

Grand School and Adventure Stories.

PLUCK

THE SCHEMER. 1^d. AWAY IN THE ROCKIES.



TRANTER, THE SCHEMER, HAS A TERRIBLE EXPERIENCE.

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STORIE

NEW SCHOOL TALE.



The Secret of St. Winifred's
A Splendid New School Story,
 BY
MARTIN CLIFFORD,
 Author of the tales of Tom Merry,
 appearing every week in the
 "GEM" Library.

READ THIS FIRST.

Clive Lawrence, a new boy at St. Winifred's, is put into the Fourth Form, which is at daggers drawn with the Fifth. The leaders of the Fourth are Fisher and Locke, Clive's study-mates, and those of the Fifth are Kendal and Keene. Courtney, a bully, takes Clive for "fag," and sends him on an errand to the Jolly Seaman, a public-house in the village. Clive arrives at his destination, and is shown into a back room to wait for a Mr. Mapper. He falls asleep before the fire, and is awakened by the sound of voices. Concealed as he is by the high-backed chair, he overhears a plot between Mapper and a German to get possession of the clue to a hidden treasure, which Trelawney, the Captain of St. Winifred's, holds. Having discharged his errand, Clive returns to the School. That evening he hears that Kendal and Keene intend to visit the Fourth-Form dormitory in order to "put him through it." In due course the Fifth-Formers arrive, and, having partially carried out their purpose, are attacked by the whole Fourth-Form dormitory with shouts of "Kick them out!" (Now go on with the story.)

The Fifth Repulsed.

"Kick them out!"
 "Hurrah! Down with the Fifth!"
 There was a rush of the swarming juniors. The Fifth drew together and retreated towards the door. Kendal, for the sake of his dignity as captain of the Fifth, could not retreat, but matters were looking pretty serious for the invaders of the Fourth Form dormitory.

"Kick them out!"
 "Come on!" shouted Clive Lawrence; and he led the attack. The juniors hurled themselves upon the enemy with great spirit.

The Fifth stood to their guns pretty well, but the odds were too great. They were driven back to the door, and some of them went scampering into the passage. Clive Lawrence closed with Kendal, and they fell to the floor, struggling furiously. Locke and Keene were similarly engaged.

"Kick them out!"
 "Kick them out!" roared Pye.
 Another and more determined rush, and the Fifth-Formers were fairly hurled out into the passage.

Pye lent Clive Lawrence a hand, and Kendal was hurled after the rest, and Keene followed, sprawling over his chief in the passage.

The doorway was crammed with grinning Fourth-Formers, looking out at the defeated Fifth, and waiting for them to return to the attack if they chose.

But they did not choose. They had had enough of it; and now that the juniors were united, they were too many for the Fifth. Besides, the row had attracted considerable attention by this time. The masters of St. Winifred's were judiciously deaf on the first night of the term, and so long as the noise was confined to the dormitories they took little or no notice. But when it was transferred to the passages, it was time for the hand of authority to interfere, and already doors could be heard opening below.

Keene staggered to his feet, and helped up Kendal. Kendal wiped away a stream of red from his nose with the back of his hand.

"Go for 'em!" he muttered. "Charge!"
 And he was rushing to the attack again, when Keene dragged him back by the shoulder.

"Come on, you ass! What are you stopping me for?"
 "Don't be an ass, Kendy! Come back!"

"I'm going to give those grinning young monkeys a lesson—"

"Come on!" yelled the Fourth. "Come on, and get another licking! Yah!"

Kendal was scarlet with rage, but he realised that Keene was right, and he remained where he was, wiping the "claret" from his nose, and glaring at the exultant juniors.

"Come on; cut it!" said Keene impatiently. "Don't be an ass, Kendy! They're too many for us; and I can hear a master coming upstairs."

"Cave!" muttered Benyon, glancing towards the stairs. Kendal growled, but assented, and the Fifth-Formers slithered off down the passage. The juniors drew back into the dormitory and closed the door.

"There's somebody coming," said Locke. "It can't be helped. No good getting into bed and pretending to be asleep, with the dormitory in this state."

Clive Lawrence laughed.
 "No; I should rather say not."

The dormitory was, indeed, in a state of wreck and confusion. Pillows and bolsters and slippers lay about, bed-clothes were trailing on the floor, and some of the beds and washstands had been shoved out of their places.

It would take some time to put matters to-rights, and already the footsteps were approaching the door.

"Well, it's first night," said Locke comfortingly. "They can't make much of a row. If it's our Form-master we shall be all right."

"But if it's Stossel?" said Pye.
 "He's been out all the evening."

"He'd be in by this time, and he'd hear this row plain enough in his room."

"Well, if it is the German—"
 Locke broke off as the door of the dormitory opened.

A dark-faced, sour-featured man looked in, with a lamp in his hand, and a cloud of ill-humour on his brow.

"Bad luck!" muttered Locke. "It's Stossel, after all."

Clive Lawrence did not speak. He was staring at the German master of St. Winifred's with utter amazement in his face, for he had seen him before.

Franz Stossel, the German master at St. Winifred's, was the German he had seen in the little parlour of the Jolly Seaman—the man whose clutches he had barely escaped earlier in the evening.

The German Master at St. Winifred's.

Clive remained mute, staring at the German, with his eyes almost starting from his head. There was no doubt about it; the man was the same. The same dark features, the same hard, glinting eyes, the same hard curve to the lip, that told of a cold and relentless nature.

Clive was dumfounded.

The German glanced over the crowded dormitory, but his eye did not rest upon Clive Lawrence in the crowd of partly-dressed juniors. The great room was dimly lighted, and Clive was not in a prominent position. And at that moment the amazed junior had no desire to obtrude himself upon the German master's notice.

"You are making too much noise," said Franz Stossel, looking at the juniors with a cold, hard glance. "You are disturbing the house. Why are you not in bed?"

"First night of the term, you know, sir," said Locke apologetically.

"That is no reason why you should turn the dormitory into a bear-garden."

"We're always allowed a little—"

"You are not allowed to get out of bed after lights are out, I believe," said the German master harshly.

"Well, sir, first night of the term, you know," said Fisher.

"Nor are you allowed to make a din at this time of night," said Herr Stossel. "I see no reason why a flagrant infraction of the rules should be passed over because it is the first night of the term."

"Our Form-master—"

"You are not dealing with your Form-master now, but with me. I have been disturbed by the noise you have been making, and I do not like being disturbed. You will each of you write out twenty lines of Schiller, and show them to me to-morrow."

The juniors were silent—speechless with indignation. Lines imposed on a first night were simply unheard of at St. Winifred's, and such a sweeping punishment as an imposition upon a whole Form was particularly irritating. It was utterly unjust, too, for the disturbance had been caused by the raid of the rival Form, as a matter of fact.

"But—" broke out Fisher hotly.

The German master fixed a cold, steely eye upon him.

"Have you anything to say, Fisher?"

(Another long instalment of this splendid School Tale next week.)