

# THE GREYFRIARS CHINEE!

*A Magnificent Long Complete Story, dealing with the Arrival of Wun Lung at Greyfriars.*

## The Penny Popular

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Three Complete Stories of—  
HARRY WHARTON & Co.—JACK, SAM, & PETE—TOM MERRY & Co.



## AT GRIPS WITH THE MANDARIN!

*(An Exciting Scene from the Splendid Long Complete Tale of Harry Wharton & Co.,  
Contained in this Issue.)*

# THE GREYFRIARS CHINEE!

A  
Magnificent Long Complete  
School Tale, dealing with  
the Early Adventures of

**HARRY  
WHARTON  
AND CO.**  
OF  
**GREYFRIARS**

BY  
**FRANK  
RICHARDS.**

## THE FIRST CHAPTER.

The Boy from the Yangtse-Kiang.

"MY only hat?"  
"Have you seen him?"  
"He's a cough-drop!"  
"Looks as if he had just  
hopped off a tea-caddy!"  
"Ha, ha, ha!"

The new boy had arrived. He was seated on a box, gazing round him with an expression of innocent wonder.

He was a young Chinnee of about fourteen. His figure was well-formed, supple, and graceful, but diminutive. He wore the loose garb of his native country, of a rich silken material, adorned with borders of strange characters. His face was oval, rather deep in colour, and not of the saffron hue some of the more imaginative Removites had expected. His eyes had the curious obliqueness of the Oriental. His pigtail hung down over his shoulders, and it was the pigtail more than anything else that excited the interest of the Remove.

"Now, young Chin-Chiu Chinaman," said Bulstrode, with a grin to the Remove, "where did you spring from?"

"Me no splinger. Me walkse."

"Ha, ha, ha! I mean where did you come from?"

"My country is China; me come from Yangtse-Kiang."

"Pshaw! What do you mean by coming from a place with a name like that?" demanded Bulstrode, contracting his brows.

The Chinese youth looked at him with a smile that was childlike and bland.

"No savvy," he said.

"H'm, I fancy you don't savvy just when you don't want to savvy!" said Bulstrode. "Now, what's your name?"

"Wun Lung."

"My aunt! Do you mean to say that you go about in the daylight with a name like that?"

"Me no savvy."

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"Look out!" yelled Bob Cherry. The lean hand of the old Chinaman was fumbling under his loose coat, and, guessing what that action meant, Bob Cherry hurled himself upon the mandarin.

"Did that thing grow on your head, or will it come off?" asked Bulstrode, taking hold of the Celestial's pigtail.

"No savvy."

"You young yellow-skinned ass, I'll teach you to savvy! Here, Skinner, give me your pocket-knife! We can't have a giddy heathen going about the place with a pigtail! I'll cut it off!"

A change came over the placid face of the young Celestial.

He sprang to his feet, his looks wildly excited, as Skinner opened the pocket-knife.

The juniors had no real intention of cutting off the pigtail, Bulstrode knowing perfectly well that he would have to answer for such an outrage to Dr. Locke. But Wun Lung evidently believed that they were in earnest, and he began to gesticulate wildly.

"No cuttee!" yelled Wun Lung. "No cuttee!"

He made a desperate rush for the door. But the laughing Remove closed round, and he was promptly collared and dragged back into the room.

He struggled desperately, exhibiting a strength and determination that no one would have dreamt dwelt within his diminutive frame. He was as slippery as an eel, and as hard to hold.

But the Remove held him fast enough, a dozen hands grasping various parts of his person and his clothes. He was dragged back, and plumped down on the box, and Bulstrode waved the knife over his head.

"Now, then, off it goes!"

The almond eyes were dilated with terror.

"No cuttee!" wailed Wun Lung. "No cuttee!"

"Fritz, and hold on," exclaimed Desmond; "I mane, let go entirely! It's 'brighten' the gossop ye are, and it's a shame!"

"You go and eat coke, Tipperary!"

"The shamefulness is terrific!" broke in Hurree Jamsat Ram Singh.

"Shut up, Inky!"

"I refuse to shut up! I shall punctiliously assault the honourable Bulstrode on his worthy nose if he does not stop his jokefulness!"

"Hold that black idiot back!"

Two or three rough spirits collared the nabob, and he was dragged back. Micky Desmond was shoved away.

Bulstrode put the knife close to the Chinnee's pigtail, and the little Oriental quivered like a jelly.

"No cuttee!" he moaned. "No cuttee!"

"What's all this?"

It was a sharp, ringing voice, as Harry Wharton came in. At a glance he took in the scene, and his brow became like a thundercloud as he strode into the crowd. He shoved the Removites to right and left without ceremony, and gave Bulstrode's wrist a blow that sent the knife with a clatter to the floor.

"You beastly cowardly bully!" he cried.

Bulstrode's eyes blazed with fury.

"Stand back, Harry Wharton!"

"Bah! There is no one here who can make me stand back!" cried Harry Wharton, his eyes flashing round him. "You ought to be ashamed of yourselves for ragging a little chap like that!"

"I wasn't going to cut off his pigtail, you fool!"

"I know you weren't; you dared not, that is the reason. But he thought you were."

"Get aside!" said Bulstrode, between his teeth. "You think too much of yourself, Wharton. You can't ride the high horse with us. You're not master here! We aren't going to hurt the chap. But we're going to have our fun with him, so I tell you!"

"You are going to let him alone!"

"By James! I'll show you! Fellows, are you going to be bullied and dictated to like that? Is Wharton your lord and master?"

There was a murmur from many throats. Threatening looks were cast upon Harry from all sides. They did not daunt him. He had thrust Bulstrode back, and now he stood beside the Chinese boy, his hand on Wun Lung's shoulder, his eyes flashing defiance at the Remove.

"Stand aside, Wharton!" cried a dozen voices.

"I won't!"

"Then we'll jolly soon shift you!" yelled Bulstrode.

He rushed furiously at Harry. Five or six of the rougher Removites followed him up. Bob Cherry and Nugent, Hurree Singh and Desmond and Hazelstone ranged up beside Harry.

Wharton's eyes were blazing. He hit out savagely, and Bulstrode received a right-hander on his chin, and went over backwards as if he had been shot. The next moment Harry's left caught Trexer under the ear, and he sprawled across Bulstrode.

There was a shouting, a trampling, a fierce struggling for a few moments round the terrified Chinese boy. But most of the Removites held off from an attack upon Harry Wharton and his chums.

Skinner, rather unexpectedly, took Harry Wharton's side, and Bulstrode, when he rose to his feet, was not feeling inclined to continue the conflict. He had had only one blow, but it was a terrible one.

The scrimmage ceased almost as soon as it had begun, and Harry Wharton looked round with a flushed face and blazing eyes.

"There won't be any ragging of this kid while I can stop it!" he said. "I don't want to ride the high horse, as Bulstrode suggests; but there's a limit, and you ought to stop at it. I'm going to see this kid through! As for Bulstrode, if he thinks I'm taking too much on myself, he's welcome to meet me in the gym any time he likes, with or without gloves!" Wharton linked his arm in that of the Chinese boy. "Come with me, kid! I'm going to look after you for a bit. You understand?"

"Me savvy," said the Chinese softly. And he held Wharton's and Bob Cherry's hands tightly as they left the Common-room.

## THE SECOND CHAPTER.

### What Nugent Saw.

"WHAT have you got there?"

Billy Bunter asked that question as Harry Wharton & Co. led Wun Lung into Study No. 1.

"He's the new fellow," explained Harry Wharton. "Is tea ready?"

"Nearly, Wharton," said Billy Bunter.

"But, I say, there's no room for five in this study. Besides, I object to having my meals with a Chinaman."

"Don't be silly, Billy."

"Really—"

"Oh, shut up, do," cried Wharton, "and make the tea! I'm jolly hungry. Suppose you'll have tea with us, Wun Lung?"

Wun Lung's almond eyes glistened.

"Me quite leady for tea," he said.

"Sit down here, my pippin!" grinned Bob Cherry, placing a chair for the new boy.

"You can hang your pigtail over the back of your chair. I hope you've brought your chop-sticks. We don't keep them in the study. We haven't a rush of Chinese guests, you know."

The Celestial grinned.

"Chopce stickce alone; knifee-folkece now, allee samee foreigc devill!"

"My hat! You mustn't call your entertainers foreign devils," said Nugent.

"It's not considered polite."

"Wun Lung sorry."

"The apologyfulness is acceptable," said the Nabob of Bhanipur. "I, for one, am gladly pleased to welcome a guestful visitor from the farful lands of Asia. It is perhaps fully possible that you speakful converse in my language.

Tum Hindustance bol sakte?"

The Chinese shook his head. He replied in a voluble volley of Chinese, to which the nabob in turn shook his head.

"Oh, don't!" said Bob Cherry. "If you're going to hold a conversation in Hindustance and Chinese, I shall slide. Do you like sausages; kid? Savvy?"

"Me savvy. Me likee muchee!"

Bob Cherry gave the Chinese boy a liberal helping of everything. He had none of the prejudices of the Hindu with regard to articles of diet. All was grist that came to his mill, and he had a good appetite. His face glowed with pleasure and good-humour, while a cloud settled upon Billy Bunter's. Bunter was not inhospitable, but he was thinking of his supper. An extra guest at the table "queered" the next meal. The chums of the Remove were content with the bread-and-cheese supper in hall; Bunter wasn't.

Tea finished, the chums of the Remove rose. They had their preparation to do for the morrow's lessons, and after that there was a meeting of the junior football committee to be attended.

Billy Bunter sat in the armchair to rest, and Bob Cherry swept off the tea-things into the cupboard. Books were brought out, and pens dipped into ink. Wun Lung sat on the hearthrug and blinked at the fire.

"He's at home here now," murmured Bob Cherry. "He doesn't mean to shift."

"I suppose he has prep to do?" said Wharton, with a puzzled look, and he bent and tapped the Chinese boy on the shoulder. Wun Lung looked up with a childlike smile. "I say, kiddy, haven't you your prep to do?"

"No savvy."

"Hadn't you better get along to your study and do your prep?"

"No savvy."

It was pretty clear that Wun Lung did not choose to "savvy." Harry Wharton gave it up; and the chums of the Remove settled down to work. For a long time there was silence in the study. Billy Bunter rose from the armchair at last with a grunt, and joined the workers at the table.

Wun Lung coiled himself up in the vacated chair, and stared at the fire. He seemed to be asleep, but several times when Wharton looked round he caught the gleam of the firelight on the dark eyes of the Celestial.

At the end of an hour the Removites had finished their prep. Harry Wharton rose from the table with a slight yawn. The Chinese boy looked up.

"Wun Lung, old chap, hadn't you better run along and do your prep?" asked Harry kindly.

"No savvy."

"You will have to prepare your lessons for the morning," said Wharton. "I thought Mr. Quelch had explained it to you. Have you your books?"

"Bookee in studee."

"Then run along and do your work."

"Me savvy."

The Chinese rose and scuttled out of the study. Wharton smiled. There was something he liked very much about the youthful Celestial—something infantile and very taking. But Harry Wharton suspected, at the same time, that there

was more in the young Chinese than met the eye. He belonged to the variety of still water that runs deep.

In less than five minutes Wun Lung came scuttling in with several books under his arm. He had evidently misunderstood Wharton, or chosen to misunderstand him. He had brought his books to Study No. 1 to do his preparation there. Wharton burst into a laugh.

"Let him stop," he said. "One of you fellows might lend him a hand with the work, too. I would myself, only I've got to go out. You might, Inky."

"The pleasurfulness will be terrific," said the good-natured Nabob of Bhanipur.

"What about our game of chess?" said Nugent.

"You can playfully work out an esteemed problem on the chess-board while you waitfully attend for me to reach the finishfulness."

"Oh, rats! I think I'll do a little sprint round the Close. You can do that after dark."

And Nugent went out with Harry and Bob. Hurree Singh and Wun Lung were soon busy over the books. The dark face of the Hindu and the yellow countenance of the young Chinese drew close together, and Hurree Singh explained in his curious English, and Wun Lung answered in English more curious still. Their voices soon sent Billy Bunter to sleep in the armchair.

Meanwhile, Wharton and Cherry went to see Wingate about a football matter, and Nugent went out into the Close.

It was a dark night, but quite fine. It was too dark to sprint very fast, but Nugent took a rapid swinging walk round the Close, enjoying keenly the sharp air after the warmth of the study.

As he passed the gym a voice floated to his ears from an open window of that building just above his head. It was the voice of Bulstrode, the bully of the Remove.

"If you fellows will stand by me, we'll make him go through it. Every new kid has to go through it, and why shouldn't a rotten Chinese? Wharton will give in if there's a lot against him."

Nugent did not choose to listen. He passed on without either quickening or slackening his pace, and left a murmur of voices behind him. There was a glint in the junior's eyes. He knew what Bulstrode's words meant. The Remove bully had not given up the idea of ragging the Chinese.

Wharton had come down heavy on the raggers, and there had been some bitterness over it. Nugent walked on. He passed the porter's lodge, and swung on past the great iron gates of Greyfriars.

In the dim gloom a patch of something white at the gate caught his eye, and he glanced at it.

Then he gave a sudden start.

It was a human face that was pressed against the bars of the gate, and a pair of deep, black eyes were looking in, and they were fixed upon the junior.

The sudden discovery sent a strange thrill through Nugent.

He hesitated a moment, and then walked directly towards the gates. A low ejaculation of amazement broke from Nugent as he came closer, and made out the form of the man outside the gate.

He was a Chinaman!

Write to the Editor of

# ANSWERS

If you are not getting your right PENSION

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

The Man from China.

**N**UGENT stared at the stranger in amazement. Till Wun Lung came to Greyfriars, Nugent had never seen a Chinaman. Now it seemed to be raining them. Wun Lung had been only a matter of hours at the school, and here was another Chinaman peering in at the gates of Greyfriars under cover of the darkness. It was natural that Nugent should connect the two, and he jumped to the conclusion at once that the stranger was some relative of Wun Lung.

"Hallo!" he said, stopping at the gate.

The man looked at him. He was clad in the garb of China, with some modifications. But, apart from that, there was no mistaking the Mongolian features, the oblique eyes, the pigtail. The face was that of an old man, wizened and wrinkled, but the eyes were as keen and alert as a monkey's.

"Do you want anything here?" asked Nugent. "If you want to get in you have to pull the bell. Have you come to see anybody?"

The old man gave Nugent a sharp look, with a quick, sudden movement of the head that reminded the boy strangely of a parrot. He began to speak, in a language totally unintelligible to the junior, but which he guessed to be Chinese. Then, remembering himself, he went on in English without a pause:

"Is he here—is Wun Lung here?"

"Yes," said Nugent. "There is a boy of that name at the school—a new boy."

The old Chinaman nodded quickly.

"Do you want to see him?" asked Nugent.

"Yes, yes, yes!" said the old man eagerly. "Tell him—"

"You can't come in without ringing up the porter. The Head would let you see him if you asked. Ring the bell."

The Chinaman shook his head.

"No, no! I wish speakee Wun Lung, no others. Tell him I am here, and he will come."

Nugent looked uneasy. If the man were a relation of Wun Lung's there was no reason why he should not apply to the Head for permission to see the young Chinese. There was something furtive, something secretive, about the old Chinaman that made Nugent vaguely suspicious, and he hesitated to reply.

"Tellee him," urged the Chinaman—"tellee him the Mandarin Yen Hai" is here to see him, and he will come."

"But why don't you get permission to come in?" asked Nugent.

The mandarin made an impatient gesture.

"Tellee him! Tellee him!" he repeated.

"Wait a minute or two!" said Nugent shortly.

He walked back towards the House. There was something vaguely suspicious about the old Chinaman, yet it could scarcely do any harm to convey his message to Wun Lung. If the boy chose to see the mandarin, it was his own business. At all events, the locked gate was between them.

Nugent went in and up to Study No. 1. The two Orientals were busy over their books.

"Hallo!" said Nugent. "Nearly finished? I say, Wun Lung, have you any relations from China answering to the name of Yen Hai?"

The Chinese boy gave a sudden start. "Yen Hai!"

"That's it. I can see that you know the name," said Nugent curiously.

It was easy enough to see that Wun Lung

know the name. He had turned pale under his dark skin, and a troubled look came over his face. He rose from the table, and Nugent saw that his hands were trembling.

"Who is he, kid?"

"He is my uncle," said Wun Lung, the troubled look deepening on his face. "Me not likee see him; he not likee me come to England."

"Well, he has come to see you."

Wun Lung started again.

"He is not here?" he exclaimed, in a shrill whisper.

"He's at the gate, and he wants you to go and speak to him," said Nugent. "But, mind, you needn't go unless you like. I'll go back and tell him you don't want to see him."

Wun Lung shook his head quickly.

"I must see him! Where is he?"

"Outside the gate."

"Will you—will you come with me?" said the Chinese boy timidly. "I—I am afraid!"

"Nothing to be afraid of," said Nugent reassuringly. "There's a locked gate, and he's on the other side of it. But we'll come, won't we, Inky?"

"The ratherfulness is terrific!" replied the nabob promptly.

"Me tankee you muchee!"

"Rats!" said Nugent cheerfully.

"We're not going to let your Uncle Gargoye frighten you. We'll come along and see fair play. We sha'n't hear any of your conversation, as we don't know a word of your cheerful language. Come on, and tell the old bouncer to get back on his tea-caddy!"

Wun Lung smiled, and followed Nugent from the study, and the nabob brought up the rear.

Harry Wharton and Bob Cherry were just returning from Wingate's study, and the juniors met them in the passage. Wharton stopped as Nugent tapped him on the shoulder.

"Come on!" said Nugent. "Wun Lung's Uncle Gargoye has called to see him, and we're going to see that the old chap doesn't bite through the bars of the gate!"

"Gargoye!" said Bob Cherry, looking puzzled. "That's not a Chinese name!"

"Ha, ha, ha! His name is Yen Hai, but I call him Gargoye after his features," explained Nugent. "Come on! He's waiting at the gate."

"Does Wun Lung want us to come?"

"Yes, rather! He's afraid of the gargoyle."

"Right-ho! We'll come!"

The Removites went out into the Close, and walked in a body to the gate. The old, wizened, yellow face was still pressed to the bars. The black eyes scintillated as they fell upon Wun Lung. A pair of clawlike hands grasped the iron bars.

"Yen Hai," said Wun Lung, in a low voice.

The old man replied in Chinese. He spoke in a shrill, harsh voice, and the Chinese junior listened, with downcast eyes and a troubled brow. He shook his head as the mandarin paused, and then Yen Hai went on again, more volubly than before.

His voice sank lower, and there was a pathetic note in it, as if he were pleading with the boy. The wizened old features contracted, and the Removites, to their amazement, saw the fierce, dark eyes dimmed for a moment by moisture. But still Wun Lung shook his head.

Then the manner of the mandarin changed. His face flushed with anger, his eyes blazed, his voice took on a shriller and harsher note. Wun Lung threw up his head, and a red flush came into his pale cheeks. His eyes flashed, but he did not speak.

A torrent of invective poured from the

lips of the old mandarin. Not a word of the strange tongue was comprehensible to the Greyfriars boys. From beginning to end they did not grasp a syllable of it. But the old man's meaning was clear now, at all events.

He was cursing the lad who had refused his demand, whatever it was, and in his rage his voice became husky, and his clawlike hands grasped and shook the strong bars of the gate.

His voice sank at last from sheer exhaustion. The Removites stood looking on in silence. Then Wun Lung replied in Chinese. He spoke only a few sentences, in a low tone, with perfect quietness. The invectives of the old mandarin had troubled him, but they had not roused his anger.

The mandarin listened, his brow growing darker and darker. He interrupted the boy at last with a cry of rage, shook his fist fiercely through the bars of the gate, and then, turning, disappeared into the darkness.

"My only hat!" murmured Bob Cherry. "That's what I call a really agreeable old gentleman to have for an uncle!"

The mandarin was gone. Wun Lung stood silent, with a pale face, and the juniors waited for him to move. He moved with a sudden start, turning back towards the House. Curious as they were, the chums asked no questions, and Wun Lung did not speak. But as they walked towards the School House the Chinese boy slid his hand through Harry Wharton's arm, and held to him; and Harry knew by keen intuition that the instinct of seeking the protection of one stronger than himself had caused the action of the Chinese junior.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

A Fall for Bulstrode.

**W**INGATE, the captain of Greyfriars, looked into the Common-room as half-past nine rang out from the clock tower.

"Bed-time, kids!"

Hurree Jamset Ram Singh was playing chess with the Chinese junior. He had discovered that Wun Lung was proficient at the game, and it was a bond of union between the two Orientals.

Hurree Singh was a past master of the great game, and there was no junior at Greyfriars who could stand against him. But, somewhat to his surprise, the young Chinese was giving him a hard struggle. The nabob was too keen on the game to even hear Wingate's words.

Wharton, Cherry, Nugent, and Hazeldene were standing round the table, looking on at the game with great interest.

"Bed-time!" said the Sixth-Former again, looking over towards the group.

"Please wait momentarily, respected Wingate," said the nabob, in his purring voice. "I have the esteemed Chinese chum mate in three."

A smile flickered over the bland face of Wun Lung. He moved a piece, and the expression of the nabob's dusky features changed. He gave a gasp, and fixed his dark eyes on the board in dismay. The captain of Greyfriars came over to the table, and glanced at the array of chessmen.

"Come, you'll never finish that game," he said, good-naturedly.

"The esteemed Wingate is mistakenly in error," said the nabob. "The game is already finishfully concluded. The honourable Wun Lung can finish in two."

"My hat!" said Harry Wharton. "Has he beaten you, Inky?"

"He has beaten me lickfully."

"I don't see it," said Wingate, who was a chess-player himself. "Where's the move?"

Wun Lung smiled.

"Lookee takee pawnee," he murmured, "cheekee, Kingee donee."

"The game is donefully finished," said the nabob, with a sigh. "I did not expectfully look for the lickful defeat. I shall try you againfully to-morrow, my worthy chum."

"Me likee muchee."

"Well, off you go to bed now," said the captain of Greyfriars.

"No savvy!"

"You'd better savvy before I come to look for you again," said Wingate; and he went out.

Hurree Jamset Ram Singh rose and swept the pieces into the box. Perfectly good-natured as he was, he felt a trifle on edge after his defeat, and would gladly have tackled the Celestial in another game. But bed-time at Greyfriars, for the juniors at least, was like the laws of the Medes and Persians. And there was no arguing with Wingate of the Sixth.

The Remove went up to bed. There was some whispering between Bulstrode, Skinner, Trevor, and the rest of the rougher set in the Remove. Harry Wharton did not notice it, but Nugent, mindful of the sentence he had caught at the open window of the gym, guessed at once what was on.

"There's going to be trouble to-night, Harry," he said, in a low voice, as he sat on Harry Wharton's bed to take his boots off. Wharton looked at him quickly.

"In what way, Frank?"

"About the heathen." And Nugent explained. Harry Wharton's brow grew dark.

"There will be a row if they begin," he said briefly.

The juniors went to bed. It was evidently the intention of Bulstrode and his set to leave whatever they meant to do until after lights out.

Wingate came in, and found the Remove quietly in bed. Billy Bunter was already asleep. The fat junior was as good a sleeper as he was an eater. Wingate locked up and down the dormitory, and turned the light out.

"Good-night, kids!"

"Good-night, Wingate!"

The door closed. The Remove dormitory was dark and silent. A murmur of voices rose from the upper end of the long, lofty room. Bulstrode's tones could be distinguished above the others, though his words were not audible to those near him. Harry Wharton did not close his eyes. There was no sleep yet for him.

Five minutes elapsed, to make assurance doubly sure that the captain of the school was gone for good. Then there was a scratch, and a match flared out.

A bicycle lantern was lighted, then another, and then several candle-ends. A flickering light spread through the Remove dormitory, and most of the fellows sat up in bed.

Bulstrode stepped out. He had kept on most of his underclothing, and now he slipped on his trousers and a pair of slippers. Trevor, Skinner, Crouch, and others followed him.

Bulstrode, with one eye on Harry Wharton's bed, walked towards the bed of the unconscious Chinese boy. He laid his hands on the bedclothes, and dragged them off with a single jerk. Wun Lung started up with an exclamation in Chinese, and stared at the bully of the Remove.

"Out you come!" said Bulstrode.

"Don't move, Wun Lung," said Harry Wharton quietly. He sprang out

of bed, and was upon the spot in a second. "Stand back, Bulstrode!"

Bulstrode looked at him furiously.

"It's no good, Wharton!" he snarled.

"You can't carry things with a high hand in the Greyfriars Remove. Every new boy goes through it, and this heathen can do it as well as others. You went through it yourself, and pretty stiff," he added, with a sneer.

"You shall not touch Wun Lung!"

"I shall touch him. I shall toss him in a blanket, and make him run the gauntlet, and souse him with cold water," said Bulstrode tauntingly.

"You will not!"

"Get out of it, Wharton!" said Trevor. "We're going to put him through it. Why shouldn't we?"

"Because he's a foreigner—because he's an inoffensive little chap," said Wharton. "He does not know our way. You don't know how much you might scare him."

"He'll have to chance that."

"Well, I can only repeat what I said before," said Harry Wharton. "The

Lung's manner was deceiving, and that considerable strength dwelt within the slim frame. But against an opponent like Bulstrode the Chinese surely could have no chance.

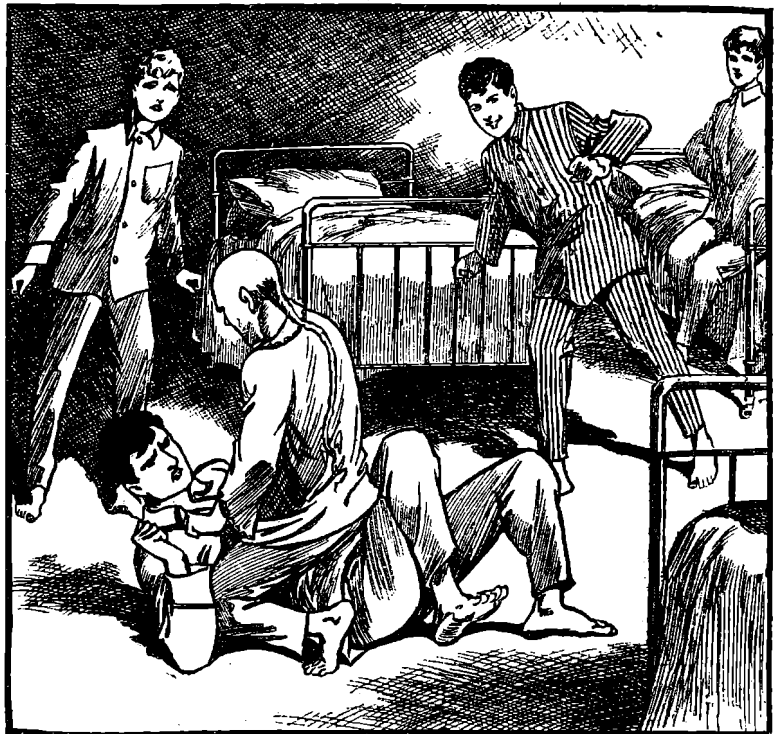
Bulstrode was bigger than Wharton in every way, and though Wharton had conquered him in fair fight, he was a powerful adversary, and another fight might easily end another way. A struggle between Wun Lung and Bulstrode would be like the war of the pigmies and giants.

"There you are!" exclaimed Trevor. "He's not afraid, he says. Let him go through it."

"Rats!" said Wharton. "He doesn't know what you mean."

"No affair," said Wun Lung, in a murmur audible only to his champion. "Big fellow no hultee Wun Lung. Ju-jitsu."

Wharton started. It had not occurred to him that the Chinese boy might be proficient in ju-jitsu. Yet he was still unwilling to leave Wun Lung to the



"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Bob Cherry, as Wun Lung sat on the bully's chest. "Is that how you like it done, Bulstrode?"

fellow who touches Wun Lung will have to walk over me first."

"It's a lot of trouble over nothing," said Skinner, with a shrug of the shoulders. "I don't see why the heathen Chinese shouldn't go through it. But if Wharton makes such a point of it, I say let him alone."

"You can say what you like," said Bulstrode, between his teeth. "I'm going to put the Chinaman through it. Get out of the way, Wharton."

"No fightee!" murmured the Chinese, taking hold of Wharton's arm, as the lad was about to raise his fist. "No fightee. Me not afraid."

Wharton looked at him curiously. Undressed, the Chinese boy did not look so helpless as his bland and childlike manner implied. His limbs, though diminutive, were hard as nails, the muscles like iron.

It occurred to Wharton that Wun

tender mercies of Bulstrode. He hesitated.

"All right," said Wun Lung, with a grin. "Lettee him tly takee me off bed, and you see. If he hultee me, you come help. Savvy?"

"Very well," said Harry Wharton, laughing. "Mind, I'll chip in the moment you want me."

"Alice light."

Wharton stepped aside. He sat on his own bed and looked on. The gleam of mischief in Wun Lung's eye gave him an idea that there was a surprise in store for the Remove bully, but he still had very strong misgivings. Still, he was ready to interfere as soon as his interference should be needed.

Bulstrode was astonished at the change of front on Wharton's part, but he was glad enough to avoid a personal encounter with the best athlete in the

Remove. He swaggered towards Wun Lung, who was sitting on the edge of his bed in his pyjamas.

"Come off, you young rotter!" he grunted, seizing the Chinese boy by the shoulder, and giving him a powerful jerk.

Wun Lung came flying off the bed, and then he seemed to curl round Bulstrode like an eel. The bully's legs were swept off the floor, and he came down on his back with a crash that made the whole room ring.

Wun Lung was sitting on his chest when he realised where he was, and he was pinned to the floor. The Removeites gazed on in blank astonishment. It had been done so quickly that no one had been able to follow the heathen's motions with his eye; but they could all see Bulstrode lying on his back, and Wun Lung sitting on his chest.

"My hat!" gasped Skinner. "My only summer hat!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Bob Cherry. "Is that how you like it done, Bulstrode?"

"The honourable Bulstrode seems surprisedly astonished."

The expression upon Bulstrode's face made the whole Remove roar. Had an earthquake suddenly happened in the Remove dormitory, Bulstrode could not have looked more amazed, more sick and dizzy. The back of his head had hit the hard floor in his fall, and his brain was buzzing like a hive of bees.

"I—I—lennie get up! Get off my chest!" he stammered.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Drag him off, you fools!" yelled Bulstrode furiously.

Trevor and Crouch started forward. Wharton quickly stepped in the way.

"Fair play!" he said. "I should think Bulstrode's big enough to deal with a little chap like that without assistance."

"Yes, rather!" chuckled Nugent. "Why don't you fling him off, Bulstrode?"

"Get off, you yellow imp!" roared the bully of the Remove.

Wun Lung smiled blandly. He had his weight on Bulstrode's chest, his knees on Bulstrode's elbows. His weight was not great, but it was sufficient to pin down the bully of the Remove.

Bulstrode could not get rid of his diminutive assailant; he could not rise; he could only squirm and gasp, and his face was crimson with mortification. The whole Remove was laughing at the ridiculous sight.

"Let me get up!" he growled savagely.

"Plomise," said Wun Lung sweetly—"plomise to let Wun Lung alone, and I lettee you lise."

"I—I won't!"

"Then you stay where you are, I tinkee."

"Let me get up!"

"Lats!" said Wun Lung. His curious Chinese pronunciation, the changing of the "r's" into "l's," strangely transformed that familiar rejoinder; but there was no doubt as to what he meant. "Lats, my fiend!"

"I—I promise," muttered Bulstrode, who would have given anything to get out of that absurd position. "It's all right."

"Allee light."

And Wun Lung sprang up like an india-rubber ball, and the bully of the Remove rose to his feet.

Bulstrode stood panting—scarlet—his chest heaving. It seemed for a moment as if he would spring upon the Chinese boy and crush him. Wun Lung was sitting on the edge of his bed again, and the smile that was "child-like and bland" was playing over his features.

But the Remove bully restrained himself. He turned away with a sullen scowl, and went towards his own bed.

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And the intended ragers followed his example. Bulstrode had given up the idea, and his followers did not feel inclined to carry it out without him. In a few minutes they were all in bed again.

Harry Wharton patted the Chinese junior on the shoulder.

"Good for you," he said. "I never thought it was in you."

"No plactise," said Wun Lung. "The battle is not always to the strong. What you tinkee?"

"Quite right," laughed Wharton. "I think you can take care of yourself, anyway."

And he went back to bed. The candle-ends were blown out, and the Remove, after much muttered discussion of the curious development on the part of the Chinese boy, went to sleep.

## THE FIFTH CHAPTER. Missing!

**B**OOM! A single stroke from the clock tower.

Harry Wharton awoke. He hardly knew what made him wake.

He lay in the darkness, wondering. It might have been the boom of the clock, sounding through the dim night, or was it some sound in the dormitory?

The room was very dark.

He lay and listened. The single boom was followed by a deathly silence. It was one o'clock in the morning. Grey-friars slept!

Wharton gave a sudden start, and sat up in bed.

A slight sound had caught his ear—a sound from below. What it was he did not know. It was simply a slight sound that made itself audible in the stillness of the night.

The night was calm. On windy nights Greyfriars was full of sounds; but now it was still. And that dim, faint sound from the distance jarred on Harry's tense nerves with the shock of a sudden blow.

At the same time, he became aware of a strange and pungent odour in the dormitory. It seemed to proceed from the bed next to him—the bed where Wun Lung slept.

It was a faint, lingering perfume, and it seemed to Harry Wharton that his senses grew heavier as he sniffed it. It needed no more to tell him that it was a drug. If it was not chloroform, it was something like it.

The boy, with every nerve quivering, sprang out of bed. He knew where to find a matchbox. He struck a match, and held it high in the air.

He saw nothing. The match burnt down to his fingers. Nothing! But even as it expired a cry left Harry's lips. His glance had fallen on the Chinese boy's bed. It was empty!

He struck another match with a quivering hand. It was no mistake, Wun Lung's bed was empty. The Chinese boy was gone!

"Frank! Bob! Inky! Wake up!"

Harry Wharton's voice rang through the Remove dormitory. A dozen fellows started out of their sleep. Wharton found a candle and lighted it.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! What's the matter?" demanded Bob Cherry's sleepy voice.

"There's something wrong."

"Eh? What is it?"

"Wun Lung's gone."

"What!"

Bob Cherry sprang out of bed. Nugent and Hurree Singh, Desmond and Hazeldene, were up a moment later. They gazed at Wun Lung's bed in amazement. "I heard something," said Harry Wharton hurriedly. "I don't know

what. Wun Lung is gone. Someone has been here!"

"But—but he may have gone of his own accord."

"Why? I heard a noise downstairs, and—sniff his pillow. Do you smell that? It is chloroform!"

"Good heavens!"

Wharton was dressing hastily. He stayed only to put on trousers and boots, the latter unlaced. He hastily buttoned a brace, and caught up the candle.

"Come on, kids! Something's awfully wrong! I don't know what it is, but—"

He opened the dormitory door. The candle flickered in the windy passage. Bob Cherry was lighting a bicycle lantern. There was a faint sound from below.

Careless of the fact that he was unarmed, Wharton ran down the stairs. The candle was blown out, but he did not stop. He knew whence the sound came. It was from a window in the hall.

Wharton reached the window. A glimmer of starlight met his eye, a cold breath of the night air fanned his face. He knew that the window was open before he reached it. It was open. It had been forced, and it swung open on its hinges. Someone had been in the House, but now was gone. Was Wun Lung gone with him?

Harry Wharton clambered upon the window. Bob Cherry came hurrying up with the lantern. Nugent had a stick in his hand, Hurree Singh a cricket-stump.

"Has he gone out?" gasped Bob Cherry.

"Yes. Come on; we may catch them in the Close!"

"We're after you!"

The chums of the Remove were in the open air in a few seconds. They left an excited House behind them. The alarm had spread from the Remove dormitory. The other fellows were awake; doors were opening, voices shouting inquiries.

Wharton and his comrades did not hear or heed. They ran through the Close towards the gates. The moon was showing over the clock tower, and there was a dim light in the Close; but there was no sign of Wun Lung or his kidnapper.

The juniors halted at the gates.

"They're gone!" said Wharton, between his teeth.

"Hark!" cried Nugent.

There was a sound of wheels on the road. The sound passed the gate, and died away in the direction of the village. Wharton set his teeth.

"Wun Lung is in that trap," he said quietly.

"But—but who—what—"

"Come on, you chaps!" said Harry Wharton, commencing to climb over the gate. "I'm going to follow that trap!"

The juniors wasted no more time in words.

The night was fine, though cold. Half-dressed as they were, the four Removeites clambered over the gate, and broke into a swift run along the lane to Friardale.

The moon was coming up higher over the grey old buildings, and her light glimmered in the lane.

The chums of the Remove ran hard, without a halt. The steady practice of the football-field stood them in good stead now.

Through the glimmering night, through the dark shadows of the trees across the lane, they ran, with light, pattering footsteps, in the dead silence.

Harry Wharton's eyes gleamed as he caught a faint sound ahead—the distant sound of wheels on a rutty road.

The pursuers were not far behind the

pursued. The sound died away, and at length, pausing for breath, the Removites arrived at the gate which gave admittance to the path beside the old inn. The windows of the Red Cow were quite dark.

All within the building were sleeping, but in the yard Harry Wharton discerned a trap, with the horse still between the shafts, tethered to a post. There was a sound in the stillness behind the inn.

"Look out, now!" muttered Harry. "I bet Wun Lung's been taken into one of the rooms!"

"Lead on, old son!" murmured Bob Cherry.

The eagerness for the esteemed combat is terrific!"

"Quiet, now; don't give the alarm! We're not certain yet!"

They were pretty certain, however. They crept in silence down the path beside the inn, and turned into the old, shaded garden. Lights gleamed from a window of one of the rooms.

Wharton placed his finger on his lips, and softly ascended the wooden steps. In spite of his care, the old, dry wood creaked a little. The others followed him as quietly as they could.

The door leading from the little veranda into the room was partly open, and a bar of light fell upon the gloom without.

Harry Wharton moved nastily to the window. There he could look into the room, and as he looked in his teeth came together with a sharp click. The sight that met his gaze held him spellbound.

Yen Hai, Wun Lung's uncle, was standing by the table, breathing heavily, spent by a great exertion. On the table lay a form wrapped in a blanket, evidently just as it had been lifted from a

bed. The face, pale and set, was visible. It was the face of Wun Lung!

Even as Harry Wharton looked in upon him, Wun Lung stirred and woke.

Wun Lung sat up on the table. The blanket fell aside, and showed the diminutive Chinese in his blue silken pyjamas. His almond eyes opened wide, and stared about him. They fell upon the wizened, gnome-like face of the old Chinaman, and he trembled.

"Yen Hai!"

The old man nodded grimly.

Wun Lung slipped from the table. His head was swimming, and he held on to the table for support. Yen Hai, with a quick, tigerish movement, placed himself between the boy and the door on the veranda. The other door of the room was locked, and the key was removed.

Wun Lung began to speak. He spoke in Chinese, and the chums of the Remove heard the murmur of his voice without understanding a word.

The old man pointed to a pad lying on the table, from which a pungent scent still came. It was a mute explanation. Then he interrupted the boy, speaking harshly in Chinese. Wun Lung shook his head.

An expression of ironic grimness came over the wizened face. The lean hand of the old Chinaman pointed to the chloroform rag again.

Harry Wharton could guess what it all meant. If the Chinese junior did not do his uncle's bidding, he was to be drugged again, and carried off insensible.

The lean finger pointed to a large packing-case in a corner of the room, and Wun Lung evidently understood. He cast a hunted look towards the door.

Wharton looked round for his chums.

They were close behind him.

"Are you ready?" he muttered.

"Yes, rather!"

"Collar him, but don't hit him if it can be helped!"

Harry Wharton stepped to the door and pushed it open.

Yen Hai gave a violent start, and stared in blank amazement at the chums of the Remove as they sprang into the room. Wun Lung gave a cry of joy.

"Look out!" yelled Bob Cherry.

The lean hand of the old Chinaman was fumbling under his loose coat. Bob Cherry guessed what that action meant, and he hurled himself upon the mandarin. Wharton gripped him at the same moment.

The lean hand came out, with something in it that flashed in the lamplight; but in a second Hurree Singh had wrenched it away, and flung it through the open door. There was a clink of steel on the wood without.

The old man struggled, his face convulsed with fury. His strength was wonderful for a man of his age, but a couple of the sturdy Removites were enough to hold him.

He was pinioned, and Nugent, tearing the table-cover into two strips, tied his skinny wrists behind his back with it. Then the old man's resistance ceased.

Wun Lung was almost crying with joy and relief. He flung his arms round Wharton's neck and hugged him; but when his glance turned on his uncle his look grew troubled.

"What did he want to carry you off like that for?" asked Wharton.

"He wanted to take me back to China," said Wun Lung. "He badee

(Continued on the next page.)

# YOUR EDITOR'S SPLENDID OFFER

START  
COLLECTING THE COUPONS  
AT ONCE!

The actual size of the magnificent framed Painting Offered as First Prize in this simple Competition is 23 inches deep by 17 1/2 inches wide.

THIS COMPETITION WILL RUN  
FOR TWO MORE WEEKS!  
DON'T DELAY! START TO-DAY!

## FIRST PRIZE!

The Original Painting of that Grand Presentation Plate, entitled:

# "THE CHUMS OF GREYFRIARS!"

Framed in Excellent Style!

## TWENTY OTHER PRIZES!

Consisting of

## SUPERBLY-FRAMED PHOTOGRAVURES!

This is a very simple competition, and is open to all boy and girl readers of THE PENNY POPULAR. All you have to do is to collect the coupons printed below.

To the reader who sends in the most coupons I will award the First Prize, consisting of the original painting of that magnificent presentation plate, entitled "The Chums of Greyfriars."

To the twenty competitors next in order of merit I shall have much pleasure in awarding framed photogravures of the plate mentioned above.

Start collecting the coupons at once. Get your brothers, sisters, cousins, and friends to help you. This is the fourth week of the competition. The coupons will appear for another two weeks.

Don't send in your coupons just yet. Keep them by you until the date for sending them in is announced in THE PENNY POPULAR.

"CHUMS OF GREYFRIARS" PICTURE COUPON.

Sent in by.....

man—no goodee. Me no want to, gooc. Me stay at Gleyfials!"

"What right had he to take you away?" asked Nugent.

"None at all," said Wun Lung. "He badee rascal!"

"I fancy the police-station is about the proper place for this amiable old gentleman," Nugent remarked.

"He is my uncle," said Wun Lung, in a low voice.

"Well, old chap, he can't be allowed loose after this."

"You won't be safe, Wun Lung," said Harry Wharton gravely. "It's not safe for you to let Yen Hai go after what he has done."

"I will speak to him," said Wun Lung. "He shall promise me to leave the countee, and if he makee a promise he will keepee it!"

Wharton looked at the sullen face of the old Chinaman, and hesitated. Wun Lung laid a pleading hand on his arm.

"Lettee him gooc," he murmured. "Wun Lung volly glateful!"

Harry Wharton nodded. "Have your own way, old chap!"

Wun Lung began to speak to the mandarin in Chinese. And now the boy's voice took on a stern tone, and it was the mandarin's turn to tremble. English laws and English prisons were an unknown terror to the old Chinaman.

It is quite probable that he pictured to

himself the tortures he was accustomed to in his own delightful country. He was pale and shaking, and he nodded his head eagerly as the junior proceeded. When he spoke, it was in a low and broken voice. Wun Lung turned to his chums.

"He has promised to leave England by the next boatee to Canton, and to keepee away from Gleyfials till then," he said. "He will keepee his word!"

"Good! Then let him be!"

Wun Lung unfastened the old mandarin's bonds. He spoke to him in farewell, but the old man did not answer. They left him, and Wharton's last glance back fell upon him, still in the same position—silent, sullen, crushed.

The juniors borrowed the trap standing in the inn yard for the return to Greyfriars. Glad enough was Dr. Locke to see them again—glad were their friends, too. The Head's brow was stern when he saw them, but as Wharton explained it cleared, and when the junior had finished, Dr. Locke shook him warmly by the hand.

"I am sorry we had to bolt off without permission, sir," Harry concluded; "but I thought there was no time to lose."

"And you were doubtless quite right, Wharton," said the Head. "You are

fully excused. I am glad, too, that anything like a scandal has been avoided. It is much better for that foolish old man to quietly leave the country than for the papers to be filled with the case, as would happen if he were sent to prison. If you can be assured that he will go, Wun Lung—"

"He never bleakee word," said the Celestial.

"Good! If he keeps his word, all will be well. I will give a hint to the inspector in Friardale to keep an eye on him till he goes, to make all sure. Now, my lads, you may go back to bed. I can only say that I thank you from my heart for what you have done!"

And the Removites went back to bed very well satisfied with themselves.

The mandarin did keep his word. There was no need to watch him. At daylight Yen Hai left Friardale, and the train bore him to London, and, as he had undertaken, the next steamer to Canton carried the mandarin as a passenger.

And Wun Lung breathed more freely when he knew it.

The mandarin was gone—disappointed, but uninjured—and Wun Lung was satisfied. And, in spite of the perilous adventure of the night, the next day there was no more cheerful countenance in Greyfriars than that of the Chinese Chum.

THE END.

## BETWEEN OURSELVES

A Weekly Chat between The Editor and His Readers.

### THE LAST TWO WEEKS!

I want to draw the attention of all my readers to the fact that the picture coupon in connection with our little competition will only appear for another two weeks after this issue. You must, therefore, not relax your efforts in any way if you wish to prove successful in carrying off one of the splendid prizes offered.

As I have told you before, the magnificent framed painting of the Chums of Greyfriars, which I am offering to the reader who sends in the largest number of coupons, is fit to be hung on the wall of any house. The painting itself is a splendid work of art, and the competitor who succeeds in carrying off the first prize will, indeed, be a very lucky fellow.

Remember, my chums, that the twenty competitors who come next in order of merit to the first prizewinner will each receive a superbly-framed photogravure. Although, of course, these pictures will not be of such high quality as the first prize, they are well worth winning.

Keep going, my chums, and collect as many coupons as you possibly can. Don't forget that every coupon helps, and the harder you work the better will be your chances of securing one of the magnificent prizes.

### NEXT FRIDAY'S GRAND STORIES!

I sincerely trust that the story in this issue, dealing with the arrival of Wun Lung, the Chinese, has met with your approval. Wun Lung is a funny little beggar; but, for all that, there is a certain amount of attractiveness about him.

In next Friday's story of the Greyfriars chums, which, by the way, is entitled

### "THE CHEERFUL CHINEE!"

Wun Lung once again plays a leading part. When Billy Bunter announces that he has seen a fearful apparition in the Remove passage, he finds few believers. However, the Removites see the apparition themselves, and many of them are frightened out of their lives for a time. When the apparition, which is none other than Wun Lung with a dragon's head over his own head, is run to earth, there is general surprise amongst the juniors.

Wun Lung is, naturally, greatly amused, and afterwards flies a weird-looking kite in the Close. Mr. Prout and Mr. Capper are amazed, and incidentally somewhat frightened. With great daring, Mr. Prout shoots the "bird" dead, and then discovers, to his astonishment, that it is only a kite. Mr. Capper questions Wun Lung on the kite, but, needless to say, Wun Lung does not savvy. For all his failing to

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savvy. Wun Lung is pretty cute, and I am sure you will all vote him an amusing character when you have read next Friday's long complete story.

Next Friday's long story of Tom Merry & Co., the chums of St. Jim's, is entitled

### "THE NEW HOUSE HERO!"

In this story Tom Merry hits upon a bright idea. He decides to form a Legion of Honour, open to School House fellows only. They try to keep the idea a secret, but Knox, the bullying prefect, has his suspicions when he sees several juniors walking about with badges in their buttonholes, on which the letters T.M.L.H. are inscribed.

Knox questions Lumley-Lumley on the meaning of the letters. Lumley-Lumley replies that they stand for "The Murderers' League of Hate." Knox takes Lumley-Lumley's explanation seriously, and marches all the members of the legion to the Head's study. There the secret comes out, and Tom Merry explains to the Head that the Legion of Honour is open to fellows who play the game. The Head compliments Tom Merry on forming such a society, and calls Knox to account for being so suspicious.

You will derive much enjoyment from reading how the legion go to the help of a beauty in distress; and you will laugh heartily when you learn the identity of the "beauty." You will also admire Redfern for the gallant act which he performs at the end of the story, an act which causes him to be elected the first president of Tom Merry's Legion of Honour.

The title of next Friday's long, complete tale of Jack, Sam, and Pete, the famous comrades, is

### "PETE'S LION HUNT!"

Raja, the lion-tamer, allows Nero, the huge lion, to escape from his den. Nero enters the house of a country gentleman who is giving a dinner-party. There are exciting times, and Nero causes considerable confusion ere he is captured.

In order to avoid disappointment, don't forget that you must order your copy of the PENNY POPULAR in advance.

### WILL YOU WRITE TO ME?

I do not want my readers to forget that I am always pleased to hear from them, and to learn what they think of the stories I am publishing. Write and let me know your opinions of the stories in this issue. Tell me the type of story you like best, and if you have any suggestions to make for the improvement of the PENNY POPULAR, by all means let me have them.

### JIMMY SILVER & CO.

It has been suggested to me by several readers that I replace the stories of Jack, Sam, and Pete by tales introducing Jimmy Silver & Co., the famous Rookwood chums. I have not come to a definite decision on the matter just yet, but I hope to make a definite announcement in a week or two. Perhaps my readers will write and let me know what they think of the idea.

YOUR EDITOR.



# THE BOGUS SCOUTMASTER!



A Grand  
Long Complete Story  
of  
**TOM MERRY & CO.**  
at St. J.m's.

BY  
**MARTIN CLIFFORD.**

## THE FIRST CHAPTER. Hares and Hounds!

**T**HERE was a big gathering of juniors in the quadrangle of St. Jim's. The reason for this gathering was the coming paperchase—the paperchase which had been looked forward to eagerly by the juniors of both Houses for some considerable time.

School House and New House juniors, in their various scout patrols, were congregated together, and a very handsome band they made in the natty garb of the Boy Scouts.

Blake and Redfern of the Fourth had been selected as the hares, and they had big bags of scent slung upon their shoulders. Tom Merry & Co., Figgins & Co., Herries, Digby, D'Arcy, and Kangaroo were amongst the hounds.

Kildare of the Sixth, the captain of St. Jim's, had come out to start the hares.

"You hares ready?" asked the captain, looking at his watch.

"Quite!" said Blake.

"Ready and Reddy!" grinned Redfern.

"Start, then! Don't throw out the scent till you're out of the gates."

"Right-ho!"

And the hares started. The crowd of Boy Scouts watched them disappear from the gates, and waited.

Some of them watched the big clock in the clock-tower of St. Jim's, and some of them kept their eyes on Kildare.

Six minutes had to elapse before the hounds were allowed to start in pursuit, and, to the waiting hounds, it seemed that the six minutes would never go.

"I say, Kildare!" said Figgins. "You sure your watch hasn't—"

"Six minutes!" said Kildare. "Start!"

And the Boy Scouts started.

They streamed away towards the school gates, with Tom Merry & Co. in the lead. Most of the juniors of St. Jim's had joined the pack. Wally—D'Arcy's minor of the Third—had come along with a choice band of fags.

Wally had confided to Frayne and Jameson and Curly Gibson of the Third, that it would be simply ripping to catch the hares, and to make the Fourth and the Shell look small, and his comrades had fully agreed with him.

Out in the white high-road the scent was thinly scattered, and at the stile, half-way to Rylcombe, the fragments of

torn paper crossed into the footpath through the wood.

The whole crowd of scouts went down the footpath at a rush.

The scent lay thick upon the fallen leaves in the footpath, but suddenly Tom Merry halted. A crowd of the fellows went rushing ahead, but the knowing ones stopped as Tom Merry stopped. The scent led off into the trees, mostly stripped bare of leaves now by the winds of autumn.

"This way!" shouted Tom Merry.

He blew a blast on his bugle, and the scattered hounds gathered in.

Through the wood they went plunging, careless of thorn and bramble.

The trail led them to the banks of the Feeder, the little stream that ran through the heart of Rylcombe Wood, to empty into the river near the village. The trail ended abruptly on the bank.

"They've taken to the water!" shouted Figgins.

"Try along the bank!" said Kerr.

The juniors had spread up and down the stream. They were quite prepared to find that the hares had waded some distance, and doubled back through the wood. But there was no "sign" on the shore.

"Can't see it here," called out Lawrence.

"They've crossed the stream," said Kangaroo. "Wade in!"

"Bai Jove, we shall make our feet wet, dear boy!"

"Go hon!"

"Wrap them up in your pocket-handkerchief," said Monty Lowther.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Well, you know, I object to makin' my feet wet. It will wuin my socks. I wogard it as wisah, undah the cires, to jump oval the stream."

"Too wide, fathead!" said Mamma.

"With the aid of a pole, dear boy, it is quite easy to jump distances which are othahwise quite impos," explained D'Arcy.

"You can't jump this," said Tom Merry.

"Yaas, by plantin' my staff on this side, and takin' a good jump, you know, I shall go wight across," said the swell of St. Jim's confidently.

"No good plantin' your staff there," said Lowther, with a shake of the head, "you couldn't expect it to grow."

"Pway don't be funnav, Lowthah! You fellows watch me, and do as I do,

and we'll get across without wettin' our feet."

"Hear, hear!"

"Go it, Gussy!"

Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, taking a firm grip upon his scout's staff, retreated from the bank of the woodland stream, and took a little run. He intended to plant the end of the staff upon the edge of the bank, and, with its assistance, to take a flying leap, which would land him clear across the water, in the reeds on the other side.

But, somehow, it did not quite work out according to calculations.

The swell of St. Jim's came down to the bank with a wild rush, and planted the pole, and leaped.

But he planted it in a bed of rushes, which did not form a firm support. The pole, instead of resting on solid earth, slid through the rushes into the margin of the water, and the support failed the jumper at the critical moment.

Arthur Augustus flew wildly through the air, and came down with a terrific splash in the centre of the stream.

"Oh!"

Splash!

"Gwooh!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

A yell of laughter rang out from the pack as the swell of St. Jim's vanished in the middle of the stream.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Good old Gussy!"

A drenched and dripping head rose from the middle of the stream. Arthur Augustus' pole remained sticking in the reeds. Arthur Augustus himself stuck in the mud at the bottom of the shallow stream, only his head and shoulders rising out of the water.

His eyeglasses and his hat were gone, and his face was streaming, and he blinked at the juniors in a way that made them shrick.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Bai Jove!"

"We've watched you," howled Monty Lowther; "but we're not going to do as you do! No fear!"

"Not good enough, Gussy!"

"Bai Jove! I'm wet! Ow!"

"The water's wet, you know," explained Lowther. "That's how it is! Fellows who tumble into wet water generally get wet. You should have chosen a dry river."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You uttah asses!" gasped D'Arcy.

"There is nothin' whatever to cackle at! Pwaj help me out of this wotten fix! My feet are stuck in the mud!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Will you lend me a hand, you fearful chump?" shrieked the swell of St. Jim's. "I am stuck in the wotten mud! My clothes will be ruined!"

"But we can't reach you!" gasped Tom Merry, with tears of laughter rolling down his cheeks. "You are too far."

"Poke out a stick to me, and I will get a grip on it, fathead!"

Tom Merry and Manners extended both their staves to D'Arcy, who seized one in each hand.

"Now, steady, deah boys!"

"Come on!"

"Steady—Ow!"

"All together!" shouted Tom Merry. "Heave ahead, my hearties!"

The chains of the Shell dragged on the poles, and Arthur Augustus' feet were persuaded to leave the clinging embrace of the mud. The swell of St. Jim's was hauled out, and he sank, gasping, on the bank.

"I say, Tom Merry," said D'Arcy, "do you think you had better call a halt while I go back and change my things?"

"Yes—I don't think!" said Tom Merry, laughing.

"I shan't keep you waitin' more than half an hour, deah boy."

"You won't keep me waiting half a minute, old son," said Tom Merry. "Come on! They've found the scent on the other side, and we shall be left out of the catch!"

"Under the trees—"

"Tally-ho!" shouted Tom Merry. And he ran on.

"But I say—"

But what Arthur Augustus had to say was not listened to. The Terrible Three ran down to the ford, and plunged through the shallow water, and disappeared among the trees on the opposite bank.

Arthur Augustus cast a dismayed glance down at his dripping clothes and muddy boots. His staff was stuck in the mud, his hat was floating down the stream.

"Bai Jove!" murmured Arthur Augustus. "I regard this as wotten! But a D'Arcy never hangs back!"

And, hatless, and squeaking out mud at every step, the swell of St. Jim's dashed on the track of the hounds.

The whole pack were now far ahead of him in the trail of torn paper; the youngest fag had got ahead while the swell of St. Jim's was causing delay on the bank of the stream.

Arthur Augustus was tail dog now. But, in spite of his elegant ways, the swell of St. Jim's was an athlete, and one of the best junior sprinters in the school, and he was soon up with the pack again.

His muddy appearance elicited a yell of laughter from the hounds as he rejoined them.

"Here comes the mud merchant!" roared Lawrence.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The pack laughed breathlessly as they swept on. Tom Merry forged ahead, with Lowther and Lawrence and Arthur Augustus at his side, and they were soon leading the pack.

Tom Merry came first out of the wood on the Wayland side, still on the scent.

Far away down the white road he caught a glimpse of two figures in Boy Scout costume, and he halted by the roadside to wind his bugle.

The pack burst forth into a breathless cheer. The quarry had been sighted!

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## THE SECOND CHAPTER. A Strange Adventure.

"T-A-R-A-R-A-R-A!"

The bugle was answered by a shout from the wood, as the pack came streaming out into the road.

"Sighted them, Tom Merry?" shouted Lawrence.

"Yes—down the road!"

"Hurrah!"

"Bwavo! This way, deah boys! Follow your leadah!"

"By George! What are the silly asses at?" exclaimed Monty Lowther, staring down the white Wayland Road at the two figures of the hares.

Blake and Redfern were standing in the road, and Redfern could be seen offering Jack Blake toffee. They were not a hundred yards away, and a quick run by the pack would have collared them in a minute or two.

They certainly must have seen the pack, for Redfern, having handed Blake the toffee, took off his hat, and bowed ceremoniously to the pursuers. But the hares did not make any movement to run.

"They're giving in!" growled Owen, in disgust.

"My hat! Chucked it already!"

"Hold on!" said Kerr, grinning.

"Don't be in a hurry, Gussy!"

"Weally, Kerr—"

"Can't you see—"

"I can see the hares, deah boy, and I am going to capture them!"

And Arthur Augustus D'Arcy started down the road at top speed. With a rush the hounds followed him. Kerr put his hands to his sides and roared.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"What's the joke?" demanded Thompson of the Shell.

"The scent, ass—the scent!"

"My hat!"

The scent did not lie down the road. It wound away across the road, and over the moorland on the other side. Tom Merry blew the bugle, the rallying call.

"Come back, Gussy!" roared Herries.

"You're off the track!"

"This way!"

The trail lay across the moor, among the brambles and furze. It wound away out of sight of the road, and it was impossible to guess what distance the hares had covered before doubling back to the road. It was a strict rule in the St. Jim's paperchases that the scent should never be abandoned for sight, and the hares were therefore quite secure. They grinned at D'Arcy, who passed in the road, realising that he was off the trail.

"Come on!" yawned Redfern.

And the two hares started on again.

They plunged into the wood, and made for the ruined castle in a roundabout way, scattering the scent as they ran with a liberal hand. Their bags were growing lighter now, but they had plenty of it left.

Tom Merry's bugle rang in the distance on Wayland Moor. Redfern and Blake reached the slope of the hill where stood the ruined castle, a favourite spot for picnics with the St. Jim's fellows in summer days, but generally deserted in the later season. The great masses of masonry stood out against the sky, swept by the sharp October wind, as the two juniors ran up the ascent to the shattered gateway.

"We'll have a breather here," said Redfern. "They're a good twenty minutes behind, I fancy."

"Quite that!" panted Blake.

And the two juniors entered the old ruin, scattering scent with liberal hands as they went, and sat down to rest on one of the mossy fragments of the old wall.

"Jolly old place this!" Redfern remarked, glancing round with interest at the moss-covered ruins.

Redfern had not been long at St. Jim's. Blake nodded with the manner of a fellow who knew every crack and cranny for miles around the school.

"Yes; dates from the reign of King Somebody-or-Other," he said lucidly. "Most of this damage was done by Cromwell and his johnnies. They battered it down, because the Royalists went to earth here. There's vaults under the castle. Gussy was kidnapped once, and kept a prisoner there by a gang of rascals on the make, before you came to St. Jim's."

Redfern whistled.

"Must have been exciting," he remarked.

"Very exciting for Gussy!" grinned Blake. "His clothes were ruined. It's pretty dirty and damp down there."

"How do you get in?" asked Redfern, with interest.

"That stone slab lifts up," said Blake, nodding towards a great slab of stone, with an iron ring in it, near where they sat. "There's a stone stairway underneath, leading down into the vaults."

"No other way out?" asked Redfern.

Blake shook his head.

"Not that I know of. Why?"

"Might lay the trail through the vaults if there were."

"Can't be done; there's only the one entrance," said Blake, "and if that slab got closed when you were underneath you wouldn't get out again, either. It can't be moved from underneath, you know. I'm blessed if I know who's taken the trouble to close it; it's generally left open, and it would need a jolly strong man to shift it."

Tap!

The two juniors jumped simultaneously.

"What on earth—" began Blake.

"It was somebody knocking."

"They're not up to us yet."

"No fear!"

Tap! Tap!

Blake gasped.

"Holy smoke, it's under the slab!" he exclaimed excitedly. "There's some silly ass got himself shut up in the vaults!"

"Phev!"

Tap! Tap! Tap!

There was no mistake about it. As they listened, they could locate the sound clearly; it came from beneath the great stone slab with the iron ring in it.

Jack Blake tapped on the stone with the end of his staff.

Knock! Knock!

From below the answer came:

Tap! Tap!

The tapping sounded faint, through the thickness of the stone.

"Somebody there, and no mistake," said Redfern. "I suppose we'd better get that slab up, and let him out. We've got time."

Blake grinned.

"Well, I fancy we should have to let him out, whoever he is, whether we've got time or not," he remarked. "A man might be suffocated under there. How on earth did the chap shut himself in? It's not easy to move that stone."

Tap! Tap!

"All serene!" shouted Redfern.

"We're coming!"

"He can't hear you," said Blake.

"He must be knocking jolly loud, for us to hear that. Lend a hand with this giddy stone."

"Right-ho!"

The two juniors bent over the stone, and grasped the iron ring. They tugged at it with all their youthful strength, and slowly, but surely, the heavy slab rose—and Blake succeeded in pushing the end

of his scout's staff under it. Then they let it sink on the staff, and rested, to recover their breath. A muffled voice came from below, audible now that the stone was no longer jammed in the opening.

"Help!"

"All serene!" shouted Redfern.

"Don't leave me."

"No fear! That's all right!"

"Who are you?"

"Schoolboys of St. Jim's."

"If you cannot raise the stone, get help from the police-station in Wayland," came the muffled voice. "Tell them that Inspector Fix, of Scotland Yard, is shut up here, trapped here by a criminal he was following."

"Great Scott!"

"We'll have you out, never fear," said Blake. "It's all right."

Having rested a few minutes, Blake and Redfern pulled at the iron ring again. The stone rose more easily now, and they guessed that the man below had his shoulders under it, and was helping them by pushing. Higher and higher it came, till they succeeded in rolling it upon its side, and the aperture was free.

The juniors released the great slab, panting.

The head and shoulders of a man rose from the opening. A short, stout, thick-set man, with ginger-coloured beard, and very keen, light-blue eyes, stepped out. His face was very pale, and his clothes covered with dirt.

He stood in the sunlight, blinking after the darkness. He drew in deep, deep breaths of the fresh, keen air. The juniors of St. Jim's looked at him curiously.

"Thank you," said the gentleman from Scotland Yard. "I think you have saved my life. I might have died of hunger in that death-trap!"

"You might, by Jove!" said Blake. "Many people don't come through these ruins, excepting in the summer. Have you been in there long?"

"What is the time now?"

"Four o'clock."

"What day is it?"

"What day?" repeated Blake, staring.

"Wednesday," said Redfern.

"Ah, it seemed to me as if I had been days and days in that horrible hole!" said the rescued man, with a shudder. "But it is only six hours. I was shut up there about ten o'clock this morning."

"Six hours in there!" said Blake, shivering. "My hat, you must have had an awful time!"

"I have!"

"And a man shut you up there, sir?" said Redfern.

"Yea."

"Must have been a jolly strong man to heave that stone by himself," said Blake, with some admiration. "Jolly big athlete, I should say."

"He is a strong man," said Mr. Fix, snapping his teeth. "Stronger than I am. There are very few criminals stronger than Colonel Jim!"

"(Colonel Jim!" repeated Blake.

Mr. Fix smiled.

"He is not a colonel, any more than I am," he explained; "but he has been in the Army, and that is a nickname he has in his gang. I thought I had him for sure, and I had the darbies all ready for him when I traced him here, and he pitched me into the vault there, and closed the stone on me. I might have starved there, for all he cared. Colonel Jim's not particular."

"The awful rascal," said Redfern.

"You haven't seen anything of such a man, I suppose?" said the inspector. "Tall, soldierly-looking, with a big moustache, ruddy complexion."

The juniors shook their heads.

"No; I don't suppose he would remain in this quarter," said Mr. Fix. "What beats me is what he came down to this country place for. But he had his eye on something, you can bet. I'm much obliged to you, young gentlemen. Lend me a hand to put the stone back, will you?"

"It's usually left open, sir," said Blake.

"Yes; but if Colonel Jim should happen to have stayed about here, I want him to see it closed, if he should come to look."

"Oh," said Redfern admiringly, "then he won't know you're still after him, sir!"

"Exactly."

"Right-ho!" said Blake. "Buzz it down, Reddy. Then we shall have to

the hares, and they saw nothing of Inspector Fix. That gentleman was gone; and the pack had no suspicion of the strange adventure that had befallen the hares in the ruined castle.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

By a Hair's Breadth.

TOM MERRY & CO. left the ruins behind, and trotted down the hill, and followed the scent over the moor. On the open moor the wind was brisk, and here and there it scattered the scent, and made the trail more difficult to follow.

The run was a long one, and by this time a good many of the hounds had tailed off. Wally & Co., of the Third, had stopped in the wood, deciding that, after all, they wouldn't rob their elders of the glory of catching the hares.



The head and shoulders of a man rose from the opening. "Thank you," he said. "I think you have saved my life! I might have died from hunger in that death-trap!"

hop it. The pack will be along here jolly soon."

"You are paperchasing?" said Mr. Fix.

"Yes, sir."

"Very lucky for me. Now, then, all together!"

The stone was heaved over, and it sank into its place with a thud. And then, taking a hasty leave of the man they had rescued, the two juniors ran out of the ruins, leaving the trail of torn paper to mark the way they went.

In five minutes or less, there was a bugle-call in the lonely ruins, and the hounds dashed in. Tom Merry & Co. came streaming in through the shattered gateway of the old castle, and they scattered among the old masonry to pick up the trail. But they saw nothing of

Fatty Wynn had stopped in a wayside place of refreshment on the Wayland Road, and Figgins and Kerr had been constrained to leave him there, bolting sandwiches and jam tarts at express speed, and washing them down with ginger-beer.

Levison, of the Fourth, had dropped out. Still, there were a goodly crowd of hounds still following the lead of Tom Merry. Arthur Augustus D'Arcy was running with the best. He had shed most of his mud by this time, and he had run himself nearly dry.

"They're giving us a good run!" panted Tom Merry. "No sight of the bounders yet!"

"The 'twail is blowin' away," remarked Arthur Augustus D'Arcy. "I fancy

they are crossoin' the moor by Brooke's place, you know."

"I'll jolly soon see!"

Tom Merry clambered up a tree, and, standing upon a high branch, holding on by another, he swept the moor with his keen glance. On the moor, near the road which ran into Wayland, was Brooke's house, and Tom Merry could see the rambling old building, partly in ruins, with the big gardens round it. Brooke of the Fourth was a day-boy, and this was his home. Brooke was in the pack below, as Tom Merry scanned the moor.

The captain of the Shell uttered a sudden exclamation.

"See them?" demanded Figgins, from below.

"Yes, rather!"

"Where are they?"

"Standing at Brooke's gate, and Brooke's sister is giving them something to drink!" shouted Tom Merry.

"Come on!" said Brooke, laughing.

Tom Merry scrambled down from the tree, and joined in the run again. Some of the juniors were ahead of him now, but Manners and Lowther had waited. The Terrible Three were soon in the lead again, however. They came sweeping up to the house on the moor, but the hares were gone. Amy Brooke was at the gate, and she smiled at the sight of the stream of Boy Scouts panting up.

"They are gone, Dick," she said.

Brooke laughed.

"Yes, I know they have," he said. "Give us something to drink, Amy."

"Yaas, wathah!" said Arthur

Augustus, putting up his hand to raise his hat to Miss Brooke, forgetting for the moment that there was no hat there. "Bai Jove!"

"There's a well in the garden," said Dick Brooke. "You can help yourselves, you fellows."

"Hear, hear!"

"Good egg!"

And the St. Jim's juniors streamed into the garden, and were soon drinking from the clear, cool, well water. Arthur Augustus entered into an apparently interesting conversation with Miss Brooke, and he was not finished when the pack began to stream out of the garden.

"Come on, Gussy!" exclaimed Herries, clapping the swell of St. Jim's on the shoulder.

"No hawwy, deah boy!"

"We're starting."

"It's all wight: Brooke is stayin', you know, and I'm stayin' with him, for a bit. He is goin' to lend me a cap."

"My dear chap, you can't chuck it like this," said Digby. "Don't you want to be in at the death?"

"Not at all, deah boy. You goin' to give you fellows a chance," said Arthur Augustus generously. "I shall come along latah, you know."

And Arthur Augustus stayed with Brooke as the pack went on, though whether it was Brooke or Brooke's sister that formed the attraction, we cannot undertake to say. Tom Merry & Co. ran off across the moor towards the Ryll, and later on they picked up the trail on the bridge. The scent led them through the village of Rylecombe, and from Rylecombe home to St. Jim's was a clear run down the lane.

Ta-ra-ra-ra!

Tom Merry's bugle rang out as he sighted the hares.

Blake and Redfern, all their scent expended now, were making straight for home. Tom Merry and half a dozen others, well ahead of the pack, came sweeping out of the village, not thirty yards behind the hares. Blake looked back.

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"My hat, Reddy! Put it on!"

The hares dashed on at top speed. They had been trotting, but now they put it on for all they were worth. The pursuers put on a spurt, too, and went down the lane at a pace that could not last for all of them. Manners lagged, and then Reilly and Dane and Glynn dropped behind. Tom Merry was well ahead, with Herries and Kangaroo and Lowther level. But Lowther dropped, and then Herries, and slacked down behind.

Without a pause, Tom Merry and Kangaroo tore on.

They were yards ahead now, and gaining on the hares; and the intervening distance lessened inch by inch as the chase swept on to the gates of St. Jim's.

The school gates were in sight now, and a crowd of fellows stood there to greet the returning harriers.

Fifty yards more—forty—thirty! The school gateway was home, but the two pursuers were very close now. Only one yard separated the two couples as they ran. Redfern gave a panting gasp.

"I—I'm done, Blake, old man!"

Blake set his teeth.

"You're not!" he muttered, and he gripped hold on Reddy's arm, and simply yanked him on. Tom Merry's grasp behind just missed Redfern, and Tom stumbled. That stumble saved the hares.

Blake and Redfern, breathless, spent, staggered in at the gateway, and loud cheers from the crowd there announced their safe arrival. Tom Merry and Kangaroo were in the next moment, but just one moment too late.

"Done you!" gasped Blake.

"Hurray!"

"Hip-pip!" panted Redfern. "Done you in the eye, old son! Yah!"

Tom Merry laughed breathlessly.

The race was over, and the hares had escaped; but, as Monty Lowther said afterwards when he had recovered his breath sufficiently to perpetrate a pun, they had won by less than a "hare's breadth."

#### THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

##### How Arthur Augustus Came Home.

**G**ENTLEMEN—

"Hear, hear!"

"Here's to the hares, the hounds, and the Boy Scouts of St. Jim's generally—in short, to us!"

said Tom Merry.

"Hear, hear!"

Quite a merry party were gathered in Study No. 6, in the Fourth Form passage. Blake and Herries and Digby were doing the honours. The Terrible Three, and Figgins & Co., and Redfern and Owen and Lawrence, and a good many other fellows, had come in to celebrate the first run of the season. And Tom Merry's toast was drunk with acclamation, in various liquids—ginger-beer and lemonade and tea and coffee.

The study was crowded, and many fellows had come, and looked in, and gone again.

At first there had been, as Lowther put it, standing room only, but the standing room was full up now, and the late comers departed disappointed.

The hounds had come in from the run one after the other, and all the pack were at home now, with the exception of Brooke and D'Arcy. Brooke, being a day boy, was not coming back to the school, and Arthur Augustus was evidently staying late at Brooke's. If D'Arcy had come in just now, he would hardly have found room in his study.

"Gentlemen——" said Tom Merry.

"Hear, hear!"

"As head-cook and bottle-washer of the Scouts of St. Jim's, I am satisfied with the performance of to-day."

"Bravo!"

"The scouts have run well—very well, indeed!" said Tom Merry. "If an enemy should ever land upon these shores, may the scouts do as well as they have done to-day!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

There was a roar in the study.

"I suppose you haven't heard the news?" said Tom Merry, when the cheering had subsided.

"What news?"

"Why, a real live colonel is coming to review us to-morrow. Colonel Rake is his name, and he's won the V.C. and the D.S.O. Raiton told me about it soon after we came in."

"I say," said Figgins, "that's jolly good!"

"What-ho!" said Blake.

"I trust," continued Tom Merry, "you will all do your best to make yourselves spick and span for the occasion. I don't know what Gussy will do, though."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I wonder where Augustus has got to?" said Blake, rather concerned for his chum. "It's time he was in."

"Oh, he's playing duets with Brooke's sister!" said Manners. "He goes over there to help Brooke with his work, and plays duets with Amy. He won't notice the time."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"By Jove, though, he'll get rowed, if he doesn't come in!" said Blake. "It's past eight. He ought to have started home before this. I hope nothing's happened to him."

"Why, what could happen to him?" said Tom Merry.

Blake and Redfern exchanged a glance. They knew something that was not known to the rest of the fellows.

"Dangerous character in the neighbourhood," explained Blake.

"Well-known criminal!" added Redfern.

"How do you know?"

"We had a little adventure at the old castle this afternoon," said Blake. "It was a case of beauty in distress. Not exactly beauty, though I remember, he had ginger whiskers."

"Who had?" demanded Tom Merry, in bewilderment.

"The prisoner."

"What prisoner?"

"The giddy prisoner we rescued. He was shut up in the vaults of the old castle," Blake explained. "We let him out. He had been bunged in there by a giddy criminal he was tracking down."

"Oh, cheese it!"

"Fact!" said Blake. "Honour bright! Name Inspector Fix, looking for a cheerful criminal named Colonel Jim—johnny with a black moustache. Must have been a pretty desperate kind of johnny, too, to shut up an innocent policeman in a vault. He must have known how hungry policemen are."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"But we rescued him," said Redfern. "That's a feather in our cap, and one up for the Scouts of St. Jim's. We ought to have a medal or something."

"But if the giddy criminal is hanging about, and Gussy meets him in the dark lane, there may be trouble," Blake remarked. "Gussy goes about loaded with money and gold watches, even in his scout rig. I hope he hasn't dropped on him."

Tom Merry looked serious.

"Well, he's jolly late," he said. "It wouldn't be a bad idea to go and meet him, if we can get leave. It's a jolly lonely way home here from Brooke's, across part of Wayland Moor and through the wood."

"Well, tea's about over—the grub's finished, at any rate," said Kangaroo. "Let's go and look after Gussy."

"We'll ask Taggles if he's come in, and, if he hasn't, we'll go and hunt for him," said Tom Merry. "Come on!"

And the crowd of juniors left Study No. 6, and went out into the dusky quadrangle. The deep night lay upon the old school, and stars were glimmering in the clear dark sky.

The juniors marched across the quadrangle, and Kangaroo delivered a terrific bang at the door of Taggles' lodge.

Taggles looked out with a grunt. "Has Gussy turned up?" asked Tom Merry.

"Has D'Arcy come in, Taggy?"

"Have you seen the one and only?"

"I ain't seed Master D'Arcy," said Taggles. "Which it will be my dooty to report 'im when he comes in! These goings hon—"

"Ting-a-ling, ting-ling!"

"Hallo, there's a bell!" said Blake. "Ten to one that's Gussy! Speak of angels, you know, and you hear the rustle of their giddy wings!"

And the juniors streamed down to the gates, followed in a mere leisurely way by Taggles, with a clinking bunch of keys.

Outside the gates, in the dimness of the road, appeared a strange figure. It was a figure in Boy Scout costume, and the juniors, looking through the bars of the gate, recognised Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, of the Fourth Form. But the swell of St. Jim's had a very unusual and peculiar aspect. His hands, for some reason, were behind his back, and he was covered with mud. His face, where it was not hidden by splashes of mud, was crimson with exertion.

"Bai Jove!" he gasped. "Open the gate, deah boys!"

"Buck up, Taggy!"

"What's the matter, Gussy?"

"G'weat Scott! I've had a fearful time!"

Taggles unlocked the gate, and swung it open. Arthur Augustus hopped in. The juniors watched him in blank amazement. Instead of walking in in the usual way, D'Arcy hopped in with both feet, his hands still behind his back. "Gone dotty!" yelled Blake.

"Bai Jove! P'way w'lease me, deah boys!"

"Why, what—"

"Untie these howwid cords!"

"Great Christopher Columbus!" ejaculated Lumley-Lumley, of the Fourth.

"He's tied up!"

"My hat!"

Arthur Augustus certainly was tied up. His feet were shackled, so that he had to hop instead of walking, and his hands were tied behind his back.

The juniors stood round him in an amazed ring, gasping.

"What on earth—"

"What are doing that for, Gussy?"

"Is it a new game?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Bai Jove! I've had an awful time, deah boys!" gasped the swell of St. Jim's, as Tom Merry sawed away at his bonds with the pocket-knife. "I've been wobbed! My gold watch!"

"The gold ticker?" exclaimed Blake.

"Yaas, and all my money, a fivah that I had f'rom my gov'nah this mornin', and a soveveign, and some silvah—all gone!"

"Great Scott!"

"Who was it, Gussy?"

"A howwid wobbah, deah boys. He pounced on me in the footpath in the wood—an awfully stwong beast. Of course, I should have been a match for any ordinaawy man; but this foahful villain was twighfully stwong! He stwuck me down, and put his howwid knee on my chest while he wobbod me. I told him I would give him a feahful thrwashin', but it didn't make any diffew-

ence. He cleahed me out of my pwo-perty, and then he tied me like this, so that he could have time to get away, you know, before I could thrwash him."

The juniors chuckled.

"Before you could get help, you ass!" said Blake. "I don't suppose a man of that sort was much afraid of your thrashing him."

"Weally, Blake, I suppose I ought to know, as I was there."

"What did he do, then?" asked Redfern.

"He left me in this howwid state, and bolted. I think he was wathah fwigh-tened."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I do not see anythin' to c'ckle at. Anyway, he bolted, and I had to get here in this extremely awkward condish," said Arthur Augustus. "I did not meet anybody in the lane, and I have had to jump along all the way like a wotten kangawoo. I wegard the whole affah as howwid. I twust the police will be able to capchah the wotah!"

"Did he have a black moustacho?" asked Blake excitedly.

"He—he had a big beard, and that was all I could see. I don't think he had a moustache," said Arthur Augustus. "I wemembah I gave him a blow on the mouth, and I don't wemembah hittin' a moustache. But he had a beard—a vewy wuff beard."

"Not Colonel Jim, then," said Redfern.

Tom Merry finished cutting the cords, which had been tied very securely, and the unfortunate swell of St. Jim's stood free.

"P'way lend me a hand to get to the School House, deah boys," said Arthur Augustus. "I am feelin' uttably exhausted, you know. This unpleasant occawence has th'rown me into a fluttah."

"No wonder," said Blake, as he took his chum's arm, Tom Merry taking the other. "I hope the police will get hold of the cad. This way, Gussy."

And, leaning heavily upon Tom Merry and Blake, the swell of St. Jim's was marched into the School House.

Mr. Railton, the Housemaster of the School House, met Arthur Augustus D'Arcy & Co. as they came in. The Housemaster looked at the swell of St. Jim's, in astonishment. Arthur Augustus presented a very pitiable appearance.

"Good heavens!" exclaimed Mr. Railton. "What has happened to you, D'Arcy?"

"I have been wobbed, sir."

"Chap cleared him out of cash and gold watches, sir, in Rylcombe Wood, as he came back from Brooke's," said Blake.

"Only one gold watch, Blake, deah boy."

"And a fiver and a quid," said Monty Lowther.

"A fivah and a soveveign, Lowthah."

"A quid!" said Lowther.

"A soveveign, deah boy."

"This is very serious," said Mr. Railton. "Come into my study, D'Arcy. You shall give me a description of the man, and an account of the whole matter, and I will telephone at once to the police-station in Rylcombe."

"Yaas, sir."

Tom Merry and Blake walked into the Housemaster's study with Arthur Augustus. He was in a very fatigued state, and needed their assistance. Mr. Railton rang up Rylcombe Police Station and asked for particulars. Arthur Augustus described the robbery once more, and gave a description of the man.

"Tall, with an overcoat, and a black beard, very bushy," repeated Mr. Railton. "It was not a common tramp,

then, like the two footpads who were arrested the other day for attacking a gentleman on the footpath?"

"Oh, no, sir! He looked quite respectably dressed," said Arthur Augustus. "I should not have taken him for a twamp at all."

"Very well," said Mr. Railton, as he hung up the receiver. "The police will look for him at once, and I hope they will recover your property. You should not have come back through the wood at such a late hour, D'Arcy. You had not a pass for staying out, I believe?"

"No, sir. I've been helpin' Bwooko with his work, sir."

"You will take fifty lines for missing, call-over."

"Bai Jove!"

And Arthur Augustus left the Housemaster's study. Tom Merry & Co. marched him up to the dormitory, and helped him to rub down and change his clothes.

Arthur Augustus' elegant Boy Scout costume was in a dreadful state. The swell of St. Jim's breathed more easily when he was in clean clothes once more.

"I'm jolly glad to get out of those dirty togs!" said D'Arcy.

"Dare say you are," sympathised Tom Merry. "But, I say, what are you going to do about the review?"

"What review?" asked Arthur Augustus.

"Of course, you haven't heard," said Tom Merry. "We're going to be reviewed to-morrow by Colonel Rake, V.C., D.S.O. You won't be able to take part in those togs, though."

"G'weat Scott!" exclaimed D'Arcy.

"That's wotten. I mustn't be out of the review. It'll have to be put off until next week, so that—"

"I don't think!" snorted Tom Merry.

"Weally Tom Mewwy—"

"It's all right, Gussy," said Blake, with a grin. "I've got another outfit. You can have that."

"Weally, Blake, I—"

"Oh, shut up, do!" growled Blake.

"If you don't care to borrow my spare clobber, you'll have to stay out of the review."

"I—"

"Come on, Gussy," said Tom Merry. "You'd better come and have a cup of coffee. You'll probably catch cold if you don't have something hot to drink."

And, protesting loudly, the swell of St. Jim's was yanked downstairs to Study No. 6.

## THE FIFTH CHAPTER. The Colonel.

"THE colonel!"

"Here he is!"

"Here's the giddy V.C."

"Here's the noble D.S.O."

It was the morning after the paper-chase, and Tom Merry & Co. were all in the quad, and all in their garb as Boy Scouts, ready for action. They looked a very handsome and fit crowd, as they mustered in the middle of the old quadrangle for the review.

Colonel Rake came out upon the steps of the School House, with Mr. Railton, and stood in the shadow of the porch, looking out over the scene.

"A very fine set of boys, Mr. Railton," said the colonel.

Mr. Railton nodded, gratified by the praise from so good a judge as Colonel Rake, V.C.

"Yes, I think the St. Jim's patrols compare very well with others," he said.

"Probably you will see the Boy Scouts of Rylcombe Grammar School while you are down here, sir?"

"Yes, undoubtedly."

And the colonel descended into the quadrangle with his clanking stride.

The Boy Scouts of St. Jim's greeted him with a ringing cheer.

"Hip, hip, hurrah!"

The colonel acknowledged the cheer with a smile and a nod.

The Boy Scouts were arrayed in the quadrangle, and they really presented a very businesslike appearance, and fully deserved the encomiums of the distinguished visitor.

There were more than a hundred fellows at St. Jim's in the garb of Boy Scouts, most of them juniors, but some in the Fifth.

Colonel Rake greeted the boys with a few cheery words, and then proceeded at once to business.

That he knew his business was soon clear.

He rapped out short, sharp orders, and put the Boy Scouts through their evolutions with great precision. The scouts showed, too, that they knew their business. Dr. Holmes looked on from his study window; but Mr. Raiton retired into the School House, where he was needed in the Sixth Form-room.

After about half an hour the colonel approached the Head's window, the Boy Scouts standing at attention.

Dr. Holmes pushed up the window, as he saw that the colonel wished to speak to him.

"A very fine set of young fellows, sir," said the colonel, in his deep voice. "They would do any school credit, doctor."

"I am very glad to hear you say so, colonel."

"I should like to take them out into the wood, with your permission, sir, to go into the thing a little more thoroughly," said the colonel. "I am curious to see whether they have made the same progress in actual scout-craft."

"Exactly as you like, my dear sir."

"Then I will bring them back in an hour or so."

"Quite so; and then I hope you will lunch with me?"

"Thank you, I will!"

The colonel turned back to the waiting scouts.

"My lads," he said, "I have your headmaster's permission to take you out into the woods for an hour or so. I shall divide you into two corps, and put you through regular manoeuvres, and you shall show me what you are made of."

"Dravo!"

"March!"

The Boy Scouts marched.

They formed in column of fours, and marched out of the school gates into the long white road that ran past the wood to Rylcombe.

Colonel Rake signed to Tom Merry and Figgins and Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, who had borrowed Blake's spare outfit after all, to walk with him at the side of the marching column. Greatly pleased at the distinction, the two leaders of the scouts, and the swell of St. Jim's, walked along beside the striding officer.

Arthur Augustus bestowed a lofty smile upon his comrades. Tom Merry and Figgins were entitled to the distinction from their rank; but Arthur Augustus had apparently been selected only for his distinguished appearance.

The colonel chatted in a very cordial way to his three companions as they walked beside the steady column of scouts.

"I had a very peculiar adventure as I came down this morning," he remarked. "I am afraid I shall sink in your estimation when I tell you that I have been victimised by a common pickpocket."

"Bai Jove!" said Arthur Augustus.

"Is it possible, sir?" said Tom Merry.

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"Yes, indeed," said the colonel, smiling. "I was cleared out—completely cleared out—in the train by a pickpocket, who got away with the plunder. Rather an unhappy experience for a man who has been through three wars in different parts of the Empire. I did not expect to meet my Waterloo in a local train in Sussex."

The juniors laughed.

"Must have had an awful nerve to tackle you, sir," said Figgins.

"Yaas, wathah! I wondah if it was the same chap who wobbled me?" said D'Arcy.

The colonel glanced at him quickly.

"You!" he said.

"Yaas, sir. I was wobbled on Wednesday evenin' in this vevy wood by a disgustin' wuffiau with a black beard."

The colonel started.

"Pewwaps it was the same chap, sir," said Arthur Augustus.

"A black beard, you say," said the colonel thoughtfully.

"Yaas, a big, wuff, black beard."

"Very likely; there was a man in my carriage with a black beard," said the colonel. "What was he like, otherwise?"

D'Arcy shook his head.

"I don't know, sir. You see, he tackled me in the dark. But he was a big, powahful chap—much stwongah than I am."

"Indeed."

"Yaas. A chap about your build, sir."

"Oh!"

"And the wemarkable thing is, sir, that his voice was somethin' like yours, too," said Arthur Augustus D'Arcy.

The colonel laughed.

"That is rather unflattering to me," he said. "But I think it was probably the same man who robbed me; there certainly was a passenger in my carriage, with a big black beard, and he was a tall, strongly-built man. I did not notice that my property was missing until after he had left the carriage, unfortunately."

"The awful rotter!" said Figgins.

"Yes, it is very unfortunate," said the colonel, in his easy way, "because he took my watch, and my return-ticket to Aldershot. I wonder whether one of you lads could lend me a watch until we return to the school, as I do not want to be too late."

Three watches came out immediately. Arthur Augustus' was his second best; the famous gold tieker being still in the list of the missing.

"Pway take mine, sir!"

"Mine!" said Figgins.

"Mine!" said Tom Merry.

Colonel Rake glanced at the watches. Figgins' was a big, silver watch of the turnip variety, which kept excellent time, but was not worth more than a pound at the most. Arthur Augustus' was also silver, though more valuable. Tom Merry's was a gold watch, presented to him by his old governess, Miss Priscilla Fawcett. Tom Merry generally wore a serviceable gun-metal watch; but he put on the gold one on special occasions. This was a special occasion.

The colonel accepted the loan of Tom Merry's watch. The fact that it was a gold one could not be supposed to appeal to a practical soldier; but, after all, he could not take all three, so he had to decide upon one. He slipped Tom Merry's handsome watch into his pocket.

"This one will do," he said. "Thank you very much. Remind me to return it to you when we get back to the school, my lad, in case I should forget."

"Certainly, sir."

"But I say, sir," said Figgins diffidently. "How are you going to get home, sir, if you've lost all your money and your return-ticket to Aldershot?"

"That is a difficulty," said the colonel. "I shall have to ask your headmaster for a small loan. Only I feel so really absurd at having allowed my pocket to be picked that I hardly like to mention the matter to him."

"Pewwaps you would allow us to make you a tempowawy loan, sir, and then you needn't mention it to the Head," suggested Arthur Augustus D'Arcy. "It would be a great honah to us, sir."

The colonel hesitated.

"You are very kind and thoughtful," he said; "but, perhaps—"

"Pway say the word, sir!"

"Well, if you should have some cash with you—"

"I had a tip fwom my governah this mornin', sir," said Arthur Augustus. "I had wished to him for a fivah, because I had been wobbled by that howwible waseal, you know, and instead of sendin' me a fivah, he sent me two pounds. I wogard that as wathah stingay of the governah. Howevah, here it is, at your service, sir, if you will do me the great honah to accept a loan fwom me."

"Thank you very much."

"But that won't be enough, sir," said Tom Merry. "I have a quid. What have you got, Figgys?"

"Ten bob," said Figgins.

The sovereign and the ten shillings disappeared into the colonel's pocket.

"Thank you," he said. "That will see me through; and when I get back to Aldershot this afternoon, I will send a cheque immediately to your headmaster, and he will return this to you. Is that satisfactory?"

"Quite, sir."

"Yaas, wathah, sir."

The scout column had reached the stile that gave access to the footpath through the wood. The scouts halted.

"This is where we get into the wood, sir," said Monty Lowther, saluting.

"Good!"

And the Boy Scouts plunged under the old trees, tramping in the thick, fallen leaves.

## THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

### Foiled at the Finish.

THE schoolboy scouts were in great spirits.

To study scout-craft under the experienced eye of a distinguished officer who had won the V.C. on the field of battle, was an honour that did not fall to the lot of every corps of Boy Scouts.

And Colonel Rake entered into the thing as keenly as the boys themselves.

He divided the scouts into two parties, assigning them their positions. The juniors had informed him of the distinction between School House and New House at St. Jim's, and he seemed to understand, and to enter into their feelings immediately. A contest between School House and New House was exactly after the boys' own hearts, and the colonel arranged it upon those lines.

The School House brigade was placed in possession of a section of the wood, and the New House fellows had to surprise them. School House scouts, detached from the main body, had to get through the New House lines to warn the main body of the intended surprise. It was the business of the New House to prevent them from getting through, and Figgins posted his men very carefully for that purpose.

Tom Merry was in command of the main position. The detached scouts were Lowther, Glyn, Kangaroo, and Reilly of the School House.

Colonel Rake led them away to the road, while Figgins was posting his men in a long circle through the wood to keep guard.

"Now, you understand what you've got to do?" said the colonel. "One of

you, at least, must get through the attacking party's lines, and warn the fort."

"Right-ho, sir!" said Monty Lowther. "It is a scout's duty never to be taken by surprise," said Colonel Rake. "Not that I have much right to preach on that subject, as I have been taken very much by surprise this very morning." "You, sir?" said the four juniors together.

"Yes. I had a most unpleasant adventure in the train coming down," said the colonel. "My pocket was picked—purse, watch, return-ticket, and everything taken."

"Oh, sir!" "How rotten!" "You saw me borrow Merry's watch, perhaps," said the colonel calmly. "He has kindly lent it to me. Unfortunately, I have made the discovery that it does not go. I suppose accidents happen to junior boys' watches at school. Will one of you lads lend me one?"

Four watches came out in a twinkling. Glyn's one was a very valuable one. Bernard Glyn, the Liverpool boy, was the son of a millionaire, and he had a very valuable watch. Colonel Rake selected that one, and thanked Glyn for the loan as he slipped it into his pocket.

"How will you get home, sir, if you've lost your ticket and your money?" asked Kangaroo.

"Really, I had not thought about that," said the distinguished officer, with a smile. "I shall have to borrow a few pounds from someone. Very awkward for me to have to mention the matter to your headmaster, too."

"No need for that, sir," said Bernard Glyn promptly. "We should be delighted, sir!"

"Faith, and it's delighted we shall be!" said Reilly.

"Thank you, my lads! You are very good!"

"Not at all, sir." "Sure, I've only got a shilling myself," Reilly remarked, "but Glyn is rolling in money!"

Bernard Glyn laughed, and took out a leather purse. He rolled half a dozen sovereigns out of it into his palm.

"Please take it, sir. You can send it to me when you get home."

"Thank you! That will be excellent."

And six sovereigns disappeared into the colonel's pockets, where he must have been accumulating quite a collection by this time.

Then, after giving the scouts some further instructions, the colonel made them set to work.

"You have an hour to work in," he said. "I shall wait for you by the stile, and you will join me there at twelve o'clock."

"Yes, sir."

And the scouts plunged into the wood, to carry out their difficult mission of penetrating the New House lines and reaching Tom Merry's position.

Colonel Rake walked away towards the stile.

He disappeared from the view of the juniors.

The distinguished officer reached the stile, and stepped over it into the road. He gave a glance back into the wood; the trees had swallowed up all the scouts of St. Jim's from sight.

He smiled.

The expression upon his face was very different now, and it might have surprised the scouts of St. Jim's if they had seen it. They might have been surprised, too, if they had known that he was striding away at a good rate towards the village instead of waiting at the stile as arranged.

The colonel was, in fact, walking so fast that it was almost a run.

He took out one of the watches—it was Tom Merry's watch, and it seemed to be going excellently now—and glanced at it.

"Just time to catch the eleven-fifteen," he murmured. "Good!"

And he hurried into the village.

He reached the railway-station, and as he entered it a stout gentleman, with ginger whiskers, looked at him fixedly, and made a slight movement.

It was Inspector Fix, of Scotland Yard, the gentleman whom Blake and Redfern had rescued from the vault under the old castle.

The inspector smiled to himself under his whiskers, and followed the distinguished officer into the station.

Colonel Rake took a ticket for Wayland Junction, and hurried upon the platform.

The next moment the colonel leaped up furiously. But his hands were fastened together; the handcuffs were tight on his wrists, and he was helpless.

Inspector Fix smiled sweetly, and clapped a hand upon his shoulder. The colonel's face was convulsed with fury. He did not look very much like a distinguished officer at that moment.

"The game's up!" said the inspector calmly. "Better take it quietly!"

The colonel made a last effort at dignity.

"How dare you!" he exclaimed. "Are you aware that I am an officer in His Majesty's Service? My uniform should have told you as much!"

The inspector chuckled.

"I don't think I'm aware of it, Colonel Jim!" he replied.

"Sir, I am Colonel Rake!"

"Good! And Colonel Jim, and Pete the Dandy, and Major Hunt, and



"I wonder whether one of you lads could lend me a watch until we return to the school? I do not want to be late!" Three watches came out at once. "Pway take mine, sir!" said Arthur Augustus. "Mine, sir!" said Figgins. "Mine, sir!" said Tom Merry.

The train was just coming in.

Inspector Fix followed him, stopping a few moments to whisper to the porter of the station, who regarded him with an open-mouthed stare.

The train rushed in, and stopped.

Colonel Rake opened the door of a first-class carriage, and was stepping in, when the stout inspector made a sudden spring forward from behind a slot machine.

The colonel was taken entirely by surprise.

The inspector's fat hands grasped the back of his collar, and he was dragged back upon the platform with a heavy thump.

The sudden fall dazed him for the moment.

As he lay gasping the stout gentleman from Scotland Yard bent over him, and there was a quick, metallic click.

Clobber Bill, and several other persons!" said the inspector. "I arrest you, Colonel Jim, on the charge of attempted murder!"

"Sir!"

"That's what it comes to, shutting a detective up in a vault, and leaving him there to starve!" said Mr. Fix, with a nod.

"You are making a mistake."

"No; you made the mistake when you thought I had stayed there," said the inspector agreeably. "I have been looking for you ever since, Jim. I saw you leave the train here this morning, and you gave me the slip; but I've been waiting for you. What little game have you been up to here?"

"This is a mistake—an absurd mistake! If you gave me time I could—"

"You could have chucked me half the

length of the platform and bolted!" smiled the inspector. "I know, Colonel Jim. I'm not giving you the chance a second time. Better shut up, my man, and take it quietly. Anything you say may be used in evidence against you, you know! You are coming with me to the local police-station now, and when I've found what you've been up to down here I shall take you to London! The game is up!"

The man burst into a laugh.

"You've got me, Fix!" he said. "All scene!"

"Yes," said the inspector cheerfully; "I've got you!"

"You may as well take these things off."

"Not this afternoon," said the inspector; "some other afternoon."

"I'll go quietly."

"I know you will. I'm going to keep the darbies on to make you!" said the inspector.

And, with a cheery smile, he marched his prisoner off.

### THE SEVENTH CHAPTER. A Surprise for the Scouts.

THE scouting was over. The School House scouts had not succeeded in penetrating the New House lines; one after another they had been captured by Figgins & Co. as they attempted it. And then the New House had assailed Tom Merry's position.

In that, however, they had been worsted, and most of the New House fellows were prisoners by the time twelve rolled over the woods from the church steeple in Rylcombe. At twelve, the Boy Scouts were to meet Colonel Rake at the stile to return to the school, and in ten minutes they were there.

But they did not find the colonel.

They clustered round the stile and in the road and the footpath, and waited; but the colonel did not appear.

Such unpunctuality on the part of the distinguished officer surprised them, and they watched the road to and fro in vain for his returning figure. The juniors were getting hungry now; it was near their dinner-time. They wanted to report to the colonel, and they wanted to get back to dinner, and some of them grew restive as the minutes passed on and the great officer did not appear.

The Scouts looked at one another in doubt and dismay. They searched along the road with their eyes, but there was no sign of Colonel Rake.

Fatty Wynn grunted.

"I say, it's dinner-time," he said. "You fellows can wait for the giddy colonel if you like; I'm going back."

"Same here," said Redfern. "We'll leave our giddy leaders to wait for him, and the rest of us can go back and feed. Two will be enough."

"Yaas, wathah!"

Some of the Boy Scouts were already starting down the road towards the school. Others followed them. It

seemed useless to wait for the colonel; he was nearly an hour late already. Tom Merry and Figgins stayed, and Jack Blake and D'Arcy stayed with them. The rest departed, and were soon lost to sight down the road.

Tom Merry and Figgins and D'Arcy walked to and fro to keep themselves warm as they waited for the missing colonel. If he had been delayed by some accident, it was too bad if he should find nobody at the rendezvous when he returned. Figgins looked at his watch. It was half-past one.

"He can't be coming," said Figgins.

"Bai Jove, it's weally wemarkable!"

"Perhaps something's happened to him," said Tom Merry. "Suppose we go to the police-station in Rylcombe and inquire? If there's been an accident, they'll have heard of it, and—"

"And if there's something fishy," said Blake, "the sooner the police know about it the better."

"Yaas, wathah, deah boys! Let's go!"

And the four juniors walked away slowly towards the village, still keeping their eyes open for the colonel. They did not see him. They entered the village, and stopped at the little police-station in the High Street. The first person they saw when they entered was Inspector Fix, speaking to the officer in charge. The inspector glanced at them, and gave Blake a nod, recognising one of his rescuers.

"Mr. Fix!" exclaimed Blake.

"Yes," said Mr. Fix, with a smile, "I am still down here, and glad to say that I have found my man."

"Found the man who shut you up in the vault, sir?"

"Yes," said Mr. Fix, rubbing his plump hands. "He has been up to some rascality in this quarter. I arrested him at the station, and when he was searched here we found his pockets full of money and gold watches. Where he got them seems to be a mystery."

The juniors looked at one another.

"Gold watches!" murmured Tom Merry.

"And money! Bai Jove!"

"M-m-may we see the watches, sir?" asked Blake. "We—we've come here about something of the kind."

"Yaas, wathah!"

"Was—was the man got up as an officer, sir?" asked Blake.

"Yes," said Mr. Fix. "He had a colonel's uniform, and seems to have been calling himself Colonel Rake—"

"He had a V.C. and several orders on his chest," grinned Mr. Fix. "He has been swindling somebody."

"Bai Jove! He has been swindlin' us!"

"You!" ejaculated the inspector.

"Must be the same man," said Tom Merry.

"You'd better tell me all about it," said Mr. Fix.

Tom Merry did so. Inspector Fix listened to the story of the review of the Boy Scouts, and the borrowing of the watches and the money; and when Tom Merry had finished, he burst into a roar.

"Ha, ha, ha!" The inspector wiped his eyes. "Excuse me, young gentleman, but this is very rich, even for Colonel Jim! He has passed himself off as an Army man before, but I never heard of his reviewing Boy Scouts before. You had better see if you can identify the watches."

The juniors looked at the stolen property. Tom Merry knew his own watch at a glance, and he recognised one as belonging to Glyn. Arthur Augustus D'Arcy uttered a cry of amazement and satisfaction at the sight of his own gold ticker.

"Bai Jove! Did you find that on him?" he exclaimed.

"Yes," said Mr. Fix.

"It is mine! I was wobbled in the wood on Wednesday night, and that watch was taken, and a fivah, too, and a sovewain."

"There's a five-pound note among the stuff," smiled the inspector. "It's all clear now. Colonel Jim has made quite a haul; and he would have got clear away with it all, too, if he had left me shut up in that vault as he had intended. Your paperchase, young gentlemen, and two of you happening to get me out of that trap, knocked his little game on the head. I have been waiting and watching for him ever since, and now I've got him."

"Bai Jove!"

"I'm very glad your property has been recovered," said the inspector. "I cannot hand it to you now; but it is safe, and will be returned in due course. I shall want some of you to give evidence against our friend in the cells." He broke into a laugh again. "This was really too rich, even for Colonel Jim! But it is his last little caper for a very long time, I think."

Tom Merry and his comrades had amazing news to tell when they arrived at St. Jim's.

Colonel Rake was no more Colonel Rake than Tom Merry was.

But for the circumstance that Blake and Redfern had rescued Inspector Fix from the vault under the old castle, during the paperchase, the impostor would certainly have escaped with his plunder.

Whether he would have left the inspector to perish, or whether he would have sent information where he could be found, when it was safe to do so, was a question that it was difficult to answer.

The man was certainly a cool and unscrupulous rascal, and he fully deserved the sentence he received in due course.

St. Jim's had been taken in; but as Blake pointed out, the chap was captured—and he wouldn't have been captured if Mr. Fix hadn't been rescued from the vault—and he was rescued by Boy Scouts out on a paperchase; therefore, it was demonstrated that the arrest of a dangerous criminal had been brought about by the Scouts of St. Jim's. And Blake's logic was admitted as conclusive by all the Schoolboy Scouts.

THE END.

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**THE FIRST CHAPTER.**

**Trouble for Raja—On the Move—Collisions.**

**T**HERE was a good deal of commotion at Jimmy Travers' Circus, for he had decided to shift his pitch. Till far into the night the men worked at getting all as forward as possible for the move on the morrow; and, when they retired for a short night's rest, Pete and his comrades, Jack and Sam, made their way to Jimmy's caravan to receive their final instructions.

"You have been working splendidly, my lads," said Jimmy, who believed in giving praise where it was due.

"We don't mind dat sort ob work, Jimmy," said Pete. "It's nice, soft work. What we don't like is hard work, or much ob it."

"You speak for yourself," said Sam. "Jack and I don't mind working hard for our living."

"You are going to make de start at daybreak?" asked Pete.

"Well, as soon after as we can. I expect it will be at about midday. There is always delay in a start. It is next to impossible to get the fellows up."

"I tink I could manage dat, Jimmy. I'll take good care dat Jack and Sammy here are out in good time. Yah, yah, yah! Dunno 'bout de girls. Rosamond ain't safe to trifle wid. She has got a knack ob going for you. Still, I can get Raja, de lion-tamer, up, and most ob de oder men."

"Do so by all means, if you can, dear boy," said Jimmy. "I want to get off before my rival, Boppy, knows anything about it. This place is played out for the time being. He will find that out in a day or so, and I don't want the silly idiot to follow me up like he did here! I would like to have a good advertisement on going into the next town."

"How would it be to let Daisy, de elephant, draw your caravan, instead ob de horses?"

"I see a drawback. Suppose she runs away with me, and smashes up a few shops?"

"Don't tink she will do dat, Jimmy. I can ride on her back, and keep her quiet."

"You can ride on her back, without doubt; but whether you can keep her quiet or not is another matter. It is one concerning which I have my doubts. However, manage it as you like. You had better turn in now; all of you, or you will never be up in the morning."

Jimmy was wrong on that point, for Pete and his comrades were moving before daybreak.

"De first operation is to wake Raja," said Pete. "We need dat man's help,



Daisy, the elephant, filled her trunk with water and squirted it into Raja's face, and, before he had recovered from the shock, she wound her trunk around his body and flung him into the miry pond.

and if we don't get it I shall be surprised. I rader tink he will hab a headache dis morning, and won't be in de best ob tempers. Still, we can't help dat."

Raja was sleeping in a small tent by himself, and, beyond taking off his boots, he had not undressed.

"Now den, Raja, my dear old hoss," exclaimed Pete. "It is time for you to get up!"

"Clear out of it, you young vagabond!" growled the sleepy one. "It's pitch dark!"

"There's going to be some more trouble," exclaimed Sam to Jack.

"It will soon get lighter. Up you get!" ordered Pete.

"I'll break your head if you don't clear out of this! I do not intend to get up for two or three hours, and it's like your confounded cheek coming here this time of night waking me up!"

Raja had not noticed Jack and Sam in the background.

"I ain't going till you turn out, old hoss."

"You won't?"

"You hab guessed first time."

"Then take that, you insolent young scoundrel!" roared Raja, hurling his boots at Pete's head.

The first boot missed its mark, but

the second one caught Pete a fearful crack at the side of the head.

"Golly! I ain't taking any more ob dose!" muttered Pete to himself. "But if I can't get dat man up one way, I will anoder. You come along wid me, Pete. I ain't letting you get into dose dangers, my poor lad. I want you to take particular care ob yourself as you go frough life. Now den, I should tink my duty is to start taking up de small tents, and dere ain't no reason why I shouldn't start wid dis one. And perhaps you will gib'a hand, boys?"

Pete and his comrades coolly commenced to pull up the pegs; then suddenly the tent came down with a run on the sleeper.

"Yah, yah, yah! Dat's woke de man. Can tell dat by de noise he's making. Are you dere?" inquired Pete, rapping a swelling in the canvas with his knuckles, which he rightly judged to be Raja's head. "Oh, you are, are you? Den come out and help us get dese tents down. Shall try dis one next, but I ain't going in to hab boots frown at my head. It wakes dem up much better if I let de tents down on deir noddles. I ain't quite certain who is inside; still, it's most bound to wake dem, whoever it is."

It did. But Pete found he had put his

foot in it that time, for the most piercing shrieks came from that tent; so did Rosamond, whose temper was not always to be relied on.

"Oh, save me—save me!" she shrieked. "It's an earthquake!" Then she caught sight of Pete, and made a better guess as to what it really was. "You little beast!" she shrieked. "I'll spoil your nigger's grin!"

Jack and Sam came to the conclusion that Pete was making trouble for himself again, and they cleared out of the way to find jobs to do elsewhere. They considered, and rightly, too, that Pete was quite capable of looking after himself, and they had no wish to be mixed up in any more of his escapades.

With a view to the early start, the fair Rosamond had only partially disrobed. All the same, seeing that she was bare-footed, she was scarcely in a condition to chase Pete round the circus. Nevertheless, this is what she did, and he would rather have faced Nero, the lion, any day in the week.

"Stop, my dear!" he cried. "You will hurt yourself!"

"I'll hurt you, you little beast, frightening me like that!"

"It ain't right for a beautiful girl like you—"

"That won't do for me. Just wait till I catch you!"

"Dat's what I want to do, my dear. I want to wait as long as I possibly can. Don't you be so impulsive, Rosamond. It was quite a mistake."

"You will find it a painful mistake, too, when I catch you!"

Rosamond saw that the chase was hopeless, so she contented herself with threatening him with what she would do when she caught him, and fled back to another tent, where the other girls had taken refuge.

"Dat's a mercy, too!" cried Pete. "Hallo, Raja! I see you hab come to help wid de work."

"I have a good mind to break your nigger's head!"

"You may hab de mind to do it, old hoss; but, seeing dat you ain't got de strength, it's no good talking about it. Besides, if you broke my head, you'd still hab Jack and Sammy to deal wid. No, suppose we get to work." "Cos you ain't in Jimmy's best books just now, and dere's such a ting as de sack. He ain't at all disinclined to gib you de order ob de boot."

Raja knew that Pete spoke the truth, so he most unwillingly lent his assistance, as also did the other men, with the result that everything was ready for the start before breakfast, to which meal Jimmy invited Pete and his comrades.

As soon as they had finished they went to the menagerie, and Pete brought out Daisy, the elephant, who would follow him anywhere. By means of rope traces he harnessed her to Jimmy's caravan, and the start was made. Pete climbing on the great creature's back.

"Pete's going to make some more trouble for us before long," exclaimed Jack.

"It looks like it," replied Sam. "The beggar seems to thrive on it!"

Now, although Daisy behaved admirably, trouble commenced even before they got out of the town; and for this reason.

Daisy kept in the centre of the streets, and went straight ahead. The right and wrong sides of the road were beneath her notice, and the consequence of this was that Jimmy's caravan collided with everything that did not get out of its way, while Pete's shouts to the drivers to clear out of the way only made them angry.

THE PENNY POPULAR.—No. 232.

"I told you to get out ob my way," he said to one indignant driver. "Well, I can't help all dat. You should hab obeyed de instructions I gabe you. Eh? Driven you on de path? Well, you can easy get off it again. Don't you be so plaguey particular!"

Jimmy felt considerably relieved when they got outside the town, but then he little thought of what was in store for him.

They traversed a good many miles that morning, and at midday put up at a little inn, where they had lunch. Then Daisy began to give a little trouble. She seemed to think her day's work was completed, and strongly objected to being harnessed again. Raja, who did not care to let Pete take matters out of his hands, made an attempt; but, finding her obdurate, he struck her a vicious blow, which Daisy promptly returned with her trunk, sending him flying into the hedge.

"Yah, yah, yah!" roared Pete. "Dat elephant don't like you, old hoss. Still, it's lucky she ain't hurt you. You hab only scratched your face a little, and you hab torn your trousers about a bit. Look here, Daisy, you mustn't frow people about in dat manner. You not only upset dem, but you upset deir tempers at de same time, and Raja's is always in a rocky condition."

There is not the slightest doubt that, notwithstanding Jimmy's presence, Raja would have gone for Pete, the very sight of whom he hated; but his previous experience in that direction had been more than enough for him, so he expressed his feelings with abuse, which had not the slightest effect on Pete, who did not appear to be taking any heed of the words.

"Eh?" he exclaimed, when Raja had talked himself breathless. "Say all dat ober again, Raja. I wasn't listening to you."

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared his comrades and Jimmy.

"He is the coolest lad I have ever met," said the latter. "He's rather exasperating, too; isn't he, Raja? You may as well leave him alone. He is too many for you with the fists; and I rather fancy he is with his tongue, also. Now, do you think she is safe, Pete? I don't want to get my neck broken."

"Dat elephant is safer dan de tings dey put money in, when dey hab got it. Jump into de waggon, Jimmy, and we will all take a ride."

"You've got a pretty good nerve to chance it again," said Jack to Jimmy. "Pete never sees danger, and he'll land us all in a mess before we've finished."

All went well until they reached the top of a steep hill, but as they descended this the caravan kept bumping against Daisy's back. This was a good deal more than her temper would stand, and she went down that hill at a gallop that caused the caravan to sway from side to side, and nearly shook Pete from his perilous position.

"Hi! Steady there!" bawled Jimmy, poking his head out of the window in front of the caravan. "You are bringing down all my crockery with a rattle. There's a regular downpour of china. Stop her!"

"How do you tink I had better set about doing dat, Jimmy?" inquired Pete calmly. "I dunno which handle to turn to stop de machine. Yah, yah, yah! We were mighty near into de ditch dat time. Dey's a carriage in de way, too; and de old boy who is driving is howling to me to stop. Stop your noise, you silly old hoss!" bawled Pete. "I can't stop. You must get out ob my way, else you'll get hurt. I'm inclined to tink dere's two free tings going to happen before we come to a stop!"

The driver, very wisely lashed his

horses into a gallop, but Daisy only quickened her pace. She seemed determined to overtake the fugitives; and, as the driver kept looking back to see what progress his strange pursuer was making, he paid too much attention to Daisy and too little to his pair of horses, for he took a curve too sharply, and overturned his carriage into the ditch, while he went flying into the hedge, and his footman plunged into the black mire at the bottom of the ditch.

Daisy appeared to be quite satisfied with the mischief she had caused, for she stopped and gazed at the badly-upset party.

"I knew we should get it," said Jack to Sam and Jimmy. "He's made a mess of things now!"

Jimmy did not feel equal to arguing the matter, so he disappeared into the caravan, leaving Pete to bear the brunt of it.

Jack and Sam also retired from the scene of the trouble.

"Hab you hurt yourself, old hoss?" inquired Pete, gazing from his elevated position at a burly gentleman of about forty years of age, who, judging by the manner in which he was scratched, looked as though he had hurt himself considerably.

"You insolent young scoundrel!" he roared. "How dare you address me like that? I am Mr. Robert Finch, and I'll put you in prison!"

"My dear old hoss, dere's no particular harm done. Your flunkey will get de carriage out ob de ditch all right; den all you will need is a good brush down and a little sticking-plaster. You shouldn't drive round corners like dat. You might hab hurt yourself. However, all is well dat ends well."

"You will find this matter is very far from ended. I shall prosecute the scoundrel! Where is he?"

"Should tink de best ting for you to do would be to inquire in de caravan's dat you will find coming down de hill."

"What is the vagabond's name? Ah, it will be on your caravan! I'll prosecute him!" declared Finch, making a note of the name.

"I don't see how you can prosecute a man because you choose to fall into a ditch. You should not turn corners in dat reckless manner. Suppose anyone had been coming along you might hab hurt dem. I'm ashamed ob you, Bobby—I am, really!"

"Pon my word, I will make an example of that insolent young ruffian! You mark my words I will, James!"

"He richly deserves it, sir. I hope as you will send him to prison for five years' penal servitude, and order him the cat as well!"

"I am a magistrate, you insolent young rascal!"

"Den see here, old hoss, in dat case you ought to know enough about de law to be aware dat you ain't got de power to send a nigger to prison because you happen to drive your own carriage into a ditch. I didn't order you to drive it into de ditch. In fact, I never said anything about de matter; you did it ob your own accord. Still, what I keep trying to impress on you is dat you ain't hurt yourself; so dat I dunno what you keep grumbling at."

"Where is your circus going to stop?"

"I should tink dat is a question dat Jimmy would be best able to answer. But we can't stop here and show you de performance, if dat is what you are driving at."

"You will find yourself in prison before you are many days older, you impertinent young rascal!"

"Look at dat now! I should say you ought to gib yourselves six weeks' hard labour for reckless driving. I dunno

weder you hadn't better order yourself a flogging at de same time; but if you do I can easy come and gib it to you."

"I never heard such impertinence in all my life!" cried Finch. "We sudi wait for de other caravans, James, and I will have that lad punished with the utmost severity of de law."

"I'm sure I hope you will, sir," answered James. "He's been and spoilt my livery, and he has made you in a horrid mess, sir. Your face is scored all over!"

"I know it; but I will make him suffer for it."

"I don't see what I hab got to do wid your scratched face, old boss. If you choose to drive into ditches you must expect to get a scratched face, and if you don't get a broken neck as well you ought to be very thankful! I didn't make you go romping into de ditch."

"Yes, you did. If it hadn't been for you coming along de road de accident would not have happened."

"You can't be sure about dat. Daisy was not near you."

Pete saw an opportunity of giving de angry man a surprise by means of his ventriloquism. Daisy had turned her head, and Pete made her appear to say, in a deep voice:

"I was a good quarter of a mile behind, you silly old jossler!"

Mr. Finch's jaws gaped open, and he stood gazing at de talking elephant, with an expression of blank dismay upon his face.

"Why, it's—it's——"

"Good-bye, old chap; and be a little more careful how you drive in future," came de deep voice apparently from Daisy, whom Pete now induced to move on.

**THE SECOND CHAPTER.**  
Raja and Mr. Finch—Daisy Objects—Laborious Work for Pete.

"I TINK dat man was rader surprised one way and anoder," observed Pete, turning on de elephant's back, so that he faced Jimmy, who had emerged from de caravan at Mr. Finch and his servant made a hurried departure from de scene.

"Ha, ha, ha! It was capital!"

"Tink he will sue you, Jimmy?"

"Not he. How can he? If he chooses to drive into a ditch it isn't our fault."

"Yah, yah, yah! Can't help laughing at dat man driving himself into de ditch! We'm coming to a pond, Jimmy. Dere's a patch ob grass at de side. Do you tink we had better stop here till de oders come up?"

"Yes; if you can only stop Daisy," answered Jimmy.

Pete found no difficulty in doing this. Daisy was both thirsty and hungry, and although de water did not look particularly clean, she helped herself to it; then she rooted up some of de bushes as a light repast.

In about ten minutes de ether caravans came in sight, and springing out of de first one, Raja approached Jimmy in no very amiable mood.

"Old Raja seems to have found more trouble," said Sam.

"If he can't find it, he soon makes it," returned Jack, laughing.

"Look here, Jimmy," cried de Spardard, "if dat young vagabond gets you into trouble, I am not going to take de blame!"

"He hasn't got me into trouble, dear boy; and I'm not blaming you in any way!"

"Who said you were? But dat stupid scoundrel you knocked into de

ditch has been kicking up an awful row, and he vows I am you. I told him what my name was, and he wrote it down, and vows he will summon me!"

"Yah, yah, yah! Dat's mighty funny!" cried Pete. "I shouldn't wonder if he gibs you six months' imprisonment, wid hard labour and a flogging! He seemed to tink dat was about de punishment required. Yah, yah, yah! You will certainly get flogged, old boss; and you will hab de consolation ob knowing you deserve it. What do you tink ob dat, Sammy?"

"You little demon!" snarled Raja, springing forward, and trying to wrench Pete from his elevated position.

But Daisy had something to say to this. Possibly she thought Raja was going to attack her. At any rate, she filled her trunk with water, squirted it into Raja's face, and, before he had recovered from de shock, she wound her trunk round his body, lifted him on high, and hurled him into de miry pond, scattering de ducks in all directions.

"Ha, ha, ha!" howled de comrades.

"Golly! Ain't dat man got wet and muddy!" said Pete.

"What cher did you want to do dat for, Raja? You'm a lot too impulsive to lead a happy life. If I ain't mistaken, you will want a wash after dat bath. You might grow big-sized turnips on de man's face. Poor, dear old boss! You hab got into a mighty awful state, too! I should advise you not to try brushing dat till it dries. Yah, yah, yah! Dat man is always making me laugh, one way and anoder. Should use him as a clown if I was you, Jimmy. He ain't no good as an elephant-tamer!"

As may be imagined, these remarks, added to de roars of laughter from Jack and Sam, did not tend to soothe Raja's fury, and if he had fulfilled a moiety of

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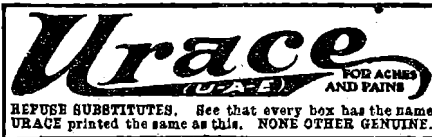
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his threats, he would certainly have been hanged.

"You will have to buy me a new suit of clothes, Jimmy," he declared, when he had quieted down a little.

"Well, I don't see that I am called upon to make good other people's losses. Here, Finch says I have got to pay because he drove into a ditch; now you want a new suit of clothes. I shall have Rosamond declaring that I shall have to pay damages because her latest thing in hats doesn't please, or because she has found her new pair of boots pinched her tootsies!"

"No, you won't, Jimmy!" retorted Rosamond, who had been laughing at Raja's mishap. "You leave Rosamond alone. She is quite competent to buy her own hats and boots, provided you pay her screw when the ghost walks."

"Go on, Daisy!" exclaimed Pete. "It's time we started, and dere's just another ting. I would like you to remember. You'm got to behave yourself for de rest ob dis journey!"

"She has, too," said Jimmy, "because we are just coming to the town, and our pitch is the other side of it."

Fortunately, Daisy behaved admirably. She did not collide with a single cart, although this was because they got out of her way. At any rate, she created quite a sensation in the place. Jimmy was in high spirits, foreseeing good houses; and Pete made Daisy speak to several of the inhabitants, choosing the simpler-looking ones, so that they might sell it to their friends, and thus make a good advertisement.

"Pete has made very valuable use of his ventriloquial powers at one time and another, Jimmy," said Sam.

"Yes," replied Jimmy. "It's already come in very handy to me on several occasions!"

Jimmy had made all his arrangements in advance, and paid the money for the rent of the ground, so that he drove straight to the pitch, and gave the men orders to get the circus up forthwith.

"Come along, Raja, old hoss!" exclaimed Pete. "We can soon get dat work done! Now, den, Jack!"

"No!" exclaimed Jimmy, in his sternest manner. "I have other work for you, Pete. You must not take work on your shoulders without my orders. I have other and more laborious work for you to do. This way, boy!"

"Don't care for dis job," mused Pete, as he followed Jimmy towards his caravan. "Eating up tents is quite laborious enough for dis child. Spect I'll hab to do it, dough. Golly! Ain't

dere a hungry sort ob smell in dis caravan, Jimmy? Smells like steak and onions!"

"It is steak and onions, dear boy, with fried potatoes. It's my dinner."

"Where is de laborious work, Jimmy?"

"Eating that steak with me. I did not want to tell Raja, because he is so frightfully jealous. Sit down!"

"Yah, yah, yah! Dat sort ob dinner just suits my complexion. I should like to invite Jack and Sammy to hab some ob dis!"

"I'm sorry, my lad, but I'm afraid dere isn't enough this time," said Jimmy.

"But what about de tents, Jimmy?" inquired Pete.

"Well, I have told Raja to see to them. There is no particular hurry. You and I will work out the posters, and get them all over the place to-morrow morning, then we will open in the evening. I think we shall do well here. Now, you will find that steak prime, if I am any judge."

It was. Jimmy was an excellent cook, and Pete was just enjoying the spread when Raja entered the caravan.

"So that is your laborious work, is it?" he sneered. "I fully expected it was a little more of your favouritism. If you ask me, I call it abominably unfair!"

"But I don't ask you, dear boy."

"Well, that old idiot Finch is here, and I simply refuse to see him. I have told them to show him to your caravan, and he will be here in a minute!"

Then Raja disappeared, with a grin. "You take the upper-hand with the man, Pete," said Jimmy. "Act as if you were a sort of boss, and I was your man. If I say anything, you shut me up: sort of snub, you know. If the old idiot means going to law, he may just as well summon Raja as me. Raja won't be missed so much, and you can take his place. Here he comes!"

"Why, my dear old hoss, how are you? Pass me de potatoes, Jimmy, and just you work steady at dat steak. I don't provide steak for my hands to eat. Nonsense! Dat steak is meant to be eaten wid my teeth. Now, den, my dear old hoss, what is it you want?"

"You shall not pitch your circus here," declared Finch. "My house is just across the field, and I will not have the uproar of a circus near it! Where is that ruffian Raja?"

"I hab started dat man on some work, and I won't hab him interrupted! Ain't it strange I should hab met you again,

Finch? Did you get out ob de ditch all right?"

"I will not leave this place until I have seen the proprietor!"

"Den you had better wait a bit, 'cos he won't be here for some time."

"I will send the police to have you cleared off the ground!"

"Is the ground yours?"

"Yes; it is my own freehold. I have let it to a vagabond who—"

"Who has let it to us. You'm got no remedy, my poor old hoss!"

"Shall I turn the fellow out for you?" said Jimmy.

"Suttinly not!" answered Pete. "I am going to request him to go in a legal manner. You ought always to do things in a lawful manner, Jimmy. How often am I to tell you dat! It's quite sickening de way you make me repeat my orders! A few more potatoes here. Yes, I tink I will hab a little more steak to go wid dem."

Pete and Jimmy finished their dinner, and all the time Finch stormed. He vowed he would put them all in prison, and uttered all sorts of ridiculous threats; but Pete went on with his meal, sometimes agreeing with the furious man, at others speaking to him in a comforting sort of voice, as though he were a little child or an amiable maniac, and by the time that meal was finished Finch was nearly mad with rage.

"Now, den, my dear old hoss, I hab some work to do," said Pete, when the meal was finished, "and it stands to reason I can't do it while you are howling dere like a gale ob wind down a drain-pipe. Dere's de door! Shut it after you!"

"I shall not go until I have seen the proprietor of this show!"

"I am inclined to tink you are mistaken, my poor, dear old hoss! Dere's a lot ob mud at de bottom ob dis caravan, and although it may be soft to tumble into, it is almost bound to make you in a mess. Are you going?"

"No, I am not!"

"Den all I can say is dat you are mistaken, 'cos I'm mighty certain you are going, and I'll prove to you dat I am right in two-free minutes!"

It did not take so long as that, for Pete seized the great man round the body. There was a sharp, short struggle, then Finch went flying down the steps, and tumbled head over heels into the mud at the bottom, while Pete calmly shut the door.

THE END.

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