

# SIDNEY DREW'S LATEST STORY INSIDE!

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Grey-friars

# The POPULAR

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Stories, Jokes & Pictures  
of Greyfriars, Rookwood & St. Jims

Rookwood St. Jims



## THE DUFFER WHO WON THE MATCH!

(An amusing incident from the long complete tale of Rookwood inside.)

**TWO LONG  
COMPLETE SCHOOL  
TALES  
EVERY WEEK.**



**"BILLY BUNTER'S  
WEEKLY!"**

Grand Four-page Supplement.  
Edited by WILLIAM GEORGE  
BUNTER of Greymfriars.

# THE DUFFER OF ROOKWOOD!

A Splendid Long Complete School Tale, dealing with the  
Adventures of JIMMY SILVER & CO., the Chums of Rookwood.

By OWEN CONQUEST.

(Author of the Famous Rookwood Yarns in "The Boys' Friend.")

## THE FIRST CHAPTER.

### A Very Raw Recruit!

"MY dear James!"  
Jimmy Silver halted, with a grin. Lovell and Raby and Newcome grinned, too.

Somehow fellows always did grin when Cuffy of the Modern Fourth spoke to them.

Clarence Cuffy had been some time at Rookwood. He had been as green as grass when he arrived. Now he was, if possible, greener.

In the pleasant and delectable purlieus of Gander's Green Clarence had been brought up in unsuspecting innocence. And a term at Rookwood School had made no difference at all to him.

Fellows pulled his verdant leg without limit. Clarence seldom discovered that his leg had been pulled. When he did he would regard the humorous jokers more in sorrow than in anger.

In Gander's Green fellows' legs were never pulled.

The Fistical Four of the Classical Fourth were on their way to the football-ground when that ornament of the Modern-Side addressed them.

They kindly resolved to waste a few minutes in chipping Cuffy.

"Hallo, Clarence, old scout!" said Jimmy Silver cheerily.

"You were proceeding to the football-ground, James?"

"You've hit it!"

"I trust I am not incommoding you by taking up your time for a few minutes?"

"Not whatting? Oh, no! Not at all! Fire away!"

"The fact is, Silver, I have decided to take up football," said Cuffy, blinking at Jimmy Silver solemnly through his large spectacles.

"Football!" ejaculated Jimmy. "You!"

"Oh, my hat!" said Lovell.

"Exactly!" said Cuffy, with an expansive smile. "And I am sure, my dear James, that you will afford me all the assistance in your power. I am addressing you as captain of the Junior Eleven. I understand that you are playing Bagshot on Wednesday. I should like to play for Rookwood, if I may."

Jimmy Silver almost staggered.

Clarence Cuffy made that modest re-

quest with a sweet smile, evidently quite unaware of the enormity of it.

"Play for Rookwood!" murmured Lovell.

"Against Bagshot!" gasped Raby.

"Oh, my hat!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Newcome.

"Cuffy looked mildly surprised. He did not see any reason for hilarity.

"I will explain the circumstances of the case," he said. "Mr. Dodd is coming down on Wednesday or Saturday—Tommy Dodd's uncle, you know. He is my very kind friend, and I have passed many delightful hours in his vegetable garden at Gander's Green. I am sure it would please him to see me playing for Rookwood."

"It would please the Bagshot fellows, too!" gurgled Lovell.

"It would! Ha, ha!"

"It is true that I have played very little football," said Cuffy modestly. "But I am quite willing to practise. We did not play much football at Gander's Green, but I was considered very skilful at marbles."

"Mum-mum-marbles!" gasped Jimmy Silver.

"Yes, indeed! Of course, I am aware that football is a more strenuous game than marbles," said Cuffy. "Perhaps a little more difficult. But I am prepared to do my best, my dear James."

James chortled.

"It is very extraordinary," said Cuffy.

"Dodd and Cook and Doyle laughed in exactly the same way when I spoke to them about it. I do not quite see where the joke comes in, my dear school-fellows."

"Oh, crumbs!" said Jimmy Silver.

"Look here, Cuffy! I can't quite play you against Bagshot on Wednesday, but there's a Modern-Classical match on Saturday, and Tommy Dodd can play you in the Modern team against us, if he likes."

"He'll jump at the chance, Cuffy," said Lovell solemnly.

"I suggested it to him, but he did not seem enthusiastic," said Cuffy, shaking his head. "But it all depends upon whether my kind friend, Mr. Dodd, comes down on Wednesday or Saturday. He would be delighted to see me playing for Rookwood. In fact, he has expressed a wish that I should take up footer, and it is my duty to observe his wishes in

every way, as he has been very kind to me. May I take it that I play on Wednesday if Mr. Dodd comes?"

The Fistical Four roared; they could not help it.

To Clarence Cuffy's simple mind, a football-match was simply a nice little game—like marbles.

Fellows would have given a term's pocket-money to squeeze into the eleven for the Bagshot match.

Jimmy Silver was exposed to the blandishments of nearly all the juniors at Rookwood when he was making up the team for that match.

A fellow's inclusion in the team was not likely to depend upon whether he had a kind friend coming down to the school on the day the match was played. Not quite!

Cuffy looked at the Fistical Four inquiringly.

"Well, my dear James?" he asked.

"Oh dear!" gasped Jimmy Silver. "I say! Come along, and let's see what you can do at footer, Cuffy. If you're good enough—ha, ha!—I'll shove you into the team. Rely on that."

"I shall be delighted, my dear James!"

And, with a smile of contentment on his chubby face, Cuffy trotted down to Little Side with the Classical Four.

There were a crowd of fellows on the junior football-ground.

The list for the Bagshot match was not quite settled yet, though it was known that some of the giants of junior footer would be playing, such as Jimmy Silver, Lovell, Conroy, Rawson, Van Ryn, Erroll, Tommy Dodd, and Cook and Doyle. But two places, at least, were not quite decided.

Raby and Newcome had their own ideas about how those two places ought to be filled. But Jimmy Silver, as football captain, was impervious to the claims of friendship.

Mornington was a likely recruit, and so was Oswald and Flynn and Towle, and, in fact, several more.

But Clarence Cuffy was really not likely to get a place. Even Tubby Muffin would have been a more useful recruit.

"Hallo, Cuffy playing?" asked Oswald, as the five juniors arrived. "Cuffy taking up footer?"

"Yes," said Jimmy seriously. "Cuffy wants to play against Bagshot on Wednesday."



"Wha-a-at!"  
 "I should be very pleased, my dear Richard," said Cuffy, blinking at Oswald.  
 "Ha, ha, ha!" roared Oswald.  
 "Cuffy's going to show us what he can do," said Jimmy. "Give Cuffy a chance, you fellows!"  
 "On the ball, Cuffy!" yelled the juniors.

Cuffy blinked round.  
 "See that ball?" asked Jimmy Silver, pointing to the somewhat muddy footer.  
 "Yes, my dear James."  
 "See if you can put it into the goal."  
 "I think that would be quite easy, my dear James."  
 "Oh, my hat!" exclaimed Conroy, who was between the posts for the practice.  
 "Quite easy—what? Well, try!"  
 Cuffy started for the ball, with the eyes of all the grinning juniors upon him.

To the astonishment of the juniors, he picked it up, put it under his arm, and trotted towards the goal.  
 "Is he potty?" gasped Lovell.  
 "Put that ball down, you idiot!"  
 "Ha, ha, ha! This isn't Rugger, you howling dummy! None of your Rugger tricks here!"  
 Clarence Cuffy glanced round in surprise.

"My dear James—"  
 "Kick it, you chump!" yelled Jimmy Silver. "You're not allowed to touch the ball with your paws, you howling jabber-wock!"  
 "Oh, pray excuse my error, my dear James!"  
 "Ha, ha, ha!"  
 Clarence Cuffy set the ball down again, within a few yards of the grinning goal-keeper. He blinked at it, and blinked at the goal, evidently calculating with great care.

The chuckling juniors watched him joyfully.  
 Cuffy, satisfied at last, backed away, and took a little run. Then he delivered a terrific kick at the ball.  
 Careful as his calculations had been, however, they seemed to be a little out, judging by the result.  
 His foot missed the ball by about six inches.

His foot flew into the air, with the natural result that Cuffy lost his balance, and sat down.  
 Bump!  
 "Oh!"  
 "Ha, ha, ha!"  
 Clarence Cuffy sat on the ground, and gasped, and groped for his spectacles. And a hysterical yell went up round the football ground.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

"Goal!"  
 "DEAR me!"  
 "Ha, ha, ha!"  
 "I am somewhat hurt. The impact upon the ground has caused me considerable discomfort!" gasped Cuffy.  
 "Ha, ha, ha!"  
 Jimmy Silver took Cuffy by one of his large ears, and helped him to his feet. Cuffy gave a loud squeak.  
 "Ow-ow!"  
 "Cut off, old scout," said Jimmy Silver. "You weren't born for a footballer. Better get some practice on the fags' ground for a few weeks. That will make a beginning—see?"  
 Cuffy shook his head.  
 "I have no time to waste, my dear James, if I am to get into form for playing in the Bagshot match," he said.  
 "Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, buzz him off the ground, bedad!" said Flynn.  
 "Hook it, Cuffy!"  
 "Hold on!" said Jimmy Silver.  
 "Chuck that old ball out, Jones!"  
 Jones minor pitched out the old ball, used by the fags in puntabouts. Jimmy kicked it to Cuffy.

"What on earth's the game?" demanded Lovell.  
 "That's for Cuffy to practise with."  
 "You silly ass!" roared Lovell.  
 "How can we get team practice with that howling burlber fooling about on the field?"  
 "Leave it to your Uncle James, dear boy. Now, Cuffy—I suppose you know that a footballer has to do as his skipper tells him?"

"Certainly, my dear James."  
 "Well, you see that ball?"  
 Cuffy blinked at it.  
 "Yes, James."  
 "You're to kick it from here to Mr. Manders' House, across the quad."  
 "Certainly."  
 "Having got it there, you're to kick it up the stairs."

"Oh!" gasped Lovell.  
 "You may find it a bit difficult at first," said Jimmy Silver, with owl-like seriousness. "But if at first you don't succeed, try again, you know."  
 "I shall be very pleased, my dear James."  
 "Having kicked it upstairs, you're to kick it into Tommy Dodd's study," continued Jimmy Silver. "If you land it on Tommy Dodd's nose, that counts as a goal. See?"  
 "I understand perfectly."  
 "Well, go ahead!"

The junior footballers looked on breathlessly. They wondered whether even Clarence Cuffy, the champion duffer of Rookwood, would be quite duffer enough to carry out the Fourth Form skipper's instructions.  
 But Cuffy had no doubts. He started.

The juniors crowded back to give the duffer of Rookwood plenty of room. There was no telling in what direction the footer might go, when Cuffy's foot got near it.  
 Cuffy kicked the footer, and it went into touch, and he followed it up. A howl of laughter followed Cuffy, as he punted the ball away across the quad.  
 "My hat!" exclaimed Van Ryn. "Is he going to be really idiot enough to punt the ball into Manders' House?"  
 "Ha, ha! Looks like it!"  
 "Let's hope he doesn't meet Manders!" chortled Flynn.

And the juniors yelled again.  
 Clarence Cuffy, still hopping in pursuit of the ball, disappeared beyond the beeches.

Jimmy Silver & Co. piled into footer practice, while some of the other fellows followed Cuffy to see how he progressed. Cuffy had learnt at least one football lesson—to heed the instructions of his skipper.  
 Jimmy's intention had been to clear the duffer off the football ground, without hurting his feelings. But Clarence took his instructions with literal exactitude.

He missed the ball oftener than he kicked it, but he stuck to his task with deadly persistence, and the footer was propelled up to Mr. Manders' House at last on the Modern side of Rookwood.  
 There Cuffy paused to take breath. His face was crimson with exertion, and his round eyes bulging behind his spectacles. But he was still game.  
 He restarted after the interval, so to speak, when he had recovered his wind. A lucky kick sent the muddy footer

whizzing into the open doorway of the Modern building.  
 "He's done it!" yelled Tubby Muffin.  
 "He, he, he!"  
 "Good old Cuffy!"  
 "Ha, ha, ha!"

But Cuffy was not finished yet. He followed the ball into the House, and began kicking it upstairs.  
 This was not an easy task, and it was likely to keep Clarence Cuffy occupied some time.  
 Three or four Modern juniors came along, and stared at him.  
 "What the thump are you up to, Cuffy?" yelled Towle of the Fourth.  
 "You'd better let Mr. Manders catch you at that game!"  
 Cuffy gasped.

"I have to get the ball to Dodd's study," he spluttered.  
 "What for?" howled Leggett.  
 "My football skipper has so instructed me, my dear Albert."  
 "Ha, ha, ha!"  
 "He's pulling your leg, you silly owl!" growled Towle. "Look out, here comes Knowles!"

Knowles, the Modern prefect, came along, frowning.  
 "Who brought that ball in here?" he rapped out.  
 "Please, Knowles, I did," said Cuffy meekly. "Yaroooh!" he added, in a wild howl, as the prefect's finger and thumb closed on his ear.  
 "Take it away at once!" snapped Knowles. "Do you hear?"  
 "Yow-ow! Yes, certainly! Ow!"

Cuffy gathered up the ball and bolted upstairs with it. Under the circumstances, he felt compelled to disregard that part of Jimmy Silver's instructions about kicking the footer up the staircase.  
 But in the upper passages he resumed operations. Whatever Cuffy couldn't do at footer, he could at least carry out his skipper's instructions to the best of his ability.

The ball was trundled along the passages in the direction of Tommy Dodd's study.  
 Dodd and Cook and Doyle, the heroes of the Modern Fourth, were detained in their study with lines. They were scribbling and grousing, when the study door was opened and Cuffy's crimson face looked in.

"Hallo! Take that phizog away!" growled Tommy Doyle.  
 "And bury it!" added Tommy Cook.  
 "Pray excuse me, my dear Thomas!" said Clarence Cuffy mildly. "I sincerely trust that I shall not incommode you. I am going to kick a football into this study, by the instructions of my skipper!"  
 "What?" yelled Tommy Dodd.

He jumped up from the table, glaring at Cuffy.  
 But Clarence did not heed his glare. He trundled the footer into the doorway.  
 "You silly chump!" raved Tommy Dodd. "If you kick that footer in here— Oh, my hat!"  
 Clarence Cuffy kicked.  
 The footer flew into the study. It was aimed at Tommy Dodd, so it naturally crashed on Doyle. But it bounced away from Doyle's head and landed full in Tommy Dodd's excited face.

Tommy Dodd sat down in the fender with a crash.  
 "Goal!" gasped Cuffy.  
 "Yaroooh!"  
 "I trust you are not hurt, my dear Thomas?"  
 "Gerroooh! I—I—"  
 "I sincerely hope that you are not subjected to any considerable discomfort, my dear Thomas? James stated  
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that if the ball landed upon your countenance it would count as a goal. I am sure, Thomas, that James will acknowledge that that was a goal—and you will bear witness if necessary, will you not, my dear Thomas?"

Thomas did not answer that question. He extracted himself from the fender and fireirons, and flew at Clarence Cuffy like a stone from a catapult.

The next instant Cuffy's head was in chancery.

"Give him beans!" roared Tommy Cook.

"Paste him, bedad, the shafe of the world!" howled Tommy Doyle, rubbing his head. "Give him jip, Tommy darling!"

"Yarooch!" roared Clarence. "My dear Thomas— Oh, my nose! My dear friend— Yoop! My eye! Oh crumbs! Oh crumbs!"

Crash!  
Clarence Cuffy landed in the passage on his back. The study door slammed after him.

"Oh dear!" gasped Clarence, as he sat up and rubbed his features. "Oh, my word! How very, very bad tempered Thomas is this afternoon! Ow! And I am sure that it was a good goal! Yow-ow-ow!"

### THE THIRD CHAPTER.

#### Good for Evil!

LEGGETT of the Modern Fourth came along the passage as Clarence Cuffy felt himself all over to ascertain that he was still all there. He felt as if he wasn't. Tommy Dodd had been a little excited, and he had not dealt gently with the protegee of his Uncle Dodd.

Leggett grinned down at the unhappy Clarence.

"Hurt?" he inquired.

"Ow! Ow!"

It sounded as if Clarence were a little hurt.

"Here, let me lend you a hand," said Leggett. "Come into my study, and I'll dust you down, old chap."

"Thank you very much!" gasped Clarence.

"Not at all."

Leggett led Clarence into his study. He needed dusting.

Any fellow less unsuspecting than Clarence would have been surprised at the good nature of the cad of the Fourth. Albert Leggett was not much given to helping others.

But Clarence was far from being of a suspicious nature. At Gander's Green sweet simplicity and trust in human nature were cultivated.

There were no bad boys like Leggett at Gander's Green. Clarence was trustfulness itself. He would have lent the Crown Prince of Prussia a "quid" and expected to see it again!

Leggett dusted him down in a very friendly manner, and then made him sit in the armchair, and gave him toffee.

Clarence sucked the toffee and beamed on Leggett. This kindness was very touching after his rough reception in Tommy Dodd's study.

"You are very, very kind, Leggett!" said Clarence gratefully. "I really think the fellows do not do you justice, Leggett, when they call you such unpleasant names as 'sneaking worm' and 'spoofing rotter,' and such things. I think, Leggett, that you are far from being such an awful rotter as the fellows believe. Is there anything the matter, my dear Albert?"

"N-no."

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"I thought you were looking rather angry."

"N-n-not at all!" gasped Leggett. "You're such a charming chap, Cuffy, that nobody could be waxy with you!"

"I am so glad to hear you say so, my dear Albert!"

Leggett breathed hard. "Now, Cuffy, old chap," he said, "I hear you're taking up footer. You'd make a splendid player, I should think. Awfully keen on the game—what?"

"Perhaps not very keen, Albert," said Cuffy thoughtfully. "You see, it is a very, very much rougher game than marbles. Have you a cough, Albert?"

"Nunno!" gasped Leggett. "Go on."

"I desire to take the game up temporarily," explained Cuffy. "I wish to please my kind old friend Mr. Dodd. Thomas' uncle, you know. He is very keen on games, and knows all the differences between cricket and football and marbles."

"My hat! He must be a regular sporting encyclopædia, if he knows all that!" said Leggett. "Well, you're keen to play in the Bagshot match, anyway!"

"Very, very keen, Albert, for the sake of entertaining Mr. Dodd if he visits us on Wednesday. If he comes on Saturday, however, I should prefer to play in the home match that afternoon."

"Exactly. Well, the way to get into the team is to please Jimmy Silver, as he is skipper," said Leggett. "If you did Silver some kind favour, it might make a lot of difference. I'd help you."

"You are very, very kind. What can I do to please James?"

"I suppose you know those fellows want their study repainted?" asked Leggett carelessly.

"I had not heard of it, Albert. But then, I do not see much of the Classical fellows."

"Well, it's a fact. They want it repainted, but they can't afford the paint, or to pay a man to do it. Now, as far as painting goes, you could do it as easy as falling off a form. You're so clever, so jolly clever, I might say!"

"You flatter me, my dear Albert."

"Not at all. As for the paint, I'd provide that, as a pleasant and friendly surprise to Jimmy Silver."

"That is noble of you, Albert!"  
Leggett rose and opened his study cupboard.

"Here's the paint."

He took out a three-pound tin of ready-mixed paint and a large brush. The tin was labelled "Light green."

"That's Silver's favourite colour," said Leggett. "I've heard him discussing it with his friends, and his idea is to have the study painted throughout in light green, including the furniture—chairs, table, bookcase, and the rest. I'm afraid you're taking on a lot of work, Cuffy."

"I do not mind that in the least, Albert."

"No, I thought you wouldn't. Put on plenty of paint, as thick as you like. And paint everything, especially the chairs and table. Begin with the chairs and table."

"Certainly!"

"And the clock—don't forget the clock!"

"I will be very, very careful, Albert."

"Better lock the door while you're at it, so that you won't be interrupted," said Leggett. "You're a really good chap, Cuffy, and I'm glad you're willing to help me return good for evil in this way."

"I am delighted, Albert. It proves that you are by no means the malicious and revengeful rascal the fellows suppose."

"I—I—exactly! Yes, quite so. Well, here you are!" said Leggett. "I'll come as far as the end study with you. We'll go the indoors way."

The two Modern juniors left the study together. Leggett led the way along the winding passage that gave access to the Classical buildings. There was a locked door in the passage, but Leggett had a key to it.

The Fourth-Form quarters on the Classical side were deserted. All the fellows were out on the playing fields.

Leggett opened the door of the end study, and they entered.

"Go ahead, Cuffy!"

"Certainly, my dear Albert. How pleased James will be when he comes in!" said Clarence, beaming.

"Pleased isn't the word. He'll be delighted! Let's see you begin."

Confident as he was in the extreme simplicity of the duffer of Rookwood, Leggett could hardly believe that Clarence Cuffy would be ass enough to paint the end study as instructed. But his doubts were soon relieved.

Cuffy jerked off the lid of the tin, thrust in the brush, and started.

Leggett almost exploded as the paint was lathered on the table-top by way of a beginning.

"Oh! Ha, ha! Oh dear!" gasped Leggett.

Clarence looked round in surprise.

"All serene. I—I just caught the smell of the paint," said Leggett, coughing. "Go ahead, old chap! Lock the door!"

Leggett beat a retreat from the end study. Clarence locked the door after him; and Leggett, waiting a few moments outside, heard the swishing of the active paintbrush. Cuffy was hard at work.

Leggett scuttled back to the Modern side. He threw himself into the armchair in his study, kicked up his heels, and yelled. In the end study on the Classical side the duffer of Rookwood painted away industriously, his face beaming with satisfaction as he thought of the pleasant surprise that awaited dear James when he came in from the footer.

### THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

#### Black Ingratitude!

JIMMY SILVER threw on a coat and muffler as he left the football ground with his chums as the dusk was beginning to fall. The Fistical Four were late for tea, but they had had a good practice. Jimmy had put his men through their paces, and he had decided about the vacant places in the eleven.

"Well?" said Raby and Newcome together, as they came away.

"You, Raby—"

"Oh, good!"

"And Mornington," said Jimmy Silver. "Sorry, Newcome, old chap, but footer is footer, you know, and we've got to beat Bagshot."

"Oh, all serene!" grunted Newcome. "Let's get in to tea, anyway! I'm famished!"

"So you won't be playing, Cuffy?" grinned Lovell.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The footballers crowded in, and the Fistical Four hurried along to the end study. Jimmy turned the handle of the door, but it did not open.

"Hallo! What's the matter with this blessed door?" exclaimed Jimmy.

"There's somebody in there!" said Lovell. "I can hear somebody moving about! Tubby Muffin after the grub, perhaps."



"I'll scalp him if it is!" Jimmy Silver thumped on the panels. "Here, open this door, fathead!"

"Certainly, my dear James!" came a well-known voice from within.

"Cuffy!" ejaculated the Fistical Four in a surprised chorus.

"What's that blessed niff?" exclaimed Newcome, sniffing. "Is there any fresh paint about?"

"Smells like it."

The key turned in the lock, and the door was opened. Clarence Cuffy's chubby face and big spectacles beamed at the chums of the Fourth. Cuffy's hands were stained, and there was a smear of green on his nose, and he looked a little tired. But he was beaming with good nature.

"Come in, my dear James!"

Jimmy Silver did not go in.

He stood in the doorway, thunder-struck.

The paint in the study had certainly seen better days. It might have been renewed with advantage. But not in the way Clarence had renewed it.

The study reeked with paint. The chairs were a dazzling light green. The table fairly shone with the same artistic hue.

The clock was green, the bookcase was green, the armchair was green—light green, wet, and smelly!

The Fistical Four could hardly believe their dazzled eyes.

"By gum!" gasped Lovell at last.

"You like it, my dear Arthur?" asked Cuffy cheerfully.

"Like it!" stuttered Lovell. "Like it!"

Jimmy Silver found his voice.

"Cuffy! You Modern idiot!"

"My dear James!"

"You've mucked up our study like this!" shrieked Jimmy Silver.

"My dear—"

"You mad idiot!" roared Raby. "Do you think this is a joke? I call it more than a joke! My hat! The place is reeking!"

"You thumping ass!" shouted Newcome. "You—you—you silly villain!"

Clarence gazed at the four in dismay. He had expected them to be pleased.

He had, in fact, expected them to be very, very pleased.

But they weren't pleased.

Whatever was doubtful about the matter, that was not doubtful at all. The Fistical Four were anything but pleased.

They gasped as they stared at the reeking paint. The study was fairly swimming with it. Already they had smears on their clothes.

"My hat!" gasped Jimmy Silver. "This is a Modern jape! This is the Modern brand of humour! By gum, we'll show 'em how we appreciate it! Collar that burbling idiot!"

"My dear J-j-j-ames— Oh dear!"

Lovell and Raby and Newcome grasped the unhappy door of good deeds.

Jimmy Silver seized the paint-pot. There was still some left. He jerked the brush away from Clarence and jammed it into the tin, and gouged out the rest of the paint—over Clarence's head.

Cuffy roared as the paint showered on his face and hair.

He opened his mouth to explain, but he closed it again, gurgling spasmodically when the paintbrush was shoved into it.

"Gug-gug-gug!"

"Paint him!" yelled Lovell. "Let him have the lot. Here's some ink, too. Get some soot, Raby!"

"Groogh-hoo-hoogh!"

Clarence Cuffy wriggled in the grasp of the incensed juniors.

Paint and ink and soot were added together to adorn him.

Not the remotest suspicion had Jimmy Silver & Co. that the duffer of Rookwood had been doing a kind action to please them.

They regarded it as a Modern jape on the Classics, and a jape that was far beyond the permitted limits.

In a few minutes Cuffy's appearance was extraordinary.

Where he was not sooty and inky he was a bright and shining green.

"Now kick him out!" gasped Jimmy Silver.

"All together!" yelled Lovell.

Four boots crashed behind the unhappy Cuffy.

He flew out of the study.

Bump!

"Arrah, and phwat's the row?" roared Flynn along the passage. "Howly

risibility, my dear Thomas! Gug-gug-gug!"

"Bless my soul!" Mr. Manders rustled up. "Cuffy! Is that Cuffy?"

"Groogh! Yes sir! Gug-gug!"

"How dare you appear in such a state?" thundered the Modern master.

"Groogh! I have been painting, and— Groogh!"

"Go and clean yourself at once, and take five hundred lines!" shouted Mr. Manders. "You disgraceful boy! Get out of my sight!"

Clarence was glad enough to get out of his sight.

He sprinted for the dormitory, and the Modern juniors followed him in a yelling crowd.

As he rubbed and scrubbed, and scrubbed and rubbed, Clarence gasped out an explanation. He was still in the dark as to why Jimmy Silver & Co. had cut up so rusty, and he asked der



The door opened and Cuffy beamed out at the chums of the Fourth. His hands were stained, and there was a smear of green paint on his nose. "Come in, my dear James," he said. "I have finished painting your study. I hope you will like it!" (See Chapter 4.)

Moses! Phwat's that intiorely? Is it a banshee?"

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled the Classical Four, as Clarence was propelled along the passage by four lunging boots.

"Yow-ow! Gug-gug-gug!" stuttered Clarence. "My dear friends—yaroooh!—my dear James—yooop!—Arthur, my dear fellow— Yah Oh! Oooooo! Woooop!"

Clarence Cuffy vanished down the staircase.

He crossed the quad in record time, and burst into Mr. Manders' House, out of breath and palpitating with astonishment and terror.

"Hallo! What on earth's that?" shouted Tommy Dodd, as he sighted him. "Is it—is it Cuffy?"

"Yow-ow! Groogh! Dear Thomas—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"There is no—groo!—occasion for

Thomas if he could tell. But dear Thomas was in hysterics, and could not reply.

Meanwhile, nearly all the Classical Fourth had gathered to stare into the reeking end study, and howl with laughter.

It was rather thick for a Modern jape, but it was funny—at least, the Classical Fourth thought so.

"By gad, it looks a corker!" exclaimed Townsend. "Nice and smelly, too! Save you somethin' in scent!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"We can't have tea there!" mumbled Lovell. "Oh, I'll scalp that villain Cuffy! Come to think of it, somebody must have put him up to it."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Come and have tea in my study!" said Erroll, laughing.

THE POPULAR.—No. 140.

NEXT FRIDAY!

"TROUBLE IN THE FAMILY!"

A SPLENDID STORY OF THE JUNIORS OF GREYFRIARS. BY FRANK RICHARDS.

And the Fistical Four had tea with Erroll and Mornington, and they did their prep in the Common-room that evening. The end study was not quite fit for habitation.

The next day, when the Fourth came out of the Form-room Clarence Cuffy bore down on Jimmy Silver with a beaming smile. He did not seem to note the deadly gleam in Jimmy's eyes.

"My dear James," he said, "Mr. Dodd has written that he is not coming (ill Saturday, so I shall not want to play in the Bagshot match this afternoon. I hope you are not disappointed. I think — Yaroooh!"

Clarence Cuffy sat down with a sudden jar, and Jimmy Silver walked on, leaving Clarence gasping and groping for his spectacles.

"Dear me!" stuttered Clarence. "James is growing very, very ill-tempered. I shall not speak to James again till he has apologised."

Which was just as well for Clarence, for Jimmy Silver was really not quite safe for the duffer of Rookwood to approach at present.

The Bagshot match was played without the assistance of Clarence Cuffy, and Bagshot was beaten by two goals to one, which would certainly not have been the case had Clarence assisted Jimmy Silver's team.

### THE FIFTH CHAPTER. A Chance for Cuffy!

"NO!" roared Tommy Dodd.  
"My dear Thomas—"  
"No!"

"But—"

"No—no—no, I say!"

Tommy Dodd seemed to be understudying a megaphone as he replied to Cuffy.

It was Saturday afternoon.

That afternoon Modern and Classical juniors were meeting on the football-field. Moderns and Classics, in combination, had beaten Bagshot on the previous Wednesday.

According to the Classics, the Moderns hadn't helped much. According to the Moderns, the Classics hadn't helped much. Now they were going to beat one another, each side being quite certain of victory.

Tommy Dodd was extremely careful in the selection of the Modern team. It was a fact that the Classical side was more of a sporting side. They had more players.

Still, Tommy Dodd averred that the Modern footballers, though fewer, were a good deal better.

Jimmy Silver had a larger number to select from. Tommy Dodd had a smaller number of better quality, according to Tommy.

Games, as the Moderns said sagely, weren't everything. Some of them were too busy for games. Still, the Moderns kept their end up pretty well on the playing fields.

But Tommy Dodd was very careful. Every man in his eleven was a picked man, and when Clarence Cuffy meekly requested to be played, Tommy Dodd's reply was more emphatic than polite.

Tommy Dodd's uncle was coming down that afternoon. Uncle Dodd was very keen on games, in his way. But what he didn't know about footer would have filled dictionaries.

Probably he would have liked to see his young friend Cuffy played for the Modern side, but Tommy was not inclined to throw away a match for that.

Tommy's idea was that Uncle Dodd should see a good match and a Modern win. That was good enough.

Clarence was very insistent. He could see no reason at all why Tommy Dodd shouldn't play him. He had learned to kick a footer without sitting down on it already.

He stated that Uncle Dodd would be delighted, but Uncle Dodd's delight was not a sufficient reason for playing the biggest duffer at Rookwood, in Tommy's opinion.

So Tommy Dodd declined Cuffy's services without thanks.

He strode away with quite a ruffled brow, leaving Clarence gazing after him more in sorrow than in anger.

It was nearly time for the start of the match when Clarence was seen escorting a stout and red-faced old gentleman to Little Side.

Tommy Dodd ran to meet him.

"Just in time, uncle!" he exclaimed.

Mr. Dodd shook hands with his nephew.

"I am glad of that, Tommy," he said. "Playing cricket this afternoon—what?" "Ahem! Footer!" said Tommy Dodd, with a cough.

"Ah, yes, of course—cricket is over!" said Mr. Dodd, with a smile. "It is a long time since my schoolboy days, Tommy. I used to be a great player myself; but it is a long time ago. I knocked up hundreds of runs at Rugger."

"D-did you?" stuttered Tommy.

"Sure, you must have been a terrific footballer, sir!" murmured Doyle.

"Yes, indeed, my boy!" said Uncle Dodd, with smiling satisfaction. Uncle Dodd's recollections of his schoolboy days of long, long ago were evidently a little hazy. "We played football in those days, you know. Played it, my boy! I was usually cover-point!"

"Oh!"

"But sometimes I kept goal, and then you should have seen me lead a charge down on the enemy—Dear me! Have you caught a cold, Tommy?"

"Nunno!" gasped Tommy Dodd. "N-n-not at all! This way, uncle; we've got a chair for you here!"

"Good! I shall watch you with pleasure! Reminds me of my school-days, by gad!"

Tommy Dodd wondered what footer had been like in Mr. Dodd's school-days. Certainly it must have been an entertaining game, with cover-point in the team and a goalkeeper leading charges.

Uncle Dodd was piloted to the place of honour reserved for him, and Jimmy Silver & Co. were presented.

The old gentleman was evidently keen on the game, though he knew about as much about it as he did about Sanskrit.

"Bless me! Why are you not in your colours, Clarence?" he asked, noticing that the youth from Gander's Green was in Etons.

"I am not playing, Mr. Dodd," said Clarence sorrowfully.

"Oh!" Uncle Dodd frowned a little. "My dear Clarence, have I not urged you to play football? It is a splendid game, Clarence, and will be the making of you, as it was the making of me. I should not be the man I am to-day but for the games I played in my youth, Clarence."

"But—"

"Come, come, you must play!" said Mr. Dodd.

"I should be delighted, dear Mr. Dodd, but—but—"

"The eleven's made up, uncle," said Tommy Dodd hastily. "I—I couldn't very well leave out a man, you know."

"Could you play Clarence as a reserve?" asked Uncle Dodd brightly.

Tommy almost fell down. Mr. Dodd's ideas of the duties of a reserve player seemed a little vague.

"N-n-no, I—I think not," stuttered the unfortunate Modern skipper.

Jimmy Silver & Co. turned to admire the view. They did not want Uncle Dodd to see their faces just then.

"Come, come, Tommy!" urged Mr. Dodd. "I particularly desired to see Clarence playing football. I am sure you would not like to disappoint me, after I have made quite a long journey."

"B-b-but—" stammered the unhappy Tommy.

"You will do as you wish, of course, Tommy!" said Mr. Dodd stiffly. "I can only say that I am surprised!"

Tommy Dodd turned a look almost of anguish upon his chums. But they could not help him.

To play the biggest duffer at Rookwood was to play a man short! The result was pretty certain.

But to refuse the kind old gentleman who had not the faintest idea of the enormity of what he was requesting was not easy.

"Faith, play him, Tommy darling!" whispered Doyle at last. "Lave me out, if you like; you can't refuse the old jinfleman."

"Oh dear!" murmured Tommy.

The Classics had already gone into the field, and Jobson of the Fifth, the referee, was calling to Tommy Dodd. It was necessary for Tommy to make up his mind.

To offend the kind old soul, who had had been a generous uncle to Tommy from his birth, was very nearly impossible.

Tommy glanced round at the Modern footballers. They were sympathetic. He wondered whether they would scalp him afterwards if he played Cuffy.

He made up his mind at last. "Get into your things, Cuffy!" he almost groaned.

"Certainly, my dear Thomas!" beamed Clarence.

Mr. Dodd smiled again.

"That's my dear nephew!" he said affectionately. "Give Clarence a good chance, Tommy, and I am sure he will do you credit. I should like to see him put on to bowl quite early."

Tommy gasped. He certainly couldn't undertake to put Clarence on to bowl. That was quite beyond his powers.

In a few minutes Clarence Cuffy was ready. Tommy Dodd & Co. went into the field, Cuffy tripping cheerfully along with them.

### THE SIXTH CHAPTER. The Limit!

"ON the ball!"  
"Play up, Classics!"

The game started with spirit. There was a good crowd of fellows round the field, Moderns and Classics.

Clarence was in the half-back line. He was right-half, if he was anything at all. The other two halves had all the work to do, of course; Cuffy was quite useless.

He was considerably shoved by the other Modern players. Every fellow who got near him, in fact, gave him a shove.

Before the match had been going on

(Continued on page 16.)

**ANSWERS**  
EVERY MONDAY. PRICE 2:  
THE POPULAR.—No. 140.

NEXT FRIDAY! "UNDER A CLOUD!" A GRAND TALE OF THE ROOKWOOD CHUMS. By OWEN CONQUEST.





A Magnificent Long Complete School Story, dealing with the Early Adventures of HARRY WHARTON & CO. at Greyfriars.

By FRANK RICHARDS.

**THE FIRST CHAPTER.**  
**Not a Fighting Man!**

**R**EGGIE COKER, the new Sixth-Former at Greyfriars, was regarded with much curiosity by the rest of the Form when he took his place in class the day after he had arrived.

A night had passed since he had put in an appearance, and he had suffered much from the attentions of the Remove, Fourth, and Fifth. Coker major was very much "down," because the Head had chosen to put his young brother in the Sixth—over the great Horace Coker's head, so to speak. For that reason Horace had not shown any intention of fighting his inoffensive young brother's battles for him.

Consequently, the diminutive Sixth-Former was left to the tender mercies of the ragers. It was Wingate, captain of Greyfriars, who had come to his rescue—with a cane.

After that the ragers had left Reggie Coker alone. The next morning he had to take his place in the Sixth Form, and the rest of the Sixth had their first real look at the new boy.

Some of them—Loder and his friends—were very gruff to the newcomer. They did not want a "kid" in the Form. But the greater part of the Sixth said nothing. If the Head chose to put him there, it was the Head's business, and ragging was quite below the dignity of the lordly Sixth. Besides, Reggie was an inoffensive fellow; he was kind and obliging and did not put on airs as if he were as good as anybody else in the Sixth. He showed a properly grateful appreciation of any kindness, and the Sixth felt that they could condescend to be kind to him. The only trouble was that so youthful and diminutive a Sixth-Former would hardly be able to uphold the dignity of the Form among the juniors. The lower Forms certainly wouldn't respect a senior whom they could lick, and it would be a very bad precedent if a member of the Sixth could be cheeked with impunity by the fags.

And Coker major was not very likely to back up his minor in the various rows that awaited him.

That Reggie would have trouble among the juniors was certain. Bolsover of the Remove had announced that he was going to give him what he was asking for.

When lessons were over that morn-

ing, Reggie left the Sixth Form-room with doubt and misgiving. The Head was very pleased with him.

The Head took the Sixth himself, and he had expressed satisfaction at Coker minor's performances on his first morning at the school. The Head's approbation was grateful and comforting in the Form-room, but outside those august limits it was not likely to be of much use to Coker minor.

Reggie kept beside Wingate as they went down the passage. Wingate did not notice him, and walked away with Courtney.

Reggie would gladly have shadowed the stalwart captain of Greyfriars until dinner-time, but that was impossible, and he drifted away into the Close by himself disconsolately.

He felt very lonely. His brother was so angry that he could not venture to seek out Coker major. But he was not left lonely for long. As he meditated upon his prospects in a secluded corner of the Close, Bolsover & Co. bore down upon him.

Bolsover planted himself before Coker minor in a threatening attitude.

"Here you are, then!" he exclaimed. "Yes, please!" faltered Reggie.

"Well, I don't please," said Bolsover grimly. "You're in the Sixth. I've never licked a Sixth-Former yet. I'm just going to begin!"

And Vernon-Smith and Stott and Snoop grinned approval.

"Please don't be rough," urged Reggie. "I do not wish to quarrel with you. It was really not my fault that I was put in the Sixth."

"Put up your hands!"

"What for?"

Bolsover surveyed him in astonishment and disgust.

"To fight, of course, you young idiot!" he said.

"B-b-but I d-d-don't want to fight!" faltered Reggie.

"It's not a case of what you want, but of what you're going to get!" explained Bolsover. He tore off his jacket and handed it to Vernon-Smith.

"Now, then, are you ready?"

"N-no!"

"Will you put up your paws?"

"I—I—please—"

Biff!

Reggie staggered back as Bolsover major tapped him forcibly on the nose.

"Now are you going to fight?" roared the Remove bully.

Coker minor's eyes flashed. In spite of his timid and uncertain ways, he was not by any means wanting in pluck.

"You—you beast!" he exclaimed. "I don't want to fight you, but I will now! Oh dear!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Vernon-Smith. "Don't hit him too hard, Bolsover. He might break into little pieces."

Bolsover squared up to the unfortunate Sixth-Former.

Reggie squared up in return, and his fighting attitude made the juniors shriek. What Coker minor did not know on the subject of fighting would have filled volumes.

"Now, come on, you beast!" gasped Reggie.

Bolsover major came on.

He knocked up Coker minor's feeble guard, and planted a terrific drive on his chin. Coker minor gasped, and tumbled over backwards as if a cannon-ball had struck him.

"Ow!"

"I say, that's a bit thick!" cried Stott, being blessed for the moment with an atom of courage; and he advanced on Bolsover, faced him grimly, and the bully's look seemed to cause Stott's momentary courage to ooze out at his finger-tips; for the next instant he gave a sickly grin, and looked down at the new Sixth-Former.

Reggie lay on his back, blinking up at the bully of the Remove.

Bolsover major pranced round him, brandishing his fists.

"Get up!" he roared.

"Ow!"

"Gerrup!"

"Yow!"

"Do you want any more?"

"Groo! N-n-no!"

"Do you confess yourself licked?" demanded the Remove bully.

"Yes! Ow! Yes!"

"Well, you're a ripping specimen to shove into the Sixth, I must say!" growled Bolsover major, as he took his jacket from Vernon-Smith, and slipped it on. "You're not worth licking!"

"Ow!" groaned Reggie.

"Pah!"

Bolsover major walked away with his comrades. His inglorious victory had been complete; but, as Bolsover remarked, there wasn't much satisfaction

in licking a chap who fell like a skittle as soon as he was touched.

Reggie lay for nearly five minutes on the ground in a dazed state. Finally he sat up, and rubbed his nose and his chin.

"Good gracious!" he murmured. "Oh dear! I don't think I shall like Greyfriars! Ow!"

And he rose slowly to his feet, and moved away disconsolately towards the School House.

There was a shout from a group of Fourth-Formers as they caught sight of him. Before Coker minor could avoid the rush, Temple, Dabney, & Co. had surrounded him.

"Here's the giddy senior!" roared Temple.

"Oh, rather!"

"Here's the new Sixth-Former! Collar him!"

"Oh dear!" said Reggie, backing away. "I—I'm very sorry that I'm in the Sixth! I—I assure you I'd much rather be in your Form. I should like it very much!"

"The liking would be all on your side, then!" growled Temple.

"Oh dear!"

"Now, which of us are you going to take a licking from?" asked Fry.

"If you please, I'd rather not fight any of you," said poor Reggie. "I'm not used to fighting, and it makes me feel quite ill."

The Fourth-Former surveyed him in utter disgust.

"Did you ever hear anything like that?" demanded Temple. "I call it a disgrace to Greyfriars! That—in the Sixth!"

"Rotten!" said the Co. unanimously.

"Must lick him, for the honour of the school!" said Temple. "Can't have a chap here who's afraid to fight! Which eye shall I bung up for you, young Coker!"

"N-n-not either, thank you!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Temple advanced upon the reluctant hero of the Sixth. A brilliant idea occurred to the unfortunate Reggie. He stood upon one leg, holding the other up with his right hand, and smiled feebly at Temple.

"Now, if you hit me I shall fall down!" he said.

Temple paused.

"Well, my only Aunt Matilda!" he gasped. "When I hit a chap, kid, he generally does fall down. Stick your feet on the ground, and stand up like a man and take your gruel!"

"My dear fellow, I—I don't want

Temple snorted.

"And that's in the Sixth!" he ejaculated, in wonder and scorn.

"What is Greyfriars coming to? A Sixth-Former standing on one leg like a giddy crane so that a chap can't punch him! Oh, let's get away! He makes me ill!"

And Temple marched indignantly off, followed by the Co.

Coker minor gasped with relief, and hurried into the House. He felt that he would be safer indoors.

Coker major was in the doorway, with a frown upon his face. Reggie gave him an appealing glance, but it was lost upon Coker major. Horace Coker was wounded in his tenderest place—his personal dignity—and he hardened his heart towards his minor. He frowned more darkly, and stalked away.

Reggie, with a heavy heart, went *THE POPULAR*.—No. 140.

into his study and remained there until the bell rang for dinner. And his face was clouded when he came into the dining-room and took his place at the Sixth Form table.

It was beginning to dawn upon him that other attributes besides learning were required in the Sixth Form at Greyfriars, and those attributes were not at all to his taste. But a Sixth-Former who could not hold his own in combat with one of the Remove of the Fourth was an anomaly; and Coker minor realised ruefully that he would have to learn.

## THE SECOND CHAPTER. Strung Up!

**L**ODER of the Sixth tapped Coker minor on the shoulder in a genial sort of way. Reggie looked round at him with a cordial smile. If he had known Loder of the Sixth better he would have distrusted him when he appeared most genial. But he did not know Loder, and he was only too glad to greet any appearance of friendliness from a Sixth-Former. Coker minor was feeling very lonely in his elevation, and he was feeling his major's desertion very much.

It was getting near bed-time, and Reggie was going to his room, when Loder stopped him in the Sixth Form passage. The Sixth were allowed to stay up late if they liked, and most of them did not go to bed till ten or half-past; but Reggie was accustomed to junior bed-time. It was half-past nine now, and he wanted to go to bed. But he stopped at once, in the most cordial way, to speak to Loder.

"Will you do me a favour, kid?" asked Loder.

Reggie beamed. He would have done anybody in the Sixth any number of favours.

"Certainly!" he said. "What can I do, Loder?"

"I have to see lights out for the Shell," Loder explained. "I'm a prefect, you know. Prefects have to do that; it's part of the bizney. But any senior will do. Would you mind doing it for me this evening?"

"I shall be very pleased," said Coker minor. "Anything you like."

"It's no trouble, you know," said Loder. "You simply have to go to the Shell dorm, and see that the kids are in bed, and put the light out."

"Thank you!" said Reggie.

"They're gone up now," said Loder.

"I'll show you where the dorm. is if you'll come to the stairs."

"Yes, certainly."

And the unsuspecting new boy followed Loder, who pointed out the Shell dormitory.

"Tell them they're not to make a row," said Loder.

"Yes."

And Reggie hurried away to do Loder's duty for him.

Loder watched him, with a grin, and then joined Carne and Walker, who were waiting for him in the passage.

"Has he taken it on?" grinned Walker.

"Yes—the young ass!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"The Shell will scalp him!" said Loder. "Serve him jolly well right, too! The cheek—coming into the Sixth! I'll Sixth him!"

Coker minor reached the door of the Shell dormitory and opened it. The light was on in the dormitory, and the Shell were all in bed.

Loder, when he saw lights out for the

juniors, did not like to be kept waiting, and he sometimes brought up a cane with him to help the juniors to hurry. The Shell were waiting for the light to be turned out, and they expected Loder; and they simply stared at the sight of Coker minor. The new Sixth-Former advanced timidly into the dormitory.

"Hallo!" exclaimed Hobson, sitting up in bed. "What do you want?"

"Nothing, thank you," said Reggie.

"I've come to put the lights out for the Shell. You are not to make a row."

Hobson stared at him speechlessly.

It seemed too good to be true that the obnoxious Sixth-Former had actually placed himself entirely in the power of the Shell by thus invading the territory of his enemies.

"Well, my hat!" said Hobson at last.

"My only uncle!" ejaculated Benson.

"Here's a kid of fifteen come to see lights out for us! What is Greyfriars coming to?"

"Loder asked me to," explained Reggie gently. "Are you ready for the light to be turned out, my dear fellows?"

Hobson jumped out of bed.

"Of all the cheek!" he gasped. "If this doesn't take the whole giddy biscuit factory!" He ran across to the door to cut off the escape of Coker minor.

"Collar him, you chaps!"

The Shell were tumbling out of bed on all sides.

Coker minor looked alarmed.

"I—I say—please—" he stammered.

"Collar him!"

The Shell fellows closed round the youthful senior. They collared him and were rather disappointed that he made no resistance. Reggie was too bewildered to resist. He did not understand what the Shell were so exasperated about. To Hobson & Co. it seemed like a personal injury that a fellow younger than themselves should be in the Sixth at all. But to have him come and put the lights out for them, as if he were a real senior and a full-blown prefect, that was insult added to injury. They had a suspicion, too, that Loder knew very well the kind of reception Coker minor was likely to meet with in the Shell dormitory, and that the prefect would judiciously refrain from hearing any noise they might make.

"I—I say, you know—please—" stuttered Reggie.

Hobson surveyed him with frowning brows.

"So you've come to see us to bed, have you?" he demanded.

"Yes, please."

"Yes, please!" mimicked Benson.

"Ha, ha, ha! Did you ever see such a spooney? Does your mother know you're out, kid?"

"Yes, please!" said Coker minor.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"And that's in the Sixth!" roared Hobson. "That's what Greyfriars is coming to! Old Coker in the Fifth, and young Coker in the Sixth! My hat! There's too much Coker in this school!"

"Hear, hear!"

"And we're going to make an example of them—and we'll start with this babbling burler," said Hobson.

"You've come to put us to bed, have you?"

"Yes, please."

"Well, we'll put you to bed. Strip him!"

"Oh dear!"

Coker minor began to struggle. But he did not have much chance. He was whirled over, and the Shell fellows, roaring with laughter, undressed him. They dragged off his boots and his socks, and yanked away his trousers, and

(Continued on page 13.)



# BILLY BUNTER'S WEEKLY!



## A GRAND FOUR-PAGE SUPPLEMENT

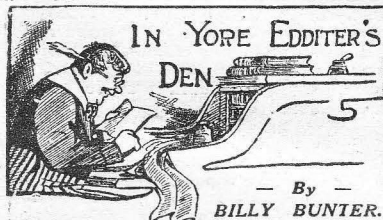
Edited by

WILLIAM GEORGE BUNTER of Greyfriars School.

Assisted by

HIS FOUR FAT SUBS—SAMMY BUNTER of Greyfriars, FATTY WYNN and BAGGY TRIMBLE of St. Jim's, and TUBBY MUFFIN of Rookwood.

Contributions from the Three Famous Schools.



IN YORE EDDITER'S  
DEN

— By —  
BILLY BUNTER.

## QUEER QUERIES!

By MONTY LOWTHER.

Do you know Hammond?

Who?  
Ham and beef sandwiches!

\* \* \*

Do you know Cardew?

Eh?  
Car due at St. Jim's any minute.

\* \* \*

Do you know Figgins?

Who?  
Fig inside a suet pudding!

\* \* \*

Do you know Talbot?

Who?  
Tall, but not bad-looking.

\* \* \*

Do you know Merry?

Who?  
'Mericans are coming over here.

\* \* \*

Do you know Wootton?

Eh?  
Wootton leave my little wooden hut for you!

\* \* \*

Do you know Gay?

Who?  
Gay-ted three times a week!

\* \* \*

Do you know Knox?

Who?  
Knox all the juniors about.

\* \* \*

Do you know Cutts?

Who?  
Cutts and then deals!

\* \* \*

Do you know Lowther?

Who?  
Low-thermometer to-day!

## THE Sub-Editor's Song!

— Written by —

Dick Penfold.

— Sung by —

Sammy Bunter.

I am thinking of the morning—several months ago, or more,

I can see my major's figure standing at the study door.

As he grasped my hand he murmured, on that January morn,

“Now they know you're on my staff, kid, they will look at you with scorn. But promise me you'll ne'er forget the journal you adorn!”

CHORUS.

If they ask you what your name is, tell them “Sammy B.”

Where's the blame? There's no shame in being a brother of ME!

If they ask you what your job is, tell them, friends or foes,

“Working for the ‘Weekly’—where the finest fiction goes!”

Many terms I've lived at Greyfriars, and have found new chums for old, I have handled postal-orders, and I've handled bags of gold.

But the one thing that I long for, yes, wherever I may be,

Is to scribble for the “Weekly” at a fat and princely fee,

And to hear again my major's voice—the voice that said to me:

If they ask you what your name is, tell them “Sammy B.”

Where's the blame. There's no shame in being a brother of ME!

If they ask you what your job is, tell them with a grin,

“Working for the ‘Weekly’—where the smartest stuff goes in!”

THE POPULAR.—No. 140.

My Deer Readers,—I am happy to state that the grate crysis threw which we have just passed is over.

The strike is at an end; the Army-stiss has been sined; the trooce has been proclaimed; and my four fat subbs have returned to work.

I am very glad to be the barer of this tidings. The strane of getting out anuther number of “Billy Bunter's Weekly” off my own bat wood have hussled me into an erly grave. It is yewmanly impossibul for a chapp to edit a paper, and write every word in it into the bargin!

It is not perraps serprizing that my four subbs went on strike. Every grate jernal passes thre a crysis of this sort at sum time or other. Either the staff, or the printers, or the edditer himself goes on strike, and then there are ructions. You karn't eggspeckt always to sale a smooth passidge. Their are bound to be sum ups and downs. But if the edditer is a person of strong karracker and kurridge, like me, he is bound to win threw.

Had a weekling been in kontrol of this paper, he wood have said, “My subbs are all on strike. What's the good of karrying on?” And the paper wood have been shut down.

But W. G. B. is no weekling. He is just the man for an emergency. It brings out all the strong poynts of his karracker. Rather than see the paper go West, he filled the hole issew himself!

My four fat subbs are now back in harness, and they have solumny prommist not to strike agane—untill neckst time! If they do come out any more, I sha'n't save there jobs for them. I am a long-suffering fello, but their is a limmit even to my endurance.

So hear we are agane, deer readers—a happy famby wunce more, determined to spare no effort to make the “Weekly” a stunning success.

So long as my readers don't go on strike, I can face the fewcher with a lite hart. But my deer, devoted chums woodn't drem of striking—wood you? I feel sure you will all remane loyal and trew to—

*Yore Edditer*



# The Song that Tubby Sang!

By ARTHUR NEWCOME.

**T**HERE was a big concert coming off at Latcham, for the cause of charity. Tubby Muffin heard all about the concert, and he made up his mind to be present at it—not as a mere looker-on in Vienna, but as a performer.

"I'm going to sing!" declared Tubby.  
"But you can't!" said Jimmy Silver.  
"Bh?"  
"You can't sing. You can't even warble. You can only make a noise like somebody sawing wood!"

"Oh, really, Silver, I can sing, like—like a bird! All fat fellows can sing. It's a well-known scientific fact. Caruso wasn't exactly slim. And what's to prevent me following in the footsteps of Caruso?"

"Caruso had a voice. You haven't even an apology for one!" said Lovell.

"Oh, that's all rot, you know! Just listen to this!"

And Tubby Muffin burst into song.

"I passed by your window  
When the morning was red—"

"And heard Muffin singing, so promptly I fled!" said Raby.

"Ha, ha, ha!"  
Tubby Muffin glared wrathfully at his schoolfellows.

"You rotters are only jealous of my wonderful voice!" he said.

"Help!"  
"I've got a conundrum, you fellows," said Jimmy Silver. "Why is Tubby's voice like the teapot in our study? Give it up? Because it's cracked!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"  
That was too much for Tubby Muffin. He turned on his heel, and rolled wrathfully away.

"I'm certain I've got a good voice!" he muttered. "When I was at a kids' party during the vac I heard somebody say to my pater, 'Your son has a magnificent voice. It only wants training.' There's a professor of singing in Latcham. I'll pop over and see him."

Tubby Muffin rolled away in the direction of Latcham.

On the gate of a private house appeared a brass plate with the following inscription:

"PROFESSOR FALL-SETTO,  
Teacher of Music, &c."

Tubby Muffin rang the bell, and was soon ushered into the presence of the professor.

"Can you train voices?" he inquired.  
"I can train voices, dogs, porpoises—anything," said the professor, with an embracing sweep of his arms.

"Will you train my voice, and send the bill in to my pater?"  
"Certainly!"

At the end of the first lesson the professor gazed upwards with a look of alarm, as if he expected that his pupil's voice had lifted the roof off.

"How do I shape?" inquired Tubby Muffin.  
"Your voice certainly has power, but it has nothing else to commend it at present," said the professor. "However, I think I can make you a passable singer in five years."

"Five years!" gasped Tubby. "Why, I want to sing at the concert in Latcham on Wednesday evening!"

"I strongly advise you to do nothing of the sort, unless you are anxious to get mobbed."

"Oh crumbs!"  
"Come to me again to-morrow. You will never make a great singer, but I will persevere with you."

Tubby Muffin continued to take lessons. In fact, he took them daily. But he made very little progress. His one idea, when singing, seemed to be to create as great a volume of sound as possible. As the professor remarked, somewhat sarcastically, his voice had quantity but not quality.

"If you attempt to sing at any concert during the next five years," he said, "you will be lynched by an infuriated audience!"

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But Tubby Muffin had made up his mind to sing at the Latcham concert on Wednesday. No human power would have prevented him. He handed in his name to the organiser of the concert, and described himself as Professor Fall-setto's most promising pupil. He undertook to sing "The Sunshine of Your Smile," and, by way of an encore, "Bird of Love Divine." But it was highly unlikely that Tubby would get an encore.

On Wednesday evening, the public hall at Latcham was packed.

Tubby Muffin was in high spirits.

This would be his first public appearance, and probably his last!

Tubby remained behind the scenes until he was called upon. Then the promotor—a short, stout man in evening-dress, announced:

"Master Smile will now render 'The Sunshine of Your Muffin.' I—I mean, Master Sunshine will now render, 'The Muffin of Your Smile.' Oh, dash it! Master Muffin will sing, anyhow!"



*A choice assortment of rotten fruit, old boots, and other missiles came upon Tubby Muffin in a deluge, and bowled him out.*

The promotor was very flurried, and there was cause for his confusion.

The concert, up to this stage, had not been a success. None of the talent had been professional. It was amateur—painfully amateur. And the audience resembled a number of caged beasts. They had not attacked any of the performers yet, but it was only a matter of time.

Tubby Muffin's confidence oozed out at his finger-tips as he stepped on to the platform.

The pianist struck up the accompaniment, but the Rookwood junior was tongue-tied. He was awed by the sea of faces in front of him. And every face seemed to wear a hideous grin, like a gargole.

The pianist paused, and motioned to Tubby Muffin to commence.

In his very worst voice—and Tubby's worst takes some beating—the singer began:

"Dear face, that holds so sweet a smile for me—"

Confound it! How did the beastly thing go on?

Tubby Muffin made a wild plunge.

"Give me your smile—way down in Tennessee!"

"Wrong!" hissed the pianist. "Better get on with the chorus!"

The faces of the audience were grinning more hideously than ever. Tubby Muffin's knees fairly knocked together as he sang, in a cracked, unmelodious voice:

"Give me your smile—the lovelight in your eyes.

Give me your smile—'tis sweet as apples!

Turn on your smile, and let its radiance drop;

It's most refreshing—just like ginger-pop!"

(Continued at foot of column 3.)

## OUR CYCLING COLUMN!

Conducted by BOB CHERRY.

The Remove cycling race, over a course of five miles, was won by Frank Nugent, who finished the width of a spoke in front of Harry Wharton. It was a great race, full of thrills and spills.

Billy Bunter told us that he fully intended to win the race. But his intentions sadly missed fire, for he never left the starting-point. It appears that he had borrowed Bulstrode's bicycle, and just as the race was about to start Bulstrode came up and claimed his property. Being in a generous mood, he presented Billy Bunter with a beautiful pair of black eyes!

For riding without lights Johnny Bull was arrested the other evening by P.-c. Tozer, and he had to bribe the portly constable heavily before he could get away. Johnny cannot understand how his lights happened to go out. He is quite "in the dark" as to how it came about!

Bolsover major complains that his bike is missing. We should advise him to get into touch with the old-iron merchant, whom we saw removing a battered and shapeless mass on a wheelbarrow!

Lord Mauleverer, whilst cycling down the hill into Friardale the other evening, took a sensational "header" into the duck-pond. First time we were aware that his lordship was a trick cyclist!

Skinner of the Remove has affixed a large placard to his machine bearing the inscription, "NOT TO BE TOUCHED." Skinner's bike is such a sorry creak that only a fellow who was "touched" would want to touch it!

Bob Cherry is badly in need of a new bike. Will generous readers oblige? Peter Todd has already made me a present of a small nut, and I found a spanner in the woodshed, so we sha'n't be long!

(Continued from previous column.)

Even as Tubby sang a ginger-beer bottle came hurtling on to the platform. It missed the singer's nose by a hair's-breadth.

Then came a choice and assorted variety of fruit-skins, old hoots, ancient eggs, nutshells, and other missiles. They came upon Tubby Muffin in a deluge, and bowled him over like a skittle.

"Ow! Wow! Yoooop!" he gasped.  
The promotor of the concert shouted to him across the platform.

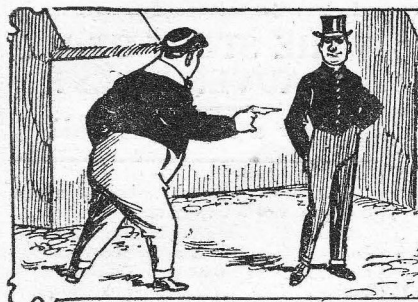
"Run! Run for your life!"

Tubby Muffin picked himself up, and took to his heels. The yolks of half a dozen prehistoric eggs clung lovingly to his face as he ran. And he didn't pause, not even to glance over his shoulder, until he gained the friendly shelter of Rookwood.

I venture to think it will be a long, long time before Tubby Muffin musters sufficient nerve to sing in public again!

[Supplement II.]





# Bunter at the Dentist's!

By MONTY NEWLAND.

"BUNTER!" rapped out Mr. Quelch, in the middle of morning lessons.

"Mmmmm!"  
 "How dare you mumble in that absurd manner? Remove that unwholesome sweetmeat from your mouth immediately!"

"Ahem! I—I haven't got anything in my mouth, sir—barring my tongue!" faltered the fat junior.

"But your left cheek is swollen, as if you had a piece of toffee in your mouth!" said Mr. Quelch sternly.

"It isn't toffee, sir—it's toothache! I've had it for days, sir! It's kept me awake night after night! If the pain doesn't stop soon I shall go raving mad!"

"In other words, he'll be normal!" murmured Bob Cherry.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Mr. Quelch frowned upon the class.

"Cease this ribaldry at once!" he commanded. "Have you a bad tooth, Bunter?"

"I—I suppose so, sir!"

"I am not surprised, bearing in mind the fact that you are always consuming sweetmeats! It is a wonder that you have a sound tooth in your head! If the pain is very intense, Bunter—"

"It's awful, sir!"

"Then you may go—"

"Thanks very much, sir!"

"To the dentist's!"

"Oh crumbs!"

Billy Bunter's jaw dropped. He had expected Mr. Quelch to say that he might go for a stroll in the Close, and be excused from Form work. But the dentist—The very word filled Billy Bunter's soul with dread.

It was bad enough to have to sit stewing in the Form-room on that sunny September morning. But it would be a far greater ordeal to have to sit in a dentist's chair.

"Ahem! My—my toothache's getting better, sir!" said Bunter.

"Nonsense! A decayed tooth never gets better! You must go and have it extracted, Bunter. I will give you a note that you can take to Mr. Tuggett, in Friardale. He will alleviate your pain!"

Billy Bunter shuddered. He had always pictured a dentist as a person who caused pain—not alleviated it.

"I—I'd rather not go, sir, if you don't mind!" he stammered.

"You have no choice in the matter, Bunter!" said Mr. Quelch. "I command you to go!"

"Oh, help!"

Mr. Quelch scribbled a note, sealed it in an envelope, and handed it to Billy Bunter.

"I shall expect you back within the hour, Bunter," he said. "The extraction of a tooth is only a matter of a few moments at the most. You will hand this note to Mr. Tuggett, and he will deal with you!"

Billy Bunter rolled out of the Form-room like a condemned felon going to his doom. Some of the fellows threw him sympathetic glances; others grinned.

Instead of making his way to the school gates, Billy Bunter went along to his study. Arrived here, he set to work in a mysterious manner. He placed a kettle of water on the gas-stove, waited a few moments, and then proceeded to steam open the envelope which Mr. Quelch had given him. He drew out the note that was within and perused it.

"Dear Mr. Tuggett—The bearer of this note is troubled with a decayed tooth, which I shall be glad if you will kindly extract.—Yours truly,

"H. H. QUELCH."

Having read the missive, Billy Bunter returned it to the envelope, which he resealed by means of gum. Then he put on his cap, and set out on his journey to Friardale.

At the school gates he overtook Trotter, the page.

"I say, kid! Where are you going?" inquired Bunter.

"Friardale, Master Bunter!"

"Oh, good! Then p'raps you wouldn't mind leaving this note at the dentist's, for Quelchy?"

Trotter was an obliging youth. Moreover, he did not smell a rat. He held out his hand for the note, nodded cheerfully to Bunter, and strolled away, humming a merry tune.

As for Billy Bunter, he went back to his study, locked the door on the inside, and made himself comfortable on the couch.

His tooth still ached, but he didn't seem to mind. Any pain, he reflected, was preferable to the awful torture which Mr. Tuggett would have inflicted.

"I wangled that a treat!" he murmured to himself. "I'm rather sorry for poor old Trotter! He'll have to go through the mill, I'm afraid! Still, better him than me!"

Meanwhile, Trotter went gaily on his way. He halted outside Mr. Tuggett's establishment, and rang the bell. A maid-servant responded to the summons.

"Which I've brought a note from Mr. Quelch," said Trotter.

"Thank you! You'd better wait!"

The girl disappeared into the surgery, and after a brief interval a grim-visaged man appeared in the hall. He beckoned to Trotter.

"Come along, my lad! I'll soon put you out of your misery!"

Trotter shivered. The man spoke as if he intended to break the Sixth Commandment.

"Quickly!" said Mr. Tuggett. "I've no time to waste!"

With an expression of mingled wonder and terror on his face, Trotter followed the dentist into his surgery. Here he beheld a large, forbidding-looking chair, and an imposing array of instruments.

"Get into that chair!" commanded the dentist.

"But, sir—"

"Do as I tell you!"

Trotter clambered into the big chair, and Mr. Tuggett jerked open the page-boy's mouth and examined his teeth. Then a puzzled expression came over his face.

"Mr. Quelch must have made a mistake!" he murmured. "There is no sign of a decayed tooth here! You can run along, my boy! I will inquire into this matter!"

Trotter slipped down from the chair in great relief.

After Trotter's departure, Mr. Tuggett rang up Greyfriars on the telephone, and asked to speak to Mr. Quelch.

"Mr. Tuggett speaking," he said. "You sent a boy to me just now, with a request that I should extract a bad tooth."

"Yes—yes," said Mr. Quelch.

"Well, I made a careful examination of his teeth, and found them all in perfect order."

"But did you not notice that the boy's cheek was swollen?" exclaimed Mr. Quelch, in amazement.

"Indeed I did not! The boy in question was a pageboy. At least, he wore a page's uniform."

"Then there has been some trickery!" ejaculated Mr. Quelch. "The boy I sent to you was Bunter—a rotund boy, wearing spectacles. His cheek was considerably swollen."

"No boy answering to that description has visited me this morning," said Mr. Tuggett.

"Then I think I understand what happened. I will find Bunter, and send him to you immediately!"

"Very well," said Mr. Tuggett.

Mr. Quelch hung up the receiver, went back to the Remove Form-room, and despatched Harry Wharton in search of Bunter.

The captain of the Remove went along to Study No. 7, and tried the door. It did not budge.

"Bunter!"

There was a startled reply from within.

"Oh crumbs! Is—is that you, Wharton?"

"Yes, Quelchy wants you, fathead!"

Billy Bunter uttered a hollow groan. He unlocked the door, and accompanied Harry Wharton to the Form-room.

The glare which Mr. Quelch bestowed upon the fat junior was enough to shrivel him up.

"Bunter!" he roared. "I gave you a note to take to the dentist's."

"Ye-e-s, sir!"

"Instead of carrying out my commands you gave the note to Trotter, in the hope that Mr. Tuggett would extract one of Trotter's teeth instead of your own."

"Ahem! It—it was only a joke, sir!"

"Then I cannot commend your sense of humour, Bunter!" said Mr. Quelch sternly. "I will not cane you—as you are indisposed—but you will write five hundred lines. Now go, and do not dare to disobey me a second time!"

Billy Bunter rolled dejectedly out of the Form-room, and set out on the long, long trail to Friardale.

He waited on Mr. Tuggett's steps for about ten minutes before he could summon up sufficient courage to ring the bell.

The maidservant opened the door, and requested Billy Bunter to "step this way."

The fat junior's feelings as he entered the surgery were far more acute than those of Daniel when he entered the lion's den.

"Ah!" said Mr. Tuggett grimly. "So you are Bunter—the boy who has caused all this inconvenience? Get into that chair!"

Billy Bunter reluctantly obeyed.

"Kick-kick-kick-can I have gas, please, sir?"

"No; it is not necessary for a simple extraction of this sort."

As he spoke, Mr. Tuggett brought his forceps into play, and gave a sharp downward wrench.

"Yaroooooh!"

"It's out!" said the dentist.

And so was Bunter.

With amazing alacrity, the fat junior bounded up from the chair, and vanished through the doorway. And he never stopped running till he got home.

THE POPULAR.—No. 140.

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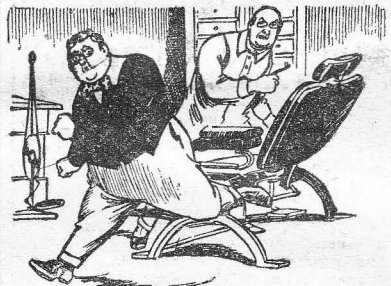
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# THE ART OF GOALKEEPING!

By **FATTY WYNN.**

Now that football is with us once more, I make no apology for writing an article under this heading.

As you all know, I am the junior goalkeeper of St. Jim's, so I know my subject. I'm not like the editor, who writes an article on "How to Swim," when he can't swim a stroke! (Wynn, you rotter, I'll deduct tuppence from your salary for this insult!—Ed.)

Goalkeeping is just as much an art as cooking a mutton chop or making an apple-turnover.

To begin with, you want to be fat. It's no use a scraggy skeleton attempting to hold the fort. When an extra powerful gust of wind came along, he'd be blown away!

The fatter you are, the more room you take up, and the less chance there is of the ball entering the net. This ought to be obvious to a fellow of the meanest intelligence, such as Baggy Trimble.

Concentrate, then, on getting fat. That's half the battle. If you cultivate such a width that you can stand in the goalmouth, and grasp the upright on either side of you, you will have gone a long way towards making yourself a successful goalie.

But understand this. All the fat in the world won't help you unless you have skill, and plenty of it. Billy Bunter's fat, but he's got no more idea of goalkeeping than the man in the moon. Baggy Trimble's fat, but he's better at keeping white mice than keeping goal!

You want to develop a powerful punch, so that you can smite the ball when it comes to you shoulder-high. Fix up a punching-ball in your study, or, if this is impossible, practise punching on your study-mate. He might raise a few objections, but, dash it all, you've got to get your training somehow!

You want to learn how to dive for the ball when it comes at your feet. A good way of practising diving is to stand among a crowd while somebody is scattering cream-buns.

Another thing you want to learn is how to kick. Every time an unwelcome visitor enters your study, give him the order of the boot. In this way you will soon develop a lusty kick.

You must also learn how to jump, because there are some shots which come whizzing in over your head.

In order to practise high jumping, get a fellow to explode a number of crackers behind you when you are not looking! An alternative plan is to get a pal to stick a pin in your calf during lessons.

When you have learnt all these things, you will know something about the art of goalkeeping.

The goalie's position is the most responsible on the field. He should possess plenty of stamina, and this is only to be obtained by constant feeding. A six-course meal before every match, and a good snack at half-time—that's my maxim.

Study these hints for all you are worth, and you will soon become as good a goalie as Sam Hardy—or me.

I make no charge for the advice contained in this article. It is free, gratis, and for nix.

Learn how to get fat, and how to dive, jump, punch, and kick, and you will become a boon and a blessing to your club. And don't forget to leave me in your will!

THE POPULAR.—No. 140.

# NOTICE!

## A GRAND (NON-SMOKING) CONCERT

Will be held in the Junior Common-room at St. Jim's on Saturday evening next at 8 sharp.

### PROGRAMME.

1. SONG:  
"I Considah a Toppah is Pwopah!"  
By Arthur Augustus D'Arcy.
2. SONG:  
"We Shan't Get Home Till Morning."  
By Gerald Knox, the Reveller of the Sixth.
3. Herries' Performing Bulldog will appear (and the fellows sitting in the front row, mindful of their Sunday "bags," will disappear!).
4. SONG:  
"Everyone Calls Me Tarzan."  
By George Alfred Grundy.
5. RECITATION:  
"Mary had a little lamb  
(The plot begins to thicken!).  
It got run over by a tram,  
She served it up as chicken!"  
etc., etc.  
By Monty Lowther.
6. SONG:  
"I'm For Ever Going Doubles."  
By Baggy Trimble.
7. DUET:  
"Always Merry and Gay."  
By Tom Merry and Gordon Gay.
8. SONG:  
"I 'Passed' by Your Window."  
By George Figgins.  
(Recently caned for playing footer underneath the Head's study window.)
9. CONCERTED ITEM by the St. Jim's Orchestra. (The audience are requested to discharge their rotten eggs, etc., at this juncture!)
10. SONG:  
"Somewhere a Voice is Bawling."  
By D'Arcy minor (Knox's fag).

ADMISSION—SIXPENCE.

Proceeds to be devoted to the Fund for providing George Alfred Grundy with a strait-jacket!

Neckst Weak: Our Sheshul Footbawl Number!

Make the Noose Agent's Shopp Your Goal!

# THE STORY OF MY ADVENTURES!

By a **Punching-Ball.**

The lot of a punching-ball at a public school is not a happy one.

One gets such a lot of knocking about. In fact, it's a game of give and take, and the poor punching-ball does all the taking. But it can hit back sometimes, as fellows know to their cost when I have given them a violent clump on the nose.

My first owner was Jimmy Silver. He has given me many a "blowing-up" before suspending me from the ceiling of his study.

I wasn't in love with Jimmy. He was in the habit of hitting far too hard and far too accurately. How often have I groaned beneath his terrific punches!

Jimmy Silver kept me until my cover was nearly worn out. Then he made a present of me to Tubby Muffin.

I had quite a good time when I was with Tubby. He often tried to hit me, but somehow or other he always missed. If I had the ability to chuckle, I should have chuckled heaps of times to see Tubby's fist go sailing harmlessly past me to crash into the wall.

After a time Tubby Muffin got fed-up with trying to knock me into the middle of next week. He pulled me down and chucked me away in the lumber-room, where I lay neglected for many moons. Owing, I suppose, to lack of nourishment, I got quite thin, and instead of being my usual plump self I was as flat as a pancake, when Teddy Grace came along and rescued me.

I hoped that Teddy was going to take me into his care and give me a good home.

But, alas!

Teddy had merely procured me for the purpose of playing footer with me in the quad.

Imagine my feelings as he blew me up with a bicycle-pump! A score of fellows stood round me, like hungry sharks, waiting to take a jolly good kick out of my hide.

Biff!

I received a kick which knocked me out of shape and caused me to gasp.

I felt myself getting flat again, and I made a loud hissing noise as the wind escaped from me.

Then, as I rolled towards the school gateway, I caught sight of my old friend Tubby Muffin. I hoped and prayed that he would take compassion on me and carry me away to his study.

But he didn't see me coming, and I was under his feet before he realised what was happening.

Tubby lost his balance, and sat down heavily upon me.

I felt myself being flattened out on the flagstones. I must have burst, I think, for my senses swam, and I remembered no more till I came round and found myself lying on the rubbish-heap.

My career is over now. No more shall I be punched and pommelled and pulverised. And I'm not sorry. I've been biffed and bashed about all my life. I have been hit, kicked, slogged, and maltreated. And it is only fitting that I should spend my declining days in peace and quietness.



**COKER COMES ROUND!**

(Continued from page 8.)

tore the rest of his things away, considerably damaging them in the process. Benson dragged an old nightshirt out of his box, and it was slammed over Coker minor's head. His head came through it, flustered and breathless. He wriggled out of the grasp of his tormentors, and jumped up, gasping for breath.

"Oh dear!"  
The Shell fellows roared.  
"Ha, ha, ha!"  
"Oh dear! I—I—I— Give me back my clothes!"

Hobson kicked Reggie's clothes away with his foot, as the unfortunate Sixth-Former made a rush for them.

He threw open the door of the dormitory.

"Now you can bunk!" he said.  
Reggie gasped.  
"I—I can't go without my clothes!" he exclaimed.

"Ha, ha, ha!"  
"You jolly well can't go with them!" grinned Hobson. "Clear off!"

"But I—I can't—"  
"Buzz off!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"  
Reggie's eyes flashed. He was getting very angry now.

"Look here, you rotters!" he exclaimed. "I'm in the Sixth, and I'm not going to stand this cheek from you juniors, so I warn you!"

The Shell simply glared at him. So long as Coker minor was meek and mild, they were willing to rag him gently. But this was too much.

"Us juniors!" gasped Hobson. "There isn't a fellow in the Shell who isn't older than he is! Us juniors! My sainted uncle!"

"The cheeky young ass!"  
"Scrag him!"

Hobson shut the door.  
"You wouldn't go when you had the chance," he remarked grimly. "Now you're going through it. Gather round, my sons!"

"Hurrah!"  
Reggie made a rush for his clothes. Benson put his foot out, and Reggie stumbled over it, and rolled on the floor. There was a yell of laughter.

"Look here, you fags!" roared Reggie, scrambling up. "I—"

"Fags!" gasped Hobson. "Fags! Oh!"

"We'll fag him!"  
"Collar the cheeky cad!"

Many hands closed upon the unfortunate Reggie. He hit out now, but his blows did not do much harm. Fellows held his wrists, and he gasped and struggled in vain in the grasp of the Shell.

"Get a sheet off a bed, Hoskins!" roared Hobson. "We're going to hang him!"

"Hurrah!"  
"Oh, I say!" gasped Coker minor, in dismay. "I really — Oh, goodness gracious!"

"Lynch him!" roared Benson.  
"Ha, ha, ha!"

A sheet was dragged from a bed. Another sheet was twisted and tied to it, then another, till a rope of considerable length was formed. Hobson took the rope, and threw the end of it over one of the great beams below the rafters.

"Hang on there!" he shouted.  
"Hurrah!"

Half a dozen Shell fellows seized one end of the rope of sheets. The other was formed into a noose, and Hobson approached Reggie with the noose in his hands.

Reggie gazed at him in terror. His experiences since he had arrived at Greyfriars had been so strange that he would not have been surprised if the excited Shell fellows had really intended to lynch him from the beam overhead.

"Oh!" he panted. "Don't! I— Oh!"

Hobson slipped the noose over his head. But he did not put it round his neck. He passed it down over his arms, jerked it under his armpits, and pulled it tight. Then he stepped back.

"Haul away!" he shouted.  
"Good egg!"

The Shell fellows hauled upon the rope. Coker minor was swung off his feet and dragged into the air. He swung to and fro dizzily.

"Now then!" roared Hobson. "Slippers!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"  
"Oh dear!" gasped Reggie. "Help!"

The end of the rope of sheets was secured to a bed. Then the Shell fellows gathered round the suspended senior, slippers and socks in their hands.

"Go it!" shouted Hobson. "Wallop him!"

"Hurrah!"  
"Ow! Ow! Oh dear! Goodness gracious! Help!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"  
Thwack! Thwack! Thwack! Thwack!

**THE THIRD CHAPTER.**

Poor Reggie!

**C**OKER MINOR swung over his tormentors dizzily. Slippers and socks were thwacking upon his undefended limbs. The Shell fellows roared with laughter as they administered the punishment.

"Go it!"  
"Give him beans!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"  
"Oh dear!" panted Coker minor. "I—I say, don't, you know. Please! Oh!"

Hobson approached a little too near, and Reggie's foot caught him under the chin with a sudden concussion. Hobson sat down violently.

"Ow!" he roared.  
"Ha, ha, ha!"

"What are you cackling at, you silly asses?" demanded Hobson indignantly.

"Ha, ha, ha!"  
Thwack! Thwack! Thwack! Thwack!

"Oh dear! Help! Oh!"  
"Cave!" suddenly shouted Hoskins, from the door. "Here comes Wingate."

The Shell fellows made a rush for their beds.

Those who were half dressed did not stop to take their things off. They plunged into bed, and drew the bedclothes over them, and began to snore, as the door of the dormitory was reopened, and the captain of Greyfriars strode in.

"M-my hat!" gasped Wingate.  
He stared blankly at Coker minor, suspended from the beam.

"Oh dear! Please let me down, Wingate!" gasped the unfortunate, Sixth-Former.

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Wingate.  
"How did you get up there?"

"I—I—"  
"You fellows are all asleep, of course," said Wingate sarcastically. "You've been making all that fearful din in your sleep, haven't you?"

Snore!  
"Hobson!"

Snore!  
Wingate strode to Hobson's bed, and shook the captain of the Shell roughly by the shoulder. Hobson opened his eyes, and blinked sleepily at Wingate.

"Hallo!" he said. "'Tain't rising-bell."

Wingate jerked the bedclothes off him.  
"Get up!"

"Yaw!" yawned Hobson sleepily.  
"Fast asleep, of course," said Wingate. "Do you always go to bed in your trousers?"

"Oh!" said Hobson. "Oh! No! Ahem!"

"What have you been ragging young Coker for?"

"Coker!" said Hobson, in surprise.  
"Where is he?"

"He's hanging up there."  
Hobson blinked at Coker minor.

"Dear me!" he said. "So he is! What a peculiar thing for young Coker to do! Fancy young Coker hanging himself up there!"

Wingate burst into a laugh.  
"Well, get him down, even if you don't know how he got there. Buck up!"

"Oh, certainly! What a surprising thing!" said Hobson.

Two or three Shell fellows turned out, and unfastened the rope of sheets, and let the gasping and breathless Sixth-Former slide to the floor. He came down with a very quick run, and bumped on the floor of the dormitory.

"Oh!" said Reggie. "Ow! Dear me! Oh!"

"What did you come here for, you young ass?" demanded Wingate.

"Loder asked me to see lights out for the Shell," gasped Reggie. "I came here to oblige Loder."

Wingate sniffed.  
"Oh, Loder! Well, you'd better not be so jolly quick to oblige Loder again. What on earth did you undress here for?"

"They—they made me."  
"Who did?" demanded Wingate.

Reggie hesitated.  
"You juniors will have to learn not to lay hands on one of the Sixth, even if he is a kid," said Wingate. "Who did this, Coker minor?"

"I—I'd rather not mention who did it, Wingate," faltered Reggie. "I—I don't want to get them into a row. I don't really mind; it was only a game."

"Oh!" said Wingate, staring at him.  
"Well, get into your clothes and bunk."

And Coker minor very gladly did so. Wingate regarded the apprehensive Shell grimly.

"As Coker minor hasn't pointed out the ringleaders, we'll let that pass," he said. "But all the Shell will take a hundred lines, and show them up tomorrow before tea-time. And if anything of this kind happens again I'll report you to the Head."

And Wingate extinguished the light, and left the dormitory.

"My hat!" murmured Hobson. "I expected a licking all round. We're jolly well out of that."

"Not a bad little beast, that Coker animal, after all," remarked Benson.  
"He's not a sneak, anyway."

"No; not half a bad little beast."  
Coker minor had risen a little in the estimation of the Shell.

Wingate strode away, and looked into Coker minor's study. Reggie was going to bed, and he turned a rather pathetic face upon Wingate.

"You seem to have been in the wars, kid," said the Greyfriars captain.

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"Yes, please," said Reggie.

Wingate grinned.

"You'd better keep out of the junior dormitories," he said.

"Indeed I will," said Reggie fervently.

"And, look here, I'll give you some advice," said the captain of Greyfriars. "I suppose you're well up in Form work, quite deep in Latin and Greek, a terror at mathematics, and strong as a horse on history ancient and modern—eh?"

"I—I don't know, please, Wingate."

"Well, those qualifications are all right for getting into the Sixth, Coker minor; but you want some others as well, if you're to have a good time in the Sixth. You'd better take up physical exercises—running, jumping, boxing—especially boxing. You'll have a fearful time until you learn to stand up for yourself. Do you understand?"

"Ye-e-es."

"Take my advice, then, and start to-morrow."

"I will," said Reggie.

"Good-night!"

"Good-night, Wingate! Thank you!"

And Wingate retired, grinning. Reggie went to bed in rather a doleful mood; but he had the presence of mind to lock his door. It was as well. Twice before midnight his door was tried from the outside; but the intended ragers, whoever they were, had to retire unsuccessful.

#### THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

##### A Slight Disturbance!

WALKER of the Sixth frowned as he came out of the prefects' room just before lessons the next afternoon. Loder met him in the passage, and gave him an inquiring look.

"What's the trouble?" he asked.

Walker grunted disconsolately.

"Oh, it's old Capper!"

"Capper?" said Loder, in surprise.

Mr. Capper was master of the Upper Fourth at Greyfriars—an enthusiastic philatelist, but otherwise quite harmless.

"Yes. He's heard about a giddy stamp specimen somewhere, and he's off after it; and he's asked me to take the Fourth Form for an hour this afternoon."

"Oh, rotten!" said Loder.

"Fellow can't very well say 'No,'" said Walker, with a grunt. "But it's rotten fooling after a gang of fags!"

Loder chuckled.

"Why not ask Coker minor?"

"Eh? Coker minor?"

"Yes. Why not? He's a most obliging kid, and he's as fit to take the juniors as any fellow in the Sixth—fitter, in fact. He simply bristles with knowledge. And any Sixth-Former ought to be able to keep a fag's Form in order. If he can't, he's no right to be in the Sixth. You've a right to assume that Coker minor can do it."

Walker grinned.

"Good egg!" he exclaimed. "If there's any trouble it won't be my fault. If Coker minor can't look after fags he oughtn't to be in the top Form."

"Exactly so."

"I'll ask him."

And Walker did.

Reggie assented at once, only too pleased to be able to please Walker, who was a prefect. In fact, Reggie felt that this was a chance to get on better terms with the Fourth Form. He wished it had been the Remove, instead, as he had friends in the Lower Fourth; but, after all, with a judicious admixture of kindness and firmness, he would be able to

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get on very well with the Upper Fourth, and make them respect him.

Temple, Dabney, & Co., and the rest of the Form went into their class-room that afternoon without knowing what was in store for them.

Harry Wharton and his chums encountered Reggie as they were going to the Remove-room.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! That's not your room!" said Bob Cherry, as he saw Reggie stop at the Fourth-Form door. "You haven't come down in the world, have you?"

Reggie smiled.

"I'm taking the Fourth this afternoon for an hour," he explained.

"Eh?"

"Mr. Capper has gone out, and he left Walker to look after the Form, but Walker has asked me," said Coker minor.

"Oh crumbs!"

"You're going to do it?" asked Harry Wharton.

"Yes, indeed!"

"Look out for squalls!"

And the chums of the Remove chuckled as they went on to their own Form-room. They anticipated trouble in the Fourth that afternoon—and they were right.

Reggie entered the Fourth Form-room.

Temple, Dabney, & Co. were standing about, chatting. Some of the juniors were in their places at their desks. There was a general movement to sit down, as the Form-room door opened; but as soon as the Fourth saw that it was not their Form-master, they stopped. They bestowed a stare of astonishment upon Reggie.

"My hat!" said Temple. "Here comes the Babe of the Sixth! Have you got a message from old Cappy, young Coker?"

"Cappy's out this afternoon," remarked Fry. "Walker's taking us."

"Please, I'm taking you instead of Walker," explained Reggie.

"What?"

"I'm going to take the Fourth Form for an hour, until Mr. Capper comes back," said Reggie, a little timidly.

"My hat!"

"Oh, great Scott!"

"You?"

"Yes, I!" said Reggie, with more firmness. "Will you please take your places?"

The Fourth-Formers did not stir.

"It's a dream!" said Temple. "It can't be true! This little worm can't have the awful cheek to come here to teach us! It can't be true! It's a giddy vision!"

"Oh, rather!" said Dabney.

"Pray sit down!" said Reggie.

Temple strode towards him. Reggie took refuge behind the master's desk.

"Now, look here, young 'un," said Temple impressively, "is it a fact? Cappy's gone out, Walker's chucked it, and you've taken us for an hour?"

"Yes, please."

"Good!" said Temple. "Gentlemen of the Fourth, as captain of the Form, I grant you an hour's holiday this afternoon."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Hear, hear!"

"We can't leave the Form-room, but we can dig up some fun here," said Temple. "I suggest sledging with the forms."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"My dear boys——" began Reggie, in dismay.

"Shut up!" roared Temple.

"But, I say——"

"No, you don't; you don't say any-

thing," said Temple. "If you say anything, we bump you. And you don't go out of the Form-room, either. If he goes near the door, you fellows, collar him at once, and squash him!"

"Oh, rather!"

"Oh dear!" said Reggie. "I—I wish I hadn't taken the Fourth. My dear boys, you—you ought to do your lessons, you know, like—like good boys."

Temple glared at him.

"Good boys!" he bellowed. "Who told you we were good boys, you young ass? I'll good boys you!"

And he made a rush at Coker minor, who dodged round Mr. Capper's desk in alarm.

Temple shook his fist at the alarmed Sixth-Former.

"You keep quiet!" he exclaimed.

"You're not worth licking, or I'd make an example of you! Don't go near the door, and don't talk. Now, you fellows!"

"Hurrah!"

The Fourth Form were only too pleased to be released from the restraints of Form-room discipline for an hour.

Instead of settling down to lessons under the eye of the Sixth-Former, they started the afternoon's work by a game of leap-frog round the Form-room.

Reggie looked on helplessly.

He could not interfere; and even if he had been allowed to leave the Form-room, he would not have liked to get the Fourth into trouble by invoking the aid of the Head.

He simply looked on.

Leap-frog having fallen upon the taste of the unruly Fourth, they dragged out some of the forms to use as sledges. Temple, Dabney, & Co. twisted paper caps of impot. paper, and stuck them on their heads, and mounted upon a couple of upturned forms for a chariot race. Two teams of Fourth-Formers dragged them along, amid an uproar of laughter and yelling and trampling and shrieking and cheering.

The noise was terrific.

In the next Form-room, where the Remove were at work, the thick walls did not prevent the noise from being heard; and Harry Wharton & Co. grinned as they heard it. Mr. Quelch heard it, too; but as he did not know that Mr. Capper was absent, he did not think of interfering.

The fun was waxing fast and furious in the Fourth Form-room.

Bump, bump, bump!

Crash, crash!

"Whoop!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Go it!"

"Buck up!"

"Hurrah!"

"Temple wins!"

"Bravo!"

The din was growing simply terrific. The unfortunate Sixth-Former stood looking on, wondering what would happen next. The juniors seemed to have forgotten that noise travels, and that they were making enough of it to be heard all over Greyfriars. As they grew more excited their yells redoubled.

"Hurrah!"

"Go it!"

"Bravo!"

The door opened. In the excitement of the moment the juniors did not notice it, and the sledge race went on. A horrified gasp broke from Coker minor as he caught sight of the awe-inspiring figure in cap and gown at the door. That attracted the attention of the Fourth-Formers.

"Oh crumbs!" gasped Fry. "Cave!"

"M-m-my hat!"

"The Head!"





Coker minor was swung off his feet, and dragged into the air. Then the Shell fellows gathered round the suspended senior, with slippers and socks in their hands. "Now, wallop him!" shouted Hobson. (See Chapter 2.)

**THE FIFTH CHAPTER.**

**Coker Comes Round!**

**I**T was the Head!  
 Dr. Locke gazed upon the scene of confusion and excitement with a grim expression upon his face.  
 The overturned forms, the paper caps, the horrified Reggie looking on made a peculiar picture such as the Head certainly never had looked upon in a Form-room of Greyfriars before.  
 "Oh!" murmured Temple, in dismay.  
 "We're booked for it now!"  
 "Oh, rather!"  
 "Crumbs!"  
 The Head strode into the room.  
 "What does this mean?" he thundered.  
 "Mean, sir?" stuttered Temple.  
 "Yes! What are you doing?"  
 "Chut-chut-chariot races, sir!" stammered the captain of the Fourth.  
 "Indeed! Is it a custom in the Fourth Form to play at chariot races with forms during lesson-time?"  
 "Nun-nun-no, sir!"  
 "Coker minor, I understand that you were left in charge of this Form?"  
 "Yes, please, sir."  
 "You should not have undertaken the task, Coker minor, unless you were able to keep some semblance of order among the juniors."  
 "Thank you, sir."  
 "Return to your own Form-room at once!"  
 "Yes, please, sir, thank you."  
 And Reggie gladly departed.  
 Dr. Locke turned a stern and frowning glance upon the dismayed Fourth-Formers. He picked up a cane from Mr. Capper's desk.  
 "Kindly come here one at a time," he said.  
 "Oh!" murmured the Fourth.

They marched past the Head, and halted one at a time to receive a cut from the cane. By the time the whole procession had passed him the Fourth-Formers were not feeling in nearly such high spirits.  
 "Now," said the Head sternly, throwing the cane upon the desk, "it is time your Form-master returned. Take your places and wait for him. If there is another sound of disorder from this Form-room I shall come back."  
 And the Head swept out.  
 The Fourth-Formers set the forms in order, and sat down meekly. They squeezed their hands and twisted their faces, and grunted. But they did not venture upon any fresh rag. When the Head was "waxy" they knew it was time to be good.  
 Mr. Capper came in five minutes later, and was astonished to find his Form in nobody's care, but in perfect order and as meek as so many lambs.  
 Temple, Dabney, & Co. were very meek outwardly, but inwardly they were smarting. They squeezed their hands under the desks to assuage the pain, and very unreasonably laid all the blame upon Coker minor. It was certainly not Reggie's fault that they had turned the Form-room into a bear-garden, but undoubtedly it wouldn't have happened if Coker minor hadn't had the awful nerve to take charge of the Form—that was how the Fourth-Formers looked at it.  
 And they waited impatiently for lessons to be over, so that they could see Coker minor again and tell him what they thought about it.  
 In the Sixth Form-room Coker minor was at peace. He liked his lessons, and he liked to please the Head, which he always succeeded in doing so far as Form work was concerned. But peace

vanished with the closing of the Form-room door when he left the august apartment of the Sixth.  
 Temple, Dabney, & Co. were waiting for him.  
 Reggie lingered in the Form-room passage, after the other seniors were gone, in the hope of seeing his brother when the Fifth came out.  
 He did not see Coker major—but he soon saw Temple, Dabney & Co. They came towards him with grim looks, and Reggie backed up against the wall.  
 "I—I say—" he stammered.  
 "You got us into a row this afternoon!" bellowed Fry.  
 "Oh, I didn't, you know! You behaved like—like rotters, you know!" explained Coker minor.  
 "You took charge of the Fourth—us!" said Temple, in a voice that indicated that even yet he could hardly believe in Coker minor's stupendous cheek. "Now we are going to massacre you!"  
 "Oh, please, Temple—"  
 "We'll teach you to take charge of the Fourth! We'll—"  
 "We'll slaughter him!"  
 "We'll scalp him!"  
 "Oh dear! Goodness gracious!"  
 Reggie was swept off his feet. He whirled dizzily in the grasp of the Fourth-Formers. But before they could proceed any farther the door of the Fifth Form-room opened, and the Fifth came streaming out.  
 They stopped to look on at the scene, laughing. Potter and Greene shouted encouragement to the Fourth.  
 "Go it, you fags!"  
 The struggling Reggie was borne helplessly down the passage. Horace Coker stood looking on with a gloomy brow.

"Serves the cheeky young bouncer right!" grinned Potter.

"Nice for the Sixth!" chuckled Greene. "Hallo! Where are you going, Cokey?"

Coker did not reply.

He had pushed back his cuffs, and clenched his big fists, and now he was rushing down the Form-room passage after the ragers.

He did not speak to them.

He dashed among them, hitting out right and left, and Temple, Dabney, & Co., in spite of their numbers, fairly ran.

Coker minor lay gasping upon the floor. Coker major stood over him, gasping, too, with his exertions. Potter and Greene came up, surprised and exasperated.

"What are you up to, Coker?" shouted Potter. "What are you sticking to the cheeky little beast for?"

Coker glared at him.

"What's that?" he exclaimed. "Are you calling my brother a cheeky little beast?"

"Yes, I am."

"Then take that!"

Biff!

Potter took it. "It" was Coker's fist, and Potter took it upon his nose. He gave a surprised yelp, and sat down on the floor.

"Yaroo! Oh!"

"Got anything to say about it, Greene?" roared Coker, as Greene glared at him.

"Yes, I have!" roared back Greene. "You're a silly ass! You're a fathead! If you're going to back up that cheeky young sweep, I'm done with you! Yah! I— Yowp!"

Greene joined Potter on the floor.

The victorious Coker stooped, and lifted up his minor.

"Come on, kid!" he said.

Coker grinned, and linked arms with his minor, and marched him off. Potter and Greene sat up and blinked and stared after them.

"Faith, and Coker's an uncertain beggar intoirly!" grinned Fitzgerald of the Fifth. "Ye'd better lave Coker minor alone. He's taking him to his study, bedad!"

"To his study—my study—our study!" snorted Potter. "We won't stand it! We're not going to have it! Come on, Greeney!"

And Coker's chums rushed off towards their study in the Fifth-Form passage. Coker major had taken Coker minor there. It was insult added to injury. Greene and Potter burst into the study like a whirlwind. Coker minor was sitting in the armchair, trying to get his breath back, but looking very happy. Coker major had come round—there was no doubt about that.

"Look here—" roared Greene.

"Coker, you idiot!" shrieked Potter. Coker major turned upon them.

"Get out of this study!" he roared. "You're disturbing my minor!"

Potter and Greene staggered. Horace Coker had "come round" with a vengeance. To be told to get out of their own study because they were disturbing the obnoxious minor was a little too much. It was more than flesh and blood could stand, and in that moment of wrath Potter and Greene forgot that Coker was a terrible slogger, and forgot that his ample funds stood most of the study feeds. They rushed at Coker for vengeance.

Coker major stood up to the two furious Fifth-Formers with a cool grin. He gave Potter his right, and Greene his left. They rolled over one another on the study carpet.

Coker picked up a cricket-stump. Potter and Greene whirled out of the study. They had had enough—in fact, a little too much. Coker slammed the door after them.

Coker minor was severely left alone after that. He might be easy to rag. But Coker major was hard to beat. And Coker major having come round, stopped round.

THE END.

(Another splendid story of the Greyfriars chums next Friday.)

## THE DUFFER OF ROOKWOOD!

(Continued from page 6.)

for ten minutes Clarence was more convinced than ever that football was a very rough game—very, very much rougher than marbles.

Only once in the first half did Clarence get on the ball. Then he kicked it at his own goal, by a slight miscalculation, and very nearly scored. Fortunately Towle, in goal, saved that shot.

There was a yell of laughter and cheers from the Classical onlookers.

"Bravo, Cuffy! Do that again!"

And Uncle Dodd smiled with satisfaction. That shout convinced him that dear Clarence was doing very well indeed, and that Tommy would have made a mistake not to play him.

The first half was well fought. With Cuffy in the Modern ranks, the Classics ought to have had an easy task. But the Moderns were playing up like giants, and Towle in goal was unusually good.

At a disadvantage as they were, the Moderns made their defence good, and the whistle went without a score for either side.

After the change of ends the Moderns kicked off, with the wind in their faces. The Classics came down the field in a charge, and there was a tussle before the Modern goal.

In spite of Clarence's assistance, the Modern defence was sound, and it was quite late in the half when the Classics got fairly through, and Erroll drove in the ball, beating Towle. Then there was a roar.

"Goal!"

It was first blood to the Classics. But Tommy Dodd & Co. played up like heroes after that. In spite of the Classical defence, they came through, and Tommy Dodd put the ball in the net.

Then it was the turn of the Moderns to yell "Goal!" and they did it with a roar. THE POPULAR.—No. 140.

will. The players lined up again with ten minutes more to go.

Jimmy Silver & Co. made a terrific effort to get a decision. But the Moderns stood to their guns, and they could not break away. Tommy Dodd sent the ball right on to Conroy's goal from midfield, and the Cornstalk drove it out. Raby cleared, and the leather fapped on Clarence Cuffy's nose, and dropped at his feet.

Clarence kicked at it blindly.

Whiz!

There was a shriek of amazement round the field.

Conroy, whom it was almost impossible to take by surprise, had not seen it coming. By the weirdest and most wonderful of chances the kick had driven the leather right at the Classical goal, unexpected by everybody, and by Clarence more than by everybody else.

Conroy jumped at it too late, as it slid over his shoulder into the net.

"Goal!"

"Goal!" shrieked the Moderns.

"Oh, my hat! Goal!"

"Cuffy! Cuffy! Cuffy's goal!"

Clarence wiped the mud from his face. It was a goal. There was no mistake about that. The ball was in the net, and Conroy was staring at it as if mesmerised. And Jobson was blowing the whistle.

Tommy Dodd was rooted to the ground for some moments. Then, with an almost hysterical shriek of laughter, he rushed up to Clarence, and thumped him on the back.

"You ass!" gasped Tommy Dodd. "You funny ass! You dangerous maniac! You've won the match! Ha, ha, ha! Oh, you chump!"

"Dear me!" mumbled Clarence. "Is it finished, Thomas?"

"Ha, ha! Yes."

"I cannot say I am sorry, Thomas. Football is a very, very rough game. I am very muddy, and I have several bruises, and I think my nose is bleeding, and I have a pain in my back, and—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I am also very, very breathless, and my eye feels stopped up, and my knee is bumped, and—"

Clarence broke off with a yell of terror as the Modern footballers, roaring with laughter, grabbed him, and swept him into the air.

"My dear, dear friends, pray—yaroo! pray do not be so very, very—yoooop!"

"Good old potty lunatic! Hurrah!"

The Moderns were only hoisting Clarence to carry him shoulder-high off the field. They bore him off in triumph. As soon as Cuffy understood that he was not going to be bumped or frog-marched, his beaming smile returned. Jimmy Silver clapped him on the back as he was borne off.

The Modern win had been totally unexpected, and it had been due to the blindest of chances; but it was a win, and the Moderns were uproariously delighted, and the Classics took it smilingly. A footer victory due to Clarence Cuffy was the limit, as Jimmy Silver remarked, and the Classics could not help chortling.

Clarence was landed, breathless, before Uncle Dodd. That gentleman was beaming.

"You see, Tommy, you did well to take my advice," he chuckled. "Clarence has kicked the winning goal—what! My dear boy, you can always depend on the advice of an old player!"

"Ha, ha—I mean, yes—quite so, uncle!" gasped Tommy Dodd.

For a week after that Clarence Cuffy was troubled with aches and pains, and he resolved to stick to marbles in the future. But when the aches and pains had worn off he thought better of it, and generously made Tommy Dodd an offer of his services in the Modern junior eleven for the whole season.

To his amazement, Tommy Dodd declined the offer. And Clarence—however great his prowess might be at the game of marbles—did not become a great footballer, and his first was also his last winning goal.

THE END.

(Another long, complete tale of Jimmy Silver & Co. in next week's issue of the POPULAR, entitled "Under a Cloud!" By Owen Conquest.)

NEXT FRIDAY!

"UNDER A CLOUD!"

A GRAND TALE OF THE ROOKWOOD CHUMS.

By OWEN CONQUEST.



THE STORY THAT IS CAUSING A GREAT SENSATION!



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**KARL VON KREIGLER**, a mysterious professor, who has great power in Germany, and who holds the secret of Germany's great treasure-chest. Ferrers Lord has ferreted out one or two of the professor's secrets, and Von Kreigler realises that Lord is a very dangerous man. After this attack, Ferrers Lord despatches Rupert Thurston, with Honour and Ching Lung, with a message to Kreigler.

However, they succeed in escaping to a cavern, finding a high aperture in which to hide. The Germans give chase, but fail to find the fugitives.

Ching Lung, who is out scouting, comes upon a great treasure store, the secret Von Kreigler has been hiding from the Allies.

In an attempt to get rid of the three chums, Kreigler floods the galleries. But in their high position Thurston & Co. are quite safe. To discover the bodies of the supposed drowned Englishmen the professor orders men to search the galleries on rafts. The search proves a failure.

(Now read on.)

**Failure!**

"THEY are dragging the tunnel for our corpses," said Thurston, "and they're very angry with us for making ourselves such nuisances!"

"I'm not worrying about their troubles!" said Ching Lung. "It's very kind of them to drag for us! Good-natured sort of louts, these Huns, aren't they?"

"Charming, old man! I've got a little more news for you. You've jumped over the top of the Schloss and drowned yourself, which seems rather foolish of you. When they told you to put up your hands and go back to your prison like a good boy, you wouldn't! Anyhow, Goltz and the gentle and genial professor say you wouldn't. That's the yarn they intend to hand over to the British commanding officer with your body, Ching."

"Decidedly, they're not nice people to know," said Ching Lung, yawning. "And I only wish I could cut their acquaintances. It's not a bad idea on the part of Goltz and Karl; but we're rather spoiling it. In fact, it's a rattling good idea if he could back it up!"

"His witnesses would swear black was pink and yellow purple, my son," said Thurston. "He'll drill them into it. The moral is, don't get caught!"

Ching Lung went to sleep again. The hours passed, and the water in the galleries became more shallow. Hal Honour was

rationing out their scanty breakfast, the prisoner watching every movement greedily, when sounds of splashing were heard. The water was scarcely ankle-deep, and men with torches streamed into the gallery, searching it high and low.

Professor Karl von Kreigler was breakfasting alone, when General Goltzheimer burst in. The general's moustache was no longer bristling, but drooping limply, and his red face had paled down to a somewhat muddy shade of pink.

"Ten thousand fiends!" he said hoarsely. "We cannot find them! Nothing—nothing! They are there, but we cannot find them!"

The professor's jaw dropped, and his pale eyes stared stonily at the general.

Five or six times during as many hours men entered the cave gallery and explored it. In flooding the tunnels, General Goltzheimer had not only failed to drown the runaway prisoners, but, unknown to himself, he had made their hiding-place more secure. The water in the moat of the Schloss contained a good deal of mud, and there was plenty of dirt and rubbish in the galleries. Some of this had floated on the surface, and as the water had receded it had left a slimy scum on the sandstone walls that had completely obliterated the scratches made by Hermann Trubner's boots when he had climbed up to the cave.

"All clear again, gentlemen!" said Ching Lung, after a visit to the loophole. "I hope Goltz and the gentle professor are getting as tired of it as I am! Their tempers must be in a pretty state by this time! Isn't it time we did something, Hal? I'm completely fed-up with this hole!"

"If you know of a better hole, you go to it!" said Thurston, quoting the wording of a drawing that was very popular during the war.

They all laughed. "And safety first," added Thurston. "There's nothing very special or attractive about our hole; but, taking it just as a common or garden hole, it's not such a bad one. And it has been a safe one up to now. I'm getting as restless as you are, Ching. If you have any brilliant ideas, hand them out!"

"How can you expect a fellow's intelligence to sparkle in this black coal-cellar?" said the prince. "What tires me most is doing nothing. I want to start an offensive. It's often easier to get in than get out, as many a trapped mouse has discovered to his sorrow! You got into the Schloss, Ru, so it may be possible to get out. We're just sitting tight, and I'm wondering if sitting tight can mean carrying on."

"I'll have a try to get out, if you like," said Rupert Thurston. "Is it morning, noon, evening, or night, Hal? I've quite lost my reckoning!"

"Afternoon," answered the engineer. "Seven minutes to five."

"Hang the persevering beasts! They're in the gallery again!" said Thurston. "This makes the seventh time since they came on the raft. Seven is a lucky number. If they fail this time they may be obliging enough to give us a rest!"

The gallery still contained a foot or more

of water that the pumping operations had failed to carry off. Again, after much spawling and splashing, the man-hunters withdrew, baffled. For a time silence brooded over the dark galleries, only to be broken by a sound of hammering.

"Bad!" grunted the engineer, bending forward to listen.

Some work was in hand. The hammering went on steadily, with short intervals of silence. They could only find one explanation for this renewed activity on the part of General Goltzheimer, and that was anything but a cheerful one. He was walling up the gallery.

"They're not satisfied that we are dead, so Goltz is shutting the tunnels up!" said the prince. "He doesn't mean us to get out!"

"Yes, that's what all the hammering must mean, Ching," agreed Rupert Thurston. "He'll fix a barrier at the top of each gallery with a door in it and a couple of sentries to watch each door. There's no chance of getting out now, I'm sorry to say! I can imagine very hungry times ahead of us, gentlemen!"

"And no honourable surrender!" said the prince. "There can't be much honour in a surrender that will end in being soured in the moat. Goltz is not a nice man to know, as I think I may have previously stated. I can see no joy in being one of the leading figures at an inquest!"

The noise of hammering seemed to be farther away than the head of the cave gallery. Ching Lung offered to go out and discover what was taking place, but he remembered that that wall was wet and slimy, and that in climbing up and down he must leave marks that might lead to their betrayal.

"You hear that row, don't you, Fritz?" he said to the prisoner. "Where is it?"

"I am not sure, Herr Englander, but I think the noises came from the Devil's Gallery," answered the soldier. "It sounds as if from there."

"So it does," said Ching Lung. "There's a bit of hope in that if it's true. Perhaps Goltz may not be shutting us in after all, but only camouflaging the treasure-chamber more securely. We don't know what the Chief has been doing. Can Goltz and the professor be expecting a visit from the British commanding-officer?"

Hal Honour frowned, and shook his head. Though Ching Lung had ventured the suggestion, he had very little faith in it. It was not Ferrers Lord's way to ask for outside help. Matters would be in an utterly desperate condition before the millionaire would tell the British officer in command that three of his friends were prisoners in Schloss Schwartzburg and ask him to go to their assistance. Ferrers Lord preferred to play his hand alone.

A quick cry broke from the prisoner's lips. He was staring into the darkness behind them. Hal Honour put up his big hand to shade the light. In the gloom they saw what had startled the prisoner—a pair of round, green, unwinking eyes.

"By Jove! It's a cat!" cried Rupert Thurston.

Hal Honour lifted the lamp. The creature

bounded away, and was lost in the thick shadow in an instant.

"Is the hole closed, Rupert?"

"Yes; and the coats are over it," said Thurston. "The beggar didn't get in that way, I'll swear!"

"Then there's some other way into the cave," said the prince, "and the cat knows it! We've not seen a trace of a rat in the place, and the beggar can't live on air! If it had been here all the time, we must have had a glimpse of it before this. It can't be hungry, either, or the smell of the food would have attracted it!"

Hal Honour was up. He left the lamp, and plunged into the gloom. Once more he saw the two green eyes watching him with their fixed, unwinking stare. He called the cat, but it seemed half-wild and very suspicious. It gave a leap, and the eyes appeared above him, shining circles. Then they were gone.

"The lamp!" grunted the engineer, over his shoulder.

Ching Lung brought it quickly. A few grains of dust and a dead leaf came trickling down from above. The shrivelled leaf fell on Honour's wrist and settled there.

"Great Scott! It's a blackberry-leaf, or was once, and blackberries want light and sunshine!" said Ching Lung. "They won't grow in gloomy dens like this, Hal!"

The engineer stooped, and raised the prince on his broad shoulders. Standing there, Ching Lung held the lamp as high as he could.

"I can't see anything useful," he said; "but there's a beastly smell up here! Pah! It's a dead pigeon, half-eaten and nearly rotten. Take the lamp, old man!"

"Be careful of your neck, Ching!" warned Rupert Thurston, as Ching Lung began to climb.

The prince dragged himself over a sandstone ledge. They could see the holes he had worn in his socks as he drew his feet up. Suddenly he saw a gleam of light—such a tiny gleam that it did little to cheer him. There was a funnel-shaped hole, and through it one star shone in. Ching Lung wriggled forward, and pushed away a few brambles with his hand. By desperate squeezing he managed to put out his head.

The lonely star was hanging low down in the pale sky above a pine-tree. Fifteen feet below him lay the moat, its water oily and black, and speckled with green scum. There was an old punt on it, containing a pole. Beyond was a road bordered by cherry-trees, for the Hun does not believe in

growing useless trees even by the roadside when he can grow fruit. With difficulty, Ching Lung withdrew his head, for although there was room for the cat to slip in and out it was such a tight fit that the sandstone almost scraped the prince's ears. He crawled back, and reported.

Lamp in hand, the engineer swung round and made a tremendous spring. He bent over the prisoner with brandished fist.

"Stop that!" he said fiercely.

Private Hermann Trubner rolled over with a frightened squeal. He had managed to crawl to the little cache where the provisions were kept, and was trying to push away the stone that formed the lid with the top of his head. Honour dragged him to a safer distance.

"The hole?" he asked striding back to Thurston and Ching Lung.

"About the size of a rabbit hole. It's sandstone, though, and pretty soft."

"Good!" he said. "Make room."

The engineer showed Ching Lung the bayonet, and again bent his broad back to aid the prince to scramble up. Crouching on the funnel, Ching Lung began to attack the sandstone with the bayonet. He made no attempt to enlarge the mouth of the hole as yet. The bayonet was made of excellent steel, and the sandstone was easy to work. What he cut away slid down the funnel beside him. The stars had gone, and it was much darker.

"You come down now, Ching, and let me have a turn!" called Thurston's voice. "You've had nearly an hour at it, so down with you and take a rest."

"Right you are!" said Ching Lung. "Show the gim, for I don't want to come a cropper. I've plugged up the hole with my waistcoat, so you can hand me the lamp without any danger of the light attracting attention from outside. If old Hal wasn't such a size there wouldn't be half the work to do."

The energetic engineer had made the ascent quite easy by cutting notches in the sandstone. He went up to inspect the funnel and the progress of the work.

The grunt he gave was one of emphatic satisfaction. The task in hand, though laborious, was quite simple. They had not even to remove what they dug away, for a mere push sent it gliding down the sloping funnel. There was no room as yet for him to do his share, but Thurston would soon remedy that.

"There's a punt right under the hole," said Ching Lung. "That's lucky, for if we had to swim the moats, our wet and muddy clothes would give us away. We're not too clean as it is, especially about the legs, and

I've made a terrible mess of my nice silk socks. That must have been a black cat, one of the lucky ones."

All the time the hammering had been going on, but for Thurston, Hal Honour, and Prince Ching Lung there was no longer any menace in the sounds. They did not care whether General Goltzheim and Professor Von Kreigler were only camouflaging the entrance of the treasure vault or shutting up the galleries, for Rupert Thurston's bayonet was slowly but surely opening a new gate to freedom. It might only be a very brief spell of freedom, for they could not read the future.

"It won't do to be too hopeful, Hal," said Ching Lung. "Though Goltz and my gentle friend the professor may think we're safely bottled up, they'll be on their guard, expecting the Chief to make some move. We'd better fix up some plan of campaign, old son. When we're out, shall we stick together, or scatter?"

"Wait!" grunted the engineer. "Time enough." When Rupert Thurston had enlarged the hole sufficiently, Hal Honour went up. A bayonet was not the best of tools for the purpose, but in the engineer's strong, skilled hands it worked wonders. As he came closer to the mouth of the hole he was more careful, for every sound heard outside would have aroused immediate suspicion. Though the moat was below, even the moat might be patrolled for all they knew.

He came down at last, and lifted the lid of the cache.

"Eat," he said, and divided the remainder of the food into four equal parts.

"And what are we to do with the Hun?" asked Thurston, freeing the prisoner's wrists.

"What is going to happen to Fritz?"

Hal Honour tapped the pocket in which he carried the little wireless apparatus.

"My dear Fritz," said Ching Lung, in German, "make a good supper, for it may be pretty late before you get any breakfast. We are going away from Schloss Schwartzburg. We don't like the place. And don't let what I am telling you spoil your appetite. We hate rough methods, but we shall have to gag you, for otherwise you would make a horrible noise, and your horrible voice would put us in a horrible mess. When we get away we'll send a wireless to your boss, the general, telling him where we have left you in your solitude. To cheer you up, here's my share of the sausage. I have to be absolutely ravenous before I can tackle such a dark mystery as a German sausage. Take it, with my blessing, Fritz, for I like it!"

There was a look of doubt and consternation in the man's eyes, but he went on eating.

"How do I know you will send the wireless?" he asked, with his mouth full. "How do I know you will not leave me to starve, to die, to be eaten by the rats?"

"I can't tell you how you're to know, except that we tell you Goltz will receive our message," said Ching Lung. "Perhaps you have never heard of such a thing as a gentleman's word of honour. That, Fritz, is as safe as the Bank of England, and ten thousand times safer than the Bank of Germany. You have that."

The moment he had finished his meal, Hal Honour went back to work. Now he pulled Ching Lung's waistcoat out of the hole, and worked without the light, for only a little came through, but quite enough to show the engineer what he was doing. It promised to be a dark night, for the cloud that had hidden the stars had now completely obscured the sky. He could not prevent some of the sandstone falling outwards as he cut away the edges of the hole, and at every splash he stopped to listen. All he heard was the occasional hooting of a motor-car's screw, and the striking of a clock.

At last there was room for his shoulders. As he lay there, looking out and drinking in long breaths of the pure, pine-scented air, a bell high over his head began to clang with a furious din that sent its echoes past him into the cave, and brought Thurston up as fast as he could climb.

"What are they shouting?" grunted Hal Honour, for shouts mingled with the clanging of the bell.

It was the fire bell, and Schloss Schwartzburg was in an uproar. The engineer smiled grimly when he understood, but he only uttered one word: "Quickly!"

They hurried down and dragged on their boots with difficulty, for they were still wet. The prisoner set up a howl.

"Shut up!" cried Ching Lung. "Hang the fellow! We can't leave him, for if the smoke

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"UNDER A CLOUD!"

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gets into the galleries he may suffocate. He'll be the ruin of us!"

"And we never had such a chance," said Rupert Thurston. "Stop that row, Fritz, or I'll throttle you! What's to be done, Hal?"

The engineer made a sign that they were to untie the man, and went for the coats and the cloth with the dope.

**A Welcome Voice!**

**T**HEY had to wait until the soldier had stamped some life into his stiffened limbs. He climbed behind Rupert Thurston, with the engineer last. From the Schloss high above them clouds of black smoke were pouring, lighted now and again by a gleam of angry red. Ching Lung scrambled down and reached the punt. A stone fastened to a string formed an anchor. As Thurston joined him the engineer's voice told them sharply to stand clear.

There was a strangled cry, followed by a heavy spash. Hal-Honour knew the value of time, and he wanted to be out of Schloss Schwartzburg, so to save time he had pitched the prisoner bodily into the moat. When he rose, Rupert and the prince dragged him into the punt.

It was a crazy craft to carry so much weight, and it rocked perilously when the engineer stepped in. Ching Lung poled it quickly across, and ran it into a bed of rushes. There they left the German soldier, gagged and bound, lying on the bank where he was sure to be discovered before he came to any great harm, and struck across the fields towards the pine forest, as the dark, stormy sky grew redder with the glow of the flames.

Schloss Schwartzburg was doomed. Far up on its pinnacle of rock, the Schloss was blazing like a gigantic torch. The three men kept on at a run till they gained the shelter of the pine-trees. Motor fire-engines were dashing along the road. They looked back at the flaming castle, and then hurried on.

"Arson," said the engineer, jerking his thumb over his shoulder. "Petrol."

Honour meant that the Schloss had been set on fire deliberately, and not by accident. It burnt so fiercely that they did not doubt it. Scarcely half an hour could have passed since they heard the first alarm of the fire bell, and already from every window and turret flames were leaping.

"By Jove, old son, if we hadn't been lucky enough to find that hole we'd have been in a fix," said Ching Lung. "When the roofs start to fall in that long staircase down to the cells and galleries will be closed up with hundreds of tons of red-hot rubbish. Was this joke meant for us, I wonder?"

"Nothing done by Goltz and company would surprise me," said Rupert. The water boiled, and as he couldn't produce our bodies their stunt of coaching witnesses for the inquiry also failed. I'm certain they were afraid of a visit from the British C.O. and a regiment of our Tommies. Their precious treasure got the wind up. Oh, yes, that little bonfire was no accident! They've drowned the place with petrol, and put a light to it."

"And when we heard that hammering they were fixing a fireproof door to the Devil's Gallery to protect the treasure cave," said Ching Lung. "They're not nice people to know, Rupert. Forgive me for repeating the same thing so frequently, but they're not nice, and I don't like them."

"Old Nero fiddled while Rome burned, my lad," said Thurston. "Goltz and Kreigler may have musical talents, and may be chortling now, even if they're not fiddling. If they knew, eh? They can't help it—that's what they'll whine. If we wouldn't come out and surrender when spoken to kindly, that is our affair. They couldn't prevent the old castle from getting ablaze, and smoking us under the ruins. There will be so many ruins that nobody will ever take the trouble to dig down and look for our charred bones. And one fine day, when it has all blown over, and the Allies have arrived at the sad conclusion that the Huns are so short of cash they may as well let them off and cut the losses, Goltz and the gentle professor and the rest of the cunning gang will do some digging."

"Let them dig, old lad!" chuckled the prince. "Perhaps we shall stroll along and ask them what they've dug up. We'd better not shout, though, till we're out of the wood, and this is a large-sized wood. I don't know where Hal is taking us, but I'm not nervous, for that big lump of silence is fairly trustworthy."

By the light of a match the engineer consulted the little gold compass attached to his watch-chain. The narrow forest path was very dark and thickly carpeted with pine needles. Except for the gloom there were

few obstacles, for no thorns or brambles grew under the deep shade of the pines, only bracken. Sooner or later their escape would be known, but it was unlikely that the man they had left lying bound in the rushes would be discovered until long after daylight. Then there would be a hue and cry. To retake them General Goltzheim and Karl Von Kreigler would move heaven and earth.

A sound came on the night breeze that was rustling the tree-tops, a dull, crashing boom, and for an instant the dark sky glowed a fiery red.

"Something has gone up in the air," said Ching-Lung. "A decent firework," that, Rupert! That must be the magazine."

"By the big noise that explosion must have made a mess of Schloss Schwartzburg," said Rupert. "Any chance of Goltz and Karl going up with it, do you think?"

"Not an earthly, Ru! Goltz and Karl are heaps too cunning and fond of their skins not to get out of the danger zone. Say, Hal, where are we making for?"

"Grindenburg," said the man of few words, and quickened his stride.

"Unless anything has happened since I made my call on Professor Karl Van Kreigler, that's the nearest French military station to Schloss Schwartzburg," said Rupert Thurston. "So near, and yet so far, for it's a good forty miles. Let us hope they won't find our pal Fritz for quite a long time."

Almost as he spoke the forest path ended at a broad, straight road, with a line of telegraph-poles on one side. The engineer put his hand into one of his capacious pockets. The fire and the explosion must have wrecked the wireless at the Schloss. Honour gave Ching Lung a pair of wire cutters, and pointed up. Ten feet above the ground iron struts were fastened to the pole, making it easy to climb. While Thurston and Honour kept watch, Ching Lung mounted to the cross-trees and cut the telegraph-wires one by one. The engineer dragged the ends into the ditch, and again they broke into an easy trot.

"A lonely sort of place this, but a jolly fine road," said the prince. "It's odd that we haven't met a soul, or seen a car."

"Kaiser Bill made this road a couple of years before he went mad and started the war," said Rupert. "It was a short cut to the Schloss and his wild-boar shooting. It was a private road then, and no doubt Goltz and the professor still keep it private, for in their own way they're just as big autocrats as Bill of the golden helmet was before he packed up all the valuables he could lay hands on, and made tracks for Holland."

For a man of his weight the engineer ran with surprising speed. It was fully an hour before he betrayed the slightest sign of distress.

"Hal is beginning to blow, so ease up a bit," said Rupert. "There's the gate that marks the end of the road, and now we're bound to meet people. I'd prefer it if we could keep together, but I seriously think we ought to split up here, and each take his own chance of reaching Grindenburg."

They looked over the gate. The main road passed it at right angles. On the left of the gate stood a rustic lodge, but the windows were in darkness. They could hear the noise of an approaching car. It passed them, and then pulled up, not far away, but out of sight, and Ching Lung vaulted the gate.

"Hold tight, boys, and I'll scout a little!" he said. "I'm curious to know why that car pulled up."

The car had stopped in front of a little inn, invisible hitherto because it stood well back from the road. A cheerful glow shone through the red blinds, and Ching Lung could hear a murmur of guttural voices and a clink of drinking-pots. The driver of the car had just alighted and gone in. Ching Lung fled back to the gate.

"Which is the way to Grindenburg?" he asked quickly.

The engineer pointed in the direction from which the car had come.

"Good!" said the prince. "Give me the magic garment, then, Hal, and you two cut away along the road as fast as you can go. Get round that bend if you can where you won't be seen. There's a little pub here, and the driver of that motor has gone to have a drink. If you can ride, why walk? All's fair in love and war. For once I don't consider thieving a very deadly crime. If I fail I can easily dodge these people in my camouflage."

"That will be useful if it comes off," said Thurston. "We'll be waiting for you. I hope it will turn out trumps, for I'm sick of padding the hoof."

Ching Lung slipped the cloth over his head and shoulders, and walked along the edge of

the grass with noiseless tread. A spectacled man who was smoking a calabash pipe stood in the doorway of the inn. He put out a fat hand and looked at the sky to see if it was raining. Ching Lung thought that the man had taken root there. Then, to his consternation he heard a clatter of heavy boots, and dropping on hands and knees, he crouched close to the privet-hedge. The runner was a youth in a blouse and peaked hat, and he was bursting with news.

"Herr Schlessler—Herr Schlessler," he shouted, "the noise was an explosion at Schloss Schwartzburg! The Schloss is on fire and blown up! They say the spies of the wicked Allies have done it! Ah! They ought to be shot like dogs, these cruel invaders—these French and English brutes!"

The spectacled man bolted into the inn, followed by the youth. The murmur of guttural voices rose to an excited clamour, and Ching Lung sprang up and advanced to the car. It was not a new car, but it looked a business-like one. There was no self-starter, and Ching Lung's thoughts and feelings were mingled ones as he bent over the crank handle. Perhaps it was one of those stubborn brutes that would not start without a great deal of exertion and a tremendous noise. If so, he made up his mind to trust to his camouflage, dash across the road, and leap the hedge.

He gave the crank handle a slight backward jerk, and then forced it down and revolved it with all his strength. The noise the engine made sounded like a salvo of guns in his ears. The people in the inn heard it. Ching Lung jumped into the car and leaned over the wheel as Herr Schlessler blocked the doorway, his plump figure keeping in a good deal of the light. And Herr Schlessler was short-sighted.

"Fritz Moeller—Fritz Moeller!" he yelled. "Your car is running away!"

There was a rush to the door. Ching Lung kept his hands under the cloth, and put on speed. As he crouched over the wheel he was utterly invisible. Then he opened out, and, without venturing to look back at the fat innkeeper and his spellbound guests, he drove rapidly away in the darkness, chuckling. Rupert Thurston also chuckled when he saw the headlights of the car, and though the engineer seldom betrayed himself when amused, his grunt was a pleased one.

"Neatly done, Ching!" said Rupert Thurston, giving the prince a pat on the shoulder. "Does anybody know what the speed limit is in this benighted country?"

"There's going to be no speed limit—only the limit of the engine, and that will be a breakneck pace," said Ching Lung. "I'm sure they didn't see me, which is another fine testimonial to your excellent camouflage, Hal. One fat Hun shrieked to the owner that his car was running away. That must surprise him more than a ha'porth, for he had left the snap on the crank. This old 'bus' is no fiercer, so I hope nothing fast will come along to the inn and start to chase us!"

(This grand serial to be continued next week.)

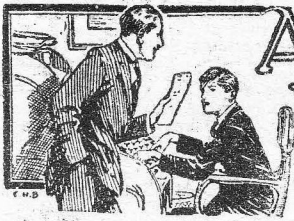
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### For Next Friday!

We have another special programme for our next issue. The first grand long complete school story is entitled:

#### "TROUBLE IN THE FAMILY!"

By Frank Richards,

which tells us of a very unpleasant part Frank Nugent has to play. As you know, there has always been a feeling in Frank's heart that his young brother Dicky is the favoured one in the family. Well, next week you will learn what happened when there was trouble in the family.

There will be another grand complete school story, introducing the chums of Rookwood, entitled:

#### "UNDER A CLOUD!"

By Owen Conquest.

In this story we are again concerned with the new position in which Valentine Mornington—once the richest fellow at Rookwood, but now comparatively poor—finds himself up against the rest of the Form.

### FOOTBALLS FOR "POPLETS!"

This week I have much pleasure in announcing that, commencing with this week's competition, I am awarding a Football to the competitor who sends what, in my opinion, is the best "Poplet" made up from one of the following examples.

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Fishy's Business      Slackers and  
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On Little Side.      Midnight Operations.

Read the following rules carefully, and then send in your postcard. Readers should particularly note that TWO efforts can be sent in on one card, but no effort may contain more than FOUR words.

Select two of the examples, and make up a sentence of TWO, THREE, or FOUR words having some bearing on the example. ONE of the words in your sentence must commence with one of the letters in the example.

1. All "Poplets" must be written on one side of a POSTCARD, and not more than two "Poplets" can be sent in by one reader each week.

2. The postcards must be addressed "Poplets," No. 34, The "Popular," Gough House, Gough Square, London, E.C. 4.

3. No correspondence may be entered into in connection with "Poplets."

4. The Editor's opinion on any matter which may arise is to be accepted as final and legally binding. This condition will be strictly enforced, and readers can only enter the competition on this understanding.

5. I guarantee that every effort will be thoroughly examined by a competent staff of judges, PROVIDED that the effort is sent in on a POSTCARD, and that it is received on or before September 29th.

Your Editor.



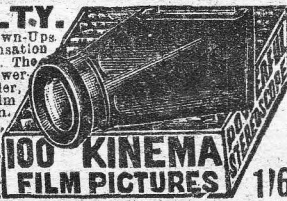
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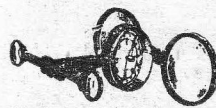
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