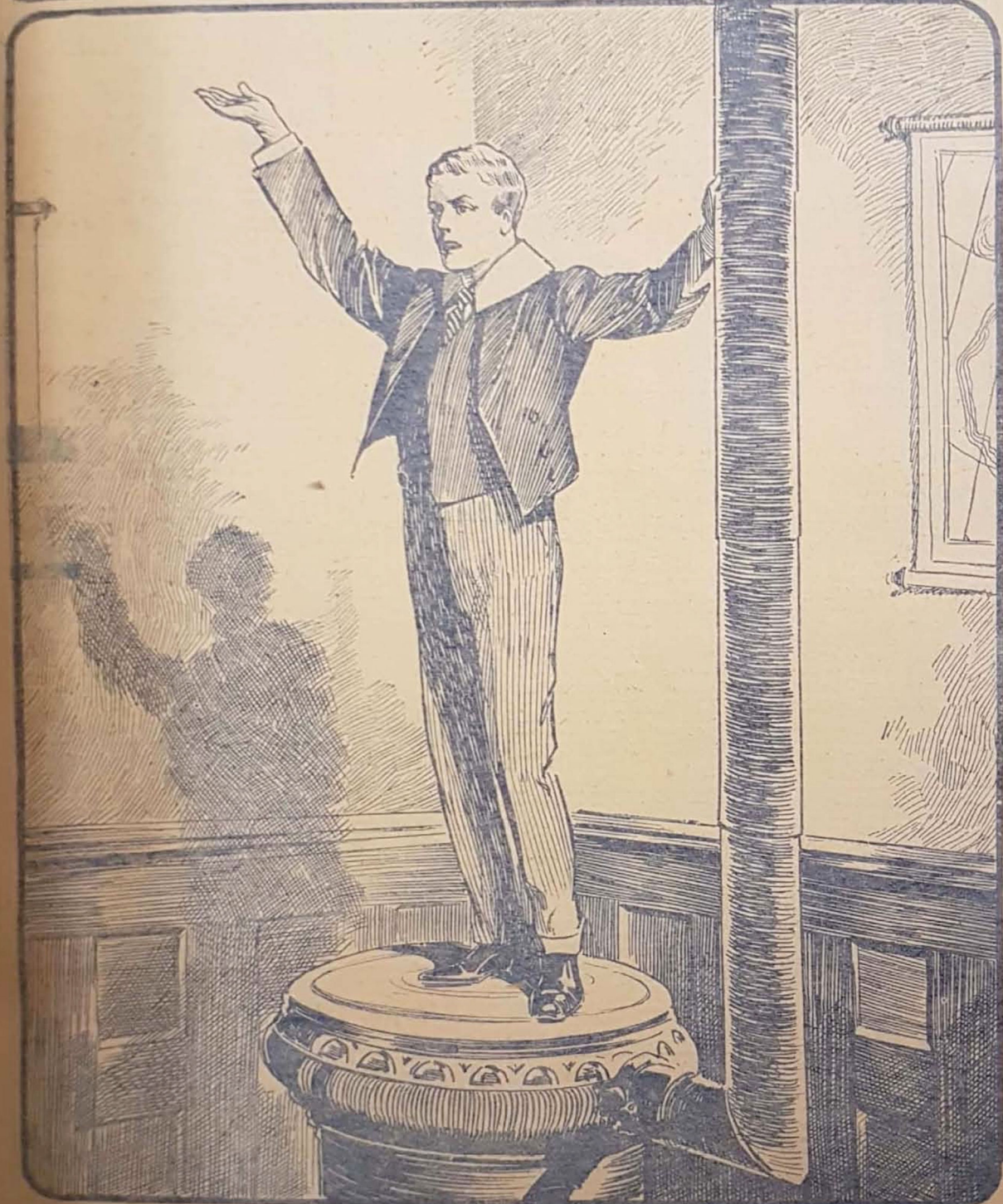
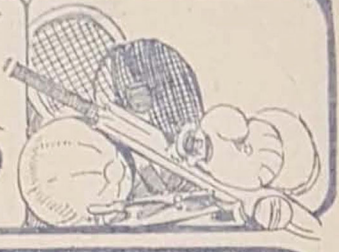


'The Rise of the Lower Fourth.'

PLUCK

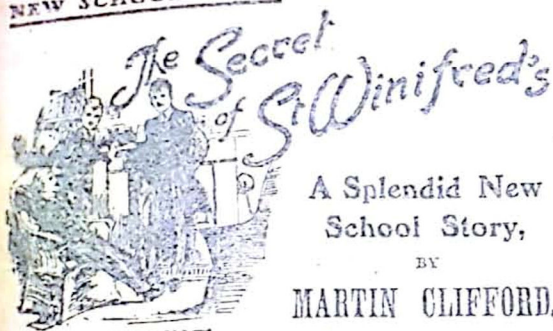
FOUND IN FLEET STREET.
A Splendid Long, Complete Detective Story.

1D



"KIDS OF THE LOWER FOURTH, LEND ME YOUR EARS!" CRIED NIGEL DORN DRAMATICALLY.
NO. 165. VOL. 6. NEW SERIES.

NEW SCHOOL TALE.



A Splendid New School Story,

BY
MARTIN CLIFFORD.

READ THIS FIRST.

The train containing the boys of St. Winifred's slowed down alongside Ferndale Station platform. "You bouncer! Why didn't you yell?" Locke, a Fourth-Former, shouted the question to Clive Lawrence, a new boy, but one in no way shy or constrained. "What was there to yell about?" asked Clive. Locke sniffed. "Oh, of course, you don't know; you're a new kid. We're at danger drawn with the Fifth at St. Winnie's, and Kendall and Keene, who are standing over there, are the heads of the Fifth." Clive joins the party of Fourth-Formers, and they make a rush for the brakes. They are stopped, however, by Trelawney, the captain of the school, who forbids them to fight. (Now go on with the story.)

Clive Challenges the Fourth!

"We'd rush the Fifth sharp enough," said Fisher, "if it wasn't for Trelawney; but, under the circumstances, we can't do anything of the kind. If we had got the brake first—"

"Well, you didn't," said Pye. "That's where you were an ass, Fishy!"

"I've no time to punch your head now, Pye—"

"That's a bit of good luck for you, Fisher!"

"Oh, don't start ragging one another now!" exclaimed Locke. "Something's got to be done. If we could get any other vehicle to the school! But to have to walk! That's where the horrid humiliation comes in!"

"It's just as bad, if they send the brake back for us," said Pye. "They'll keep it as long as they can, on purpose."

"Hallo, they're off!"

The brake was crammed with Fifth-Formers. Most of the luggage was left to be sent on, so as to make room for the crammed and crowded passengers. Fifth-Formers filled the brake like flies, and the three horses had plenty of weight behind them.

The driver cracked his whip, and the brake was off.

The Fourth-Formers stared after it savagely. The Fifth shouted and kissed their hands, and hurled back taunts and cat-calls.

Fisher simply writhed with rage.

"Oh, my hat! I can't stand this! Christopher! How I wish that beastly brake would turn over in the lane!"

"Not much chance of that."

The Fourth-Formers yelled after the brake till it rolled away down the lane towards the school. Then they began to growl at their leaders. The Fourth had been humiliated, and some reproof had to be found. They found Fisher.

"That chap calls himself captain of the Fourth," Pye remarked, looking round for sympathy, "and he lets the Fifth come it over us like this!"

"Horrid!" said Sugden. "What we want is a new Form captain. I've said so for a long time. Fisher can't deny that."

"What was I to do?" growled the worried Fisher.

"I'm not captain of the Form," said Sugden loftily. "If I were I dare say I should be able to say what ought to be done. If I couldn't I'd resign."

"You know you wouldn't back me up against Tre. Now, would you?"

"Oh, don't ask me conundrums!"

"You're a set of rotten, grumbling asses!" said Fisher. "It's no sin to lead a Form like this, I can tell you, and I've a jolly good mind to take you at your word and resign. You'd soon see—"

Clive Lawrence broke in:

"That's a question that can be settled later, you fellows." They all stared at him.

"You've got a lot to say for a new kid," growled Sugden. "It seems to me to be necessary for somebody to say something sensible," retorted Clive. "What's the good of ragging one another, with the Fifth Form chucking at us? Something's got to be done."

"Well, you've soon dropped into the way of it, anyhow," exclaimed Locke, rather admiringly. "He'll be a credit to us yet, Fishy."

"Oh, rats!" said Fishy.

"Look here," exclaimed Clive, "I belong to the Fourth. New kid or not, I'm not going to take this lying down. I'm willing to follow anybody's lead."

"If you've got any idea, you can get it off your chest," growled Fisher; "I admit I don't see what's to be done."

"Oh, we've got to walk to St. Winnie's!" said Sugden.

"We're not going to walk," said Clive firmly—"at least, I'm not. What's the matter with getting another vehicle, and racing the Fifth to the school?"

"There isn't another brake to be had for love or money."

"Aren't there any hacks or cabs, or anything here?"

"Yes, one old ramshackle bone-shaker, with a knock-kneed horse," said Fisher scornfully. "It would hold about three of us."

"Then that's no good."

"Like your ideas, my boy—"

"Wait a bit. What price that brake standing there?"

"That's for the Sixth."

"They're not in it."

"They'll be in it sharp enough," said Fisher. "They're looking after their luggage, I suppose. Don't be an ass. We can't touch the Sixth Form brake."

And then Clive Lawrence made a reply that took the breath away of all that heard him.

"The Sixth could wait for us."

"What?"

"The Sixth could wait till the brake was sent back for them from the school."

"Ha, ha! The Sixth wait till the Fourth were pleased to let them have their brake! Talk sense, or shut up."

"I'm talking sense," said Clive determinedly. "I say that we're going to take that brake, and race the Fifth Form to the school."

"You—you utter ass!"

"Better let the Sixth hear you say so."

"Now's our chance, before the fellows come out," said Clive.

"They're waiting for the common crowd to clear off," grinned Pye. "They can't be seen mixing with us, you know. It's a question of dignity. It would be rather a ripping wheeze for them to find their brake gone."

"There's no time to be lost," said Clive. "Come on!"

Fisher caught him by the arm.

"I tell you you're mad! You'll get skinned alive for this at St. Winifred's."

"I don't care!"

"But I do. I—"

"Then you're a rotten funk," exclaimed Clive hotly.

"What!" yelled Fisher.

"Every chap who doesn't get into this brake with me is a rotten funk," said Clive, in measured accents.

There was a roar from the incensed Fourth.

"Knock him down!"

"Punch his head!"

"Jump on his neck!"

Clive faced the angry juniors coolly.

"You can do all that another time," he exclaimed "At present we've got to keep our end up against the Fifth. Every fellow who isn't a funk, follow me."

He clambered into the driver's seat.

The juniors looked at one another. Then Fisher clambered up beside Clive.

"Nobody's going to call me a funk," he exclaimed, gritting his teeth. "I'm game, if you are. Come on, chaps! We're not going to be dared by a new kid."

Clive had already seized the reins and the whip.

Locke followed his leader, and sat on Clive's other side.

Then the more daring of the juniors climbed into the brake.

Some held back.

"Come on!" shouted Fisher. "We're all in this! No funking!"

"Get on there!" cried Clive, cracking the whip.

The driver of the brake came running up.

"Young gentlemen! You mustn't—you can't—"

"Get out of the way! Chuck him a bob, Fisher. I'll give it you later!" cried Clive.

Fisher found himself obeying. The driver picked up the tip, but he still expostulated.

Clive cracked the whip again, and the horses moved on.

(An extra long instalment next Saturday. Please order your copy of PLUCK in advance.)

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THE RIVALS OF ST. KIT'S.

(conclusion.)

Captain of St. Kit's (continued).

"Let's go and start the ball rolling," Greene suggested. And the chums of the end study lost no time. The Fourth Form at St. Kit's were only too eager to follow Pat's lead in giving Talbot a tremendous ovation.

When the hour of the election came round, the big hall was crammed. No rival candidate had appeared. Talbot's popularity was too great.

The election was, therefore, only a matter of form, but it gave the juniors the opportunity of making a fearful row.

The doctor was there in cap and gown to open the proceedings. His appearance was greeted by a tremendous three-line-three. Then he made a little speech, which was listened to with more interest than was usually shown in speeches from the Head.

Then Talbot was elected captain of St. Kit's, without a single dissentient voice.

Arthur Talbot made a very brief speech; but it might have been one of the most highly-finished orations of Pitt

by the way the hearers cheered it. When the Sixth had finished cheering, the Fifth went on a little longer; and when they were done, the Fourth were far from finishing.

Arthur, laughing, led the way out of the hall, and the seniors followed him. But still the Fourth Form went on cheering.

"Well, it's been a jolly time!" said Pat, as he eventually walked out, with his arms linked in Bladen's and Greene's, in the midst of the stream of juniors. "We've made Arthur captain again, and now everything in the giddy garden will be simply ripping! Hallo, Talbot!"

Talbot tapped him on the shoulder.

"I'm going to ask you three to come to tea in my study," said the captain.

"There's some fellows coming in, in celebration of the election, and I've laid in a good feed. We all want you to come—you three!"

"Well, this is ripping!" said Pat. "We'll come—oh, yes, rather! It isn't every day we get invited to tea."

"Come, no blarney!" said Arthur. "Come along!"

It was a jolly tea in the captain's study. The best they had ever had, the chums of the end study agreed; and their hearts were light as they took their leave of the Captain of St. Kit's.

THE END.

Your Editor's Corner.

All letters should be addressed, "The Editor, **PLUCK**, 2, Carmelite House, Carmelite Street, London."

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YOUR EDITOR.