

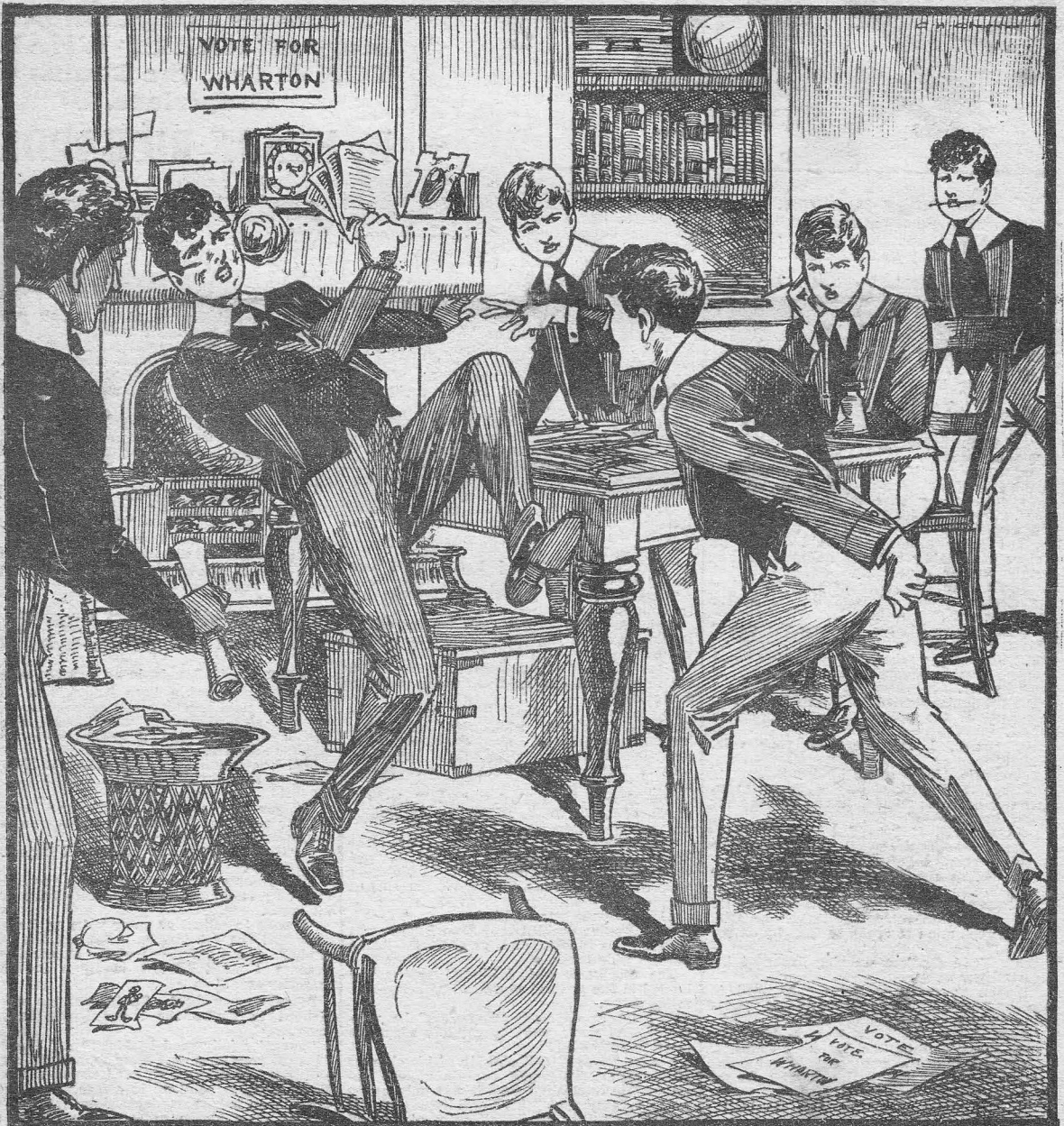
THREE LONG SCHOOL STORIES—20 PAGES!

The  
**Penny**  $1\frac{1}{2}$ <sup>d</sup>  
**Popular**

Week Ending  
December 13th, 1919.

No. 47.  
New Series.

Three Complete Stories of—  
**HARRY WHARTON & CO.—JIMMY SILVER & CO.—TOM MERRY & CO.**



**ONE FOR THE EDITOR OF THE "GREYFRIARS HERALD!"**

(A Remarkable Scene in the Magnificent Long Complete School Tale of the Chums of Greyfriars.)



A Splendid Long Complete Story of HARRY WHARTON & Co., the Chums of Greyfriars.

By FRANK RICHARDS.

### THE FIRST CHAPTER.

#### The Push for Bunter!

"I WONDER how many votes I'll get?" Thus Billy Bunter, of the Greyfriars Remove.

Peter Todd, the leader of Study No. 7, gave an expressive snort.

"None!" he said promptly. "You were a burbling chump to have put up for the captaincy at all! Do you think the Remove wants to be ruled and governed by a barrel of lard?"

"Oh, really, Toddy—"  
"No one but a tame lunatic would dream of giving you his vote!" Peter went on. "It's difficult to say with certainty who will be elected to the captaincy; but I'm jolly sure it won't be you!"

"Of course," said Billy Bunter scornfully, "you're jealous! You're a rival candidate, and you're funky that I shall queer your pitch. This petty jealousy makes me ill!"

"So will my fist, if you don't dry up!" growled Peter Todd. "As if I should be jealous of a flabby imbecile like you!"

Billy Bunter chuckled.  
"You'll have the shock of your life when the election comes off, and W. G. Bunter heads the poll!" he said.

"Well, you've always been up the pole!" admitted Peter.

But his sarcasm missed fire. Contempt and sarcasm could seldom pierce the hide of Billy Bunter.

The fat junior turned to Alonzo Todd, who was deep in the poetry of the Elizabethan period.

"Of course, I can count on your vote, Lonzy?"

The gentle Alonzo shook his head.  
"I regret to have to disappoint you, Bunter," he said; "but I intend to vote for Peter, because—"

"Because what?" demanded Bunter.  
"Because he knows what to expect if he doesn't!" grinned Peter Todd.

The Owl of the Remove gave a grunt of displeasure.

"Candidates ought not to be allowed to bully fellows into voting for them," he said. "I've a good mind to speak to Quelchy on the subject!"

Peter Todd shook a warning finger at his fat study-mate.

"If you so much as breathe a word to Quelchy," he said, in measured tones, "you'll never be able to breathe again!"

"Beast!" growled Billy Bunter, his little round eyes glittering behind his spectacles. "I can see that I'm not going to get much support from this study. Dutton will give me his vote, though—won't you, Dutton?"

The deaf junior glanced up from his book.  
"Certainly not!" he said.

"Eh?"

"I'm not in the habit of carrying spare

buttons about with me," said Tom Dutton. "If you've lost a button—and you're always shedding buttons after a big feed—you'd better go and hunt for it!"

Billy Bunter blinked at his deaf study-mate in amazement.

"Buttons!" he repeated. "Who's talking about buttons? I was asking you to rally round and vote."

"My hat!" said Dutton. "First it's a button, and now it's a pound-note! You'll be losing yourself one of these days!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Peter Todd.

And even the placid Alonzo could not repress a smile.

Tom Dutton was as deaf as the proverbial doorpost; and his affliction gave rise to some curious misunderstandings at times.

"You—you—" spluttered Billy Bunter. "I wasn't talking about buttons—or pound-notes, either! You're as deaf as an oyster!"

"If you've lost them in the Cloisters," said Dutton, "I should advise you to go and look for them!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Look here!" bellowed Bunter. "I was asking about your vote!"

"Certainly!" said Tom Dutton. "Anything to oblige!"

And, springing to his feet, he rushed at Bunter, grasped him in the vicinity of the windpipe, and pushed him out of the study.

"Out you go!" panted Dutton. "You asked me to put you out by the throat, and I'm doing it!"

So saying, the deaf junior gave Billy Bunter a final shove, which sent him sprawling into the passage. Then he slammed the study door in the fat junior's face.

Peter Todd was doubled up with merriment.

"Oh dear!" he sobbed. "You'll be the death of me! Doesn't look as if Bunter will get your vote, at this rate!"

"Such scenes of hooliganism, my dear Peter," murmured the guileless Alonzo, "are both distressing and disturbing! I sincerely hope Bunter will remain on the other side of the door!"

Alonzo's hope was fulfilled.

Billy Bunter decided that Tom Dutton was a dangerous lunatic, and, as such, should be given a wide berth.

The fat junior picked himself up—he had landed in the passage in a huddled heap—and rolled away.

"I'd better do some canvassing," he murmured. "I don't want to get left when the election comes off!"

Bunter thought quite highly of his chances of becoming permanent captain of the Remove. He considered that it was only necessary to "ginger up" his Form-fellows at the outset, and they would all rally round and vote for him.

The fat junior paused for a moment outside

the door of the study which Dennis Carr shared with Lord Mauleverer and Sir Jimmy Vivian.

Voices were audible within, but Bunter could not catch the drift of the conversation. Calmly turning the handle of the door, the Owl of the Remove rolled into the study.

"I say, you fellows—"  
A lexicon, deftly aimed by Dennis Carr, came whizzing through the air.

Billy Bunter lowered his head just in the nick of time, and the book crashed against a panel of the door.

"Missed, by gad!" murmured Lord Mauleverer. "Try again, Carr!"

Dennis Carr glared at the intruder.

Although he had not been long at Greyfriars, Dennis had summed up Billy Bunter, and the summing-up was not to the fat junior's advantage.

"Travel!" growled Dennis.

"Oh, really, Carr—"

"Scat!" said Sir Jimmy Vivian. "We don't want any rollin'-stock in this study!"

Billy Bunter did not budge.

"Look here, Carr," he said. "I've come to speak to you about the election!"

"Well?"

"You know jolly well that you haven't a dog's chance of being made skipper! You're not a bad sort of fellow, in your way, but I—"

"Go on!" said Dennis, in an ominous tone.

"But you're not a born leader, like me! You lack good breeding and refinement, and all that sort of thing. The Remove Form would go to the dogs if you were captain! Don't think I'm being rude to you, Carr," added Bunter hastily. "I'm not. I'm simply speaking my mind!"

"Oh!"

"If you take my tip, you'll stand down," Bunter went on. "Hand in your resignation to Quelchy, and—"

"And give my vote to you?" said Dennis.

"Exactly!"

Billy Bunter was fairly beaming now. He evidently imagined his words of advice had hit home.

"I want to collect as many votes as I can," explained the fat junior. "Not because I'm doubtful about the result of the election, but because I want to get in by a romping majority—see?"

Dennis Carr nodded. Bunter was too shortsighted to notice the storm-signals on his brow.

"I want a jolly good backing!" said Bunter. "I want your vote, and Mauly's, and Vivian's, and heaps of others besides. I want the whole Form to rally round me to a man. But there must be no half-heartedness about it. You've got to show plenty of enterprise—plenty of push! Will you promise me that?"

"Certainly!" said Dennis Carr, rising to his



feet. "We're quite willing to show plenty of push—aren't we, you fellows?"

"Yaas, begad!" chuckled Lord Maulverer. And Sir Jimmy Vivian chuckled.

Billy Bunter could not help feeling agreeably surprised at the easy way in which he had converted the occupants of this study. They had needed very little persuasion, very few honeyed words. They were prepared to back him up with might and main; and Dennis Carr was actually going to retire from the contest on his behalf!

So Bunter thought, anyway. But disillusionment was soon to follow.

"This is awfully good of you fellows!" he exclaimed. "I knew I could rely on your support—Here, hold on! What's the little game?"

Bunter broke off suddenly, as the trio advanced towards him, and proceeded to handle him out of the study.

"You said you wanted us to show plenty of push," said Dennis Carr. "Well, here goes!"

Three pairs of hands pushed the Owl of the Remove out into the passage.

It was not a gentle push by any means.

Billy Bunter whizzed through the doorway with a velocity which caused his spectacles to leap off his nose, and he alighted on the linoleum with a loud yell.

"Yaroooooo!"

"The push for Bunter!" chuckled Jimmy Vivian. "Ha, ha, ha!"

"He asked for it, and now he's got it!" said Dennis Carr. "The cheek of it! Fancy asking me to stand down, and give him my vote! Fancy saying I was without breeding and refinement! My hat! Watch me toe the fat beast down the passage with my boot!"

But Billy Bunter didn't wait for that ordeal.

The trio had already played push-ball with him, and he didn't want the game to develop into football.

The fat junior streaked along the passage as if a pack of wolves was at his heels. And when he finally halted at a safe distance from Dennis Carr's study, he told himself that he would do no more canvassing that evening.

## THE SECOND CHAPTER.

### Election Fever!

"HALLO! Hallo! Hallo!"

Bob Cherry uttered his familiar ejaculation as he stopped short in front of the notice-board with the other members of the Famous Five.

The board was plastered with notices of every description, for these were stirring times at Greyfriars.

But there was one announcement which was new to the eye, and Harry Wharton & Co. paused to peruse it.

### "NOTICE!"

"H. Vernon-Smith, being one of the candidates for the captaincy of the Remove Form, desires to call a meeting in the Rag at eight o'clock sharp, for the purpose of addressing his constituency. All are cordially invited.

"N.B.—Refreshments will be provided.

### "VOTE FOR VERNON-SMITH!"

"Smithy's starting early!" observed Johnny Bull.

"He's as keen as mustard on bagging the captaincy," said Nugent, "but I guess he'll be disappointed!"

The others were of the same opinion.

Each of the candidates had been given a week's trial in the position of Form-captain; and Vernon-Smith's trial week had proved anything but a roaring success.

During that week the Remove had been badly taken in by the Highcliffe fellows, and Vernon-Smith's popularity had suffered. Very few fellows were likely to vote for him; and very few were likely to attend the meeting he now convened—in spite of the tempting bait. "Refreshments will be provided."

"Shall we go along, Harry?" inquired Bob Cherry.

Wharton shook his head.

"We've got to get busy on the special election number of the 'Greyfriars Herald,'" he said.

"But think of the tuckful refreshments, my esteemed chum!" protested Hurree Singh.

"Refreshments be blowed!" said Bob Cherry. "That's all bunkum on Smithy's part. The only refreshments will be a slab of stale toffee and a glass of water!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The Famous Five mutually agreed not to form part of Vernon-Smith's audience. They were all, on the staff of the "Greyfriars

Herald," and there was work waiting to be done.

Harry Wharton meant to fight hard to win back his old position as captain of the Remove, and he could not afford to waste his time at a meeting held by one of his rivals.

There were others, however, to whom Vernon-Smith's announcement made a big appeal.

Skinner and Stott and Bolsover major read the notice, and so did Billy Bunter, and they chuckled gleefully.

The word "refreshments" had a magical effect upon them—particularly upon Billy Bunter.

"You fellows going to the meeting?" asked Skinner.

"What-ho!" said Bolsover heartily. "It isn't every evening that you can get refreshments for nix!"

"Of course, Smithy's after our votes!" said Stott.

"Any ass can see that!" said Skinner. "Smithy will fawn on us, and make us promise to back him up at the election. I don't mind going along and sampling his grub—but I'm dashed if I'm going to vote for him!"

"Neither am I!" said Bolsover major. "Of course, there's no harm in our promising what we don't mean to perform. Personally, I'd promise Smithy anything he liked, for the sake of getting a jolly good feed!"

"Same here!" cackled Billy Bunter. "He, he, he! Smithy will think he's roping in votes, and when the election comes off he'll find himself in the cart!"

Vernon-Smith happened to be standing near whilst this conversation was in progress.

Not a word that was said escaped the Bounder, who smiled rather grimly, and moved away.

Then, when the crowd had melted away from the notice-board, Vernon-Smith returned to it, and made an amendment to his announcement.

"Refreshments will be provided" was altered to "No refreshments will be provided."

News of the alteration very soon reached the ears of Skinner & Co., and of Billy Bunter, and they abused Vernon-Smith in measured terms.

"What a sell!" growled Bolsover.

"Smithy's been having us on toast!" said Skinner. "I was looking forward to a ripping feed, and now he's let us down! Blow Smithy! And blow his meeting!"

"Hear, hear!" said Stott. "It will serve Smithy right if not a soft turns up!"

When eight o'clock commenced to chime Vernon-Smith wended his way to the Rag.

He was not hopeful of getting a good audience, for the withdrawal of the refreshments had put most of the fellows off.

At the same time the Bounder was hardly prepared to find the Rag empty. Yet such was the case.

Not a single Removite had turned up!

Vernon-Smith clenched his hands.

"Hang them!" he muttered.

He waited until the quarter chimed out, but nobody came in.

It looked very much as if Vernon-Smith's claims to the captaincy were being ignored. With the exception of Billy Bunter, he was the most unpopular candidate. And he knew the reason why. It was because during his trial week he had allowed Ponsoby & Co., of Highcliffe, to spoof the Remove.

The Bounder's first impulse was to resign from the contest in a fit of rage. On reflection, however, he decided to stick to his guns, in the hope that some of the fellows would rally round him later on.

During the evening, Vernon-Smith's original announcement on the notice-board was covered over by another, which ran as follows:

"The meeting called by H. Vernon-Smith duly took place in the Rag at eight o'clock. One person was present—H. Vernon-Smith. The Famous Five regretted their inability to turn up owing to a severe attack of swelled head.

"H. Vernon-Smith proceeded to address the meeting. He proposed that H. Vernon-Smith should be elected to the captaincy of the Remove, he being the right man for the job. The proposition was seconded by H. Vernon-Smith, and carried unanimously by H. Vernon-Smith.

"The meeting—consisting of H. Vernon-Smith—then dispersed."

This ironical notice was greeted with roars of laughter, except from the Famous Five, who resented the suggestion that they were suffering from swelled head.

"Strikes me it's Smithy who'll have swelled head, if he's not careful!" growled Bob Cherry. "I've a good mind to give him a thick ear!"

"You're welcome to try!" said a voice. Bob Cherry spun round, to find Vernon-Smith standing behind him.

A fistful duel might have ensued had not Wingate of the Sixth arrived on the scene and ordered the juniors to bed.

In the Remove dormitory that night there was only one topic of conversation—the forthcoming election.

There were six candidates for the captaincy, but only three of them seemed to count.

Dennis Carr, Harry Wharton, and Dick Russell each had his quota of supporters.

Peter Todd had just a few, including Alonzo and Tom Dutton. And Vernon-Smith and Billy Bunter seemed to have no following at all.

"Russell's the man!" declared Ogilvy. "He's a jolly good all-round sportsman, and he knows what's what. Any fellow who doesn't vote for Russell is a silly ass!"

"There are a good many silly asses knocking around, then!" said Squiff. "I, for one, don't intend to vote for Russell."

"Good!" said Billy Bunter. "That's very decent of you, Squiff!"

"What do you mean?" asked Squiff, in surprise.

"As you're not going to vote for Russell, I take it you intend to vote for me?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I'd as soon vote for my grandmother!" growled Squiff.

Lord Maulverer's voice was the next to make itself heard.

"My advice to you, gentlemen," drawled the schoolboy earl, "is to blimp for Dennis Carr. There isn't another fellow in the Form who's better qualified to hold the reins—"

"Barring Wharton!" interposed Bob Cherry. There were loud cries of "Rats!" from several parts of the dormitory.

"Wharton's played out!" said Bolsover major. "He's a back number. He let us down badly before, and he'll do it again if he gets the chance. But he's not going to get it!"

"No, rather not!"

"You silly chumps!" roared Johnny Bull. "There's more sense in Wharton's little finger than in Bolsover's bullet head! If you want the Remove to flourish, and hold its own against all comers, vote for Wharton!"

That sentiment was echoed by Bob Cherry and Frank Nugent, and Hurree Singh and Mark Linley and Dick Penfold—loyal Whartonites both—added:

"Hear, hear!"

But there were many dissentient voices.

"Vote for Carr, the football star!" said said Jimmy Vivian, unconsciously lapsing into poetry.

"Vote for Todd, the young Greek god!" said somebody.

And there was a general laugh.

Ogilvy tried to go one better.

"Vote for Russell—mind and muscle!" he exclaimed.

"Rats!" said Skinner. "You might as well say, 'Vote for Bunter, the gay tuck-lunter.'"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Vernon-Smith contrived to get a word in edgeways.

"Vote for me, and there you'll be!" he said.

"Where?" said Bob Cherry. "In the cart, I suppose?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The taunt goaded Vernon-Smith to anger. He groped for his boot, and hurled it at Bob Cherry.

Bob, who was sitting up in bed, stopped the missile with his nose.

"Yaroooooo!"

Bob Cherry caressed his damaged nasal organ; then he scrambled out of bed and made his way towards his assailant.

"I'll pulverise you for that!" he muttered. Bob's action was unfortunate. It was the signal for everybody to get out of bed and have a go at everybody else.

The next moment the Remove dormitory presented a very animated scene.

The election fever was responsible. Most of the juniors were spoiling for a fight, and they snatched up their pillows, and other people's pillows, and dashed into the fray.

The supporters of Harry Wharton were eager to get to grips with the supporters of Dennis Carr, and vice versa; but this was a difficult undertaking, for it was impossible to tell with certainty which were Carr's backers and which were Wharton's.

The result was a general mix-up, in the course of which Harry Wharton accidentally

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howled Bob Cherry over, and Dennis Carr floored Sir Jimmy Vivian, one of his most ardent supporters.

Biff! Thud! Biff! Thud!

Pillows and bolsters descended with great violence on every side, and the dormitory echoed with shrill battle-cries.

"Vote for Wharton!"

"Rally round Carr!"

"Dick Russell for ever!"

How the affair might have ended it was impossible to say. But there would certainly have been a long casualty list had not Wingate of the Sixth put in an appearance at that moment.

"My hat!" muttered the captain of Greyfriars. "Have you all taken leave of your senses? Stop it—stop it at once!"

Wingate's voice was lost in the uproar. Fortunately, however, he carried an ashplant, and with this useful weapon he did great execution.

Whack, whack, whack!

The juniors fled to their beds, uttering yells of anguish as the ashplant descended.

Order was restored at length, and Wingate paused, breathing hard.

"You mad young duffers!" he exclaimed.

"What was it all about?"

"The election, Wingate," said Bob Cherry. "Election!" repeated Wingate. "What election?"

Bob Cherry gave a gasp.

Was it possible that Wingate had not heard of one of the most thrilling events in the Remove's history?

"We're electing a new Form-captain, Wingate," explained Nugent.

"Indeed! Then I wish you'd make a little less noise about it."

The Removees writhed in their beds. Wingate's apparent indifference to the vital affairs of the Remove hurt them more than his ashplant had done.

"I shall take no further action this time," said the captain of Greyfriars, "but I warn you that if there is a repetition of this disturbance you'll answer for it to me!"

With which ominous threat Wingate extinguished the light, gruffly bade the juniors good-night, and withdrew.

And there was peace in the Remove dormitory, though the goodwill was not quite so apparent!

### THE THIRD CHAPTER. Going to Press!

**N**EXT day the election fever raged as fiercely as ever in the ranks of the Remove.

The Famous Five had caught it very badly.

Harry Wharton made no secret of the fact that he was anxious—desperately anxious—to be returned at the top of the poll; and his supporters, for their part, meant to leave no stone unturned in order to bring about the desired consummation.

It was a half-holiday; but, for once in a way, football and fresh air failed to attract the Famous Five. They were going strong with the special election number of the "Greyfriars Herald," and the editorial office—Study No. 1 in the Remove passage—was transformed into a veritable beehive of activity.

A cheerful fire cracked and spouted in the grate, and it served a double purpose. It warmed the study, and it devoured rejected manuscripts, of which there were a good many.

A constant stream of contributors poured into the study. And the doorway was congested with amateur poets and cartoonists.

"How the thump am I going to get my editorial finished?" groaned Harry Wharton, in despair.

"Oh, cut it out!" said Johnny Bull. "Nobody reads the editorial, anyway."

"Look here—"

"Can't I'm working on my pirate serial."

"Pirate serial!" gasped Bob Cherry. "This is an election number, fathead! The fellows don't want to read about pirates!"

Johnny Bull chuckled.

"My stuff's quite topical," he explained. "You see, the chief pirate happens to be Bunter!"

"Oh!"

"You can't deny that Bunter's a pirate. He's always lifting other people's grub. Therefore, it fits in beautifully."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Look here, Wharton," said Squiff, from the doorway. "I've brought you a rattling good article!"

"You're about the tenth fellow who's told me that in the last quarter of an hour!"

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grunted Wharton. "What's the article called?"

"It's rather a long title, but quite a good one," said Squiff modestly. "It's called 'A Thousand and One Reasons Why Every Fellow Should Vote for Dennis Carr.'"

"Hand it over!" said Wharton grimly. Squiff hesitated.

"What are you going to do with it?" he asked.

"Feed the flames!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Look here," said Squiff wrathfully, "it's not playing the game to chuck out all the articles praising the other candidates!"

Wharton frowned. His countenance was besmeared with ink, and it almost resembled Hurree Singh's in hue.

"If you want to shout the odds about Carr," he said, "you'll have to do it through another channel."

"Hear, hear!" said Bob Cherry. "The 'Herald' takes one view only—that Harry Wharton's the man to vote for!"

There was a howl of indignation from the crowd, most of whom were supporting other candidates.

"Shame!"

"It's going to be an all-Wharton number!"

"Play the game, Wharton!"

"Give every candidate a fair show!"

Wharton calmly surveyed the disgruntled ones.

"I'm the editor of this paper, and I shall do as I like!" he retorted. "If Carr happened to be the editor, he'd get out a special election number for his own benefit. So would Russell—likewise Smithy and Toddy. It's only natural."

"Of course!" said Frank Nugent. "Don't take any notice of them, Harry."

"Then you refuse to use my article?" exclaimed Squiff.

"Yes!" shouted the Famous Five, in unison. "Very well; I'll use it myself!"

And Squiff did so, with good effect. He crumpled the sheet of paper into a ball, and hurled it at the editor, who received it full in the face.

"Ow! Chuck him out!" gasped Wharton. The other members of the staff hastened to obey, foremost among them being Bob Cherry, the Fighting Editor.

But Squiff very wisely fled.

The amateur journalists tried to settle down to work again, but interruptions were plentiful.

Contributions continued to pour in from all quarters. Those which happened to favour Harry Wharton were set on one side for consideration. Those which chanted the praises of a rival candidate were promptly consigned to the flames.

Wharton's conduct might have seemed selfish in the eyes of many. But he had a hard battle to fight in order to win back the captaincy, and it was only natural that he should act for his own ends. The other candidates would have done the same had they been fortunate enough to edit the "Greyfriars Herald."

"I say, you fellows—"

Billy Bunter, flushed and perspiring, pushed his way through the crowd in the doorway. "Buzz off, porpoise!" said Wharton curtly.

"Oh, really— I've brought you a poem, Wharton—a stunning poem—about one of the candidates!"

"Yourself, I suppose?" said Nugent scornfully.

"Ahem! Not exactly," said the fat junior. "No name is mentioned in the poem. It will be left to the readers of the 'Herald' to decide who the verses are about. Let me read you a bit."

And Billy Bunter started to declaim his poem:

"Now that the election's coming,  
All the school is simply humming!  
Will they vote for Carr or Smith,  
Or for Peter Todd forthwith?  
Who will win this thrilling tussle—  
Harry Wharton or Dick Russell?  
No, my friends! Upon my soul,  
None of these will head the poll!  
But the victor's name will be—"

"Simply Bunter, W. G.!" chuckled Bob Cherry.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Bunter didn't write that poem, I know!" said Johnny Bull. "I can recognise Skinner's handiwork there!"

"It's all mine!" said Bunter indignantly. "I suppose you'll publish it, Wharton?"

"There's something wrong with your supposer, then!"

"Look here," said Bunter wrathfully, "I

don't see why this poem should be left out in the cold!"

"It won't be!" said Nugent cheerfully. "We're going to put it on the fire!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Hurree Singh snatched the effusion from Bunter's grasp, and the next moment it was being eagerly devoured by the flames.

"Beasts!" howled Bunter. "Now I've got to think it out all over again!"

"You can think it out a hundred times over," said Wharton, "but it's not going in the 'Herald'!"

"You—you—"

Words quite failed Billy Bunter. With a furious glare at the grinning editorial staff, he rolled out of the study.

Ogilvy was the next visitor, and the Famous Five regarded him with suspicion.

It was well known that Ogilvy was the staunch champion and ally of Dick Russell, and Harry Wharton & Co. expected him to produce an article or a poem lauding Russell to the skies.

"I've brought you an acrostic," he said. "A what?" gasped Bob Cherry.

"An acrostic—a double acrostic, to be exact."

And Ogilvy displayed his puzzle to view. "What's the solution?" inquired Nugent.

Ogilvy grinned.

"You must find out for yourselves," he said. "I suggest you give a small prize—say half-a-crown—to the first reader who sends in the correct solution."

"That's not a bad wheeze," said Wharton. "Is the acrostic anything to do with the election, though?"

"Oh, yes!"

"Very well; we'll publish it."

"Good!" said Ogilvy.

And he chuckled to himself as he quitted the editorial sanctum.

The Famous Five were puzzled as to the meaning of that chuckle, and they were equally puzzled by the double acrostic, which ran as follows:

"My first is required to win the V.C.,  
My second consists of two vowels, you see;  
My third is a gate-porter known to  
St. Jim's,

My fourth describes people of curious  
whims,

My fifth is a thing for which all men are  
hunters,

My sixth, a familiar nickname of Bunter's;  
My last is a river on which they canoe,  
My whole is what every wise fellow should  
do."

"Dashed if I can make head or tail of this!" said Bob Cherry, stroking his curly head in perplexity.

"The fellow who fathoms it will have earned his half-crown!" said Wharton.

"Let's try and puzzle it out," said Nugent. "No time!" said the editor briskly.

"We've got to wire in and finish, and get the copy off to the printers."

"Better clear the study," suggested Johnny Bull. "We can't work with a crowd of silly asses goggling in the doorway!"

"Rats!" said Bolsover major, who was one of the goggling individuals referred to. "We're not going to budge!"

"We'll jolly soon see about that!" said Bob Cherry.

And the Famous Five did! They rose to their feet as one man, and carried out a brilliant charge, with the result that the study was cleared of all intruders.

After which no sound disturbed the serenity of Study No. 1, save the busy scratching of pens and the occasional grunts of the hardworking members of the editorial staff.

### THE FOURTH CHAPTER. A Shock for the Famous Five!

**T**HE election number of the "Greyfriars Herald" was a special one for circulation at Greyfriars only. It was printed locally, and the copies, damp from the printing-machines, arrived at the school during the following afternoon.

It was a number which did Harry Wharton credit, bearing in mind the rapidity with which it had been prepared for the press.

The keynote of most of the contributions was, of course, "VOTE FOR WHARTON!" And if propaganda counted for anything, Harry Wharton's chances of securing the captaincy were certainly rosy.

Ogilvy's acrostic caused quite a sensation in the Remove.

Fellows who were short of pocket-money—and their number was legion, since it was



neering the end of the term—set their wits to work in order to win the half-crown.

Now that the rush of work was over, the Famous Five were able to study the acrostic at their leisure, and they determined to discover the correct solution between them, five heads being better than one.

Harry Wharton opened the paper at the page on which the puzzle appeared.

"My first is required to win the V.C.," he quoted. "Now, what does a fellow require to win the V.C.?"

"A pal at the War Office!" said Bob Cherry.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"No larking!" said Wharton sternly. "This is a serious matter. It's occurred to me that there may be more in this acrostic than meets the eye."

"There certainly is!" said Nugent. "Blessed if I can get the drift of it!"

third is a gate-porter known to St. Jim's.' That's simple enough."

"Taggles!" said Bob Cherry.

And the name was duly jotted down.

"We're getting on!" said Nugent. "Go ahead, Harry!"

"My fourth describes people of curious whims."

"Wonder if he refers to poets, or politicians?" murmured Bob Cherry.

"Neither, I should say," said Wharton. "People of curious whims are called eccentrics."

"That's a good word, anyway!" said Johnny Bull. "I'll back it both ways!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The word "eccentrics" was added to the list.

"My fifth is a thing for which all men are hunters.' That's a poser, if you like!" said Wharton.

close to St. Jim's," he said. "You'll observe that the acrostic says 'they,' not 'we.'"

"So it does," said Nugent. "They' probably refers to the St. Jim's fellows."

Harry Wharton wrote down the word "Ryll," and a curious expression came over his face.

"My hat!" he exclaimed. "I'm beginning to get the hang of it at last!"

"Is it a trick?" asked Bob Cherry.

"Of course!"

Wharton made a careful study of the words he had written down; and then he emitted a sudden yell of indignation.

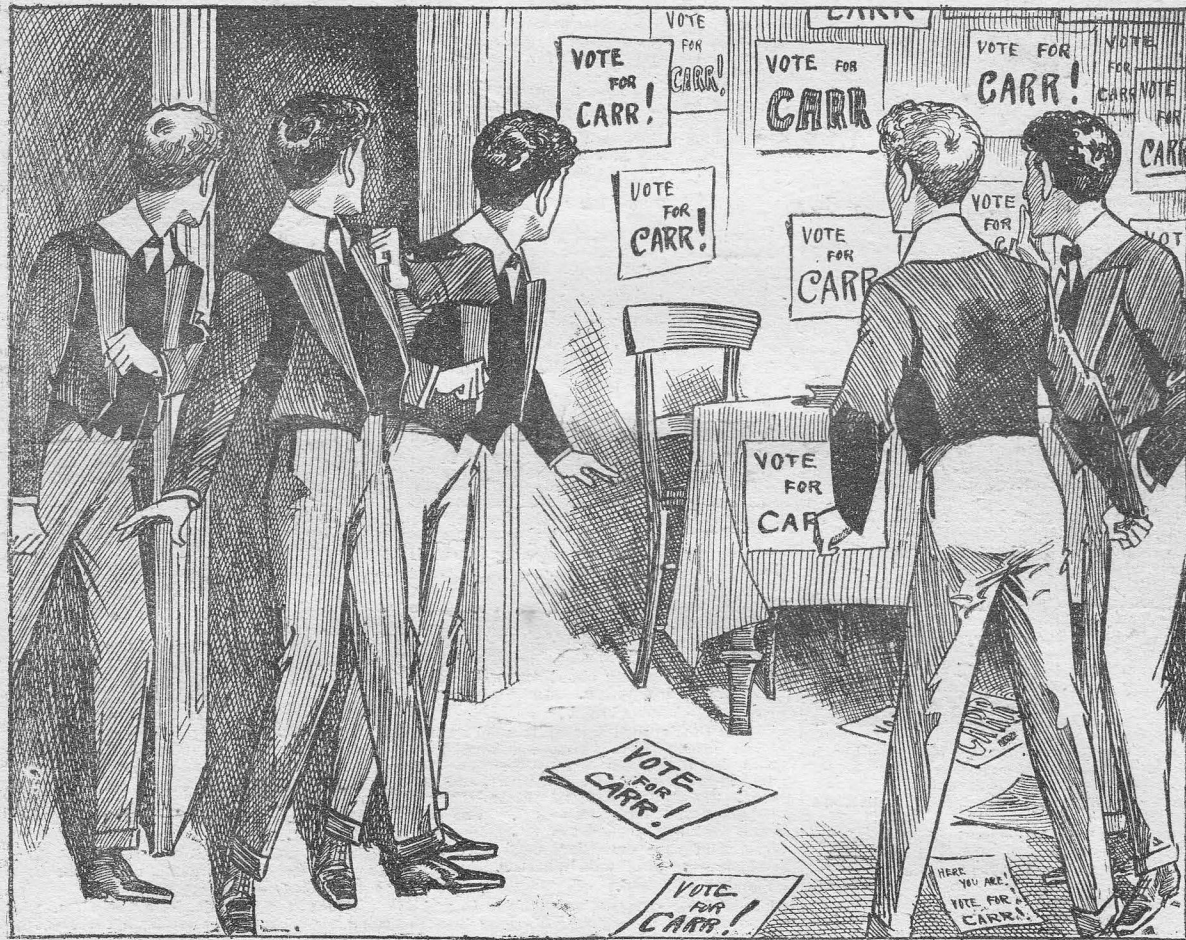
"Spoofer!"

"Thought as much," grunted Johnny Bull.

"Let's see what the solution is."

Wharton pushed the paper across the table.

"Presuming that the two vowels are 'o' and



Sheets of paper, about a foot square, had been plastered on to every available space on the study walls; and each sheet contained the injunction in bold black type: "VOTE FOR CARR!" Harry Wharton's complexion turned almost purple. (See page 6.)

"I mean, it may be a trick on Ogilvy's part," said Wharton.

"My hat!"

"Let's tackle it in earnest," said Johnny Bull. "Now, there are several things required to win the V.C. There's pluck, and dash, and—"

"Valour?" suggested Hurree Singh.

"Inky's hit it!" said Harry Wharton. "Valour sounds the most likely word. We'll dot it down. That's the first hurdle overcome. Now it goes on, 'My second consists of two vowels.'"

"There are five vowels," said Bob Cherry.

"A, e, i, o, u—"

"Don't!" pleaded Nugent. "Sounds like a donkey braying!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"The question is, which are the two vowels that belong to the acrostic?" said Wharton. "Impossible to tell, except by guesswork," said Johnny Bull.

"Quite! We'll leave the vowels for the moment, and fill them in afterwards. 'My

"I suggest tuck," said Nugent.

"Rats! All men are not Bunters!"

"Might I proposfully suggest that the correct word is 'fame'?" said Hurree Singh.

"Inky scores again!" said Bob Cherry.

"All men like to achieve fame. I myself hope to be a railway-porter one of these days, earning twenty quids a week!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"We'll soon solve this merry old puzzle!" said Wharton. "My sixth, a familiar nickname of Bunters'."

"Owl!" said Johnny Bull promptly.

"Might be porpoise," said Nugent.

"I think Johnny's right," remarked Wharton. "We'll put down 'Owl,' and chance it. If it happens to be wrong, we can amend it later."

"Is that the lot?" asked Bob Cherry.

"No; there's one more. 'My last is a river on which they canoe.'"

"The Sark, of course!" said Johnny Bull.

Wharton shook his head.

"More likely to be the Ryll, which runs

and 'u,' the results works out like this," he said.

The other members of the Famous Five glanced eagerly over Wharton's shoulder.

The solution of the double acrostic stared them in the face. It was as follows:

V a l o u r  
O U  
T a g g l e S  
E c c e n t r i c S  
F a m e  
O w l  
R y l l

"VOTE FOR RUSSELL!" gasped Bob Cherry. "Oh, my hat!"

"Dished, diddled, and done!" groaned Nugent.

The Famous Five exchanged rueful glances.

All unknowingly, they had advertised a rival candidate in the "Greyfriars Herald."

The keen-witted Donald Ogilvy had evolved that acrostic, and at that moment he and Dick Russell were waltzing in triumph round their study.

But the faces of Harry Wharton & Co. were as long as fiddles.

When the solution to that acrostic was made known—and it was bound to become common knowledge sooner or later—the laugh would be against them.

"It was my own fault!" said Wharton remorsefully. "I might have known there was a catch in it. The acrostic ought to have been chucked out—and Ogilvy, too!"

"There was a tap on the door of Study No. 1, and Billy Bunter rolled in, with a sheet of paper in his hand, and a beaming smile on his fat face.

"Half-a-crown, please!" said the Owl of the Remove, blinking at the editor of the "Herald."

"Look here, porpoise," said Bob Cherry wrathfully, "if you think you can come here and cadge half-crowns—"

"I'm not cadding!" said Bunter indignantly. "I've won it fairly and squarely. You see, I've found the correct solution to the acrostic."

"My hat!"

"The first word," said Bunter, consulting his paper, "is 'valour.' Then come the vowels, 'o,' 'u,' and then 'Baggles,' 'eccentricities,' 'fame,' 'Owl,' and 'Ryll.' My whole is what every wise fellow should do—**VOTE FOR RUSSELL!**"

The juniors stared blankly at Bunter. They wondered how the fat junior with his inferior thinking apparatus had managed to solve the acrostic.

It did not occur to them that Billy Bunter had been putting in some useful work at the keyhole of Study No. 1, and that he had overheard every word of their conversation.

There was a determined gleam in the fat junior's eyes.

"Half-a-crown, please!" he repeated. "You promised a prize of half-a-crown for the first correct solution received, and I'm the winner. Pay up!"

"I suppose we must humour the fat beast?" growled Wharton.

"There's nothing else for it," said Nugent. "We were the first to find the correct result, but as we're members of the staff we're debarred from competing. Therefore, the prize goes to Bunter."

With a wry face, Harry Wharton handed over the half-crown.

This was the bitterest pill of all.

It was bad enough to have been hoaxed by Ogilvy; but to have to part with half-a-crown to the greedy and grasping Owl of the Remove was the last straw!

That evening some person unknown—though it was probably Ogilvy—posted up the correct solution on the notice-board; and laughter, loud and long, rang out at Harry Wharton's expense.

"If Wharton advises us, in the 'Greyfriars Herald,' to vote for Russell, I think we'd better study his wishes!" said Wibley.

"Yes, rather!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You cackling asses!" said Wharton ferretably. "I haven't advised you to do anything of the sort!"

"But, my dear chap, you can't deny it," said Bulstrode, pointing to the notice-board. "There it is, in black and white—**VOTE FOR RUSSELL!**" If that's the editor's view, it's up to us to support it."

"Hear, hear!" said Morgan. "I intended to vote for Wharton at first, but now that he's urged us to vote for Russell, I mean to carry out his wishes."

"Same here!"

"Good, old Russell!"

Harry Wharton strode away from the notice-board, fuming.

Ogilvy's acrostic had quite robbed the special election number of the "Greyfriars Herald" of its intended effect. Instead of being an anti-Wharton number, it contained an injunction to its readers to vote for a rival candidate.

Wharton dashed into Study No. 1 in a very bad temper.

"All copies of the election number are to be destroyed at once!" he rapped out.

"My hat!" said Johnny Bull. "You intend to have a bonfire?"

Wharton nodded.

"That beastly acrostic ought to have been strangled at birth," he said. "It's too late for **THE PENNY POPULAR**—No. 47.

that now, but we can at least prevent it going any further. Give me a hand with these copies!"

The others obeyed.

Dozens of copies of the special election number were carried away to the football-ground. They were dumped down in the centre of the playing-pitch, and Harry Wharton applied a match to them.

Then the juniors sprang back out of the danger-zone, and watched the first-fruits of their labours being ruthlessly destroyed by the devouring flames.

"Phew! What a blaze!" muttered Bob Cherry.

"All our efforts gone to pot!" groaned Johnny Bull.

"It can't be helped," said Wharton. "Better to destroy every single copy than to circulate that acrostic."

"Yes, rather!" said Nugent.

The juniors waited until the conflagration resolved itself into a smouldering heap. Then they retired from the scene of their operations.

There was a shock in store for them on their return to Study No. 1.

During their absence, a number of people had been busy papering the walls. Sheets of paper, about a foot square, had been plastered on to every available space; and each sheet contained the injunction, in bold black type:

**"VOTE FOR CARR!"**

Harry Wharton's complexion turned almost purple.

"This is altogether too thick!" he said indignantly.

Bob Cherry clenched his hands.

"If only we could find out who did it!" he exclaimed.

"They must have been jolly swift, whoever they were," said Johnny Bull. "We haven't been gone twenty minutes."

Harry Wharton turned to the door.

"Let's go and interview Carr!" he said.

In Dennis Carr's study all was calm and peaceful.

Dennis was seated at prep, with Lord Maul-everer and Sir Jimmy Vivian. He looked up in mild surprise as the Famous Five marched in.

Wharton came to the point at once.

"Have you fellows been papering the walls of our study?" he demanded.

"My dear fellow," drawled Lord Maul-everer, "paperin' walls is hard work, an' I've no use for hard work."

"But Carr—"

"Not guilty!" said Dennis.

"You know nothing about our walls being papered?" said Wharton.

"Nothing—honour bright!"

Dennis Carr's word was quite good enough for the Famous Five. Time was when they would have doubted his word—when they would have viewed him with distrust and suspicion. The Dennis Carr of old had been a passionate and wayward fellow. The new Dennis Carr was straight as a die.

"Some of your supporters must have done it, unknown to you," said Wharton.

Dennis Carr stared.

"I don't see that you've anything to make a fuss about," he said. "It's jolly nice to have Good Samaritans papering your study walls."

"But not when they paper them with 'Vote for Carr!'" growled Johnny Bull.

"My hat! Is that what they've done?"

The Famous Five nodded.

"In that case, I should advise you not to tamper with the wallpaper," said Dennis.

"'Vote for Carr' is jolly sound advice!"

"Rats!"

Harry Wharton & Co. went back to Study No. 1, and for the next hour or so they were very busy. That wallpaper had been very firmly glued, and it refused to come off for a long time.

At last, however, the walls began to peel, and by bed-time most of the paper had been removed; although in certain places the inspiring message could still be traced:

**"VOTE FOR CARR!"**

## THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

### The Eve of the Election.

**M**R. QUELCH found his pupils almost uncontrollable next morning.

Never had the election-fever raged so strongly as now.

The six candidates for the captaincy of the

Remove were very excited; and their supporters appeared to be even more so.

The practical jokers who had papered Study No. 1 had evidently been busy on the black-board in the Form-room, for "VOTE FOR CARR" was chalked all over it.

Bob Cherry darted forward with a duster, in an attempt to clean the blackboard before Mr. Quelch came in.

But Bob was too late.

The Remove-master swept in with rustling gown, and he stopped short with a frown as he surveyed the board.

"What boy has had the effrontery to cover the blackboard with these foolish hieroglyphics?" demanded Mr. Quelch.

Dead silence!

"Was it you, Carr?"

"No, sir," said Dennis. "Of course I quite agree with the sentiments expressed, but—"

"That will do, Carr!"

Mr. Quelch would doubtless have pursued his inquiries, but at that moment his attention was arrested by another startling fact.

"Ogilvy! Wibley! Morgan! Desmond! Stand up!" rapped out Mr. Quelch.

The juniors addressed rose in their places.

"How dare you come into the Form-room wearing red rosettes in your button-holes?" exclaimed the Form-master.

"I—I—" stammered Ogilvy.

"We—we—" stammered Wibley.

"Answer my question!" roared Mr. Quelch.

"What do those ridiculous ornaments mean?"

"They're Dick Russell's colours, sir," explained Morgan. "You see, we mean to vote for Russell."

Mr. Quelch frowned.

"I fail to see that it is necessary to advertise the fact in the Form-room!" he said. "You will remove those rosettes at once, and deposit them in the wastepaper-basket. In addition, you will each take two hundred lines!"

"Oh crumbs!"

The rosettes were duly laid to rest, and, after Bob Cherry had been instructed to erase the writing from the blackboard, morning lessons commenced.

Mr. Quelch's eyes—which the juniors likened to gimlets—were particularly penetrating that morning.

"Bunter!" snapped the Remove-master. "Stand up, sir! What is that on your desk?"

Billy Bunter made a careful scrutiny of the desk in front of him. Then he blinked at Mr. Quelch.

"My Latin grammar, sir," he said.

"I am well aware, Bunter," said Mr. Quelch drily, "that your Latin grammar is on the desk. But there is something else—something which has no right to be there. What is it?"

"N-nothing, sir!"

"Do not lie to me, Bunter! Unless my eyes deceive me, there is a sheet of cardboard—"

Billy Bunter hastily thrust something behind his back.

"Stand out before the class, Bunter!" rumbled Mr. Quelch.

The fat junior reluctantly rolled out from his place, keeping his hands behind his back as he advanced.

There was a chuckle from the class, who could see what was written on the sheet of cardboard.

"Silence!" shouted Mr. Quelch. "Come here, Bunter!"

Billy Bunter halted in front of the Form-master, still clutching the cardboard sheet behind him. He blinked at Mr. Quelch, as if to say:

"But you can't tell me which hand it's in!"

Mr. Quelch compressed his lips, and stepped behind Bunter in order to investigate.

As he did so, Billy Bunter spun round, so that he still had his back to the angry Form-master.

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared the Removites, unable to restrain themselves any longer.

"This is no laughing matter, boys!" thundered Mr. Quelch.

But the juniors seemed to think otherwise. They were convulsed with merriment as they watched the elusive performances of Billy Bunter.

Mr. Quelch made repeated attempts to step behind the fat junior, and Bunter continued to revolve, as if he were a spinning-top. He soon became dizzy, however, and came to a full stop, with the result that Mr. Quelch was able to snatch the cardboard sheet from his grasp.

Breathing hard after his unwonted exertion, the Remove-master surveyed the



sheet, on which the following rousing message had been inscribed:

**"VOTE FOR BUNTER—AND UNLIMITED TUCK!**

**VOTE FOR BUNTER, WHO PROMISES TO PUT DOWN THE TIRFANNY OF FORM-MASTERS!**

**VOTE FOR BUNTER—AND NO MORE LINES OR LICKINGS!**

**VOTE FOR BUNTER, WHO WILL ADVOCATE THAT THE TUCKSHOP BE KEPT OPEN DAY AND NIGHT!**

**RALLY ROUND, REMOVE!**

**MAKE W. G. BUNTER YOUR LEADER AND KAPTIN!"**

"Bless my soul!" gasped Mr. Quelch. "I can scarcely credit the evidence of my eyes! How dare you squander valuable time by writing such ridiculous rubbish, Bunter?"

"I—I—" stuttered the fat junior. "Hold out your hand!"

"Oh crumbs! Does—does that mean that you're going to cane me, sir?"

"It does!" said Mr. Quelch grimly. "But—but think of the dignity of my position, sir! I'm shortly to become captain of the Remove, and—"

"Hold out your hand!" thundered Mr. Quelch, taking up the pointer.

Very reluctantly the Owl of the Remove extended a flabby and grimy paw.

"Swish, swish, swish!"

"Yow-ow-ow!"

"Now the other hand, Bunter!"

"Ow! I—I think I've had enough, sir—"

"I am the better judge of that, Bunter! Do as I tell you!"

Billy Bunter received three more cuts—a fact which he advertised by a yell which rang through the Form-room.

"Now destroy this rubbish, and go to your place!" panted Mr. Quelch.

The prospective captain of the Remove, groaning and gasping, obeyed. And for the remainder of morning lessons he sat as mum as a mouse. Billy Bunter's attack of election-fever had been effectually cured by the Form-master's pointer.

A good many fellows were in trouble before lessons were over. The pointer was freely administered, and lines were as plentiful as leaves in Vallombrosa.

"Thank goodness!" breathed Bob Cherry, when the welcome word of dismissal came.

"Cherry!" rapped out Mr. Quelch. "You were talking! Take a hundred lines, in addition to the three hundred I have already had occasion to give you!"

"Oh, help!" groaned Bob.

The Removites streamed out of the Form-room.

In the passage they encountered Gosling, the school-porter, who was staggering along with several weighty packages.

"What's all this Gossy?" exclaimed Johnny Bull. "Christmas presents arriving already?"

"Which they've come from the printers!" grunted Gosling. "An' which, moreover, they're 'eavy!"

"From the printers!" echoed Wharton.

"Who are they for?"

Dennis Carr pushed his way forward.

"I guess this is my little lot!" he said. "Dump them down, Gossy!"

The porter was only too glad to do so. Having relieved himself of the packages, he stood mopping his perspiring brow, and glanced expectantly at Dennis Carr.

"That will be all, thanks, Gossy!" said Dennis.

Gosling gave a grunt.

"Which it's usual to 'and over a tip, Master Carr—"

"I don't believe in too many tips," said Dennis gravely. "They make you tipsy."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"When we break up for the Christmas vac," continued Dennis, "I'll consider the advisability of giving you tuppence!"

"Well, I'm jiggered!" gasped Bolsover major. "Fancy having a mean bouncer like that as captain of the Remove!"

But Dennis Carr soon showed that he had been indulging in the gentle pastime of leg-pulling. He tossed a shilling to Gosling, and then asked Lord Mauleverer and Sir Jimmy Vivian to give him a hand with the packages.

"Bring them along to the study," he said.

"I say, Carr," said Billy Bunter, his mouth beginning to water. "Is it a feed?"

"Well, it's certainly a feast—" began Dennis.

"Oh, good!"

"It's a feast of good things!"

"How ripping!"

"There are articles and stories and poems —"

Billy Bunter's jaw dropped.

"But—but you can't eat those!" he protested. "I thought you said it was a feast?"

"A feast of good things from cover to cover!" said Dennis. "You see, it's a magazine."

"Oh crumbs!"

Harry Wharton & Co. were interested at once. And so, for that matter, were the rest of the juniors.

"What sort of a magazine is it?" asked Bob Cherry.

"Come along to the study, and you'll see." The packages were taken along to Dennis Carr's study, and a curious crowd followed.

"Fancy buying up such a big stock of papers!" said Peter Todd. "Not thinking of starting in business as a bookseller, are you, Carr?"

"This magazine," said Dennis, untying one of the packages, "happens to be my own."

"Great Scott!"

"In a way it's a rival to the 'Herald,' but it's not going to be a permanent thing. This is the first and last number. It was specially got out for the election. I didn't see why Wharton should have matters all his own way."

"But—but who did all the work?" ejaculated Nugent.

"Jimmy Vivian, your humble servant, and Mauly. Yes, Mauly! You needn't cackle. Mauly's got the reputation of being a born-tired slacker, but he can work like a nigger when he's roused. We've been burning the midnight oil, and not a soul knew what was in the wind—not even Bunter! We laboured, and now we're entering into the fruits of our giddy labours—see?"

"What's the rag called?" asked Skinner.

"The 'War-Cry.'"

"Pity you couldn't have called it 'Votes for Women'!" said Vernon-Smith.

"Why?"

"Because you happen to be an old woman, of course!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The laugh was against Dennis Carr, but not for long. He proceeded to distribute the copies, free, gratis, and for nothing, and the Removites turned over the pages with considerable curiosity.

The cover picture—executed by Dennis himself—was entitled "After the Election." It portrayed Dennis himself seated in state, having been elected by an overwhelming majority, and the other candidates crawling from the room on all fours, with their tails between their legs, so to speak. It was a really clever cartoon, and it evoked roars of laughter from everyone save the candidates in question.

On the first page appeared a poem, under the now familiar title of "Vote for Carr!"

The poetry was not brilliant, but it was certainly striking.

"If you wish to do the right,  
Vote for Carr!  
Rally round with all your might,  
Vote for Carr!  
Russell's hopeless, so is Toddy,  
Smifthy's stale, and Wharton's shoddy.  
Rally round, then, everybody!  
Vote for Carr!"

That was the first verse, and the same sentiments animated the remainder of the poem.

The Famous Five looked glum as they turned over the pages of the "War-Cry." They were amateur journalists themselves, and they could not but admire the enterprise and ability of Dennis Carr. At the same time they were thrown off their balance by the totally unexpected appearance of a new paper. They had imagined that they had been alone in the field with the "Greyfriars Herald."

"My hat! Just look at this!" said Bob Cherry.

Under the heading of "Advice to Electors!" appeared the following:

"Don't give your vote to Peter Todd,  
A fitting candidate for quod.  
His ways are so absurd and odd!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" chortled Dick Russell.

"That's one in the eye for you, Toddy!"

Bob Cherry continued to read the verses aloud.

"I'm sure a most unholly fuss'll  
Be made of Master Richard Russell,  
Who swopped his brains for brawn and  
muscle!"

A shout of laughter went up at Dick Russell's expense. It was well known that Russell was a very useful man with the gloves, and the verse seemed to suggest that he had sacrificed his mental ability in order to become a prizefighter.

"Well, I must say that I heartily agree with that verse. But he didn't agree with the next."

"The chaps who come up to the scratch, and vote for Wharton in a batch,  
Will be consigned to Colney Hatch!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The Famous Five clenched their hands and glared at the chucking crowd.

"I'll teach that bouncer Carr to take my name in vain like this!" growled Wharton.

"Where is he?"

"We'll jolly well slaughter him!" said Bob Cherry in warlike tones.

But Dennis Carr had discreetly made himself scarce.

Every single candidate, with the exception of Dennis, came in for a good deal of chipping in the "War-Cry."

Another double acoustic had been evolved—by Dennis Carr this time—and the solution was a very pointed one—namely, "Wharton is an ass!"

"We'll deal with Carr later!" said Johnny Bull grimly. "Meanwhile, somebody had better telephone for the ambulance!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The bell rang for dinner at that moment, and the juniors trooped into Hall.

Several muttered threats were directed at Dennis Carr as he sat at the table, but he did not turn a hair.

When the meal was over, and the juniors streamed out into the Close, Harry Wharton & Co. sought out Dennis Carr, with the object of having "a few words" with him.

The Famous Five pounced upon Dennis easily enough. He looked up with a cheerful smile as they bore down upon him.

"What's wanted?" he asked.

"You are!" growled Johnny Bull. "What do you mean by publishing libellous statements? What do you mean by saying that Wharton's an ass, and that his supporters ought to be sent to Colney Hatch?"

"Oh, don't bandy words with him!" said Bob Cherry impatiently. "Bump the bouncer!"

Dennis Carr's next action was surprising.

Before the Famous Five could carry out their intention he drew a whistle from his pocket, and sounded a shrill blast upon it.

Seven or eight fellows immediately sprang up, as if from nowhere. They were Dennis Carr's supporters.

Lord Mauleverer and Sir Jimmy Vivian were there, of course; and so were Monty Newland and Bulstrode and Dick Rake, likewise Squill and Tom Brown.

"Rescue!" rapped out Dennis.

Dennis Carr's enthusiastic supporters came on with a shrill war-cry, and the next moment a free-fight was raging in the Close.

The Famous Five lined up shoulder to shoulder, and hurled themselves at the enemy, who were led by Dennis Carr.

The other candidates—Dick Russell and Vernon-Smith, Peter Todd and Billy Bunter—came running out to see the fun.

Slowly but surely the Famous Five were beaten back. Slowly but surely they were overwhelmed by Dennis Carr's loyal backers, who fought with fierce energy.

And when, a few moments later, half the Remove turned out to see what was happening, they found Harry Wharton & Co. sprawling on their backs, with the victorious followers of Dennis Carr mounted over them in triumph.

A storm of cheering arose.

"Well played, Carr!"

"That's the stuff to give 'em!"

"You're going the right way to win!"

The Famous Five, on their promising to keep the peace and to be of good behaviour, were released, and they went along to Study No. 1 to hide their diminished heads, leaving Dennis Carr master of the situation.

Dennis was indeed going great guns. His magnetic personality had won him many supporters—supporters who would not fail him when the fateful election took place.

Excitement ran high in the Greyfriars Remove. And one question was on everybody's lips.

"What will be the result of the election?"

THE END.

(Don't miss next week's grand, long story of Harry Wharton & Co., entitled: "The Greyfriars Election!" Order your copy of the PENNY POPULAR in advance.)

THE PENNY POPULAR.—No. 47.



# JIMMY'S TERRIBLE COUSIN!

A Magnificent Long  
Complete Story of JIMMY  
SILVER & CO., the Chums  
of Rookwood.

BY  
OWEN CONQUEST.

## THE FIRST CHAPTER. A Slight Misunderstanding.

**P**UT on your best bibs and tuckers!"

Jimmy Silver of the Fourth gave the order.

The Fistical Four of Rookwood had come out of the dining-room, and Jimmy Silver had stopped to take a letter from the rack and read it. Lovell and Raby and Newcome waited while he read it, interested to know whether it contained a remittance or not.

Jimmy Silver's face brightened up as he read it. There was evidently good news in the letter, though no remittance was visible.

"What the dickens—" began Lovell. "Best bibs and tuckers!" repeated Jimmy firmly.

"Look here, we're going to rag the Moderns this afternoon," said Raby warmly. "We've arranged that already."

"Blow the Moderns this afternoon," replied Jimmy Silver. "We can rag Modern worms any time."

"But we're going to give Tommy Dodd the kybosh!" exclaimed Newcome. "We've got it all cut and dried."

"Bother Tommy Dodd!" "Look here, what's on?" demanded Lovell.

Jimmy Silver's reply was impressive. "My cousin's coming."

Jimmy's manner as he spoke indicated that he expected that answer to put an end to all argument. Strange to say, Lovell and Raby and Newcome did not seem in the slightest degree impressed. Lovell snorted. Raby sniffed. Newcome echoed the sniff. And they replied in a kind of chorus:

"Blow your cousin!"

"Bless your cousin!"

"Bother your cousin!"

"Look here," said Jimmy Silver indignantly, "this letter is from my cousin. My cousin is coming to Rookwood to-day, as it's a half-holiday, to see the place, and to see me."

"Then your blessed cousin can see us ragging the Moderns," said Lovell obstinately. "Tommy Dodd's been getting his ears up too much. He asked me this

morning whether we'd gone out of business, and said the chaps on his side were getting tired of giving us the kybosh. We're going on the warpath this afternoon."

"We are!" said Raby.

"We is!" said Newcome. "Your cousin can help, if you like, Jimmy. I suppose your cousin can punch a Modern nose—what?"

"Certainly not, fathead!"

"Eh? Can't your cousin fight?" demanded Lovell.

"No, ass!"

"Then your blessed cousin can keep away from Rookwood. We don't want any funks or slackers here. Send him a wire not to come."

"Oh, you duffer! I tell you—"

"Look here," said Lovell hotly, "will your cousin help us wallop the Moderns, or won't your cousin help us wallop the Moderns?"

"No, no, no! Because—"

"Never mind the because; that's enough. Your cousin ain't coming."

"I tell you—" shrieked Jimmy Silver.

"Are you going to send that wire?" bawled Lovell.

"No! I—"

"Collar him!" said Lovell.

"Look here, hands off! Oh, you fatheads!" roared Jimmy Silver, as his three chums collared him and jammed him against the wall. "Leggo! I tell you—"

"We're only doing this out of kindness," explained Lovell. "Are you going to send that wire?"

"No!" yelled Jimmy.

"I'll knock your head against the wall till you say 'Yes.' One—"

Bang!

"Yarooooh!"

Three juniors in Modern caps looked in at the big doorway, apparently very much interested in the little scene. They were Tommy Dodd, Tommy Cook, and Tommy Doyle—the three Tommies of the Modern side.

"Go it, ye cripples!" said Tommy Dodd encouragingly. "Mind the wall, though. You'll have somebody complaining that the wall has been damaged

by being knocked upon by a heavy wooden instrument!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Clear off, you Modern worms!" growled Lovell. "Now, Jimmy Silver, are you going to bottle up your precious cousin?"

"No! I—"

Bang!

"Yow-ow-ow! Leggo! I'll— Oh, my hat!"

"I'll keep this up as long as you like," panted Lovell. "Your funky cousin isn't coming here. Will you send him that wire?"

"Yaroooh! It isn't a— Yow-ow-ow!"

Bang!

"Ycoop! I tell you it isn't a him!" shrieked Jimmy Silver, getting it out at last.

"Eh?"

"It's a her!" yelled Jimmy.

"Oh!"

Lovell & Co., in surprise, released their leader. They had not had the least suspicion that Jimmy Silver's cousin was a "her."

"A blessed girl cousin?" ejaculated Lovell.

"Yes, you fathead!" Jimmy Silver rubbed his head and glared. "And do you think I could ask my cousin Phyllis to lend a hand ragging the Moderns, you duffers? Ow!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

## THE SECOND CHAPTER.

Tommy Dodd Makes a Kind Offer.

**H**A, ha, ha!" The mistake seemed funny to Lovell & Co. It did not seem so funny to Jimmy Silver, who rubbed his head, and looked at his merry chums as if he would cat them.

"You silly asses!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You frajulous, burbling gryphons

"Oh, draw it mild!" chuckled Lovell. "How were we to know your cousin was a her—I mean, a she?"

"Eve a jolly good mind to mop up



the floor with the lot of you!" growled Jimmy Silver, still rubbing his head.

"Pax!" said Raby amicably. "If your cousin's a she, or a her, of course, we wouldn't ask she—I mean, her—to help us ragging the Moderns. You should have explained. We withdraw those bumps."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"That's all very well!" said Lovell. "But even if the blessed cousin is a her, what about our programme for this afternoon?"

"Blow the programme!" said Jimmy crossly. "I'm going to the station to meet my cousin, and you are coming with me."

"It means wasting an afternoon," said Lovell.

Lovell was not a ladies' man.

Jimmy Silver snorted. "I tell you it's my cousin Phyllis—a stunning girl! I've told her about you fellows, and she wants to see you, too. Of course, she doesn't know what a set of rowdy hooligans you are."

"Well, we'll look after her if you make a point of it," said Lovell. "It's wasting an afternoon, but anything for the sake of a pal!"

Jimmy Silver snorted again.

Meeting cousin Phyllis was a great privilege. But as Lovell & Co. had never seen cousin Phyllis, they couldn't be expected to be very enthusiastic "on spec," as it were.

"Well, you'll have to change your collars and make yourselves look a bit respectable," growled Jimmy.

"Look here, my collar's all right."

"If you don't put on your best bibs and tuckers I won't take you."

"Oh, rats!"

"Hold on!" broke in Tommy Dodd, who had listened with great interest. "May I make a suggestion?"

The four Classical sniffed. They did not value suggestions from Moderns.

"Kick those Modern worms out!" said Lovell.

"But I've got a really good suggestion to make about entertaining Jimmy Silver's cousin," pleaded Tommy Dodd.

Jimmy looked at him rather suspiciously.

"Well, you can go ahead," he said.

"Your cousin's coming down to Coombe, I suppose—"

"Yes. Changes at Lantham at three, so I suppose it will be the thirty-third local train at Coombe."

"And she's a nice girl—what!"

"Yes, you duffer!"

"Well, she ought to be met by some decent fellows who'll look after her properly," said Tommy Dodd. "I'll tell you what. You Classical chaps can go and play marbles—"

"Eh?"

"Or hop-scotch, or whatever your special game is—"

"You cheeky ass—"

"And we'll go and meet your cousin," said Tommy Dodd calmly. "We're the nicest chaps in Rookwood; and Doyle specially is a ladies' man, being Irish. We'll take care of Cousin Phyllis for you."

"Sure, it's a foine idea, intoirely!" said Tommy Doyle heartily. "Lave it to yer superiors, dear boys!"

"I don't mind," said Tommy Cook generously.

"Is it a go?" asked Tommy Dodd, as Jimmy Silver glared at him speechlessly. "You see, the young lady will get a much better impression of Rookwood by seeing us first, and you Classical ruffians can dawn on her gradually afterwards, and it won't be so much of a shock—"

Tommy Dodd had no time to finish.

With one accord the Fistical Four rushed upon him, and the three Tommies

went spinning out of the doorway, and rolled down the steps.

They landed in the quadrangle with loud roars.

"Yow!" gasped Tommy Dodd, scrambling up. "Go for 'em!"

"Boys!"

The deep voice of Mr. Bootles, the master of the Fourth, broke in.

Tommy Dodd & Co. suddenly changed their intentions. With looks of lamblike innocence, they sauntered away across the quad.

Mr. Bootles looked very severely at the Fistical Four.

"I do not approve of this—er—horse-play, Silver!" he said severely. "You must not—er—make such scenes—er—in the doorway—what, what!"

"Yes, sir," said Jimmy Silver meekly—"I mean, no, sir!"

Mr. Bootles shook his head sternly, and toddled away.

"Might have been lines!" murmured Jimmy. "Never mind! Now come up to the dorm and get your best bib and tucker on."

"Tain't worth while changing my collar—" began Lovell.

"All serene! I'll take the Moderns instead."

"Oh, rats!"

The Co. made no further demur, and the Classical Four proceeded to the dormitory to don their best bibs and tuckers for that great occasion.

### THE THIRD CHAPTER.

#### Hold by the Enemy.

**A**DOLPHUS SMYTHE of the Shell was adorning the steps of the School House with his elegant person when the chums of the Fourth came out in their best bibs and tuckers.

The elegant Adolphus extracted an eyeglass from his waistcoat and jammed it in his vacant eye, and blinked at the four.

"By gad," he remarked, "you're lookin' almost respectable!"

Lovell paused, but Jimmy Silver marched him on.

"Look here," said Lovell, "we've got lots of time to bump that cad! We haven't got to start for an hour yet!"

"Lots of time, but we're not looking for rags now," said Jimmy. "Have you forgotten your best bib and tucker? Adolphus can wait."

"Well, let me give him one dot in the eye—"

"Bow-wow!"

Jimmy marched his chums onward, and Adolphus Smythe remained unbumped. The Fistical Four were heading for the tuckshop, it being necessary to lay in some rather extra supplies for tea in the end study. Cousin Phyllis couldn't be offered merely a sardine and a chunk of cake. Tea in the study had to be something extra-special that afternoon.

Outside Sergeant Kettle's little tuckshop in the old clock-tower there were a crowd of Modern juniors. The three Tommies were there, and Towle and Lacy, and several more of the Modern Fourth. They were watching the School House across the quad, and as the Fistical Four came in sight Tommy Dodd chuckled.

"Walking faintly into the trap, by jingo! No need for us to go and fetch 'em, they're coming!"

And all the Moderns chuckled.

Jimmy Silver frowned as the Modern crowd formed up before the doorway of the tuckshop. Having changed into their best bibs and tuckers, the Classical were not, for once, looking for rags with the Moderns.

Their previous plan had been to spend that afternoon giving Tommy Dodd the kybosh. But circumstances alter cases.

"Buzz off!" said Jimmy Silver. "Let's get in, you Modern duffers!"

"We've been looking for you," said Tommy Dodd. "We hadn't decided whether to come to your dorm for you. Now you've saved us the trouble."

"Look here—"

"We want you to come for a walky-walky," explained Tommy Dodd. "Take their arms, dear boys, like affectionate and loving schoolmates!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Best bib and tucker or no best bib and tucker, the Fistical Four could not stand that. They stood shoulder to shoulder, and put their hands up as the Modern crowd surrounded them.

But the Moderns were in great force. Tommy Dodd was a great general, and he had overwhelming odds on the spot. The Classical four were fairly rushed away, resisting manfully, through the stone archway into Little Quad.

"Will you chuck it?" shouted Jimmy Silver, struggling furiously with three pairs of hands on him. "What's the little game, you silly duffers?"

"You're the little game."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Held on both sides by the Moderns, but still resisting, the Fistical Four were marched across Little Quad and into the wood-shed. The Moderns, chuckling gleefully, crowded in with them.

"Look here, you rotters," said Lovell, "we've got our best togs on to go and meet a lady—"

The Moderns roared.

"That's all right!" said Tommy Dodd. "We won't damage your togs if you keep quiet. As for the lady, she's going to be well looked after. Get that rope, Towle!"

"What are you up to?" yelled Raby.

"Don't be impatient, dear boy; you'll see in a minute."

The Classical saw in less than a minute.

While each of them was held securely in the grasp of two or three Moderns, Towle ran the rope round them, and knotted it, securing their arms down to their sides, and fastening their legs together. There was plenty of rope, and Towle made plenty of knots.

The remarks the Classical chums made during this operation were sulphurous. But the Moderns only chortled.

"Now their hankies," said Tommy Dodd.

"Look here— Groooogh!"

Jimmy Silver's remarks were cut short by his own handkerchief being jammed into his mouth, and fastened there scientifically with twine wound round and round his head.

He could only glare at the grinning Moderns.

Lovell and Raby and Newcome "Groooogh" spasmodically, as they were gagged in their turn.

But there was no help for it.

The four Classical were then seated in a row on a bench. Tommy Dodd took the key out of the lock, and transferred it to the outside of the door.

"Good-bye!" he said affably. "Don't worry about your Cousin Phyllis, Jimmy Silver. I'm going to meet Cousin Phyllis."

Jimmy Silver glared speechlessly.

"I think you said the three-thirty," smiled Tommy Dodd. "All serene. I shall be there—so will Doyle and Cook. We'll explain that you couldn't come—that you were detained owing to circumstances over which you had no control—"

The Moderns yelled.

"We won't mention that we were the circumstances; you can explain that to Cousin Phyllis another time."

"Ha, ha, ha!"  
 "Any message to Cousin Phyllis before we go, headad?" grinned Tommy Doyle.  
 "Groogh!" gurgled Jimmy, in a vain effort to speak.

"I can't repeat 'Groogh!' to Cousin Phyllis, ye gosssoon!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Well, so-long!" said Tommy Dodd. "If you get a little bored here this afternoon, you can spend the time meditating on what silly asses you are, and how nice it is to be dished by us. Did I hear you mention, Lovell, that you were going to give the Moderns the kybosh this afternoon?"

"G-r-r-r!"

"Is this what you call the kybosh?"

"M-m-m-m!"

"Is that German or Esperanto?"

"Groogh!"

"Must be Eskimo," said Tommy Dodd.

"I can't catch on, Lovell. Say it over again!"

Lovell glared, and was silent.

The Moderns, chortling, trooped out of the wood-shed, and Tommy Dodd locked the door on the outside, and they walked away. Their laughter was heard, dying away in the distance. Then there was silence.

Jimmy Silver & Co. looked at one another.

The afternoon's expedition was suddenly cut short. Tommy Dodd was going to meet Cousin Phyllis at the station—he was going to appropriate that young lady for the afternoon.

It was a case of unexampled "nerve"; but it was just like Tommy Dodd. And while the three Tommies were showing Cousin Phyllis the sights of Rookwood, Jimmy Silver & Co. were to sit in the wood-shed chewing their gags, and chewing the cud of exceedingly unpleasant reflections.

Even if they could have spoken, their feelings were too deep to be expressed in words.

#### THE FOURTH CHAPTER. Something Like a Wheeze!

"O H, by gad!"  
 About ten minutes had elapsed since the departure of the Moderns, and Jimmy Silver & Co. had been wrestling in vain in their bonds, and chewing the handkerchiefs stuffed in their mouths.

The eyeglass of Adolphus Smythe, of the Shell, gleamed in at the window of the wood-shed, and the Classical dandy grinned at the disconsolate row of Fourth-Formers.

Jimmy Silver brightened up a little. Smythe of the Shell was his old enemy; but, after all, he was a Classical, and, therefore, bound to lend a hand in defeating a Modern jape.

Jimmy made heroic efforts to speak; but the gag was well-tied, and he could only gurggle.

Smythe chuckled gleefully. He had never been able to "down" Jimmy Silver himself; but he was very glad to see him downed.

"By gad, you look a pretty set, 'pon my word!" said Adolphus, pushing the window a little wider open, and fairly floating over the unfortunate four. "You do, by gad! I rather thought there was somethin' on, you know, and when those ruffians came back without you, you know, I thought I'd rather look in, you know. Are you fellows enjoyin' yourselves, what?"

Gurgle, gurgle!

"Like me to let you loose?"

Four heads nodded as if by clockwork.

"Then, I'm sorry I can't do it,"

chuckled Adolphus—"jolly sorry, by

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gad! But what's the little game? What have they planted you here for, dear boys?"

Gurgle, gurgle!

"Roll this way, and I'll undo the gag," said Smythe, after some consideration. He was very curious to know what Tommy Dodd & Co. were planning, though with no intention whatever of helping the luckless Classics.

Jimmy Silver rose to his feet. He could not walk, but in a series of kangaroo-like jumps he approached the window. It was something to get ungagged.

Smythe reached in and untied the twine, and jerked the handkerchief out of his mouth. Jimmy gasped with relief.

"Now, what's the little game—eh?" smiled Adolphus.

"Let us loose, Smythey."

"Can't be did," said Adolphus loftily.

"I never interfere in your fag rows, you know. Can't be mixed up in anythin' of the sort."

"You slacking idiot—"

"Oh! Good-bye!"

"Hold on, Smythey! Look here, old chap—"

"Not so much of your 'old chap.' I'm not 'old chap' to fags of the Fourth!" said Adolphus icily.

Jimmy Silver restrained the reply that rose to his lips. It was not judicious at that moment to tell the dandy of the Shell what he thought of him.

"Smythey, be a good chap, and let us loose. My Cousin Phyllis is coming to Coombe by the three-thirty—"

"By gad, is she?"

"And we want to go and meet her—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"There's nothing to cackle at, you ass! Come in and untie us—"

"So Cousin Phyllis is comin' at three, is she?" drawled Adolphus. "Nice gal, what?"

"Oh, ripping! Let us loose—"

"I'll tell you what I'll do," said Adolphus. "You can't go, that's clear. I'll take Howard and Tracy, and go instead. Nothin' to do this afternoon, and we may find it amusin'. I'll tell her you've been dished by the Modern fags, you know."

"Look here, you silly chump—"

"Good-bye!" said Adolphus. "Rey on me to look after Cousin Phyllis."

He slammed the window, and walked away, grinning. Jimmy gritted his teeth. Evidently there was no help to be had from Adolphus.

He thought of shouting for help. But the wood-shed was in an isolated spot, and window and door were shut. His shouts were not likely to be heard. Neither was Jimmy anxious to be discovered in so ridiculous a position.

"We'll get out of this, you chaps," he said. "I can use my teeth now, anyway."

He hopped back to the bench upon which his chums were sitting. They could not speak, but regarded him anxiously and hopefully.

Jimmy started with his teeth on Lovell's knots. His teeth were sound and strong, and he worked hard. In a few minutes the first knot was dragged loose, and Lovell had one arm free.

"There's a knife in my pocket," said Jimmy. "Get at it if you can."

Lovell, with his free hand, groped in Jimmy's pocket, and extracted the pocket-knife. He held it between his knees, and opened the blade.

The Fistical Four were all looking very bright now. Adolphus Smythe was far from dreaming of the amount of help he had given.

Lovell sawed through his own bonds

with the knife, and stood free. Then he sawed through the rope that was wound round Jimmy Silver. In a few minutes more Raby and Newcome were cut loose. They tore the gags out of their mouths, and gasped with relief.

"Groo-hoo!" mumbled Raby. "My blessed jaw's quite stiff! Now we'll make those Modern cads sit up!"

"We'll simply slaughter 'em!" said Lovell sulphurously.

"We'll skin 'em!" growled Newcome.

"Come on! We'll soon get out of this now we're loose!"

"Hold on!" said Jimmy Silver.

"Rats! Let's go and find those Modern worms! I don't suppose they've started for Coombe yet."

"We'll get a crowd of Classical chaps, and collar 'em, and mop up the quad with 'em!" hooted Lovell.

"Hold on, I tell you! Listen to your Uncle Jimmy!"

"Oh, rats, I tell you! Uncle Jimmy be blowed! Let's go and scrag the Moderns!" roared Lovell.

He started for the window. Jimmy Silver put his back to the window.

"You bull-headed blatherskite!" he said witheringly. "Shut up, and listen! I've got a wheeze."

"Well, get it off your chest!" growled Lovell. "I want to get at the Moderns!"

"Those duffers are going to Coombe to meet Cousin Phyllis," said Jimmy.

"Well, let 'em go!"

"What?"

"Cousin Phyllis changes at Lantham. There's plenty of time for a chap to get to Lantham on a bike and intercept her at the junction. The chap can bring her to Rookwood in a trap."

Lovell's face broke into a grin.

"Oh! And those Modern worms can wait at Coombe for her! Good!"

"Good egg!" said Raby.

"That isn't all," said Jimmy Silver. "I don't want to disappoint the Moderns. They are going to meet Cousin Phyllis at Coombe."

"Eh?"

"Another Cousin Phyllis," exclaimed Jimmy.

"Have you got two Cousin Phyllises, then?"

"No, fathead! But we've got the girl's clobber that we used for 'Alice in Wonderland' when we did our pantomime."

"Oh, my hat!"

"That's the wheeze," said Jimmy Silver, with a chuckle. "I thought it out while I was sitting there chewing my hanky—if we could only get loose in time. Well, owing to that idiot Smythe, we've got loose, though he didn't intend us to. We're going to sneak out of this quietly. One chap can scoot off to Lantham on a jigger, with a note from me to Cousin Phyllis, and bring her on in a trap. And I'm going to put on the 'Alice' clobber—"

"Oh, crumbs!"

"And meet Tommy Dodd & Co. at Coombe. I can get in the train at the next station from Coombe, and come on just as if I'd come from Lantham."

"But—but—"

"Tommy Dodd knows my cousin's like me, so if he notices a resemblance it won't matter."

"But you're too jolly plain for a girl," objected Raby.

Jimmy Silver only replied to that remark with a glare.

"They'll bowl you out!" said Newcome.

"How can they bowl me out, fathead, when they think I'm tied up in the wood-shed all the time?" demanded Jimmy.

"Besides, can't I make-up? Ain't I the





The three Tommies jumped back to escape the shower of crockery and eatables. Miss Silver caught up the dish of sardines, and with a twist of her hand scattered the fishes over the three astounded Tommies. Then she opened the door and departed. (See page 14.)

best actor in the Classical Players' Society?"

"Not by long chalks!" said Raby promptly.

"Oh, don't jaw! I'm going to plant myself on Tommy Dodd as Phyllis Silver, and give 'em a high old time when I have tea in their study."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

That prospect silenced all objections. Jimmy Silver had his way, as he usually did.

Jimmy opened the window, and the four juniors dropped out one after another, and the window was closed again. By a roundabout way, taking great care not to be observed, the Fistical Four reached the School House, and entered at the back, to carry out that stunning scheme which was to give the Moderns, after all, the promised kybosh.

#### THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

"Miss Silver."

**J**IMMY SILVER & Co. lost no time. Oswald of the Fourth was called in, and the great scheme was whispered to him, with many chuckles. Dick Oswald willingly undertook the ride to Lantham. Jimmy silver hastily wrote a note to be delivered to Miss Silver at Lantham Junction, informing her that his special chum, Oswald, was to bring her to Rookwood in a trap, instead of by the local train, and the Fistical Four went

through their pockets to provide the funds for the trap. Oswald was given a full description and a photograph of Cousin Phyllis, and he went off for his bike. In a few minutes Dick Oswald had wheeled his machine out of the school gates, and was riding away for Lantham at top speed.

Jimmy Silver opened the box which contained the properties of the Classical Players, and selected the clobber required for his purpose. It was packed in a bag. The disguise, of course, could scarcely be donned within the walls of Rookwood School.

"We'll get out at the back gate and cut across the fields," said Jimmy Silver. "Come on!"

The Fistical Four left the house by a back door, and scudded out of the side gate, and took to the fields at once. They did not wish to risk being spotted by the Moderns on the road. They followed a short cut across the meadows, and passed the village of Coombe without entering it, and kept on to Hurley, the first station on the Lantham line.

"We halt here," said Jimmy. He looked at his watch. "Just three. The train from Lantham to Coombe stops in Hurley at three-twenty. We've got twenty minutes."

"Get on with the washing!" said Lovell.

A shed in the field gave the juniors shelter from the public view. Jimmy

rolled up his trousers to the knees, and rapidly donned the attire worn by "Alice" in the Rookwood pantomime. In a three-quarter skirt, a blouse and a belt, and stockings and shoes, Jimmy Silver made a somewhat burly, but quite presentable young lady. Lovell held a glass for him while he attended to his face.

Jimmy had had great practice in the art of make-up. His face was smooth and well-coloured, and only a few touches were required.

A flaxen wig and a pretty little hat changed his looks enormously. Then his eyebrows were touched up artistically.

"My only hat!" said Lovell, in great admiration. "You ain't bad-looking now, Jimmy!"

"Fathead!"

"A good deal like Jimmy Silver, though!" grinned Raby. "But, of course, that's only to be expected in Jimmy's cousin!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Jimmy added a few final touches, and surveyed the result in the glass. He nodded with satisfaction at his reflection.

"Good enough!" he said. "Too good for taking in a Modern duffer, in fact! Five minutes to catch the train! Ta-ta!"

"M-m-my hat! I—I shouldn't care to walk out like that, all the same!" said Lovell.

"Oh, rot!"

"I—I say," ejaculated Raby, a sudden thought occurring to him rather late, "I believe it isn't allowed to dress in girl's clothes!"

Jimmy Silver paused.

"Oh, crumbs! I—I hadn't thought of that!"

"Suppose a bobby—"

"Well, you're a blessed Job's comforter!" growled Jimmy Silver. "It's too late now! Ta-ta!"

And Jimmy marched off.

His chums watched him from the shed. He had a somewhat pronounced stride for a girl, but otherwise the get-up was complete and quite excellent. Lovell chuckled.

"The Modern worms won't spot him in a month of Sundays!" he said. "Let's get back to Rookwood. We've got to get tea ready for the genuine article."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The Co. started for Rookwood, chuckling jocosely.

Jimmy Silver walked into the station and took his ticket. With all his nerve, he was a little uneasy at first, but he found that he passed without attracting glances. The train came in from Lantham, and Jimmy stepped into it.

He chuckled as he sat down, and the train rolled on to Coombe. Everything in the garden was lovely—from a Classical point of view.

#### THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

##### Captured!

"HERE we are!" said Tommy Dodd.

The three Tommies had arrived at Coombe Station in good time for the train. They were looking very spick-and-span, and very cheery as they strolled on the platform. Never had they dished the Classics so thoroughly, and the thought of Jimmy Silver & Co. sitting in the wood-shed, while they were meeting cousin Phyllis, made them burst into spasmodic chuckles.

"Hallo, Classical duffers!" said Tommy Cook. "What do they want here?"

Smythe of the Shell and his chum Tracy were on the platform, lounging about elegantly, and evidently waiting for the train to come in. They bestowed supercilious glances on the three Moderns.

"We've got time to mop them up, bedad!" remarked Tommy Doyle.

But Tommy Dodd shook his head.

"Never mind them now. Remember you're here to meet a lady!"

The train appeared in sight at last.

"Here she comes!" grinned Cook.

"Now for cousin Phyllis!" chuckled Tommy Dodd. "Keep your eyes open! I dare say she looks a bit like poor old Jimmy. He said she was like him."

The train stopped, and several passengers alighted.

"By gad, here she is, dear boy!" said Adolphus Smythe.

A young lady of about fifteen had alighted. She was a somewhat burly young lady, but her complexion was very fresh, and her long flaxen hair decidedly pretty. She looked up and down the platform, as if expecting to be met. Smythe and Tracy started forward, raising their shining silk toppers, and bowing with much grace. It was easy to see in the girl's face a resemblance to Jimmy Silver.

"Miss Silver?" said Adolphus.

The girl looked at him.

"Yes."

"Jimmy Silver's cousin—what?"

"Oh, yes!"

"We've come to meet you," explained

Adolphus. "We— Keep away, you Modern cads! Don't shove!"

Tommy Dodd & Co. had rushed up. For a moment they could not believe their eyes. But when they realised that the dandy of the Shell was going to appropriate Cousin Phyllis, they chipped in promptly and effectively.

Tommy Cook seized Smythe by the shoulders and swung him away. Tommy Doyle took Tracy by the ear, and jerked him back. Tommy Dodd stepped forward and raised his cap to the young lady.

"We've come to meet you, Miss Silver, and take you to Rookwood," he said. "Jimmy has been unavoidably detained."

Miss Silver looked surprised.

There was cause for surprise. Smythe and Tracy had not taken their "medicine" quietly. They were rolling on the platform with Doyle and Cook, engaged in desperate combat.

"Don't mind those kids, Miss Silver!" said Tommy Dodd reassuringly. "It's only high spirits, you know."

"They— Are they fighting?" stammered cousin Phyllis.

"Fighting? Oh, no! What we call a scrap at Rookwood!" said Tommy Dodd calmly. "Let me show you the way out, Miss Silver."

"Thank you so much!"

Tommy Dodd gallantly escorted Miss Silver out of the station. Outside, in the village street, he waited for his chums. In a few minutes Cook and Doyle rejoined him.

Both of them looked rather dusty and rumpled, but they had evidently been victorious. As a matter of fact, they had left the dandies of the Shell sitting on the platform, making frantic endeavours to extract themselves from the silk hats that had been jammed over their ears.

"Excuse me, miss!" gasped Tommy Doyle. "Sure, those blaggards were ather playin' a joke intiohly!"

"Dear me!" said Miss Silver.

Her voice, as well as her face, was very like Jimmy Silver's, as the Modern juniors noted.

"But we've stopped them," said Tommy Cook. "May we have the pleasure of seeing you to Rookwood, miss?"

"But my cousin Jimmy—"

"He couldn't come," said Tommy Dodd. "He was awfully sorry—I don't think I ever saw a chap look so sorry for himself as Jimmy did when he found he couldn't come—"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Doyle.

Tommy Dodd gave him a severe look.

"What are you cackling at, Tommy? There's nothing funny in Jimmy Silver's sad disappointment. He couldn't come, Miss Silver, owing to circumstances over which he had no control—no control whatever—and so we told him we would come."

"I am sure it is very kind of you! Are you a friend of Jimmy's?"

"Oh, we're great pals! I'm Tommy Dodd, you know. This chap with the face is Tommy Doyle, and the chap with the ears is Tommy Cook."

"Sure, you spalpeen—"

"You silly ass!"

"This is the way to Rookwood, miss!"

The three Tommies marched Miss Silver off in triumph. It was true that she was a somewhat muscular young lady, taking after her cousin Jimmy, perhaps, in that respect. But she was quite good-looking, and, upon the whole, the Moderns felt pleased with their capture. They walked off to Rookwood in great spirits.

A group of Moderns were lounging in the gateway of the school, and they all

smiled and raised their caps very respectfully to Miss Silver.

"Captured, by Jove!" murmured Towle. "What will Jimmy Silver say—eh?"

And the Moderns chuckled gleefully. The three Tommies escorted Miss Silver across the quadrangle in great state to Mr. Manders' house.

"But where is my cousin Jimmy?" she asked, pausing at the doorway.

"Detained!" said Tommy Dodd sorrowfully. "He hopes to get off before you catch your train, that's all. It's very sad, but we promised him—ahem—to see that you should want for nothing. We've got rather a nice tea ready in the study. You'll come, won't you? Jimmy—ahem!—would be disappointed if you didn't."

"Thank you so much!"

"Not at all, Miss Silver. This is an honour to us, all the more because we're so fond of your cousin Jimmy."

And Miss Silver was escorted to the study in triumph.

#### THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

##### A Very Merry Tea-party.

TOMMY DODD had laid in unusual supplies for that study tea.

The occasion was to be honoured in first-rate style.

It was not often that the three Tommies had a lady visitor to tea; and certainly they had never had one under such circumstances before.

They were prepared to enjoy the occasion—all the more from the anticipation of what Jimmy Silver & Co. would say afterwards.

Miss Silver seemed very pleased with her surroundings. She took the arm-chair. Several books happened to be reposing in the armchair, and the young lady tossed them into the grate and sat down.

The three Tommies looked a little startled. Tommy Dodd made a rush to rescue the books, which were already scorching.

"Ahem!" he stammered.

"Quite a nice little study!" said Miss Silver. "Do you little boys always have your tea here?"

The Modern juniors did not exactly like the "little boys," but they nodded and grinned politely.

"Sure, we do!" said Tommy Doyle. "But it's seldom intiohly that we have such a charmin' visitor to tay, bedad!"

"You must let me make the tea," said Miss Silver.

"Certainly!" said Tommy Dodd.

He had rescued the books, and he jammed the kettle on the fire. Doyle and Cook produced the good things from the cupboard, and the table was laid. Miss Silver insisted upon lading out the jam from the jar into the nobby dish which had been specially borrowed from a Sixth Form study. Knowles of the Sixth did not know that his dish had been borrowed, but that was a mere detail. It was necessary to have things decent for a lady visitor, as Tommy Dodd declared, with the full concurrence of his chums.

Miss Silver laded out the jam with a tablespoon, and when she had finished she dropped the jar. There was a terrific yell from Tommy Doyle.

"Arrah! Tare an' 'ouns! Yurrooh!"

"What is the matter?"

Doyle was dancing on one leg, and nursing his other foot with both hands. Miss Silver gazed at him in surprise.

"Is that a new kind of tango?" she asked.

"Ow, Moses! Sure ye dropped the jar on me fat!" groaned Doyle.



"Dear me! What a fuss to make about a trifle!"

"Faith, it isn't a trifle to have yer big toe squashed!"

"Poor little boy!"

"Oh, cheese it, Tommy!" said Cook. "Accidents will happen!"

"Pick up the jar," said Miss Silver.

Tommy Doyle stooped to pick up the jar. Miss Silver reached forward with the jam spoon, and pushed it down his back under the collar.

Doyle gave a curious kind of howl and leaped up. The cold, clammy, jammy spoon slipped right down his back, and he felt decidedly uncomfortable. He stared at Miss Silver with his eyes almost starting from his head.

"Ger-ger-great Scott!" he gasped.

The three Tommies were almost speechless. They had never encountered a young lady like this before. In practical joking Miss Silver could plainly give points to her merry Cousin Jimmy.

"I—I say!" ejaculated Tommy Dodd, in dismay.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Miss Silver's laugh was very like Jimmy's. Doyle's weird contortions as he strove to extract the spoon from down his back, seemed to afford her great amusement.

"Oh, you funny boy!" she exclaimed.

"I—I say, Miss Silver—" stammered Cook. "I—I say—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Tommy Doyle bolted out of the study. He could not get that spoon out without a removal of attire which was impossible in the presence of Miss Silver. He was glad to get away from that lively young lady for a while, too.

"The—the kettle's boiling," said Tommy Dodd feebly. "You were g-g-going to make the tea, Miss Silver?"

"Yes, certainly."

Miss Silver took up the kettle.

"Where is the teapot?"

Tommy Dodd held out the teapot. The kettle jerked forward, and Tommy Dodd jerked back his hand just in time. Several hot drops splashed on his knees, and he jumped, and the teapot went to the floor with a crash.

"Dear me! How clumsy you are, Todd!" said Miss Silver.

"You—you splashed me!" mumbled Tommy. "And—and my name's Dodd, not Todd."

"Now you have smashed the teapot. You ought to be punished for that," said Miss Silver severely. "I shall box your ears!"

"Wha-a-at!"

Biff!

Tommy Dodd gave a wild yell, and dodged round the table. He stared wildly at Miss Silver across the table. His ear was burning, and as red as fire. "Oh, my only aunt!" gasped Cook, in dismay.

"I—I say, draw it mild, you know!" stuttered Tommy Dodd, beginning to wish that he had not captured that lively young lady.

"Now find me another teapot!" said Miss Silver.

"I—I'll borrow one along the passage." Tommy Dodd rushed out, clapping his burning ear. Tommy Cook kept the table between him and Miss Silver, feeling rather alarmed at being left alone in the study with her.

"Goodness gracious!" said Miss Silver. "Look at these jam-tarts!"

"Wha-a-at's the matter with them?" faltered Cook.

"Look at them!"

Tommy Cook leaned over the table to look more closely at the dish of jam-tarts, wondering what was the matter with them. A hand was clapped immediately

on the back of his head, and his face was driven fairly into the tarts.

A terrific squabble came from the unfortunate Cook.

"Gurrrrrrrrrrrg!"

"Ha, ha, ha! You funny boy!"

"Groogh! Leggo! Yoop!"

It seemed like a grip of iron on the back of the unfortunate Tommy's head. His face squashed and squelched in the tarts. When he freed his head at last, and jumped back, his face was smothered with jam and pastry, and presented a most remarkable aspect. Miss Silver shrieked with laughter.

"Oh, you funny boy!"

"Groogh! What the thunder—I—I beg your pardon—I mean—I— Oh, crumbs!"

Tommy Cook dashed out of the study. What he needed most was a wash, and to get away from Miss Silver for a bit.

He met his chums in the passage returning. They stared at him blankly.

"What's the matter with your face?" yelled Tommy Dodd.

Cook gasped and spluttered.

"It's that awful girl! She jammed my chivvy into the tarts!"

"Oh, my hat!"

"Howly mother av Moses!"

"I—I can't stand much more of her! Jimmy Silver's welcome to a cousin like that! If she was a boy, I'd mop up the study with her!" gasped Cook. "For goodness' sake get rid of her as quick as you can!"

"But—but we've asked her to tea!"

"Well, look at my face. She ain't a girl—she's a Suffragette or something! Look at my chivvy!" shrieked Cook.

He rushed away, spluttering. Tommy Dodd and Doyle exchanged looks of dismay. They really felt a little nervous about re-entering the study.

Crash—crash!

The sound of smashing crockery from the study decided them. Tommy Dodd opened the door, and entered hastily.

"Wha-a-at has happened?"

"Goodness gracious! The table went over when I pushed it!" exclaimed Miss Silver.

"Oh crikey!"

The table was on its side. The crockery was on the floor, mostly in fragments, and the good things had rolled far and wide.

"You must not say 'Oh crikey!' to me!" exclaimed Miss Silver severely. "Have you no manners, you bad boy? I shall box your ears again!"

"Here, you keep off!" yelled Tommy Dodd, dodging wildly round the study.

"Oh, Miss Silver!" gasped Doyle. "Sure and ye— Yaroooh!"

Biff!

Tommy Doyle staggered against the wall as he received that box on the ear. He leaned there, and blinked dazedly. He was quite overcome. What sort of a young lady was this that the Modern heroes had captured?

"Sure, it's draming I am intoirely!" murmured Doyle.

"Keep off!" roared Tommy Dodd, as Miss Silver pursued him round the overturned table. "D-d-don't! I—I give you best!"

"You bad boy!"

"I'm s-s-sorry—I really am!"

Tommy Dodd was sorry, there was no doubt about that—sorry that he had played that stunning wheeze on Jimmy Silver, and captured that terrible cousin.

The unfortunate Tommy was cornered. He backed into the corner, and put up his hands defensively. He would have given a term's pocket-money for Miss Silver to have been a boy, so that he could have mopped up the study with the terrible guest. But it was evidently

out of the question to mop up the study with a lady.

Miss Silver paused, and gathered up some of the tarts and muffins.

"Stand still!" she commanded.

"Ye-es, miss."

"Don't move your silly head!"

"Oh! Nunno, miss!"

Squash! A well-aimed tart clung to Tommy Dodd's nose.

"Oh crumbs! Wharrer you at?" he yelled.

It was a superfluous question. Miss Silver was pelting him with the tarts. Tommy Dodd dodged wildly, but three or four of the tarts got wickets.

"There, you bad boy!" said Miss Silver. "Now, are you sorry, Dodd?"

"Ye-es!" moaned Tommy Dodd feebly.

"Now give me the teapot, and let us have tea," said Miss Silver.

Tommy Dodd wiped his face and his perspiring brow with his handkerchief.

He would have given untold wealth for that tea-party to be taking place in Jimmy Silver's study instead of his own. In Miss Silver the Modern heroes had bitten off, as it were, more than they could masticate.

Feeling quite weak and forlorn, Tommy Dodd and Doyle set up the table, and rescued what they could of the eatables.

Tommy Cook came back, with his face newly washed and very red, and looking very nervous. Dodd and Doyle gave him hopeless looks. Tommy Dodd raided the next study for more crockery, and tea commenced.

The three Tommies hoped that Miss Silver would calm down over tea, but that hilarious young lady was only beginning.

Tommy Dodd tried to laugh, as at a good joke, when she ladled jam on his sardines, but it was a hollow laugh. Tommy Doyle yelled when she poured tea over his knees instead of into his cup. Tommy Cook, in an unfortunate moment, asked her to pass the butter. She passed it, and he caught it with his chin.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Look here," roared Cook, "you may think this funny, Miss Silver—"

"I do! Ha, ha!"

"Well, I don't! I think it's rotten!" howled Cook, quite forgetting his politeness.

Butter under the chin was not conducive to politeness.

Miss Silver jumped up.

"You think what?" she demanded.

"I—I beg your pardon!" stammered Cook. "Oh, yaroooh!"

Biff!

"I shall always box your ears when you are rude!" said Miss Silver.

"Oh dear!"

"Sure, I wish I was in the wood-shed instead of those spalpeens!" groaned Doyle.

"S'hush!"

There was a sound of wheels outside, and Miss Silver jumped up again, and looked out of the window. A trap had driven in, with Dick Oswald and a pretty girl of fifteen seated in it.

The three Tommies followed her glance. The trap stopped outside the School House, and, to the stupefaction of the three Moderns, Lovell and Raby and Newcome came out to greet the visitor.

"The—The Classics!" stuttered Tommy Dodd. "They—they've got away, then!"

Miss Silver turned round from the window.

"I must buzz off!" she said cheerily. "Thanks so much for your kind enter-

tainment. I hope you've enjoyed it as much as I have!"

"Oh! Yes-es," gasped Tommy Cook, "we—we have rather! Hallo! What the merry thunder are you at?"

Miss Silver had grasped the table by one side. Before the three Tommies could realise what was coming she tilted it over towards them.

They jumped back to escape the shower of crockery and eatables. Miss Silver caught up the dish of sardines, and, with a twist of her hand, scattered the fishes over the three astounded Tommies. Then she opened the door and departed.

Tommy Dodd & Co. gazed at one another speechlessly.

They were quite overcome.

"Faith, did ye ever see such a horrid baste?" gasped Doyle at last. "Sure, Jimmy Silver is welcome to her intoirly!"

"I—I'm smothered! I'm fishy all over!" moaned Cook.

Tommy Dodd groaned.

"Oh, what an afternoon! I wish I'd let Smythe capture her. I wish I'd left her to Jimmy Silver, confound him! Oh dear! Oh crumbs! Oh crikey!"

#### THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

##### The Genuine Article.

OSWALD of the Fourth looked into the study about ten minutes later. The three Tommies were trying to set it to-rights.

"Pax!" said Oswald cheerily, as the Moderns glared at him. "I've brought you an invitation to tea—extra special spread in the end study. Jimmy Silver's cousin's there."

"Blow Jimmy Silver's cousin!" groaned Cook. "We're fed-up with Jimmy Silver's cousin. Tell Jimmy Silver to take her away and bury her!"

Oswald looked surprised.

"Why, you've never met her!" he said.

"We've had her here to tea!" mumbled Tommy Dodd. "Look at the state the study's in! If Jimmy Silver's relations are all like that, he must have a high old time in the holidays."

"Oh, draw it mild!" said Oswald. "She hasn't been here!"

"Sure, I tell ye the baste—ahem!—I mean, she has been here, and she's wrecked the blessed place!" roared Doyle. "She's got the manners of a Prussian, and you can tell Jimmy Silver so from me!"

"But I've only brought her in ten minutes ago, in the trap from Lantham."

"Trap from Lantham!" gasped Tommy Dodd.

"Yes," said Oswald innocently.

"Jimmy Silver asked me to fetch his cousin from Lantham in the trap."

"D-d-didn't she come by the local

train to Coombe, after all?" stuttered Cook.

"No fear!"

"Then—then who did?" yelled Tommy Dodd.

"Is that a conundrum?"

"Look here, some Miss Silver or other has been here—"

"Oh, you're dreaming!" said Oswald cheerily. "Miss Silver came in the trap with me, and she's in the end study now just going to have tea. And Jimmy Silver's sent you a special invitation."

"Then—then he isn't in the woodshed!" stuttered Cook.

"Eh? What woodshed?"

"Oh, dear!"

"Better come," urged Oswald. "Cousin Phyllis is really a stunning girl, and she's quite anxious to see you!"

The three Tommies looked at one another quite dazed.

"Sure, phwat does it mane intoirly?" gasped Doyle.

"I—I suppose that was the girl we saw come in in the trap with Oswald," said Tommy Cook. "But—but who was

But the Modern juniors were not anxious at that moment to encounter the enraged knuts. They tore up the stairs at top speed, and marched on to the end study. There was a sound of merry voices from that celebrated apartment, and a girlish voice.

Tommy Dodd knocked at the door.

"Come in!" sang out Jimmy Silver's well-known voice.

The door was opened, and the three Moderns entered.

The Fistical Four were all there, smiling. Oswald was there, too, also smiling. And a charming young girl was there, laughing. Jimmy Silver had just been telling her an entertaining story of a tea-party in Tommy Dodd's study.

"Here you are!" said Jimmy Silver hospitably. "Trot in! Tommy Dodd and Dook and Coyle—I mean, Cook and Doyle—Miss Phyllis Silver!"

Tommy Dodd stammered out something, he hardly knew what. Cousin Phyllis gave the three Tommies a charming smile.

"I am so glad to see you!" she said softly. "It was so kind of you to come to the station for me, though I—I wasn't there!"

"I—I—" stammered Tommy Dodd.

"Oswald fetched my cousin from Lantham," explained Jimmy Silver. "I was detained on business—important business. By the way, I hear you've had a visitor, Duddy?"

Tommy Dodd gasped.

He caught sight of a flaxen wig hung up over the mantelpiece in a prominent position. Then he understood. Jimmy Silver was in his ordinary attire now; but the sight of that flaxen wig enlightened the three Tommies. They did not need telling now the real identity of the "Miss Silver" they had entertained at tea with such direful results.

"Oh, ye thafe of the worruld!" murmured Doyle.

"Oh, you spoofer!" gasped Cook.

Tommy Dodd forced a laugh. The great chief of the Modern juniors knew how to take a defeat.

"Awfully ripping of you to ask us to tea with your cousin, Jimmy!" he said. "Thanks so much! It's a great pleasure to see you at Rookwood, Miss Silver!"

"Good old Tommy!" murmured Jimmy Silver.

And the three Tommies sat down to tea, and, under the influence of cousin Phyllis' bright eyes, they quite recovered their spirits. And when Miss Phyllis had to catch her train, she was escorted to the station by seven juniors, all on the best of terms. But it was a long time before the three Tommies were allowed to forget the visit of "Jimmy's Terrible Cousin!"

THE END.

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it that came here, then? Has that thundering beast Silver got two cousins?"

"Let's go," said Tommy Dodd. "I—I can't catch on, somehow. It's a giddy mystery! Let's go and find out!"

In a perplexed and exasperated frame of mind, the three Tommies crossed the quadrangle to the Classical side. Smythe and Tracy of the Shell scowled at them as they came in.

They were very sore with Tommy Dodd & Co. for having stolen Miss Silver under their very eyes. Smythe always considered that he had a way with him that appealed to members of the opposite sex.

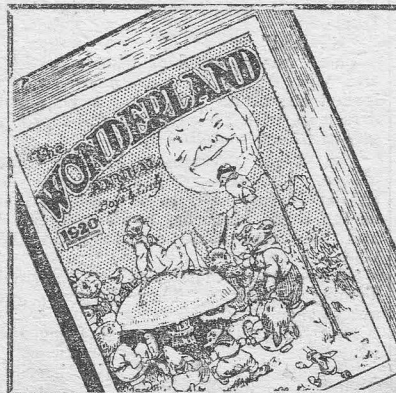
This was no doubt due to his vanity, for the dandy's ways were probably as objectionable to members of the fair sex as they were to the juniors at Rookwood.

Be that as it may, Smythe felt that he owed Tommy Dodd & Co. a grudge, and he felt just in the mood to repay that grudge.

"Modern bounders!" he exclaimed. "Let's give the fotters the hiding of their lives!"

"What-ho!" exclaimed Tracy.

And he followed in Smythe's wake in the direction of Tommy Dodd & Co.



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By . . .

## MARTIN CLIFFORD.

### THE FIRST CHAPTER. The Way of the Spirit.

“COMING along to footer, Gustavus?” asked Jack Blake, of the Fourth Form at St. Jim’s.

Arthur Augustus D’Arcy looked up from the small parcel he was unwrapping. “I think not, Blake,” he said gravely. “I do not feel at all inclined for footah at present. My mind is given to more serious matters.”

“Oh, that spiritualistic rot, I suppose? I knew you were an ass; but I didn’t think that you were such an ass as to take to that in your old age!”

“It is not wot, Blake; an’ to chawactewise it as wot is like your ewass Philistinism! Lots of weally great men—Sir Waymond Lodge an’ Sir Conan Doyle—believe in it most firmly, an’—”

“Who’s Lodge, anyway? I know Conan Doyle, of course. ‘Sherlock Holmes’ is jolly good, and ‘Rodney Stone,’ and ‘The White Company,’ and ‘Sir Nigel,’ are ripping. But if he’s taken to believing in spooks, and all that kind of flummery—”

“It is not flummery, Blake!”

“I’ll bet Sherlock Holmes wouldn’t have believed in it, anyway,” said Digby.

“Sherlock Holmes nevah existed in the flesh, Conan Doyle cweated him.”

“You mean imagined him, don’t you? That’s what he’s doing with the spirits, I guess. And you’re adding your brains over the silly twaddle—”

“Weally, deah boy, I—”

“It doesn’t need much logic to be a spook-merchant,” said Blake. “If Conan Doyle believes in it, I’ll bet Haggard doesn’t!”

“What will you bet?” asked Gussy eagerly.

“Anything you like, old sport!”

“A first-class feed all round?”

“Yes—when I’ve got the dibs to pay for it!”

“Wight-ho! Just let me open this parcel, an’ I will convince you that Widah Haggard is also a spiritualistic believah!”

“Rats!” snapped Blake.

Jack Blake was not greatly given to reading; but, like most boys, he had read a good deal of Conan Doyle and Rider Haggard. He knew all about Alan Quatermain and Umslopogea the Zulu, and scores of other characters in Haggard’s thrilling romances; and he could not believe that the man who had written about them could ever descend to such “soft stuff” as he considered spiritualism. Not that Blake knew as much about spiritualism as he did about Alan Quatermain; but his conviction that it was soft, silly stuff was deeply rooted.

Gussy opened his parcel, and displayed a book.

“There you are, deah boy!” he said triumphantly. “‘The Way of the Spirit,’ by H. Widah Haggard! Look for yourself, if you don’t believe me!”

don’t believe it’s about spooks and all that rot.”

“It is not wot, Blake; an’ I fail to see what this stowy can be about if not—”

“Bet you it isn’t!” put in Dig.

“Have you wead it, may I ask, Digbay?”

“No, I haven’t. I’ve read the adventure ones; but someone told me that that thing and some more of them weren’t up to much.”

“I do not see what you can know about it if you have not wead it. I wefuse to bet, because I wegard bettin’ as low, but—”

“Why, you’ve just made a bet with Blake, you bounder!”

“Yaas, but that is weally not quite the same thing, because I have a hampah comin’—”

“Are you fellows coming down to footer?” inquired Kerruish, from the study next door, sticking in his head. “Did you say you’d a hamper coming, Gussy? Corn in Egypt! There haven’t been many hampers about lately!”

“Look here, Gustavus—”

“Yaas, I have a hampah comin’, Kewwuish, but—”

“Will you listen to me, ass?” snorted Digby. “You say you’ve a hamper comin’?”

“Yaas!”

“And you’ve bet Blake a feed that—”

“Yaas, that was the agweement.”

“And if you lose you stand the feed from your hamper?”

“Yaas, of course!”

“My hat!”

“Well, I’m hanged!” exclaimed Blake.

“Heads I win, tails you lose!” said Herries.

“Weally, I do not see that—”

“Oh, don’t you? See here—we always whack our hampers in this study, don’t we?”

“Yaas, that is so!”

“Well, then, dummy, you’re betting what belongs to me and Herries and Blake as much as it does to you, really. We should have the feed anyway, whether you win or lose.”

“Whereas, if I lose I’ve got to shell out the dibs to pay for a feed!” growled Blake.

“And this is the chap who says he regards betting as wrong!” Dig said, pointing a finger at Gussy.

“Bai Jove! I did not look at it quite in that light. An’ even now I cannot see that—”

“If you can’t see, you’re blind, that’s all!” said Herries. “I’m not going to have you betting with my grub, that’s straight!”

“Weally, deah boys—Kewwuish, I appeal to you! Am I wight or w’ong?”

“We always whack out our hampers in No. 5,” answered Kerruish. “They belong to the study, we reckon. I must say that I think you’re wrong, Gussy!”

“If you think I am w’ong, you must think that I wanted to chisel these fellows, Kewwuish!” returned Arthur Augustus indignantly.

“It does look rather like it,” Kerruish said, grinning.

He did not mean it, of course. No one at St. Jim’s was less likely than Arthur Augustus

D’Arcy to attempt even the mildest possible form of chiselling.

But Gussy thought he meant it, and Gussy was indignant.

“Vewy well, Kewwuish!” he said hotly.

“When that hampah awwives, I will take caah that you have no shaah whatever in what it may contain!”

It was Kerruish’s turn to wax indignant now, and he waxed.

“I like that!” he snapped. “You ask me to decide, and because I say what I honestly think—”

“It was not your sayin’ what you thought that I objected to. It was the insult—”

“Oh, go to Bath!” exclaimed Kerruish.

“Are you fellows coming?”

“We’re coming—all but Gussy,” replied Blake.

“Nobody wants him, I should think!” snapped the Manx junior.

The four went, and Arthur Augustus was left alone in No. 6, with his book and his indignation.

He was not indignant with Blake and Herries and Digby. He could stand quite a lot from them. Indeed, he had to stand quite a lot, though he did get on his ear about it occasionally.

But what was bearable from those three was not so easily to be borne from an outsider; and Eric Kerruish, though all four of the chums of No. 6 were on good terms with him, was an outsider in the sense that he did not belong to their special circle.

Arthur Augustus opened his book, with a sigh. He had lately been reading a good deal of spiritualistic stuff, and was keen to get hold of anything in that line. But he found that he had jumped to a wrong conclusion about “The Way of the Spirit.”

He turned over the pages, anxious to know whether he was right—not so much that he minded losing his wager, even though it could not be settled out of the coming hamper, as because he hated being proved wrong.

There did not seem to be anything at all about spooks and that kind of thing in the book.

Gussy was not exactly the average boy, and he found it interesting enough, though in a very different way from what he had expected.

When Blake, Herries, and Dig came in from footer, nearly two hours later, he had practically got to the end, though it must be admitted that he had practised the skipping art in doing so.

The three were ruddy and muddy and hungry. They found the fire nearly out, the cloth unlaid, and no sign of any preparation for tea.

“Well, you are a blessed coon, Gustavus!” said Blake.

“What is the mattah, deah boy?” returned Gussy, without looking up.

“A jolly lot! What about tea I’d like to know?”

"Is it tea-time, Blake? I did not notice. I am not hungry."

"But we are, ass!" growled Herries. "Weally, Hewwies, that is scarcely my biznay, is it?"

"Of course it is, fathead! Why didn't you get tea ready?"

"I have been weadin', Hewwies."

"Found any spooks yet?" inquired Digby. "No, Dig. I am, to some extent, disappointed in the book, I must confess. The title is misleadin', I considah; an' yet, in another way, it is hardly that, to be talah."

"What's it about? Any good?" Digby asked.

"You've lost your bet, old gun!" chortled Blake.

"Yaas, Blake; I admit that. I am not suah whethah you would considah the book any good, Dig. There are Awabs in it."

"That sounds all right. I like the Emir Feisal no end. Chap we saw on the films, you know, Blake."

"I know, Dig. I liked him, too. Those chaps may not be over and above civilised, but they can fight."

"There is not much fightin' in this book, Blake, I may say. It is chiefly about a fellow—very decent fellow, too, in his way—who loved an Awab lady who was not his wife."

"Why didn't he marry her?" growled Herries. "Nothing against her because she was an Arab, that I can see."

"You do not undahstand, Hewwies, Wupert—the hewo—alweady had a wife."

"Don't call him much of a hero, then, if he was fooling round after an Arab girl," replied Herries bluntly.

"Weally, Hewwies, you are vewy dense! That was where the 'way of the spiwit' came in. Because he was alweady mawwied he could not have Mea—"

"Don't want to hear any more about it!" interrupted Blake. "It sounds like sentimental rot, and I can't think how Haggard came to write it. You own you've lost?"

"Yaas. But do listen, Blake! Wupert—"

"Oh, bless Rupert! Hang Rupert! We want our tea."

"One moment, Blake! Though I have been undah a misapprehension myself, I do not wish to leave you fellows so. Wupert—"

"Just you get down on your hands and knees and make up that blessed fire. Cackling about 'Wupert' won't boil the kettle!"

"But Wupert an' Mea—"

"Are you going to make up the fire, you potty spook-hunter?"

"I uttally wufuse to lowah myself to fag for such extremly unimaginatave boundahs as you three! I do not caah whethah I have any tea or not—"

"Neither do we," said Dig cheerily.

"I undahstood that you were vewy—"

"You can't understand anything—you haven't the works. We don't care whether you have any tea or not—that's what I mean. But we mean to have some, and if you don't get to work a trifle sooner than immediately—"

"I wufuse—Yawoooooh! Leave me alone, Digbay! Hewwies, you wuff boundah—Blake, you bwute—"

"Will you have your dial smeared with ashes, Gustavus, or will you help to get tea?" demanded Blake, stretching out his hand to grab the ashes.

Gussy was down on his back upon the hearthrug. Dig was sitting on his waistcoat, and Herries had pionioned his hands. The high pride of the D'Arcys warred with prudence in the breast of the victim.

For once prudence won. "Let me get up, you boundahs, an' I will assist in gettin' tea weady. But I must say—"

"Don't say any more—that's enough," said Blake.

"You see, Gustavus, old dear," added Dig, "it's the way of the flesh that's most in our line. We want our grub, and we mean to have it! Your friend Rupert may have been able to get along without—"

"Do not be sillay, Dig! I nevah suggested that Wupert got along without eatin'."

"And you'd better not suggest that we should!" growled Herries.

## THE SECOND CHAPTER.

### Plots!

"Gussy's got a hamper coming!" announced Kerruish to his chums, Julian, Hammond, and Reilly, at tea in Study No. 5 in the Fourth Form passage.

THE PENNY POPULAR.—No. 47.

"Sure, then, what about it?" inquired Reilly, dissecting with care a kipper which seemed to him to have been endowed with quite twice the usual quantity of bones.

"I put his back up, and he swore that I shouldn't have a giddy mouthful out of it," answered Kerruish.

"We don't mind that," said Hammond.

"But it means that you bouders won't get anything, either, though we generally get a look-in when there's anything special going in No. 6."

"We're not to get anything because you put Gussy's back up, eh? Is that it?" asked Julian.

"That's it. But I've a notion about that hamper," said Kerruish.

"Don't get hold of any more bright ideas for taking other studies down, please, old chap!" protested Julian. "Somehow they never pan out."

"Rats! If we can bag that hamper it will serve Gussy jolly well right, won't it?"

"Don't quite see it," said Hammond, who thought no end of Gussy. "Why should 'e be punished because you ain't civil?"

"I don't think much of this game of bagging other chaps' hampers," Julian said.

"It's not—well, I suppose it's too much in the way of a jape to be called dishonest. But we shouldn't like it if the hamper was for our address."

"You're a silly ass, Hammond, and you're a blessed old wet blanket, Dick!" said Kerruish. "What have you got to say about it, Paddy from Cork?"

"Excuse me, Belfast," corrected Reilly. "Quite some difference, you know. Sure, what I have to say about it is—how are ye goin' to do it?"

"That's better!" said Kerruish.

"I don't mind a joke," Julian explained; "but if we bag their hamper I stick out for making it up to them afterwards."

"Oh, we'll let you do that, Richard; you've always got plenty of tin," replied the Max junior.

"Ave you got a plan?" asked Hammond.

"No. Don't even know when the thing's coming yet. But you can leave that to me."

"What's this yarn about Gussy having gone potty on spiritualism?" Julian inquired.

"Gussy can't—he's there already," said Kerruish. "But I believe there is something in it. I heard him talking to Gunn about it yesterday."

"Gunn's just the kind of silly ass who might go in for it," said Hammond. "Always got 'is nose stuck in a blessed book!"

"He seemed interested," Kerruish answered.

"If they can ring in Skimmy and Lucas and a few more maniacs, they have quite a nice little—what do they call it?" remarked Julian.

"See-ong-say,' the French call it," said Reilly.

"Like that?"

"Sure, near enough, Dick. But an Irishman's not a Frenchman, you know."

"Now, I can think of a better jape on Gussy," Julian said.

"How?"

"Tog up as a medium, and get what Patrick calls a 'see-ong-say' in No. 6."

"How do mediums tog up?" asked Hammond.

"Oh, any old way so that silly asses can't recognise their faces!"

"Who's to be the medium?"

"Well, I thought of playing that part myself," admitted Julian.

"But how shall we work it?" Hammond asked.

"Kid Gussy a bit. About a medium at Wayland, say."

"Sure, is there one?"

"I don't know. 'What's it matter when the medium wouldn't come from Wayland?"

"Can't see 'ow Wayland comes in, then," Hammond said.

"Well, the medium must come from somewhere, chump!"

"But why Wayland?"

"Because Wayland is nearer than Inverness or Timbuctoo or Buenos Aires, fathead!"

"Oh, I see! What a whale you are for geography, Dick!"

"You'll pretend to be interested, and get yarning to Gussy about the Wayland medium, you mean?"

"Well, I'd thought about letting you do that part of the bizney, old top. You'll want to be in it, of course?"

"Not like that! Besides, Gussy and I are off. He'd smell a mouse."

"Reilly, are you on?"

"Thank you, Richard, but the answer is in the negative! I should laugh at the silly omadhaun."

"Hammond?"

"Oh, I can't be bothered to mug up all that rot, Dick! I should go giving the game away straight off the reel."

"Afraid it will have to be you, Eric."

"Why not yourself?"

"For one reason, I don't like telling 'em. Now, you—"

"Rats! That reason won't wash. What's the next?"

"If I'm to be the medium—"

"But Gussy won't know it's you, chump!"

"That's true. But I don't want to hog everything."

"You don't want the part you don't want—we quite understand that, dear boy! But we sha'n't accuse him of hogging, shall we, kids?"

"Not likely!" said Hammond.

"He's welcome to be the spook as well, as far as I'm concerned," Reilly said.

"Oh! Will there be a spook, Dick?" asked Kerruish eagerly.

"I hadn't got as far as that, but I suppose there ought to be."

"Bags I!"

"Eric the Spook, or Littler by Littler!" said Reilly gravely.

"Ass!"

"But if you're the spook, who's going to collar the hamper?"

"What's the hamper got to do with it?"

"Why, I was thinking that if Dick could work 'is game for the day when the hamper turned up—they generally come in the afternoon—you could bag the thing while he was 'umbuggin' Gussy."

"That's an idea, if it can be worked!" said Kerruish. "What do you think, Dick?"

"Oh, the hamper's your funeral! I'm not really interested in that," answered Julian.

"Faith, that's what's after comin' from havin' all the oof ye could wish for, an' more!" said Reilly.

But the fact that Julian was kept well supplied by his Uncle Moss was quite a good thing for No. 5, as Reilly recognised as well as the rest did. Dick Julian believed in "wauking-out" with his chums.

"When will you start on the game, Dick?" asked Kerruish.

"Oh, any time I see a chance! I don't think Gussy will suspect me of doing him down. Makes it a bit unfair, really; but, after all, it won't hurt him, and it may cure him of this rotten craze of his."

## THE THIRD CHAPTER.

### Gussy in Earnest.

"I HAVE come along to see you fellows because I cannot get either sympathy or encouragement in our studay," explained Arthur Augustus to the

Terrible Three.

"There is always a welcome for you in No. 10, Gussy," answered Tom Merry genially.

"And sympathy of the very best kind is ever on-tap here," added Lowther. "I am quite sure of that, for I deal in the article myself."

"Oh, don't try to be funny, Lowther!"

"Far be it from me, old top!"

"What's gone wrong, Gussy?" inquired Manners.

"Nothin' in particular has gone wrong, Mannahs, deah boy."

"Then what's your need of sympathy?"

"Well, you see, I am vewy much intewested just now in—in spiwits, an' all that."

"That's rum!" said Tom, grinning.

"A gin to trap Gussy's feet," said Lowther.

"Wats! I do not mean spiwitous liquahs. You ought to know me bettah than that, I think!"

"You're an ass!" said Tom. "Look here, Gussy. You don't expect to get any sympathy from us for your spiritualistic craze, do you? Blake said something about your going in for that rot, but—"

"It is not wot, Tom Mewwy!"

"Remember Hotspur and Glendower, in Shakespeare, Thomas?" Lowther said.

"I think I've heard of the gentlemen. What about them?"

"Glendower, who was a Welshman, like Fatty Wynn—"

"Shakespeare doesn't say that he was fat," put in Manners.

"Well, did I, duffer?"

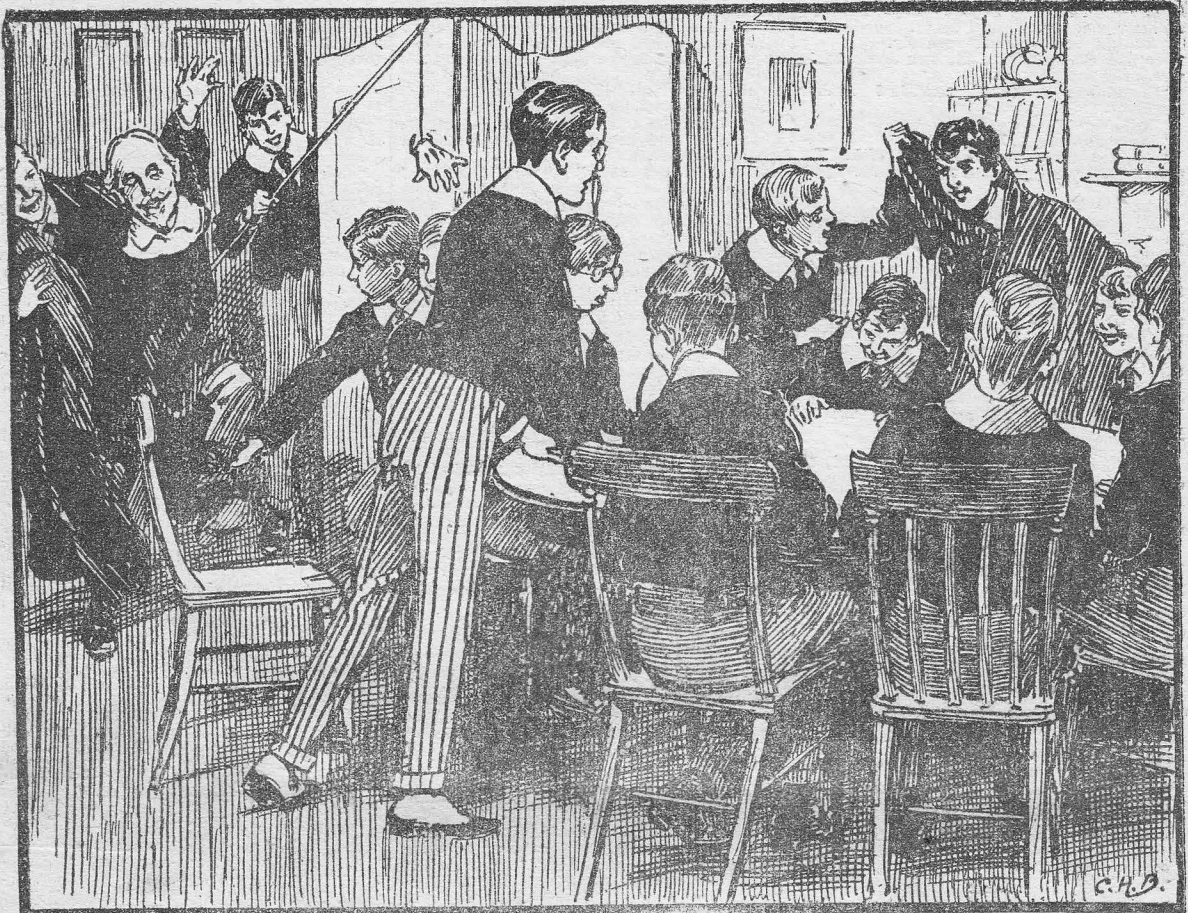
"You said he was like our old—"

"I only meant that they were both Welsh, burbler!"

"Oh!"

"I wish you would not intewwupt, Mannahs! What about Hotspur an' Glendowah, Lowther?"





Talbot jumped up. The light flared. The plaster cast fell. The cloak was torn away. And there was Lowther! Digby and Herries had laid sacrilegious hands upon the person of the great Malluj. The hood was snatched away, and Gussy gasped: "Julian! Oh, you boundah!" (See page 19.)

"Glendower wanted to produce an impression, you know. Magic arts, and all that. So he said, in a deep and mysterious voice: 'I can call spirits from the vasty deep!'"

"An' what did the othah chap—Tottenham, wasn't it—"

"Hotspur, chump!"

"Well, aftah all, it is vevy much the same thing."

"Think so? But you can't think, we know! Hotspur, who was a fellow something of the type of our Thomas, dashing and fearless, and with no nonsense about him—"

"Thanks for the unsolicited testimonial, old dear!" chipped in Tom, smiling.

"Hotspur said: 'Why, so can I, or so can any man. But will they come when you call to them?'"

Arthur Augustus rubbed his chin.

"Well, deah boy, could Glendowah?" he asked, after a pause.

"Could he what?"

"Call up spiwits. Because, if so, I should have liked to know him—though, of course, that is imposs, as he is dead now."

"Quite—good and dead, one might say," replied Lowther. "Yes, he could call them."

Gussy leaned forward in eager interest.

"An' did they come?" he asked, with bated breath.

"That's more than I can tell you for certain. But my private opinion is that they didn't, and that Owen never really thought they would."

"Wats! Hallo, Julian, deah boy! Come in!"

"That's right. Do the honours for us!" growled Manners. "We don't mind, as long as you're kind enough to let us stay here!"

"I apologise—as a gentleman should—if I have taken a libahity, Alannahs!" said Gussy stiffly. "But I weally thought—"

"It's all right, old thing, and we're always pleased to see Julian!" said Tom.

"I heard Gussy was here, and I rather wanted to see him!" Dick Julian said.

"Who told you it was heah, deah boy?"

"Trimble. He saw you come in, you know."

"What was it you wanted to talk to me about?"

"It's about something that you are interested in, and that these fellows ought to be, if they are keeping up to date with modern thought, and all that kind of thing."

"We're not," said Manners, who was in one of his occasional cross-grained moods. "What they call modern thought is mostly rot. And if it's spiritualism—"

"Oh! Is it spiwitualism, Julian?" asked Gussy eagerly.

Julian nodded. He winked at Manners. Gussy saw the nod, but not the wink.

"I didn't know you were intewested, deah boy!"

"I wasn't till just lately," answered Julian, quite truthfully.

"What aoused your intewest, may I ask?"

"Chiefly, I think, hearing that you were so keen on it," Julian said gravely.

Arthur Augustus beamed. That sounded like a real compliment. It was not, of course; but it was true.

"If there's anything in particular, Julian," said Manners, "get on with it. If not, may I remark that prep—"

"Has not been abolished in the Shell, if it has in the Fourth!" finished Lowther for him. Julian laid a hand on Gussy's shoulder.

"Let's clear out before they start chucking us out," he said.

"Yaas—quite a good ideah! Weally, I expected a little more sympathy from you fellows! Good-day to you!"

And with that, and his monocle stuck into his eye, and his chin up, Gussy departed in dudgeon. But Dick Julian went smiling.

"Silly asses!" said Tom.

"Not Julian," returned Manners.

"Eh?"

"Getting deaf? I said—not Julian!"

"I know what you said, chupp! Question is what you meah."

"That son of Israel is having Gussy on a string, Thomas!"

"How do you know that, Manners?" asked Lowther. "I had a notion of it; but I'm surprised that you should be sure when I merely suspected."

"He winked."

"Thomas," said Lowther, "there is really no limit to the influence of environment! Manners has lived with us until he has actually begun to develop intelligence!"

"Thick ears are in season!" snapped Manners.

Meanwhile, Julian led Gussy to No. 5, where they found only Hammond. Gussy would not mind talking before the little Cockney, Julian knew.

"I am vevy glad indeed to heah that you are takin' an intewest in spiwitualism, Julian, deah boy," said Arthur Augustus.

Harry Hammond pricked up his ears.

"Are you, old chap?" returned Julian.

"Yaas. Blake an' Hewwies an' Dig have weally such gwoos minds, though, of course, they are vevy good fellows. They do not undahstand the attitude of an earnest seekah for the truth."

"Think you're goin' to get the truth, Gussy?" inquired Hammond, with a grin.

"I am seekin' it, Hammond!" replied Arthur Augustus, with dignity.

"Ah! Then you've come to the right shop!"

And Hammond winked at Julian.

"You aren't a convinced spiwitualist, I take it, Gussy?" said Julian.

"No, deah boy. Mewely a sinceeah seekah aftah the light. That is what Blake an' those othah barbavians wefuse to undahstand."

"I understand, though," said Julian. "You haven't really gone into the matter properly yet, but you'd like to."

"That is pweesely my fwame of mind, Julian!"

"Have you ever been at a seance?"

"Not as yet. I hope, howevah—"

"Have you heard of the Wayland medium?"

"No, deah boy! What is his name?"

Gussy had bitten at once. Hammond looked over the top of the "Boys' Friend" at his own, and winked again.

"Nailuj," replied Julian gravely. He had simply turned his own name backwards for the occasion.

"It sounds foweygn," remarked Arthur Augustus.

"So it does."  
"Is he a foweygn?"  
"Can't exactly say. Not English, I'm pretty sure. But you don't see his face, you know."

Gussy thrilled at that.  
"It sounds no end mysterious an' cweepy," he said. "Do you know him, Julian?"

"My uncle does," answered Julian.  
"Oh! Now I wondah whethah I could get admission to one of his seances?"

"I should think so. In fact, I fancy it might be possible to get him here for one, and then perhaps you could convince Blake and the other barbarians that there's something in it all!"

"Bai Jove! Do you think that is weally poss, deah boy?"

"I almost think I can answer for it, D'Arcy!"

"Is he—ah—vewy expensive?"  
"De doesn't do it for cash at all. But, of course, the fellow must live."

"Would a fivah—"  
"My hat, yes! He'd come like a shot for less than that!"

"I am quite vepared to pony up a fivah, deah boy. The lobouwah is worthy of his hiah, y'know."

There was more talk on the matter after this; but it was mostly in the way of enthusiasm and repetition. When Kerruish and Reilly came in for prep, and Gussy had to go, it had been settled that Julian should arrange through his uncle—as Gussy understood it, though Julian had not said so—for a visit by the medium, Nailuj, to St. Jim's on an early afternoon. Gussy was to invite whom he liked to the seance, and to pay five pounds, or any less sum asked for by Nailuj.

"Have to tell many whoppers, Richard?" asked Kerruish, when Gussy had departed.

"Not one, I think," replied Julian.  
Harry Hammond looked at him hard.

"But I circumnavigated the strict truth quite some," added Julian, with a chuckle.

"You did that, Nailuj!" agreed Hammond.

## THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

### Mystery and Tuck Hampers.

IT'S all right—Gussy's expecting his hamper this afternoon," said Kerruish to Julian a couple of days later.

"Hamper? What hamper?"  
"You don't mean to say that you've forgotten all about it, fathead?"

"I had, then. I've had Nailuj on my little mind!"

"Jolly good job you fixed that wangle for to-day. I was afraid the blessed hamper would turn up yesterday, and we should be done."

But Julian's interest in the hamper was very small indeed. It was his own scheme upon which he was keen, and he had taken quite a lot of trouble to the end that it might be carried through successfully.

He had ridden over to Wayland, pretending that the visit was necessary to fix up matters, and had firmly refused to let the eager Gussy accompany him—a refusal Gussy found it hard to understand. He had found books and magazine articles which described seances, and had worked out a plan for something like a burlesque of the genuine thing—its seances ever are genuine.

Gussy was to choose the company. In fact, after much cogitation, he had chosen it. Blake, Herries, and Digby were to be included. They did not mind, they told Gussy. They told each other that he jolly well wouldn't have a giddy spiritualistic seance in No. 6 without them, whatever he might jolly well think.

Hammond was to come. But Gussy would not have either Kerruish or Reilly. As a matter of fact, he could not have had them. They had business elsewhere.

Tom Merry had been asked, but not Manners or Lowther. Julian had arranged for the presence of those two, however. He needed some help, and they were willing to give theirs.

Talbot had also been included. Gussy had not meant to ask him, but had gone to invite Skimpole, who was in Talbot's study, and had been constrained by his ideas of politeness to ask Talbot, whom he found with Skimpole.

Skimpole had passed a thin hand over a corrugated brow, and had said that though he had not of late given spiritualism much attention, he had studied the subject some time ago. Skimpole always talked as if he were at least fifty. He was ever ready to assist in any scientific investigation, he added.

Talbot had inquired whether they should bring Gore, the third partner in the study. But Gussy had negatived that proposition with a shudder.

Gore was not at all the right sort of person—worse even than Herries, whom Arthur Augustus regarded as the most difficult of his own chums.

And as bad as Grundy. Gunn was to come, but certainly not Grundy or Wilkins. But Blake thought that it would have been rather a good notion to have the great George Alfred. Grundy, he said, was ass enough for anything.

Lucas of the Shell, a musician, with the dreamy, artistic temperament, was the other guest. By the time Gussy had talked to him for five minutes Lucas had grown quite interested. Gunn was already so, though more sceptical than Arthur Augustus.

"How do you know about the hamper?" asked Julian.

"Baggy Trimble heard Gussy say that he expected it," replied Kerruish.

"Well, if Baggy is on the track, you had better look out, or there won't be any hamper left for you, my son!"

"I'll see to that!" said the Manx junior.

Julian went along to find Gussy. He was alone in No. 6. Blake, Herries, and Dig were at footer.

"Though how they can give their minds to the game with such a tremendous affiah comin' off this aftannoon is more than I can explain," said Gussy.

"It is queer, isn't it?" returned Julian.

"Julian, deah boy, I feel in a positive fluttah of excitement! What will the gentleman with the vewy queeah name do, do you think?"

"Just you wait! If I got guessing I might be all wrong."

"How will he get neah without bein' spotted by anyone?"

"Leave that to him. He has his own methods. And he doesn't a bit like having questions asked about them, I can tell you."

"But you cannot mean that he pwetends he can make himself invisible, or any wot of that description?"

"Oh, no; he certainly doesn't pretend that. But you can understand that, though he may not care to reveal his face to the sitters at his seances, he can go anywhere like an ordinary person if he likes. Say that a well-dressed stranger inquired at the gates for me? Taggles isn't going to smell a rat, you know."

"I see; an' it is weally vewy simple," said Gussy.

"So are you!" murmured Julian.

"What did you say, deah boy?"

"Oh, nothing of any importance."

"I weally hardly know how I shall get through the houahs between now an' the time of the seance!" sighed Gussy.

"I can get through them all serene," said Julian.

"Weally, you are almost cold-blooded, Julian!"

"I'm not as keen on the spooks as you are, old top. I own. In fact—look here, I've done what I can for you about this. Shall you mind much if I—er—I don't show up this afternoon?"

"Can you beah to stay away, Julian?"

"I think I could, old fellow."

"Well, I should not like to pweess you, if you have any strong feelin' against bein' pweesent. Pewwaps you will think othahwise when the time comes, howevah. An', in any case, I am vewy gratefule to you for all the twouble, you have taken in the mattah."

"That's all serene. Go on being gratefule, old chap!"

But Julian was not sure that Gussy's gratitude would last beyond the end of the seance.

Soon after half-past four that afternoon Julian appeared in No. 6.

"Nailuj has arrived!" he said, in a voice of awe.

"Let's have a look at the old codger!" said Blake cheerily.

"You cannot see him until this study is made ready for him. I must ask you to clear out while I prepare it."

"Did he tell you to do that?" asked Herries.

"What do you think?"

"I think the whole giddy thing's a wangle," replied Herries bluntly.

"Oh, George!" protested Digby, with a good pretence of being shocked.

Julian glanced keenly at Dig. He had much more fear of Dig's or Blake's seeing through the imposture than of Herries' doing so.

The four cleared out, though Gussy wanted to stay.

"Let's have a squint into No. 5. The merchant may be there," suggested Blake.

But only Harry Hammond was in No. 5.

"You ought not to have done that, Blake," said Arthur Augustus reprovingly.

"Why not, chump?"

"If he had been there he might have taken offence, an' wefused—"

"Rats! He'd have had to go away without his fiver if he did that. My hat! Fancey throwing a fiver—a whole blessed fiver—to the spooks!"

"Let's go and look up Tom Merry," said Dig, and they went.

Kerruish and Reilly were not in No. 5 because they were on their way to the lodge. Taggles received parcels of all kinds from the railway delivery van, and brought them along if and when the spirit moved him. Unless he scented a tip, the spirit seldom moved him until he had given the addressee of any parcel a fair chance to fetch it for himself.

The chums of No. 5 knew this, of course. So did others, and it so happened that Figgins & Co. were just ahead of them. Kerr was expecting a hamper, and the trio had gone along to inquire.

The early gloom of a December evening lay upon the quad. A dim light showed in the lodge, but Taggles was absent. Dame Taggles was still at the tuckshop, and the place had no one in charge for the moment.

But the hamper was there. In fact, three hampers were there—one addressed to Kerr, one to Arthur Augustus, and one to Cutts of the Fifth.

"Here we are!" said Kerr.

"Oh, good egg! It's something like a hamper, that!" said Fatty Wynn glottingly.

"Something like a hamper! Why, it is a hamper, stupid!"

"Well, that's what I mean—a good, big one."

"Somebody's coming!" hissed Figgins. "It's not Taggy. Listen!"

Kerruish and Reilly had passed outside. Their errand was of a different nature from that of the New House trio, and they had to be cautious.

"Taggles isn't there, I fancy," the three heard Kerruish say.

"Faith, an' so much the better!" answered Reilly. "There won't be any need at all, at all, to deluther him."

"Get back into the next room!" said Kerr, pushing Fatty and prodding Figg.

They got. Next moment Kerruish and Reilly came stealthily in.

Figgins & Co., not anxious to show themselves, did not see that the two carried a hamper between them. But they heard every word spoken.

"Three of them!" said Kerruish. "Gussy—Cutts—Kerr. There's more in this than we thought, Patrick! Got those labels?"

"Sure, an' they're in my pocket, old son."

"Get 'em out, then! And tie this one on the Gussy hamper—take the one that's on it off, of course!"

"Think I'm not knowin' enough for that?" growled Reilly.

"Cutts!" said Kerruish. "I don't like Cutts a little bit, and I'm sure he doesn't deserve a hamper. Tom Merry's no end of a decent chap. I'll re-address it to him!"

And he got out his fountain-pen.

"Wonder what he'll do with ours?" whispered Fatty to Kerr.

"Oh, Kerruish is a pal of the firm, Fatty! He won't rob us."

"Kerr," murmured Kerruish. "Now, I like old Kerr, Patrick. He's one of the very best. But it's no use half-doing things. Let's send his to Redfern! Reddy's sure to ask them to have some of the grub, so it won't really hurt the bounders."

"Faith, Eric, me boy, I'm glad you're not fond of me!" said Reilly.

"But I am, ass!"

"Then you keep away from my hamper when I have one next! I don't want it sent to Talbot because you admire the way he brushes his hair!"

Kerruish chuckled at that. But he went on with his fell work.

"We'd better call a little later for ours," he said, when all had been done.

"Sure, it would be safer to take it now!"  
"No. Safest plan is to let Taggy deliver



it, really. If it's brought to us, we didn't take it—see?"

They went, and the New House three came forth.

Where there had been three hampers were now four. The addition was addressed to D'Arcy, and Figgy & Co. could guess what its contents were like. It was a dud hamper, of course. Kerr's was now addressed to Redfern, and Cutts' property was labelled for diversion to Tom Merry.

"Won't do!" said Kerr, shaking his head. "Why, if the chumps haven't left their luggage-labels behind! My hat! This is an easy one!"

He rewrote labels for Cutts and himself, and changed them for those first put on. Then he shifted the labels on the other two hampers. The dud hamper was now addressed to Kerruish; and Gussy had his own again—or was in a fair way to get it.

"No good getting Tommy into a row with Cutts," he said. "Kerruish didn't think of that; but there might have been big trouble."

"Hallo, Taggy!" said Figgins.

Taggles was puffing and blowing under the weight of yet another hamper.

"Which what I says is this 'ere," he gasped. "That chap Jorkins is a fool—that's what 'e is—a fool! Forgot this 'ere hamper when 'e brought 'others, an' gets me to carry it a mile or more to save 'im trouble."

"You're too good-natured, Taggy!" said Kerr.

Taggles grunted. Good nature had had nothing to do with his acceptance of that task. The truth was that Jorkins had come back with the hamper, but had found no one at the lodge to receive it. The railway delivery-man knew that Taggles should have been there, and had put pressure upon him to make him carry the hamper back when they chanced to meet.

Figgy glanced at the label.

"Come along, Kerr! Come along, Fatty!" he said. But Kerr was sure that he had seen something which excited him.

Outside the lodge he gripped Kerr's arm and Fatty's neck.

"The new hamper's for Kerruish!" he hissed.

"My hat! What a stroke of luck! Now there will be one for good old Tommy—unless you think Reddy ought to have it? Anyway, it's not for Eric from the Isle of Man—not after his little games with ours!"

"We must hang round till Taggles gives us a chance," Figgy said.

But they had not to wait long. They heard Taggles lumber upstairs, and Kerr slipped in. He cut off the label from the last arrived hamper, and fastened to it the one that had been addressed by Kerruish to Tom Merry.

Taggles was not likely to smell a rat. His memory was indifferent, and he had been imbibing gin.

"I say, Taggy!" called Kerr.

"Yuss, Master Kerr?"

"As you've four or five hampers to deliver, you might put them all on a truck and bring them along at once, I should think."

"Yuss, I might, an' then, agin, I mightn't."

"A bob for you if we get ours within twenty minutes."

"Right-ho, Master Kerr! O', my truck's a wheelbarrow!"

"I don't care if it's a palanquin, as long as the hamper comes!"

"I should, then. Which what I says is, I don't cotton to them furrin animiles. But I'll bring 'em."

## THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

### Mysteries Made Clear!

"I AM Nailuj!"

The deep, sepulchral voice which rounded from the doorway of No. 6 came from a cloaked and hooded figure, barely visible in the very dim light for which Dick Julian had arranged before he went out to fetch the medium.

Julian had seen to everything. He had had the table cleared, and chairs ranged round it. Tom Merry had been allotted a place on the right-hand of the empty seat left for the medium, and Hammond on the left. There was nothing in that to arouse suspicion; but it did happen that Tom and Hammond were the only fellows around the table in the secret of the plot.

Next to Tom sat Gunn, then Herries, Lucas, Gussy, Talbot, Skimpole, Blake, and Digby, whose seat was next to Hammond's. The chairs had to be drawn back a bit to give a wider circle, but they were near enough for everyone to put hands upon the

round table, specially borrowed for the occasion. A square one was no use, Julian said.

The screen had been "put out of the way" near the door. In the gloom Julian had so placed it that there was room for someone behind it, and as he came forward now, as the medium, Monty Lowther slipped through the door and behind the screen, followed by Manners, and unseen by those around the table.

"Tight fit!" whispered Manners.

"Bui Jove, I feel quite cweepy!" Gussy confided to Talbot.

"There is quite an atmosphere of mystery about this," said Lucas to Herries.

"Atmosphere of rats!" growled the burly Fourth-Former.

"Silence!" spoke the low and thrilling voice of Nailuj.

But it was never easy to silence Herbert Skimpole when that philosophic person had anything to say, as he always had.

"Do I understand that these manifestations—" he began.

"You'd better understand that you'll go out on your neck if you interrupt, Skimmy!" said Tom.

"But, really, Merry—"

"Silence!" spoke Nailuj again.

And Skimmy, who really was interested and perhaps a little awed, dried up.

"Let each person present place his hands upon the table lightly, with palms downwards, and little finger touching the little

finger of the person on either side of him," commanded Nailuj, as he took his seat.

The order was obeyed.

"Yow!" cried Skimmy.

"Sorry!" said Blake. "I ought to have told you that I had a pin in my hand."

"I do not object at all to a pin in your hand, Blake, but I have a very decided objection to the point of a pin in my hand!"

"If there is any more of that kind of thing—" said the deep voice.

"Out you go!" Blake finished cheerily for it.

"Is the circle of hands complete?" asked Nailuj, thinking it prudent to look over Blake's transgression.

"Have a squint for yourself," answered Dig pleasantly.

"Weally, Dig, pwopah wespsect—"

"The scoffers and unbelievers will soon be convinced!" spoke Nailuj, with his own hands busy under the table, fixing something to his right leg above the knee.

"Yes, I think not!" murmured Talbot.

"Concentrate your thoughts! My hands are upon the table, as the young gentlemen to right and left of me can testify," Nailuj said. "If I remove them, even for a second, I beg that those young gentlemen will at once notify the company!"

"Do you mean that?" whispered Hammond.

"Yes, ass!" came the whisper back.

"A mysterious current now begins to flow from me around the table. When the circuit is complete the table will move of its own accord!" said the medium.

And, surely enough, in about half a minute the table began to rise at the place where the medium sat. Julian had only to lift his right leg to make it rise.

"Wonderful!" exclaimed Gussy.

That seemed to break the spell, for the table subsided at once.

"Make it tilt at the other end!" suggested Blake.

But Nailuj ignored that. It seemed best to him to do so.

"That is a very common manifestation," he said. "I will not waste more time upon it. Will you now kindly make your minds as absolutely blank as possible?"

"Easy one for Gussy!" murmured Dig in the ear of Hammond.

Silence then—a silence full of breathless suspense on the part of Arthur Augustus, Gunn, Lucas, and Skimpole also felt rather creepy. But Tom Merry and Harry Hammond were in the know; and the scepticism of Blake, Herries, Digby, and Talbot was not in the least shaken.

Then in the gloom there glimmered something white—something in the shape of a hand. It hovered above the heads of the circle. Then it descended slowly, and a clammy touch fell upon the earnest countenance of Skimpole.

"Ugh!" he gasped.

"Silence!" sounded the thrilling voice of Nailuj.

"Oh deah! It has touched me! Oh, weally!"

The hand disappeared. Manners had hauled it back. It was a wetted and stuffed white glove at the end of a string, which string hung at the end of a rod. Manners had stood

on the chair to work it, for he knew that he must not touch any of the sceptics. They would have grabbed rudely.

"What did you feel?" asked Nailuj.

"The touch of a cold hand!" gasped Gussy.

"I saw it, too! Oh, it was dreadful!"

"I wish it had touched me!" growled Herries.

"I also felt it, and I am free to confess that it gave me a considerable shock," said Skimpole. "But I should like an explanation. I do not deny the possibility of—"

"Silence!" commanded Nailuj. "Who shall explain that which is inexplicable? Who shall presume to know the unknowable? Who—"

"Shall kiss the unmissable?" murmured Dig.

Somebody had to suppress a snigger at that. It could hardly have been Nailuj; but it seemed to Dig that the choked sound came from him. There were other sniggers which were not in the least suppressed.

"I shall now proceed to call up spirits," said Nailuj. "For that perfect silence and extreme concentration is necessary. I cannot commune with the world beyond until the trance has come upon me, and the trance will not come unless silence is kept."

"Let's play up to him!" muttered Blake.

So there was silence. Even for the space of five minutes there was silence, although Gussy and Skimmy must have found it hard to keep their tongues still so long.

Then there came from Nailuj a deep, hollow groan.

"I see the world of the departed!" he said, in a curious monotone. "Whom shall I summon from it?"

"Try Shakespeare!" suggested Tom Merry.

"William Shakespeare, I summon you from the regions in which you wander!" chanted Nailuj.

"Be friendly, and call him Bill!" urged Dig.

"Weally, Digbaw— Oh, Look!"

In the darkened room appeared a form clad in a black cloak. The face above that cloak shone with a phosphorescent light, and behold it was the face of Shakespeare. Or, rather, it was a plaster cast of the face of the Bard of Avon, touched up with phosphorus paint; while Monty Lowther was beneath the cloak.

"You summon me from realms where I do roam, beyond the Stygian wave, beyond the shore of farthest—"

Gussy gave vent to an audible gasp which had caused Shakespeare to cease his flow of Lowtherian blank verse. It was the fact that Blake had grasped Shakespeare's leg!

"Up with the light!" roared Blake. "I've got somebody!"

Talbot jumped up. The light flared. The plaster cast fell. The cloak was torn away. And there was Lowther!

And Digby and Herries had laid sacrilegious hands upon the person of the great Nailuj. The hood was snatched away, and Gussy gasped.

"Julian! Oh, you boundah!"

From behind the screen came Manners, dangling the glove.

"Ha, ha, ha!" he roared.

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Blake and Dig and Herries, Tom Merry and Talbot and Lowther, Hammond and Gunn. But Lucas and Skimpole looked bewildered, and Gussy was quite indignant.

"Then it was all—all a wotten spoof?" he exclaimed.

"Just 'about!" agreed Tom Merry cheerfully.

Arthur Augustus passed a trembling hand over his heated brow.

"I weally do not know what to say," he faltered. "As a jape, I do not considah it in altogether good taste. As a lesson, I am not suah that it is a pronounced success. Aftah all, it pwoves nothin'!"

"Except that you're a silly ass, which doesn't require proving!" snapped Blake. "If you can believe in all that rot after this—"

"I weally do not see what difference this need make to my belief, Blake. What is it, Taggles?"

"Anper for you, Master D'Arcy. And which I says is this 'ere—it's a rare 'eavy one. One for you, too, Master Merry, an' I've jest delivered one to Master Kerruish."

"For me, Taggy? I wasn't expecting one."

"Here's a bob, old top, for the sweat of your brow, and an extra tanner for the surprise," replied Tom.

Taggles took the silver, grunted thanks, and departed. The Terrible Three went off to their study, inviting Talbot, Skimmy, Lucas, and Gunn to accompany and share.

The chums of No. 6 shut their door, and proceeded to an inspection of the hamper.

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Julian and Hammond went into No. 5.  
 "Sure, it was a lark!" said Reilly. "We were listenin' outside the door. But some-thin's after goin' wrong with these hampers. Eric ought to have two!"  
 "The other one will turn up to-morrow," Kerruish said. "Sure to! This is Gussy's, of course!"  
 "What other one?" asked Julian, puzzled.  
 "Just had a letter from the mater to say she had sent one. It ought to be here by now, too, for the letter's been quite a long time coming."  
 "Never mind! I've withdrawn any objec-

tion I felt to bagging Gussy's," said Julian.  
 "Open it, Eric!"  
 Kerruish cut the strings of the hamper and threw up the lid.  
 "My hat!" he gasped.  
 "Faith, it's the one we packed for Gussy!" exclaimed Reilly.  
 "You must have bungled your job!" said Julian sharply.  
 "We didn't!" howled Kerruish. "I'll swear we didn't! There's been some trickery here!"  
 "What's the matter, you fellows?" asked Kerr, appearing at the door suddenly.  
 "What do you want?" snapped Kerruish.

"Oh, don't be civil if it hurts you! I came across to ask you four to tea, that's all!"  
 "We'll come!" said the three in unison.  
 "And we'll return the compliment to-morrow, when my hamper turns up!" said Kerruish, who had kept himself between Kerr and the table that bore the bogus hamper.  
 "Thanks!" replied Kerr.  
 But his smile puzzled them all. And it was not until later that the smile was explained.  
 By that time Gussy had quite given up spiritualism, and there was not a mouthful left from any one of the hampers.  
 THE END.

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