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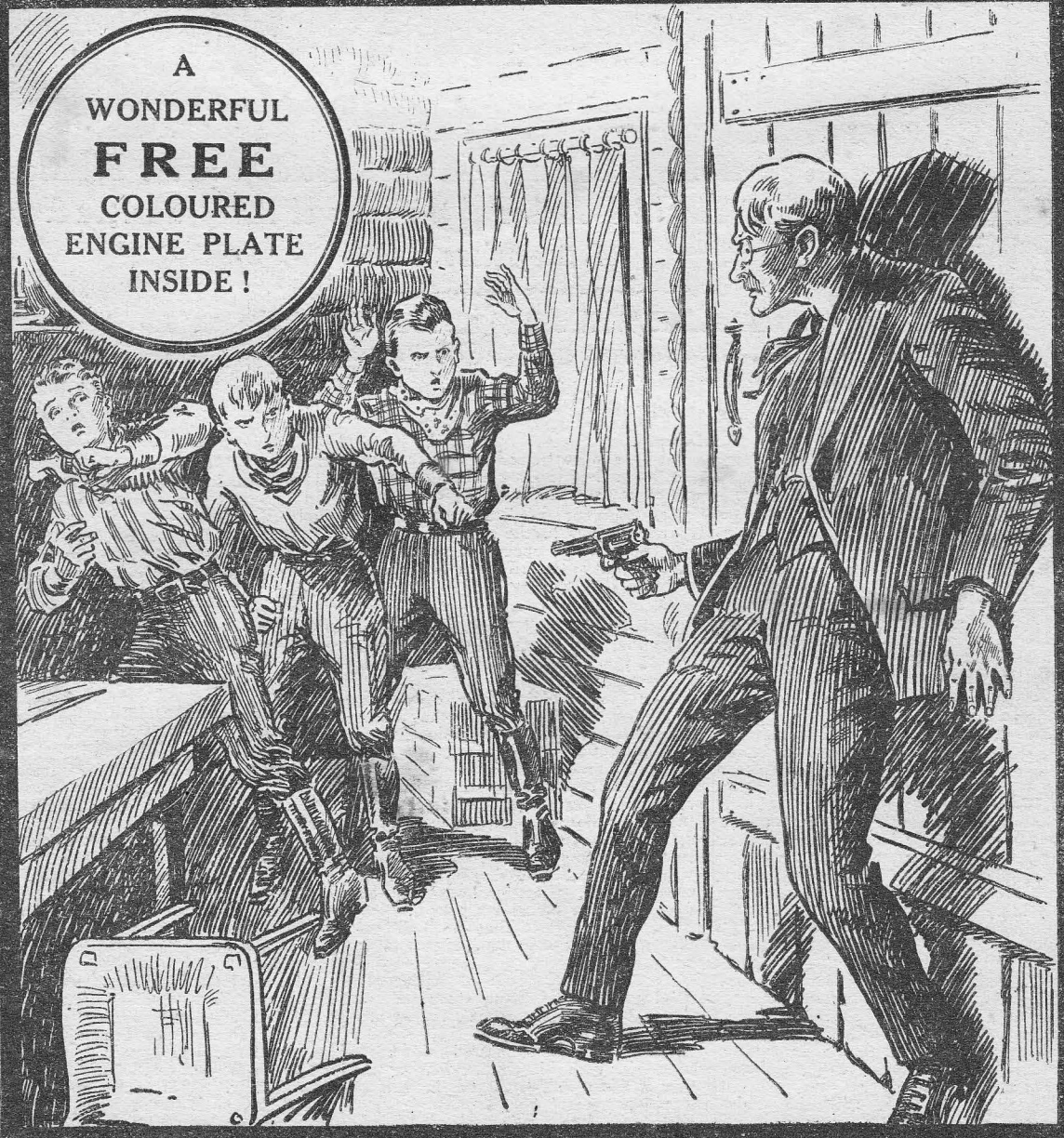
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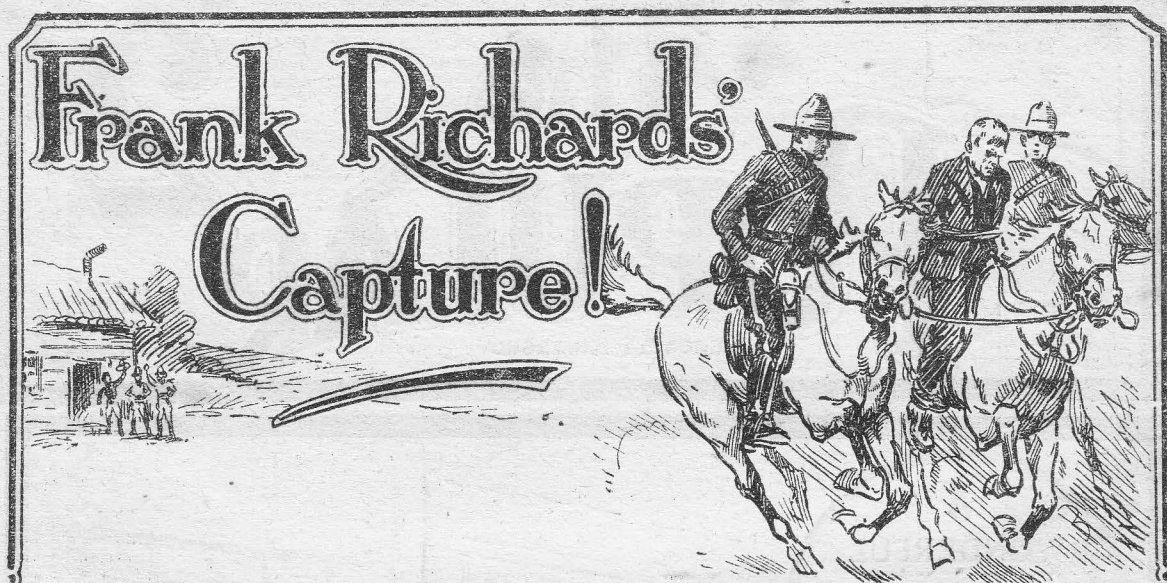
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THE IMPOSTOR OF CEDAR CREEK AT BAY!
(A Dramatic Moment in the Long Complete Tale of Frank Richards & Co. Inside.)



A Splendid Long Complete Story, dealing with the Schooldays in the Backwoods of Canada, of FRANK RICHARDS, Author of the Tales of Harry Wharton & Co., of Greyfriars.

By MARTIN CLIFFORD

(Author of the Famous Stories of St. Jim's now appearing in the "Gem" Library.)

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

Mum's the Word!

CEDAR CREEK SCHOOL was in a buzz of excitement. Only one topic, just then, was of interest to the schoolboys—the visit of Sergeant Lasalle, of the North-West Mounted Police, to the lumber school.

The sergeant had come in quest of Rufus Slimmey, the twin brother of Mr. Slimmey, the assistant master. And the resemblance between the twin brothers had very nearly led him to arrest Miss Meadows' assistant master in the school-room.

It was an exciting episode, and naturally it was discussed with the keenest interest.

Mr. Slimmey, with his somewhat vacant face and big glasses, was regarded with a good-humoured toleration by the Cedar Creek fellows.

It was a startling revelation, that the quiet and unassuming young man's brother was a fugitive from justice, sought for by the Mounted Police.

"Poor old Slimmey!" said Chunky Todgers compassionately. "This must be a big shock for him."

"I guess it's a disgrace to the school," said Gunten, the Swiss junior. "Slimmey ought to be fired."

"Oh, shut up!" said Bob Lawless savagely. "How can poor old Slimmey help his brother being a rascal?"

"Yep!" chimed in Eben Hacke. "He can't help it any more than your brother could help you being a rascal, Gunten, if you had a brother."

There was a laugh, and the Swiss scowled. His sneering remarks found no echo among his schoolfellows. All of them were sorry for Mr. Slimmey, and the disgrace that had fallen upon

him through his connection with the fugitive from Vancouver.

"There he goes!" murmured Dick Dawson.

All eyes were turned upon Mr. Slimmey as he left the log schoolhouse and walked towards his cabin by the creek.

Mr. Slimmey walked straight on, looking neither to the right nor to the left. He did not appear to observe the curious glances on all sides of him.

"And there's the sergeant!" said Lawrence.

"Still on the trail!" grinned Hacke.

The big, athletic figure in the scarlet coat of the Mounted Police loomed up in the gateway.

Sergeant Lasalle's keen eyes were resting on Mr. Slimmey as he walked towards his cabin, not suspiciously, but very searchingly.

Mr. Slimmey's resemblance to the photograph of Rufus Slimmey was still evidently in the sergeant's mind.

Save for the fact that Mr. Slimmey was clean-shaven, and wore glasses, that resemblance was exact.

Only Miss Meadows' positive assurance that Mr. Slimmey had been her assistant master for over a year had convinced the sergeant that he had not, after all, found the man of whom he was in search.

But Sergeant Lasalle apparently hoped yet to find some trace of his game at the lumber school, for he was not gone.

Frank Richards sauntered down to the creek, with his chums, leaving the other fellows still engaged in excited discussion.

Frank's face was clouded and troubled.

"This is rotten, you chaps," he said, when they were out of hearing of the others.

"I guess it is," assented Bob Lawless. "I wondered what was going to happen when the sergeant was questioning Slimmey in the school-room."

"And I," said Vere Beauclerc. "I did not think that Mr. Slimmey would tell him a lie. But from what you've told us, Frank—"

Frank nodded.

"That's what beats me," he said.

"Mr. Slimmey denied, point-blank, having seen or heard from his brother. And—and I told you fellows how I happened to hear them talking in the timber yesterday. There was no mistake about it—it was Slimmey and his brother Rufus. The man did come here—and Slimmey knows it. He met him and spoke to him. He told him he wouldn't help him, certainly. But—"

"He can't be expected to give his own brother away to the police!" remarked Bob Lawless.

"No. But—but I did not think he would lie," said Frank. "It made me feel rotten, to see him standing there telling lies, without turning a hair. I should never have thought that of Slimmey."

"If he'd refused to answer, the sergeant would jolly soon have tumbled to it that his brother was about here somewhere."

"I know! But—it was rotten, all the same, and it's so unlike Slimmey, too," said Frank. "It beats me! Slimmey is rather an ass; but I always thought he was the soul of honour."

"It beats me, too," said Beauclerc thoughtfully. "Slimmey seems rather queer to-day, in more ways than one. He was even forgetting the names of the kids in his class. And he had forgotten all about the Latin lesson he gives you in his cabin once a week, Frank."

"Yes; I shall have to see him about

that some time. I suppose it's worry," said Frank Richards. "Look here, you fellows, we shall have to keep mum now about what we know. It's horrid, Slimmey having lied to Mr. Lasalle like that, but—but we're not going to show him up."

"No fear!" "I was thinking of letting the sergeant know that Rufus Slimmey had been here, and getting the rotter taken away," said Frank. "We can't do that now without giving Slimmey away. It's a rotten position. I—I wish he hadn't lied."

"Shove it out of your mind, and come out in the canoe," said Bob Lawless cheerily. "No good thinking about it."

Bob Lawless' advice was too good not to be taken.

But as they paddled the canoe on the shining creek, Frank Richards could not wholly dismiss the matter from his mind. Rufus Slimmey haunted his thoughts.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.
A Desperate Game.

MR. SLIMMEY entered his cabin, and the door closed behind him.

As he had crossed the school-ground the young man's manner had been indifferent, and he had not appeared to observe the many glances that were turned upon him, or the fact that the big sergeant was eyeing him from the distance.

But immediately the cabin door was closed, the indifference dropped from him like a cloak flung aside.

The calm composure of his face vanished, and his look became anxious, almost drawn, and his eyes restless and unquiet.

He paced to and fro for some minutes in the little cabin, his brows deeply wrinkled, his hands clenched.

Then he moved to the little window, and without removing the curtain, peered out towards the School House.

In the distant gateway the big sergeant was still visible, talking now to a trooper of the Mounted Police.

"Hang him!" The young man muttered the words savagely. "Why does he linger here when I have told him? He cannot still suspect me, after Miss Meadows' evidence. He believes that Rufus Slimmey—the fool!—came here—that he will pick up his trail here. Hang him! What if he should come here?"

He drew a deep, almost sobbing breath.

He left the window, and placed the bar in the sockets at the door. Then he unlocked the door of the inner room—the bed-room—and entered.

On the camp-bed the figure of a man lay stretched.

He was bound to the bed, and securely gagged. He could move nothing but his eyes, which fastened at once upon the man who came in with a burning glance.

If Sergeant Lasalle could have looked into the room, he would have had no doubt that he was hot upon the track of the fugitive from Vancouver.

For the bound man on the bed was the exact counterpart of the man who stood looking moodily down upon him.

He could not speak, but his eyes told volumes of anger and scorn and bitterness.

"You are not looking happy, Brother Paul!" The man's lips curled sardonically as he looked down at his prisoner. "Hang you! Why could you not give me the help I asked? I might

have been safe now. But I would rather be in your position than mine, hang you!"

The bound man's eyes burned at him.

"But I guess I shall play the game out, Brother Paul. I've managed to get through morning lessons." He laughed. "By gad, what would they say if they knew that their teacher was Rufus Slimmey, robber and outcast, hunted by the North-West Mounted Police. I've faced the sergeant himself, my dear brother, and your kind headmistress bore witness that I had been a master in this school for a year or more! She takes me for you, my dear Paul, as everyone else does!"

Rufus Slimmey laughed mockingly.

But his reckless insouciance could not conceal the anxiety that was gnawing him.

He had taken his brother's place, and his brother was a silent and helpless prisoner, while he played out the cheat. But the position was full of danger.

So far, he had played that dangerous game successfully.

But the sergeant was not satisfied; he had not gone. And so long as he remained at Cedar Creek there was ever-present danger.

Already the Chinese servant at the School House was surprised by "Mr. Slimmey's" refusal to allow him to enter the locked bed-room.

That refusal would have to be renewed on the morrow.

What if the sergeant should question the servants, and learn that Mr. Slimmey was not allowing the Chinese to perform his usual household tasks in the cabin?

He would guess at once that the fugitive from Vancouver was concealed there. He would search, and he would find, not the fugitive, but the real Mr. Slimmey.

The imposture would be revealed then with a vengeance.

And there were other dangers. There was the boy Richards, who had asked him some question about a private lesson, of which he knew nothing. He had put the boy off. But there would be another occasion—

"Paul, listen to me. If I free you, will you help me? Close your eyes if you mean 'Yes.'"

Paul Slimmey's eyes remained wide-open, gleaming.

The adventurer made an angry gesture.

"You fool! Do you want to stay tied up here for days, without food, without drink? That is what it means."

No sign from the prisoner.

"Listen, Paul! There is a boy here, named Richards, to whom it appears you give private lessons. Will you tell me the details, if I remove your gag, so that I can ward him off?"

No sign.

"Otherwise, he may suspect, and a tattling tongue may do me harm."

Still the same steady look from the bound man. Rufus Slimmey had no help to expect from that quarter.

He gritted his teeth.

"Very well. Remain as you are—starve, for all I care! I shall play the game out without your help."

He quitted the room, putting the key into his pocket. He removed the bars from the outer door, and he had barely done so when there came a tap on the outside.

For a moment the adventurer's face went white.

But with a steady hand he threw open the door, and looked over his spectacles at the tall figure of the Canadian sergeant without.

Rufus Slimmey was quite himself again

now. His face was calm, and he looked at the big sergeant with polite inquiry.

"These are your quarters, I think?" said Sergeant Lasalle.

"Yes, that is so. Will you step in?"

Sergeant Lasalle entered.

Only the board wall separated him from the room where the gagged prisoner lay bound. But the door of the bed-room was closed, and it was not evident that it was locked. There was nothing to excite the sergeant's suspicions.

"Well?" said Mr. Slimmey. "I am quite at your service, sergeant. Believe me, if I could do anything to help you, you would not need to ask."

"You are not on friendly terms with your brother Rufus," the sergeant remarked, his eyes on the young man's face.

"Not in the least. He has always been my enemy, as well as his own."

"Yet he has fled to this place."

"Is that certain?" asked Mr. Slimmey.

"Quite certain. He has been traced on this side of the town of Thompson. Certainly, he has been within five miles of this school."

Mr. Slimmey looked troubled.

"Then I can only conclude that his object was to see me, if possible," he said slowly. "I can guess his intention, I think. I—I admit, sergeant, that I am not a man of resolute character, and on a previous occasion Rufus extorted money from me by threats. Possibly he hoped to gain my assistance this time by the same methods. But I have not seen him yet."

"And if you should see him—"

"I shall give information at once, of course. He has forfeited all the claims of a brother upon me."

"Thank you, Mr. Slimmey! If you wish to communicate with me, you can do so, at Gunten's store, in Thompson."

"You are going back to Thompson, then?"

"It does not seem much use remaining here."

The sergeant was disappointed.

There was a vague suspicion in his mind that Rufus Slimmey was concealed in the vicinity, assisted by his brother.

But he scanned Mr. Slimmey's face in vain for any sign of relief at his announced intention to depart.

Instead of looking relieved, Mr. Slimmey had an anxious expression.

"Of course, you know your own business best, Sergeant Lasalle," he said hesitatingly. "But—but in case the ruffian should come here, attempting to see me, would it not be advisable for you to remain nearer at hand? My brother Rufus would think nothing of resorting to the most desperate violence."

The sergeant's lip curled involuntarily.

"I—I admit that I am afraid of him," stammered Mr. Slimmey. "I have not led a life like yours, sergeant. I have led a quiet, scholarly existence, and—and I am not the kind of man to deal with a desperate character. If—if you remained in the neighbourhood, I should feel more able to deal with that scoundrel if he should appear. They would put you up at the Hopkins' Farm, if you wished; that is only a mile away."

"I will think that over, Mr. Slimmey."

"But you will let me know?" asked Mr. Slimmey anxiously.

"Yes, I will let you know."

And the sergeant departed, dissatisfied. Mr. Slimmey closed the cabin door after him, and breathed hard.

He had played his part well—the part

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A MAGNIFICENT STORY OF FRANK RICHARDS & CO.

BY MARTIN CLIFFORD.

NEXT TUESDAY!

"HELD UP ON THE TRAIL!"

A MAGNIFICENT STORY OF FRANK RICHARDS & CO. BY MARTIN CLIFFORD.

of a pusillanimous man, who feared the arrival of the desperate fugitive from Vancouver. And if the sergeant adopted his suggestion of putting up at the Hopkins' homestead, he would be near—too near; but at least the schemer would know where he was, and could be on his guard in that direction.

Rufus Slimmey had played his cards well. But there was deep anxiety in his breast.

Frank Richards could not help glancing at Mr. Slimmey when Cedar Creek School assembled for afternoon lessons.

The young man came in as usual to take his class.

His aspect was quite normal. Frank had expected him to be worried and troubled by the occurrences of the morning, but Mr. Slimmey was quite calm.

Immediately classes were dismissed Mr. Slimmey went to his cabin.

He went at once into the bed-room, after barring the outer door, to make sure that the prisoner's gag and bonds were still secure.

Meanwhile, Frank Richards was discussing Mr. Slimmey with his chums. The kind-hearted master was in the habit of helping Frank with his Latin once a week, to assist him in keeping up that subject, which was not taught in the backwoods school.

Once a week Frank stayed for half an hour or an hour after lessons to "swot" with Mr. Slimmey in his cabin.

"I suppose I'd better go, you chaps," Frank said dubiously. "Slimmey put me off yesterday, but I suppose he meant me to stay to-day instead. It would look rather slighting if I let the lessons slide. Only I don't want to bother him while he's worried about that blessed brother of his."

"Well, you can put it to him," said Bob Lawless. "Ask him whether it's convenient."

"I suppose I'd better."

"I guess so."

"Well wait for you," said Vere Beauclere. "I dare say you'll get your lesson this time, Franky. Buzz off!"

"Right-ho!"

Frank Richards made his way to the log cabin.

He tapped at the door and pushed it, but the door did not open.

Frank could not help feeling surprised. Why Mr. Slimmey should bar his cabin door in the day-time was a mystery.

He tapped again.

He heard a hurried movement within, and the sound of a closing door, then the unmistakable click of a key turning in the lock.

A moment or two later the door was opened from within, Frank clearly detecting the sound of the bars being removed.

Mr. Slimmey locked out him, his eyes glittering over his spectacles.

Frank, utterly astonished, stood dumb for a moment. Mr. Slimmey had been in the inner room, and he stopped to lock the door before opening the outer door. Frank's glance wandered involuntarily to the inside door.

The key was not to be seen. After locking it, Mr. Slimmey had evidently put the key in his pocket, a proceeding so surprising that the schoolboy was dumbfounded.

"What is it? What are you troubling me for?" exclaimed Mr. Slimmey, in sharp and angry tones.

Frank flushed.

"I—I came—"

"What have you come for?"

"I—I—about the lesson, sir," said

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NEXT TUESDAY!

"HELD UP ON THE TRAIL!"

A MAGNIFICENT STORY OF FRANK RICHARDS & CO. BY MARTIN CLIFFORD.

Frank. "I did not have it yesterday, sir. I don't want to bother you, of course, sir, but I thought I'd better mention it."

"Oh, the lesson!" Mr. Slimmey's face cleared. "I—I am afraid that I cannot give you the time this evening, Richards. Another time."

"Oh, certainly, sir!"

Mr. Slimmey closed the door in the schoolboy's face.

"Well, my hat!" muttered Frank.

He walked away, surprised and uneasy, suspicion creeping into his mind in spite of himself.

His face was so disturbed when he rejoined his chums that Bob and the Cherub looked at him curiously.

"Slimmey seedy again?" asked Bob.

"No. But—"

"What's happened?" asked Beauclere quietly.

"Blessed if I catch on!" said Frank.

"I—I can't help thinking that—"

He broke off abruptly. He hardly cared to frame in words the dark suspicion that had been forced into his mind.

"Go ahead!" said Bob. "What's the trouble, old chap? Get it off your chest!"

"I—I say, it's jolly serious, I believe!" said Frank. "The door was barred on the inside when I knocked!"

"What on earth for?"

"Well, it was. Slimmey was in the

other room, and when he came to let me in he locked the bed-room door and put the key in his pocket. What the dickens should he do that for?" Frank drew a deep breath. "I've been in Slimmey's cabin lots of times, and he's never done anything of the kind."

"He could act like that for one reason," said Beauclere. "He wasn't running any risk of anybody looking into the inner room. It can't be possible that—that—"

Beauclere paused, startled by his own thoughts.

"He couldn't be ass enough to hide that rascally brother of his in his own cabin!" breathed Bob Lawless.

"I—I couldn't help thinking of it," said Frank. "He lied to the sergeant, and that could only have been to help Rufus Slimmey to keep clear."

"Good heavens!" said Bob.

Frank Richards compressed his lips.

"I like Slimmey," he said. "I always thought him a good sort. I was for standing by him, even after he lied to the sergeant in that rotten way. But if he's hiding a thief, with his plunder still in his pockets, at this school, the time has come for us to chip in. If he's doing that, he's no better than a criminal himself. And I feel sure that he must be doing it; there can be no other explanation!"

"And what are we going to do?" asked Beauclere. "If the man's there, we're not going to let him stay there. This school isn't a refuge for criminals."

"No jolly fear!" said Bob Lawless emphatically. "Let's go and put it

straight to Slimmey. Either the man clears off at once, and takes his chance, or else we call the sergeant in. That's fair."

"Come on!" said Frank Richards.

And a few minutes later the chums were at the door of Mr. Slimmey's cabin, with very determined expressions on their faces.

THE THIRD CHAPTER. An Amazing Discovery.

FRANK Richards knocked at the cabin door, and opened it. This time it was not fastened.

Mr. Slimmey was in the room, moving about restlessly. The young master spent much of his leisure time in study, but there was no sign of study in the room now. He swung angrily towards the door as it opened.

"You again, Richards?" he exclaimed.

"Yes, sir."

"I have told you that I cannot be troubled with you this evening. Is not that plain enough?"

Frank bit his lip.

"Quite, sir. I have not come to speak about the lesson."

"Then what do you want?"

"I will explain, sir. I had better come in."

Frank entered, followed by his chums, watched angrily by Mr. Slimmey. His anger did not deter Frank Richards, however. He had a duty to do, and he had come there to do it.

"Well, what is it?" snapped the man.

"I ought to tell you first, sir, that yesterday I heard you talking in the timber with your brother Rufus," said Frank quietly.

Mr. Slimmey started violently.

"You—you heard—" he gasped.

"Yes. It was quite by accident. I had gone there to mug over my books, when I heard your voices," said Frank. "I never intended to let you know that I had heard you, or knew anything about your brother—"

"My—my brother—"

"Your brother Rufus, the man Sergeant Lasalle is in search of."

"Oh!"

The expression of relief in the man's face puzzled the schoolboy. Frank did not know that for one terrible moment the impostor had feared that the boys knew the whole truth.

"You told the sergeant in the school-room that you had not seen or heard from your brother," went on Frank, in the same steady tone. "It isn't for me to judge you, sir, but that man cannot stay here."

"What—what man?"

"Rufus Slimmey!"

"Are you mad? Do you think he is here?" panted the man.

"I can't help thinking so, sir. I think he's persuaded you somehow to give him shelter here," said Frank. "It can't be done, sir. We all like and respect you, Mr. Slimmey, but we can't keep silent while you hide a thief and criminal in the school. You know what Miss Meadows would say if she knew."

"You—you have not told her this—this ridiculous suspicion—"

"No."

"Have you told anyone?"

"Not yet."

"Not yet? That means—"

"That means that unless the man goes, we are bound to call in the sergeant!" said Frank Richards.

"Oh!"

"Don't think we intend to be disrespectful, sir," said Bob Lawless.

"But we should be doing wrong if we let

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him stay here and said nothing. You can see that."

"And we don't want him arrested here," said Beauclere. "Simply let us know that he is gone, sir, and that ends it as far as we're concerned. We're not asking you to give the man up."

Mr. Slimmey drew a panting breath. "You—you are mad to suspect such a thing—"

"Will you let us see into the other room?"

"No, I will not. Am I to be dictated to by schoolboys? I shall report this insolence to your parents."

But the attempt at bluster had no effect upon the chums of Cedar Creek. The matter was too serious for that.

"We intend to tell our parents, in any case, sir, unless that man goes," said Bob Lawless. "That cuts no ice, sir. We've got to see that man off."

"If—if I should admit the—the truth of what you say, will you keep silent?" muttered Slimmey.

a weapon, yet they knew that this man had a revolver hidden in his coat, upon which his fingers had closed convulsively.

What did it all mean? What amazing change had come over the quiet, irresolute man? Why was that hard and desperate look creeping on his pale face?

The distrust they already felt intensified. His eyes gleamed at them with anxious and savage inquiry.

"Well," he muttered, "what do you say?"

"That's good enough, sir," said Frank, after a long pause. "Let the man clear off. We don't want to have a hand in arresting your brother. The sergeant can take the money he has stolen. That can be arranged—"

"The money! What do you mean?"

"Sergeant Lasalle told you that he had stolen money upon him," said Frank. "He cannot take that away with him. We can't agree to be parties to a robbery, sir! If he keeps his liberty he

Slimmey's hesitating tones and the clear, cool, hard voice of the adventurer from Vancouver. The voices had been similar, but the manner of speaking very different.

Unconsciously the impostor, in his anxiety and bitter rage, had spoken without disguising his tones. He was no longer affecting the low voice of the schoolmaster, and back into Frank's mind came the hard, sardonic tones he had heard that day in the timber.

"Good heavens!" muttered Frank, almost dazed by the startling suspicion. "Good heavens!"

The look on the boy's face was enough for the adventurer. He knew that Frank Richards knew.

His hand flashed from his pocket now, and a revolver glittered in it.

Frank sprang back.

"Look out!" he shouted. "Look out! That is not Mr. Slimmey—that man is Rufus Slimmey!"

With the bound of a tiger the ruffian



A DESPERATE CHANCE.—With a sudden swing of Frank's arm the stool was lifted and flung at the same moment. Crash! The ruffian spun round, and the whizzing stool struck him full on the head. He crashed to the floor, and the next moment the chums were on him! (See Chapter 4.)

"Yes, if the man goes."
"I—I agree, then! Keep silent, and as soon as it is dark the man shall go. I promise you that."

The chums of Cedar Creek looked at one another. It was a complete admission. The man was there. They had been sure of it, yet that complete surrender on the part of the assistant master startled them a little.

"Are you satisfied?" he muttered hoarsely. "I will do as you wish. I—I will pass over your conduct in treating me in this manner. The man shall go to-night. That is a promise."

His face was deadly white, a hunted look was in his eyes. His hand was in his pocket, and the schoolboys knew, from the sagging of the coat, that it was grasping a weapon hidden there.

It was not the Mr. Slimmey they had always known, and there was a vague fear and suspicion in their looks. Mr. Slimmey had never been known to carry

is lucky. He cannot take the stolen money. Let him leave it here, and it can be handed over to the sergeant in some way to be taken back to Vancouver."

"Agreed! Now go."

"But the money?" said Frank.

"He shall leave it here."

Frank smiled slightly.

"He is hardly likely to do that at your asking, sir."

"He—he will do as I ask—"

"He will not," said Frank quietly.

"When I heard you talking to him in the timber, sir, it did not sound as if he would do as you asked. You asked him to go, and leave you in peace. Did he do so? I am sorry, Mr. Slimmey, but—"

Frank Richards paused suddenly.

He started violently as a strange and startling suspicion flashed into his mind. On that occasion, when he had heard the brothers speaking in the timber, there had been a contrast between Paul

reached the cabin door, slammed it shut, and set his back to it. The revolver in his hand rose to a level, gleaming at the startled chums of Cedar Creek.

"Silence!" he hissed.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

At Clossé Quarters.

SILENCE!"

Frank Richards panted. He knew the truth now—Rufus Slimmey's action left no doubt of it—and his chums knew.

Amazing as it was, they wondered that they had not guessed it before. It was not Mr. Slimmey, but his double.

The resemblance, which had almost made the Canadian sergeant arrest him in the school-room, had enabled Rufus Slimmey to play this trick.

He advanced towards them, the revolver still levelled.

(Continued on page 23.)

THE POPULAR.—No 173.

A SPLENDID SCHOOL TALE, TELLING HOW PETER TODD DOES DICK PENFOLD A GOOD TURN!



A Magnificent Long Complete Story of Harry Wharton & Co., The Chums of Greyfriars.

BY FRANK RICHARDS

(Author of the Famous Greyfriars Tales appearing in the "Magnet" Library.)

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

Peter Wants to Help!

PETER TODD of the Remove Form at Greyfriars made his way along the corridor and stopped at the study which was shared by Dick Penfold, the scholarship boy, and Skinner, Stott, and Snoop.

Peter entered the study and found only Skinner and Penfold there. He nodded carelessly to Skinner and came towards Penfold.

"I want to speak to you, Pen," he said.

"Yes," said Pen.

"I'm sure Skinner wouldn't mind leaving the study for a bit—"

"What blessed cheek! It's my study!" growled Skinner.

"Oh, I don't mind the trouble of chucking you out," said Peter calmly. "I thought you'd rather walk, that's all."

"Ahem! I—I only came in for a book," said Skinner.

"Well, take your book and your hook at the same time."

"Skinner took both, and Peter Todd closed the door after him.

"Now, Pen," he said, "I'm going to talk to you like a Dutch uncle. I haven't been at Greyfriars long, but you've got to know me. I'm not one of the fellows who go through a school from the First Form to the Sixth without anybody ever knowing they're there at all."

Pen smiled faintly. Peter Todd certainly wasn't that kind of boy. He was never likely to be anywhere for long without everybody else becoming emphatically aware of his presence.

"You're in trouble," said Peter Todd. "You haven't known me long, but you've known my cousin Alonzo a long time, and you know he's simply brimming over with the milk of human kindness. So am I, only I show it in a

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different way. I'm making a man of Bunter, for instance. I shall succeed in the long run, if he lives. Now, I'm going to help you out. What's the trouble?"

Penfold crimsoned.

"N-n-nothing!"

"Rats!" said Peter Todd promptly. "No good telling me fairy tales, you know. You're in trouble, and, as head-cook-and-bottle-washer in the Remove, it's up to me to pull you through. Tell me all about it."

Pen closed his lips.

"I understand," said Peter, with a nod. "Poor and proud—won't talk of your troubles—rather go under than let a chap help you. I savvy! But I'm not an ordinary chap—not of the common-or-garden variety at all. I'm going to help you, I tell you."

"You can't."

"You don't know that until you've told me, and I've had a think about it. I suppose the trouble's money?"

Pen nodded.

"You won't take any if any fellow wanted to help you?"

Pen flushed again.

"I'd die sooner!" he said.

Peter nodded.

"I understand again. I'm a good understander, you see. I'm not going to offer you any money—partly because you wouldn't take it, and still more because I haven't any to give away. But there must be some other way out of the trouble. Now, tell your Uncle Peter all about it—in strict confidence, of course."

Pen hesitated.

There was something very taking in the breezy directness of Peter Todd, and he inspired confidence in the breast of the worried, troubled, harassed boy. Dick knew that he could trust him not to talk of what was confided to him, and

in his trouble he had a longing for someone to help him to share the burden.

"Go ahead," said Peter Todd, who saw already that he had succeeded, and he sat on a corner of the table and swung his legs—his favourite attitude. "Tell it all to your uncle, and we'll put our heads together. Your pater's in trouble—eh?"

"Yes," said Pen.

"Is it true about the bailiffs?"

"Yes. The pater's business isn't what it was," said Pen drearily. "It's partly through my coming here, you know. I can't help him as I used to. And trade's bad. It makes me begin to wish I'd never come to Greyfriars, though I was so jolly glad when I got the scholarship. It seemed such a wonderful chance for me."

"So it was," said Peter.

"All the same, I've been thinking about chucking it up, and going home to help the governor," said Pen.

"You may be able to help him without chucking up your scholarship," said Peter. "How is he fixed? Is it rent?"

"Yes."

"Shell out all the facts. I'm going to think out a way for you to work it, you know."

"You can't!"

"Leave that to your Uncle Peter."

"I only wish you could," said Pen, brightening a little with encouragement, in spite of himself. "But how could you?"

"We shall see. It's rent, I suppose?"

"Yes."

"How much?"

"Five pounds—overdue!"

"Landlord's a hard man, I suppose?" "It isn't the landlord; it's his agent. The landlord who owns all that ground lives abroad, on the Riviera somewhere. I don't even know his name; I've heard it, but I've forgotten. But it's Mr. Snooks we have to deal with, and he's

as hard as nails. If the money isn't paid next week, there'll be what they call a man in possession." Pen clenched his hands convulsively. "I think the disgrace of it would kill my father. Poor old dad! He's always held his head up in Friardale."

Peter Todd wrinkled his brows in thought.

"It's not much money," he said. "Lord Mauleverer spends more than that on a tie-pin, and Maudy is a friend of yours."

"I'm not going to touch his money."

"Not even for your father?"

"My father wouldn't take charity."

"Quite right," said Peter, nodding; "that's the right sort. But if a chap could think of a way to help him get out of the difficulty himself—"

"I'd never forget it, if you could do that," said Pen; "but you can't. I've thought and thought about it till my head's splitting. But I can't think of anything. Money isn't so easy to get—especially when you want it."

"Quite true. But where there's a will there's a way," said Peter Todd. "I'm not going to jaw about what you've told me. I'm going to think it over, and if there's a way, I'm going to find it for you. You rely on your Uncle Peter."

And Peter Todd left the study. He left Pen, in spite of his doubts, in a more cheerful humour. There was an impression of force and strength about Peter Todd which seemed to say that what he had undertaken to do, that he would carry out with success.

And Pen's face was brighter as he sat down to his work.

Peter Todd's brow wore a thoughtful frown as he went along the Remove passage to his own study. Peter Todd was a youth with a peculiar sense of humour, which was not always to be restrained within bounds. But he had a kind heart; he was like his cousin Alonzo in that respect. And Peter cheerfully considered himself as top dog in the Remove, and therefore bound to help the other fellows out of their troubles.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

Five Pounds Reward!

"FIVE POUNDS REWARD!"

Peter Todd started as the words caught his eyes.

Five pounds reward!

Peter was thinking at that very moment of the exact sum of five pounds—the five pounds that young Penfold required to help his father out of his trouble, and which Peter had promised to help him obtain somehow.

As chief of the top study in the Remove, Peter had said that it was up to him. Whether it was or not, Peter was in deadly earnest about it. But how to help young Penfold without giving him money which he certainly would not accept was a problem that puzzled even Peter Todd's keen wits. The only way was to help him to earn it somehow—and how could Penfold earn it?

Some of the fags, it is true, turned an honest penny by writing out lines for richer fellows who didn't want to do their own imposts. Clever "kids" in the Fourth and Remove sometimes did construe for duffers in the Fifth, like Coker, and were rewarded with shillings and even half-crowns. But little earnings of that kind would be of no use to Penfold. He wanted a big sum—for a schoolboy—and wanted it in a few days. How was he to be enabled to get it?

That was what Peter Todd had set himself to think out. Pen was more than willing to work if he could have found some work that would bring in money.

Peter was strolling through the old town of Friardale, with his cap on the back of his head and his hands thrust deep into his trousers' pockets, thinking hard. Peter always thought better when he was in motion—as a matter of fact, he was very seldom still. He had cheered himself up a little by knocking the hats off two Highcliffe fellows he had encountered in the old High Street of Friardale, and by uttering a sudden yell at the open door of Mr. Snooks, the estate agent, which made Mr. Snooks jump up from his desk and knock his chair over backwards in his surprise. But these things, though pleasant in themselves, did not help Peter with his self-imposed problem. How was he to enable young Penfold to get hold of five pounds in hard cash without giving it to him?

Peter was wrestling with the knotty problem when he passed the little police-station of Friardale. P.-c. Tozer was sunning himself on the steps majestically. Peter was thinking of expending a halfpenny upon an orange for the especial benefit of P.-c. Tozer's waist-

SPLENDID REAL PHOTOS.

In the "MAGNET":
Action Photo of John Crosbie of Birmingham.

In the "BOYS' FRIEND":
Photo of Johnny Brown, the Scottish Lightweight Champion.

NOW ON SALE.

In To-morrow's "GEM":
Two Real Photos of Famous Footballers.

coat, when he caught sight of the words on a bill posted up outside the police-station:

"Five Pounds Reward!"

Five pounds! The exact sum he wanted! Peter dropped the idea at once of pelting P.-c. Tozer with a cheap orange, and raised his hat very politely to that officer. Then he halted and read the notice on the wall.

"Five Pounds Reward!"

"The above sum will be paid to anyone giving information leading to the detection of the Person or Persons who lighted a fire upon Popper's Island, in the River Sark, thereby causing damage to Sir Hilton Popper's estate.—Apply at the office of J. Snooks, Friardale."

Peter Todd grinned cheerfully.

"Five pounds!" he murmured. "Five golden quids! And I happen to know who did it—nobody better! Five quids—how ripping! Oh, my only Aunt Gloxiana!"

Peter Todd turned towards P.-c. Tozer, who was eyeing him suspiciously. P.-c. Tozer was suspicious of all Greyfriars' boys. He had had many rubs with them. But Peter Todd looked very innocent; and, as a matter of fact, Mr. Tozer took him for his cousin Alonzo. When it suited Peter Todd, he could adopt the meek-and-mild manners and gentle voice of his cousin. It suited him now.

"Good-afternoon, my dear Mr. Tozer!" he said.

Dear Mr. Tozer grunted.

"Some bad boy has been lighting fires on Sir Hilton Popper's island, I see,"

said Peter. "Do you think he will be caught, Mr. Tozer?"

"I 'opes as how he is," said Mr. Tozer amiably. "I knows perfectly well that it was some young rip from Greyfriars, a-going a-picnicking, and not caring how much dummidge he might do to a man's property! Huh!"

"I shouldn't wonder!" said Peter. "There are some very naughty boys at Greyfriars—boys who are quite rough in their manners. I suppose that's all square, Mr. Tozer—five pounds for whoever gives the name of the naughty boy?"

"Wotto!" said Mr. Tozer. "You should 'ave seen Sir 'lton when he kem down 'ere about it—fair ramping he was. The young scallywags had chopped down a young tree for fuel—fair chopped it down. And one of them stuck a card on another tree, with the words hon it: 'Poor old Popper!' My heys! You should 'ave seen Sir 'lton. Fair scorching, 'e was!"

"The naughty boy ought to be sent to a reformatory," said Peter, with a shake of the head.

"I dunno about that," said Mr. Tozer; "but if it's a Greyfriars' kid, and he's found out, the 'Ead will 'ave to flog him—Sir 'lton will see to that! Wotto!"

"Serve him right!" said Peter indignantly. "There doesn't seem to be any respect left for a great landowner in the country any more than there is for the police force. Only this morning I heard a bad boy say that you were an old donkey, Mr. Tozer. I chided him at once."

"Oh, he did, did he?" said Mr. Tozer, growing purple.

"Yes, and he said your face was enough to make a cat laugh, Mr. Tozer."

"Look 'ere, Master Todd—"

"I said it was not right to cackle about your face, though," said Peter virtuously. "I said a man couldn't help his face. If he could, it stands to reason that you would have quite a different sort of one, wouldn't you, Mr. Tozer?"

Mr. Tozer spluttered.

"And I heard a bad boy say that you were—"

"I don't want to 'ear wot he said!" roared Mr. Tozer.

"He said you were—"

"Look here—"

"He said you were a funny merchant, Mr. Tozer, and that if you knew how funny you were you'd let yourself out to a circus—"

"Will you be off!" roared Mr. Tozer.

Peter Todd looked surprised.

"But I'm only telling you what that bad boy said, Mr. Tozer. I was shocked at him! I said you couldn't help being funny—"

Mr. Tozer made a dive towards Peter, and Peter walked away. The fat constable gazed after him with a purple face and bulging eyes, snorting with rage. Peter smiled gently to himself, and strolled round to the office of Mr. Snooks. Mr. Snooks was an estate agent, and a house agent, and agent for many things. He was a collector of rents to many owners of property in and about Friardale, and as he was a good collector he had plenty of clients. Mr. Snooks was as hard as nails and not troubled with any sentimental unwillingness to turn an unfortunate tenant out of house and home. He was a fat man, with a prominent waistcoat and watchchain, and a hard face that might have been carved out of a particularly hard red brick.

Peter raised his hat respectfully as he came into the office. Mr. Snooks looked at him hard. He had not forgotten the yell at his door which had startled him; but there was no evidence to connect Peter with it, as he had not seen the

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NEXT TUESDAY!

"LODER PAYS THE BILL!"

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

joker. And Peter looked as innocent as Alonzo; that is to say, as innocent as innocence itself.

"Good-afternoon, sir," said Peter meekly. "I hope I see you well, sir. Very warm for this time of the year, isn't it, sir?"

"Have you any business with me?" asked Mr. Snooks.

"Yes, sir. About that reward you are offering for the wicked boy who lighted a fire on the island in the river—"

Then Mr. Snooks looked interested.

"Oh, good!" he said. "Can you give me some information, my lad? Sir Hilton Popper is very anxious to discover the perpetrator of this outrage. The reward will be paid over at once when the culprit is discovered."

"I know a fellow who can give you his name, sir."

"Indeed! Then if your friend wants five pounds, he has only to come along and give the name," said Mr. Snooks, turning back to his papers again.

"Thank you, sir!"

And Peter left the office, and walked back to Greyfriars. His face was very cheerful as he came in at the old gates. Harry Wharton & Co. had just come off the cricket-field, and they greeted him in the Close.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo, slacker!"

"Why ain't you playing cricket?"

"The slackfulness of the esteemed and ludicrous Todd is terrific."

Peter grinned.

"Important affair to attend to," he explained. "Some affairs have to be attended to by the top study in the Remove, you know—lots of time for cricket."

And Peter went on into the School House, leaving the Co. looking after him very expressively.

"The cheeky bounder!" said Bob Cherry. "We shall have to take him down a peg or two, one of these days. Top study! The cheek of it!"

"Awful nerve!" said Wharton indignantly. "If we hear much more of it, we'll rag him, and bring him down off his perch."

"Hear, hear!"

Peter Todd went up to the Remove passage, whistling cheerily—a shrill whistle which made fellows yell out to him, and throw books and boots at him as he passed. Peter reached Penfold's study. The door was open, and the voice of Lord Mauleverer, the dandy of the Remove, could be heard within.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

Peter's Way!

"BEGAD, you know, Pen, old chap, it won't do, my dear fellow, you know."

Lord Mauleverer was very much in earnest. Dick Penfold was seated at the study table, at work—or rather, he had been at work when the schoolboy earl came in. His face was far from cheerful.

"You see," said Lord Mauleverer, "I'm your pal, you know, ain't I?"

"You're a good chap!" said Pen.

"Well then, why don't you let me lend you a hand?" expostulated Lord Mauleverer. "You haven't told me what's the matter, but I know it's tin. I've got plenty of tin—as much as I want, and more. What's the good of the beastly money if a chap can't help his friends when they're down on their luck?"

Pen sighed.

"If it were a loan I wanted, Mauly, THE POPULAR.—No. 173.

I'd ask you like a shot. But it isn't! If I borrowed of you I couldn't pay!"

"Well, I shouldn't dun you for it, my dear fellow."

Pen grinned.

"I know you wouldn't, Mauly. But a loan that isn't repaid is a gift—and I'm not taking money from anybody! You would despise me yourself if I did, when you came to think of it."

"No, I jolly well wouldn't!"

"Well, I should despise myself, and that would be worse."

"But it's only rotten money, kid," said Lord Mauleverer. "What is it Shakespeare says about it—about locking rascal counters from one's friends? I forget the lines, but they're quite to the point. Let me lend you a hand."

"No!"

"You're a determined beast, Pen, though you look so soft," growled his lordship. "I've a jolly good mind to punch your silly head!"

Peter Todd came in.

"It's all right!" he announced.

Lord Mauleverer looked at him.

"BEGAD! What do you know about it?" he asked.

"I've taken the matter up, as head of the top study in the Remove," Peter explained. "I know all about it. Pen won't take money in charity—quite right. He wants to earn it. I've found out a way for him to do it."

Pen's face flushed with hope.

"Oh, Toddy! Is it true?"

"True as a die!"

"You know a way I can earn five quid?"

"Easy as rolling on a log!"

"Oh, Toddy!"

"BEGAD, that's all serene, then!" said Lord Mauleverer. "I'll be off! You're a very clever chap, young Dodd."

"My name's Todd!"

"Yaas, I'm always forgetting names," said his lordship. "I meant Rodd. Well, so-long, Pen; so-long, Podd."

And Lord Mauleverer left the study. Peter Todd closed the door after him, and then turned to the flushed and excited Penfold.

"It's all right," he said. "Right as rain. I've been thinking a big think, and I've got it. You want to earn five quid—this week?"

"Oh, yes, yes!" said Pen eagerly.

"I can fix it. You've heard of Sir Hilton Popper—big gun in this district? He owns the island in the river, and won't allow chaps to picnic there, though they've done it from time immemorial. I mean," said Todd, remembering—"some naughty and reckless fellows persist in camping out on that island, though Sir Hilton Popper won't allow it, and the Head has made it out of bounds."

"Yes, I know all that," said Pen, in wonder.

"There is a reward of five pounds offered for information about the latest bad boy who did it. The awful young rascal chopped down a tree, and burnt it in a camp-fire, and left a card for old Popper, with cheeky words written on it."

Pen grinned.

"Yes, I've heard about it. Some of the fellows say it must have been a Greyfriars chap," he said. "Serve old Popper right! He shouldn't have stopped us from going on the island. Greyfriars chaps have always camped there."

Peter shook his head solemnly.

"I'm sorry to see you upholding disorder and disobedience in this way, young Penfold," he said severely. "The miscreant ought to be denounced."

"Rats!" said Penfold.

"And you're going to denounce him!"

"What!"

"And earn the five quid!"

The eager, hopeful look died out of Penfold's face. He sat down again drearily.

"Is that the wheeze?" he asked. "Is that how I'm to earn five pounds?"

"That's it!"

"Then it's no good. I wouldn't give the chap away, if I knew who it was; and I don't know. I haven't the faintest idea. But if I knew, I wouldn't sneak about him. I'm really surprised at your suggesting such a thing, Todd. Why, even Snoop would stop short of doing a rotten thing like that!"

"You don't tumble, Penfold. I'm not proposing to you to sneak—and I'll punch your head if you make any more remarks like that. I happen to know who did it—a really desperate young rascal who ought to be had up."

"Then you can give him away yourself, if you want to. I sha'n't!"

"It wouldn't do. Sir Hilton Popper wouldn't pay me the reward. Never mind why he wouldn't; but I happen to know that he wouldn't. But if I write down the name and put it into an envelope, and you take it to Mr. Snooks, you get the five quid."

"Well, I won't!"

"Yes, you will!" said Peter Todd coolly. "You don't know all the circs yet. The fellow who did it wants to be given away."

Pen jumped.

"What rot!"

"It's a fact!"

"How do you know?"

"I've got it from the chap himself. You see, old Popper wants him badly—he won't rest till he's got him. He's raising Cain to find out who burnt that blessed tree on his blessed island. He's going to go on nosing and nosing till he finds him out. Then the chap will get it where the chicken got the chopper; you know—in the neck. The chap would rather have it over. Mind, I have this from the chap himself! He wants to have it out—and if you don't give him away, he's going to own up. Fact! He won't be punished, either."

"He would be flogged—"

"No, he wouldn't; he's got a way of getting out of that—and that's why he wants to get it over," said Peter cheerfully. "Now you believe me, don't you?"

"Of course, I take your word, Todd; but—"

"I give you my word of honour that the chap wants to be found out, and that you will be doing him a favour by doing it."

"I don't see it—"

"Can't you take my word?"

"Yes; but—who is the chap?"

"Never mind that now. All you've got to do is to take the name in an envelope to Mr. Snooks. Snooks will do the rest, and you get your five quid. And I give you my sacred sam that the chap wants you to do it."

"You have that from the chap himself?"

"Honour bright!"

Pen looked perplexed.

"It's a jolly queer business," he said.

"Of course I believe you, Todd; I know you wouldn't play me a rotten trick, and make me sneak for nothing. But why does the chap want to be given away?"

"He's got reasons—jolly good reasons—and after it's done, you'll see for yourself. You've got to trust me till then. But you know I'm a square chap."

"Yes, I know that, Todd; but I'd rather speak to the chap himself."

"Can't he did! He doesn't want you to know till afterwards—he's got his reasons. Look here, if you don't mind Wharton knowing about it, I'll tell him all the circumstances, and you can ask his opinion. Wharton's captain of the Remove, and you know he's straight as a die. If Wharton tells you that it will be all right for you to take the note to Mr. Snooks, will you take it?"

Pen nodded.
"Yes—I know Wharton won't treat me badly. If it's not honourable, he wouldn't have a hand in it. I know you wouldn't either, of course; only—only you might be mistaken about the chap wanting to be given away—"

"No mistake about it—I know the chap better than I know anybody else in the world."

"He's a friend of yours?"
"My best pal!"

"Well, that ought to settle it. But why can't you give him away yourself, then, and capture the quids?"

"Because I couldn't get the reward. Sir Hilton Popper wouldn't pay it to me. I couldn't touch the reward, if I wanted to ever so much!"

"It's jolly queer," said Pen slowly, "and I don't see what you want to be so mysterious about it for. But if I can save my father without doing anything rotten, of course I should jump at the chance. If Wharton knows about it, and tells me to go ahead, I'll do it!"

"Then I'll go and have a jaw with Wharton."

And Todd left the study. Dick Penfold remained plunged in deep and perplexed thought.

Pen did not understand the matter at all. Peter Todd was such a peculiar and original kind of fellow, that it was not always easy to understand his processes of thought. But if Pen could earn that reward honestly and honourably, it was not likely that he would fail to do so. He thought of his father, working away long and weary hours in the little shop, in daily fear of the bailiffs.

However peculiar and mysterious the matter was, it was up to Pen to take advantage of the chance, if he could do so honourably. And he could certainly depend upon Harry Wharton's judgment. Wharton would not have done anything mean, or counselled another fellow to do anything mean, for any consideration whatever. Pen knew that.

He was still thinking the matter out in perplexity, but with reviving hope, when Peter Todd came back into the study with Wharton. Harry Wharton was smiling. Todd held a sealed envelope in his hand.

Pen looked quickly and eagerly at the captain of the Remove.

"Todd's told you?" he asked.
"Yes," said Harry; "and it's all right. Todd's a regular genius; nobody but Todd would have thought of this! You can earn the reward by giving away the chap who lighted the fire on the island, and the chap agrees to it, and wants you to do it, in fact!"

"You—you're sure?"
"Quite sure. I've talked to the chap about it."

Pen looked relieved.
"Then you think it will be all right for me to go to Mr. Snooks—"

"Right as rain! I'll walk down with you, if you like, and see you through."

"You're jolly good!" said Pen gratefully.

The boy hesitated no longer. If Wharton said it was all right, he had no right to doubt further, though he did not understand.

Five minutes later Pen and Harry Wharton were walking down together to Friardale, and in Pen's pocket was the envelope containing the name of the unknown delinquent.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

The Culprit!

MR SNOOKS was in his office, busy with a long list of articles he was preparing for the printer. Mr. Snooks added to his other professions that of an auctioneer, and he was making up a list for a sale. He glanced up rather impatiently at the juniors as they came in.

"One brass bedstead, good condition, and one set of fireirons—" he murmured. "Well, well! What can I do for you?"

"If you please—" began Pen, rather timidly.

Mr. Snooks waved a fat hand. "Kindly do not refer to your father's affairs, Penfold," he said. "I cannot listen to you on the subject! I cannot discuss questions of rent with a boy! If you have come to ask me—"

Pen flushed.
"I haven't come for anything of the sort!" he exclaimed.

"Well, what do you want, then?"

"It's about the reward," said Harry Wharton, helping Pen out. "The reward of five pounds for the name of the chap who lighted the fire on Popper's Island in the river."

Mr. Snooks became more genial at once. He was far from disapproving of anything in the nature of sneaking or treachery. And if he succeeded in dis-

covering the person or persons against whom Sir Hilton Popper was so deeply incensed, he knew that it would be a "leg up" for him in the baronet's good graces. And that was a great desideratum to Mr. Snooks. He made a remarkably good thing out of acting as agent for Sir Hilton Popper.

"Ah, I see!" he said. "You know the person?"

"Penfold has his name written down in that envelope, Mr. Snooks."

"Very good! Upon proof-being forthcoming, the reward will be paid immediately."

"I don't want the reward, Mr. Snooks," said Pen. "My father owes you five pounds, and I want you to take the money for his rent, and send him a receipt, instead of sending the reward to me."

Mr. Snooks nodded.

"That is quite immaterial to me," he said. "I will certainly do so, if you wish. Of course, the proof against the person you denounce must be clear."

"He won't deny it," said Wharton.

"In that case there will be no doubt. It was, I presume, a Greyfriars' boy?"

"Yes."

"I thought so," said Mr. Snooks closing his fat lips spitefully.

"There's one other thing," said Wharton. "It's understood that the source of information is kept dark. The fellows might cut up rough with Penfold if they knew."

"It is very meritorious of Penfold to assist the law in its course," said Mr. Snooks pompously. "But certainly the source of information shall be kept



THE MYSTERY SOLVED! Peter Todd went on removing his garments. He drew out a large sheet of thick leather. The juniors gazed at it almost in stupefaction. Now they understood. Peter had worn that leather under his garments when he had had the flogging. "Oh, you awful spoofer!" gasped Frank Nugent. (See Chapter 5.)

secret. There will be no need to mention it, of course, if the proof is clear without that."

"That's agreed, sir," said Wharton. "Give him the paper, Ben!" Pen laid the envelope on the agent's desk.

Wharton linked his arm in Pen's, and marched him out of the office while the agent was opening the envelope. Pen was looking troubled.

"I don't know the name yet," he said.

"That's all right! Come on!"

"You're quite sure it's all right, Wharton?" said Pen, smitten with a new and troublesome feeling of doubt. "Right as rain!" said Harry.

And he walked Pen back to Greyfriars cheerfully.

Pen could not help thinking about the matter and puzzling. But his heart was lighter. The five pounds reward would pay his father's debt, and he could imagine Mr. Penfold's surprise and joy when he received the receipt for the rent.

It was about two hours later when Nugent, looking out of the window of Study No. 1, uttered a sudden exclamation. The shades of night were falling fast, as a poet has observed, but in the dusk Nugent saw a portly figure crossing the Close from the gates. The portly form in riding-breeches and coat could be no other than that of Sir Hilton Popper, the local landowner, who was so unpopular with the Greyfriars' boys.

"My hat! Here's old Popper!" said Frank, turning from the window. "Looks as if he's on the warpath, too! Trouble for somebody!"

"Generally is when Popper honours us with a visit," said Harry.

"I suppose it's about that affair on the island," said Nugent. "I've heard that the old duffer has offered a reward about it."

"Yes; I believe so," said Wharton, with a chuckle.

Nugent looked at him. "Do you know anything about it?" he asked.

"Well, yes; a little," admitted Harry. "The chap told me in confidence. But all Greyfriars will know who it was in a quarter of an hour."

A good many fellows gathered to stare at Sir Hilton Popper as he strode in, and Trotter showed him to the Head's study.

Two or three fellows, forgetting the respect due to a really great man, gave Sir Hilton a groan as he passed. The baronet frowned angrily.

The fellows gathered in a crowd in the passage as the Head's door closed upon the portly form of Sir Hilton Popper.

"Trouble for somebody!" said Bolsover major. "Popper's found out that it was a Greyfriars' chap who lighted that fire on his giddy island, I suppose."

"Begad, it will be bad for the chap, then!" said Lord Mauleverer.

"Sure, and I shouldn't like to be in his shoes," said Micky Desmond. "Phwat are ye grinning at, intirely, Pether Todd? What do you know about it?"

Peter chuckled. Trotter, the page, came down the passage, and stopped before Peter Todd, with a look of commiseration upon his face.

"The doctor wants you, Master Todd," he said—"that is, if you're Master Peter," added Trotter, a little doubtfully.

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NEXT TUESDAY!

"LODER PAYS THE BILL!"

Peter grinned cheerfully. "I'm Master Peter, and it's all right," he said.

There was a buzz as Todd swung away down the passage.

"My hat! It was Todd, then!"

"Peter Todd."

"He's in for it!"

"The boulder doesn't seem to care," said Bob Cherry. "Blessed if I wouldn't sooner face a ramping, roaring lion than old Popper when he's ratty."

"The soonerfulness is terrific!" murmured Hurree Jamset Ram Singh. "And the esteemed and ludicrous Popper looked very excitful! He was in an honourable and august wax!"

And the juniors waited anxiously for news from the Head's study. All their sympathies were with Peter Todd, if he was indeed the culprit.

Sir Hilton Popper had a legal right to close his island to the public—at all events, nobody had gone to the trouble of a lawsuit on the subject. But landowners have duties as well as rights.

At the same time, most of the fellows had the impression that Peter Todd would succeed in extricating himself from the scrape somehow.

Peter Todd was a decidedly cool customer, and he had a way of looking after himself that was really wonderful.

Peter Todd's manner was meekness itself as he entered the Head's study. His cousin Alonzo looked as if butter wouldn't melt in his mouth; Peter looked as if ice-cream wouldn't melt there. The innocence of the dove was in Peter's countenance, and he was carefully concealing the wisdom of the serpent.

Dr. Locke was looking very worried. Sir Hilton Popper stood frowning, a picture of majestic wrath. He glared at the junior as the latter entered, and then some of his ferocity abated. It really did not seem possible to be very ferocious with that innocent and harmless-looking boy.

"You sent for me, sir?" said Peter Todd meekly.

Dr. Locke looked at him dubiously.

"You are—er—Peter Todd?" he asked.

"Yes, sir."

"Very good! Sir Hilton Popper complains to me that somebody—somebody belonging to Greyfriars—has trespassed

upon his island in the Sark, and lighted a fire there, to the damage of his property—"

"A tree cut down and burnt for fuel!" exclaimed Sir Hilton Popper, in sulphurous tones. "A large patch of grass burnt! Empty sardine-tins left lying about! And an insulting notice pinned upon a tree! Huh!"

"It appears that Sir Hilton's agent has received information that you are the perpetrator of this outrage, Todd!" said the Head severely.

"Yes, sir."

"You do not deny it?"

"No, sir," said Peter meekly.

The Head coughed. Sir Hilton Popper snorted.

"The boy confesses!" he exclaimed.

"Yes," said the Head. "The information Mr. Snooks has obtained appears to be correct. It was, then, you, Todd, who broke school bounds by going to the island in the river, and who did damage to Sir Hilton Popper's property by lighting a fire there?"

"Yes, sir."

"Why did you do it, Todd?"

"I went on a little picnic, sir."

"You knew that Sir Hilton Popper did not allow trespassers upon his property?"

"Yes, sir."

"And that the island was out of bounds," asked Dr. Locke sternly.

"Yes, sir."

"Todd! This—this conduct—"

"Pray excuse me, sir," said Todd meekly. "I knew that Greyfriars fellows had always camped on that island when they wanted to, and Sir Hilton suddenly stopped them from going there when he came back from abroad. All the fellows think they had a right to go there. There is supposed to be a right-of-way across the island."

"Nothing of the sort!" roared the baronet.

"You do not allow it, sir," said Peter meekly; "but that is because you are an unreasonable old gentleman, sir."

The baronet turned purple. Peter spoke so meekly and mildly that it was impossible to think that he intended to be impertinent. He seemed to be simply stating the facts as he saw them in the simplicity of his heart.

"We all know that you have made the island out of bounds, sir," resumed Peter, looking gently at the Head, "simply to avoid dispute with Sir Hilton Popper, and not because he is in the right. We feel that it is up to us, as Greyfriars chaps, not to let an unreasonable old gentleman like Sir Hilton bully us, sir."

"Todd!" gasped the Head. "You—you must not be impertinent to Sir Hilton Popper!"

"I'm sure I don't mean to be," said Todd, in surprise. "I'm sure any acquaintance of Sir Hilton Popper would admit that he is a very unreasonable old gentleman."

The baronet appeared to be about to choke.

"I am very, very sorry I broke bounds, sir," said Peter. "But I can't say I'm sorry I went on the island, because I am sure that Sir Hilton Popper has no right to keep me off it."

"Insolence!" roared Sir Hilton Popper. "Dr. Locke, there stands the young—young ruffian who has damaged my property. Unless that young rascal—that unmitigated young scoundrel—is properly punished, under my eyes, sir, I shall take the case before the magistrates. I will have my property respected, sir!"

"That is enough, Sir Hilton," said the Head coldly. "Todd has confessed to breaking bounds, and to committing

(Continued on page 16.)



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A SPLENDID STORY OF THE JUNIORS OF GREYFRIARS.

By FRANK RICHARDS.

GEORGE ALFRED GRUNDY TRIES HIS HAND AT RAISING A CRICKET ELEVEN AND COMES A FEARFUL CROPPER!



GRUNDY'S BID FOR FAME!

A Splendid Long Complete Tale of the Famous Chums of St. Jim's.



By MARTIN CLIFFORD

THE FIRST CHAPTER. Not Cricket!

HUMPH!" George Alfred Grundy of the Shell, with his study-mates, Wilkins and Gunn, were standing in front of the notice-board, and it was Grundy who gave vent to that expressive grunt.

"Got a cold, old man?" queried Wilkins anxiously.

Grundy made no reply, but snorted again. In fact, he had snorted continuously ever since he had first gazed at the notice-board.

From across the almost deserted quad could be heard the unmistakable click of willow against leather. It was a beautiful sunny May afternoon, and once again King Cricket held his sway, and the cricketing juniors of St. Jim's were putting in their Wednesday 'half' at the nets.

"Coming up to change, Grundy?" asked Gunn, "or are you going to stand staring at that board all day?"

Grundy snorted more violently than ever, and then growled:

"Look at that!"

"We've been looking about ten minutes," sighed Wilkins. "I almost know it off by heart."

"Come up and change into flannels, old boy, and we'll have some practice," said Gunn.

Grundy glared.

"Don't you chaps realise," he said, "that we're not playing in the junior practice match next Saturday?"

"What of it?" asked Gunn. "You don't expect to play cricket if you never put in any time—"

"You shut up, young Gunn. You always harp on the same string like a blessed parrot. Didn't I spend about half an hour yesterday explaining to Tom Merry that I'd better organise the practice game on Saturday?"

"Did you?" asked Wilkins innocently. "You know I did!" howled Grundy.

"What did he say?" asked Gunn.

Grundy sniffed. It was quite evident Tom Merry had not taken him at all seriously.

Grundy was under the impression—the other fellows thought it a perfectly absurd one—that he was a born cricketer, just as he fondly imagined he was a great exponent of all other sports.

In this it can hardly be said that Tom Merry, as captain and leader of the St. Jim's juniors, saw eye to eye with him.

In spite of repeated endeavours on George Alfred's part to get Tom Merry to leave the junior cricket in his capable hands, so far his talent had not been recognised in fact he was not even included in the teams for the practice match the following Saturday.

"You going to stand here and mope all day?" inquired Wilkins, who was fast getting fed up. "Because I'm not!" And he walked off in the direction of the Shell dormitory. Gunn, after a moment's hesitation, followed him.

"I say!" bawled Grundy after them, but his two henchmen seemed to be suddenly struck deaf, and George Alfred was left to waste his remarks on himself. He thrust his hands deep in his trousers-pockets and walked moodily away from the offending notice-board.

On the way upstairs he met Gunn and Wilkins, who had changed into flannels in record time, and were now carrying their bats under their arms.

"Buck up, Grundy, old scout, and come and have a knock. We'll see you down at the nets," called Wilkins, as they hurried off.

Grundy sniffed and glared after his departing followers. Gunn and Wilkins, he felt, although true pals to him, were scarcely the sort of followers a genius like himself should have. Somehow they never took him seriously enough, which, perhaps, was just as well. In this frame of mind he slowly changed into his flannels and then walked towards Little Side. He had with him a brand new bat, a perfect piece of wood.

As Wilkins had remarked to Gunn, it was a rotten shame to waste a bat like that on a chap like Grundy. George Alfred, however, hoped to do great things with it, and his step quickened as he drew near the playing field.

"Catch, Grundy!"

Tom Merry had sent down a loose ball, and the Kangaroo, opening his shoulders, had driven it right to the edge of the field, straight for Grundy.

Grundy stared round and dropped his bat. Then he ran forward for the catch, but, misjudging the flight of the ball entirely, that missile caught him full in the chest.

"Yaroooooh!" yelled Grundy, as he

sat down with some force. "Who did that?"

"Guilty, my lord!" said the grinning Kangaroo. "Why didn't you catch it?"

"Oh, he caught it right enough," said Monty Lowther. "Pitch our ball back, Grundy, and don't sit there looking like a statue."

George Alfred picked himself up and returned the ball with none too good a grace. He felt more injured at having muffed the catch than hurt by the bump.

"Care to try your arm, old son?" asked Tom Merry, as Grundy came up.

Grundy nodded, and clumsily caught the ball that was tossed to him.

"My hat! Get your distance, you chaps," advised Lowther. "Grundy's going to bowl!"

There was a general retreat as Grundy prepared to take a tremendous long run.

Kangaroo, at the wicket, began to look quite alarmed.

Grundy clutched the ball and commenced a series of weird antics, copied, as he fondly imagined, from one of the leading professionals of the day, and finally hurled the ball.

"Ow! Yow! Ow! Bai Jove!" screamed Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, hopping round on one leg and clapping the other.

Grundy stared dazedly at him. Gussy had been standing at the bowling stump of the pitch, two nets away.

"You dangerous lunatic!" shouted Jack Blake. "You might have killed our Gussy!"

"What do you mean?" demanded Grundy. "I haven't touched him, have I?"

"Touched him! Oh, no! Only thrown a cricket ball at him and hit him on the shin!"

Grundy looked astounded.

"My ball hit D'Arcy?" he asked. "But it couldn't have done. Let me have another shot!"

"No, you don't, my infant," said Blake promptly. "You might brain Herries or Digby next time—that is, if they have got any brains!"

Grundy seemed prepared to argue.

"The ball must have slipped," he said. "I'm a jolly good bowler really. At my other School, Redclyffe—"

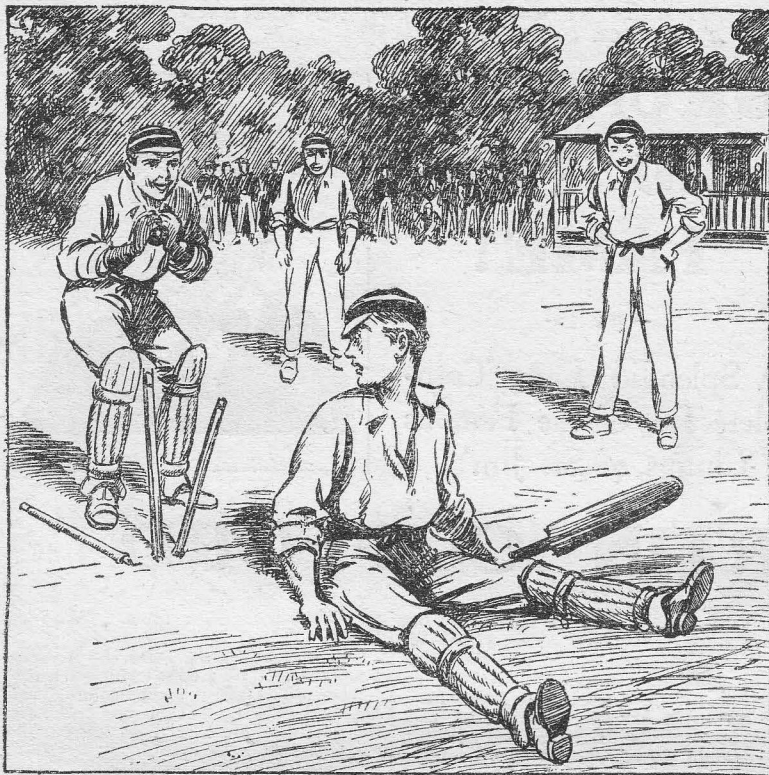
The assembled cricketers groaned in unison. If Grundy was allowed to start

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NEXT
TUESDAY!

"THE TRAP!"

A GRAND COMPLETE STORY OF ST. JIM'S.
By MARTIN CLIFFORD.



GRUNDY PLAYS CRICKET!—The force of the mighty stroke caused his bat to describe an arc, and Grundy, carried away by the momentum, collapsed on to his wicket. He sat up dazed amongst the scattered stumps. "How's that umpire?" "Out!" (See Chapter 1.)

the story of his exploits at his old school there would be little cricket for the rest of the afternoon.

It was Tom Merry who came to the rescue again.

"Go and have a knock at the wicket, Grundy," he said.

George Alfred accepted with alacrity and took up his stand at the crease. It was an extremely businesslike posture he took up, too. His splendid new bat was tilted at a rather impossible angle, and his legs reminded one of an ostrich. Nevertheless, upon his face was that do or die expression so well known to Gunn and Wilkins, who expected great happenings from their leader, but not in the way of cricket.

Tom Merry winked as he tossed a ball to Fatty Wynn, the champion New House bowler; and, strange to say, Wynn screwed his plump face into a wink by way of reply. Taking his usual short run, Fatty Wynn made as if to bowl the ball, but kept it in his hand.

Grundy brought down his bat, and made a fearful swipe at where he thought the ball should pitch, and, of course, hit nothing but air. The force of the mighty stroke caused his bat to describe an arc, and Grundy, carried away by the momentum, collapsed on to his wicket, and sat up dazedly amongst the scattered stumps.

"How's that, umpire?"

"Out!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The juniors saw something extremely funny in Grundy's great hit. Grundy, however, did not.

"Where did the ball go?" he asked breathlessly.

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NEXT
TUESDAY!

Fatty Wynn chuckled as he held up the object in question.

"Did you catch it?"

"Ha, ha, ha! No, I didn't, old scout!"

This was too much for the juniors; they simply roared with laughter.

"Look here, you grinning hyenas," roared Grundy, "are you going to give me another bowl, or do you want me to give you a thumping good hiding all round?"

The fellows went on chortling until Grundy could stand it no longer. With a roar he went for the laughing cricketers, who scattered before his approach.

"Yaroooh!" yelled Levison, as Grundy's great fist landed on his ear. "Pile in, you chaps!"

The juniors stopped grinning, seized the warlike Grundy, and with a thump sat him upon the turf.

By the time they had finished with him his thoughts were like the stumps he had sat on—somewhat scattered.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

Grundy's Great Idea!

"IT'S up to me!"

Wilkins and Gunn glanced up mechanically and groaned.

"It's up to me!" repeated Grundy firmly.

His study-mates merely shook their heads pityingly. Their leader was ap-

parently going through another of those subtle brain-waves to which he was subject. From long experience they had found it was best to let him run on.

"Look here," said Grundy, "our junior cricket's no good!"

"Rats!" said Wilkins promptly.

"What?"

"Rats!" said Gunn, with emphasis.

Grundy commenced to push back his cuffs.

"I'm afraid I shall have to bring you to your senses!" he said.

Wilkins and Gunn looked at each other dubiously. They were certainly not cowards, but even collectively they were hardly a match for the warlike Grundy, and there was no fun in getting hurt for nothing.

"Ahem!" began Wilkins. "On second thoughts, perhaps you're right, Grundy, old top!"

"Perhaps!"

"Oh, let him have it his own sweet way, Wilkins!" broke in Gunn. "You're quite right, as usual, old man."

Grundy looked doubtfully at his fellows, and then his countenance cleared.

"Yes!" he said. "I've been thinking that—"

Gunn opened his mouth to make a humorous remark, but shut it again on receiving a warning glance from Wilkins.

"That practice match they're having on Saturday," their leader went on. "My idea is that we ought to get up a team to scrag the junior eleven ourselves."

"Where are you going to get them from, old bean?" asked Wilkins.

"Oh, the fellows will join all right!" said the great George Alfred confidently. "Of course, I shall be the backbone of the team."

"My bat!" groaned Gunn.

Grundy stared ferociously at his inter-rupter.

"Got any more of your feeble interruptions to make?" he demanded. "If not, we'll see about getting the team out."

Gunn groaned again.

"I'd better buttonhole the fellows one by one," mused Grundy, as if unconscious that he was not getting any support from his chums.

"They might go for you if you ask them in lots of more than one at a time," remarked Wilkins sarcastically.

Grundy looked at Wilkins in a pitying way, and then walked out of the study, with a resolute expression on his heavy face.

Cardew was the first victim to be buttonholed.

Cardew smothered a yawn.

"I'm getting up an eleven which will put the kybosh on Tom Merry's team. Going to join?"

Cardew shook his head.

"No, I'm not!" he said decisively.

"Why not?" demanded Grundy warmly.

"Too much fog," drawled Cardew lazily. "I'll come and watch, if you like. It should be rather amusin', I think."

Grundy snorted, and continued his recruiting tour. Strange to say, his efforts met with little success. Nobody seemed at all anxious to assist the great George Alfred "put the kybosh" on Tom Merry & Co. Some, in fact, were distinctly rude.


Grundy even endeavoured to annex some of the regular members of the junior eleven, but they seemed quite satisfied with things as they stood, and

(Continued on page 17.)

ANSWERS
EVERY MONDAY...PRICE 2:

"THE TRAP!"


A GRAND COMPLETE STORY OF ST. JIM'S.
By MARTIN CLIFFORD.



BILLY BUNTER'S WEEKLY

St. Jim's
Greyfriars
Rookwood

Edited by W. G. BUNTER of Greyfriars, assisted by SAMMY BUNTER of Greyfriars, BAGGY TRIMBLE and FATTY WYNN of St. Jim's, and TUBBY MUFFIN of Rookwood.



IN YOUR EDITOR'S DEN.

By BILLY BUNTER.

My Dear Readers,—I was aware that the town of Nottingham was famous for its lace, and also for its Goose Fair; but I was not aware, until recently, that anybody in Nottingham possessed an appetite greater than my own!

This week, however, I have received a letter from a reader signing himself "Trencherman." This reader encloses his waste mezzurements, which are enormous, and he informs me that he is fifteen years of age, and that his appetite is ineggsaustible. "I never finish a meal," he writes, "without wanting to start on the next."

Well, I can only hope that "Trencherman's" parents are wealthy, and that there aren't many more like him at home! Fancy a family of fourteen, all possessing Bunterian appetites!

My chum goes on to say that he considers that the descriptions of my eating eggsploits are eggsgenerated. "Supposing you come up to Nottingham, Billy," he says, "and compete against me in an eating contest? No money involved, just a friendly affair. If you come up, I'll guarantee to tuck away more grub than you at one sitting. We will equally share the cost of food, if you are agreeable."

I am quite agreeable, my chum—quite! But, unfortunately, the Head isn't! When I asked him if I could take a week-end off to go up to Nottingham, he was quite rood!

"Why do you wish to go to Nottingham, Bunter?" he demanded.

"To see the Goose Fair, sir!" I replied.

"Why, you stupid boy, the Goose Fair is not in progress!"

"Ahem! What I meant to say was, I want to see Notts play Yorkshire at cricket, sir!"

"Worse and worse!" said the Head. "The county cricket matches have not yet commenced! I shall cane you severely, Bunter, for attempting to deceive me!"

He did, too, the tyrant! He gave me such a lamming that I feel soar, even now."

Your Editor.

ODE TO AN EXPIRING BLACKBEETLE!

By ALONZO TODD.

Beetle, wriggling on your back
Just outside my study door,
Do you find the outlook black?
Are you feeling bruised and sore?
Can I give first aid or massage
To revive you once again,
While you're prostrate in the passage,
Racked with pain?

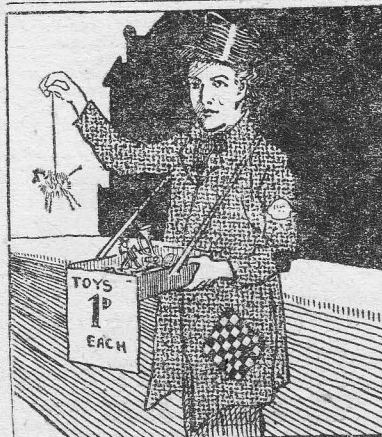
Beetle, as you lay and kick,
Tell me how this came about!
Did some fellow heave a brick
As you crawled, and knock you out?
Did the heavy boot of Bunter
Trample on you unawares?
Were you hurled by some mad stunter
Down the stairs?

Beetle, you are sinking fast.
See, your kicks are growing faint!
Helpless, here I stand aghast,
Exercising my restraint.
Barely can I keep from sobbin'
As your helpless plight I view.
Talk about "Who killed Cock Robin"—
Who killed YOU?

Beetle, you no longer kick,
Limp and lifeless here you lie.
If I knew who threw that brick
I should smite him in the eye!
If I knew the callous fellow
He would tremble at the knees,
And I'd surely make him bellow:
"Mercy, please!"

PEEPS INTO THE FUTURE

By George Kerr.



PERCY MELLISH

POPULAR PERSONALITIES!

No. 3.

ARTHUR AUGTUSUS D'ARCY

An elegant awistocwat am I,
With dazzling socks and flaming tie,
The fellahs wemark, as they pass me by,
That I'm vevy spwuce and classy.
A stately swell from top to toe;
I'm nevah "infwa dig," you know.
My name's not vulgar "Tom" or "Joe";
It's Arthur Augustus D'Arcy!

There, deah boys! Now you know all about me. Those of you who wead the "Gem" will have known all about me ages ago. I'm a chap with a stwikin' personality, you know. (Aubwey Waekie told me that when I punched his nose!) I am also a fellah of tact an' judgment. I nevah say a thing out of place, an' my judgment is nevah at fault.

Some howwid beasts at St. Jim's call me "Fashion Plate." They declare that I dote too much on dwess. Well, I always believe in lookin' smart an' elegant. You nevah see an awistocwat wearin' corduwoytwousahs an' a battahed bowlah hat!

A fellah should always take a pwide in his appeawance. The appawful oft pwo-claims the man, Shakespeare said, an' it oft pwo-claims the schoolboy, too. If you see a fellah slouchin' about indifferently dwessed, you know he can't be much class. A chap should always wear good togs, an' what's more, he should study the art of wearin' them cowwectly.

I possess sewveral scores of toppahs, a dozen best suits, a dozen second-best suits, an' a dozen suits for everyday wear. Then there are heaps of fancy waistcoats an' spats, an' neckties an' socks, an' so forth; an', as I shall make it my duty to give you the history of each garment, it will naturally occupy a considerable time.

I don't want you to think, deah boys, that I worship dwess to the exclusion of ewewy-thing else. I simply wevd in sport, whethah it's football or cwicket, or merely a game of chess in the juniah Common-woom. An' I'm just as game for a "wag" or a jape as Tom Mewwy an' the othahs.

I nevah get much of a show in "Billy Bunter's Weekly." An' now that I've got the chance, let me again impwess my wonderful personality upon your minds as follows:

An elegant awistocwat am I,
Though Blake declares I am a guy,
An' Lowthah mimics me on the sly,
Two howwid beasts they are—see?
Of skill and tact I'm nevah short;
I shine at lessons an' at sport,
An' boys an' gals of ewevy sort
Will bow the knee to D'Arcy!

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I AM out of luck and out of pocket. Although I'm not a camel, I've got the hump—and I've got it badly!

For weeks and weeks, dear readers, I have been working on an extra-special, gilt-edged, eighteen-carrot story—a pirate story, entitled "Sons of the Spanish Mane!" I was rather short of pocket-muney, and I hoped that Billy Bunter would accept my story for his "Weekly," pay me well for it, and thus put my egg-schecker on a sound footing once more.

When the manuscript was finished, after much burning of midnight oil, I despatched it to Billy Bunter, with the following letter:

"My dear Billy,—I send you hearwith a grand pirate story, which will make the fame of your 'Weekly' ring through the land!"

"I think you will agree, on reading my story, that it's the finest peace of fickschum that has come your way for many a long day. I hope you will be able to publish it at once, and pay me handsomely for same.

"Yours hopefully,

"TUBBY MUFFIN."

"P.S.—If you could send me a check by return, I should be grateful. My creditors are pressing me for payment."

Well, I certainly received a check—but not the sort of check I wanted! It was, in fact, a very rood check.

Two days later I had a letter from Billy Bunter. Either by accident or design, he hadn't put a stamp on it, so it cost me fourpence!

The letter ran as follows:

"My dear Tubby,—I am sorry to be kempelled to return your story. It will be quite sootable for my 'Weekly' if you will make a few alterations.

"In the first place, there are no less than seventy-seven murders in your story, and I want to keep my paper as free from crime as possible. So will you kindly reduce the number of murders to six?

Secondly, the masters here are very straight-laced and narrow-minded, and they don't like me to introduce cutlasses, and swords, and deadly duels into my 'Weekly.' So will you please re-write the chapter entitled, 'A Duel to the Death,' and let the pirates lay into each other with cricket-stumps. That will be ever so much nicer, and it won't give offence.

"In another chapter you describe a shipwreck. I want you to keep off shipwrecks, because they only remind me of the condition I am in at present, namely, 'on the rocks.'

"One other point. Your story as it stands is long enuff to fill half a dozen issues of my 'Weekly.' I want you to cut it down and kondense it, so that it can be skweezed into a single kolum.

"When you have done all this I shall be pleased to forward you stamps to the value of fourpence, in payment of your story.

"Yours sincerely,

"BILLY BUNTER."

As you may imagine, dear readers, I was awfully wild. I paced up and down in my study like a savage beast.

It was impossible for me to make the alterations Bunter had suggested. Seventy-seven murders, and I was ordered to cut

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out the whole jolly lot! Why, murders are the very essence—the very life-blood, so to speak—of a pirate story! A pirate story without murders is like a house without windows.

Then, again, how could I describe a fierce duel on the quarter-deck, fought with cricket-stumps? It simply isn't done. It would be making a mockery of the whole thing. My story would be a hollow sham—a flimsy pretence.

As for the shipwreck chapter, I couldn't possibly cut it out. That particular chapter took up half the story, and it was the finest peace of descriptive writing I've ever done. Cut it out, indeed! Why, I'd as soon cut out my own tung!

But the croolest cut of all was Bunter's offer to pay me fourpence.

When you come to consider that I had already paid fourpence on his surcharged letter, it was simply adding insult to injury, to offer me that sum in payment of my pirate story.

I felt so mad that I sat down and wrote to Bunter, telling him eggsactly what I thought of him. And I didn't mezzure my words!

"Dear Bunter,—You are a beest, and I kinsider you are treating me very shabbily. My pirate story is a jolly good one, and it is only professional jellussy that has prompted you to reject it.

"Unless you axcept my story as it stands, without any alteration, I shall jolly well go on strike! Yah!

"TUBBY MUFFIN."

I hoped my letter would bring Bunter to his senses. But it didn't. He replied to it as follows:

"Dear Muffin,—You have introduced a mutiny into your pirate story, but you're not going to do it in real life.

"If you dare to carry out your threat of going on strike, I shall dismiss you for ever from my employ. No bunkum. I mean every word I write!

"As for your pirate story, you can tear it up and feed it to your study fire!

"W. G. BUNTER."

I have carried out Bunter's suggestion. My manuscript has been fed to the flames, and Jimmy Silver & Co. were present at the cremation.

Now you can understand, dear readers, why I am out of luck and out of pocket.

Truely, the eggsistence of a famous author is anything but a bed of roses!

BUMPER NUMBER

OF

STORIES

AND

ARTICLES

IN NEXT

WEEK'S ISSUE.

W.G.B.

THE GREAT STORM AT ROOKWOOD!

By AN OLD BOY.

NEVER shall I forget the great storm of 1895.

I was at Rookwood at the time; captain of the Classical Fourth. (There was no Modern Side in those days.)

The storm broke out one April afternoon, and it was like a whole crowd of furies let loose at the same instant.

The annual boatrice between Rookwood and Greyfriars was in progress. Both boats became waterlogged, and sank, and the crews struggled to the bank with difficulty.

Joive, it was a terrible storm that raged—a veritable tornado! I remember we could hardly keep our feet as we battled our way back to Rookwood.

Although it was quite early in the afternoon, a pail of darkness settled over the countryside. And the wind howled and roared, and the great trees swayed and groaned, and ever and anon a peal of thunder awakened the echoes.

It was positively dangerous to be out in such a storm, for more than one tree was sent hurtling down across the roadway. One of my pals, Jimmy Barlow, had a jolly narrow escape. A tree crashed down across the very spot where he had passed a few seconds previously.

So fierce was the gale that it would have been sheer madness to have attempted to ride a bicycle. Cycle and rider would have been sent spinning.

On reaching Rookwood, we found that considerable damage had been done. And the havoc was still in progress.

Tiles, and fragments of glass, came clattering down on to the flagstones of the quadrangle.

Nobody was safe. The air seemed to be thick with flying missiles. I recollect that I found my study window smashed to fragments.

The Head's garden gate had been swept off its hinges, and carried bodily for a distance of a dozen yards. And the flagstaff on the school tower was swaying ominously. It was a jolly stout pole, and it had weathered the storms of many seasons; but it gave up the ghost that afternoon. When the tempest was at its height, it broke in two, and everybody scurried into safety as it came crashing down. Fortunately, no one was struck.

Not one of us slept a wink that night. Very few of us undressed. For hour after hour we remained sitting on our beds, listening to the wind which shrieked round the roofs and turrets.

And from time to time we heard terrific crashes, while the building was shaken to its foundations.

It was not until dawn that the tempest abated. And we were not surprised to read in the newspapers, some hours later, of terrible calamities on land and sea—of wrecked houses and wrecked vessels, of loss of life and of terrible devastation caused by the storm.

We found all sorts of debris scattered about the quad next morning, and the damage was estimated at several hundreds of pounds.

Happily, however, there were no casualties at the school; though some of us could only have escaped by a miracle.

[Supplement II.]

**MUSICAL
CONUNDRUMS!**

By **KIT ERROLL.**

(Fourth-Form, St. Jim's.)

Dodd: "I say, Jimmy, have you ever seen a real, live cake walk?"

Silver: "No; but I've often heard the 'Dead March'!"

* * *

What is the difference between Hanson of the Fifth and Tubby Muffin?

One blows his own trumpet, the other borrows somebody else's!

* * *

What did Mornington sing on breaking-up day, when he could find nothing to tie round his box?

"The Lost Cord!"

* * *

What was the punishment administered to Peele of the Fourth for warbling "Two Eyes of Grey"?

Two eyes of black!

* * *

What would be an appropriate song for that notorious Nosey Parker, Tubby Muffin?

"The Noses Round the Door!"

* * *

What is the difference between an editor and the audience that listens to an amateur singer?

One voices his "regrets," and the other regrets his voice.

* * *

When Rookwood played footer against St. Mary's College, what song could be heard?

"The Yells of St. Mary's!"

* * *

What is the difference between a successful Rugger player and a fellow learning to play the piano?

The former scores a try, the latter tries a "score."

* * *

Why should a really great musician be arrested for kidnapping?

Because he "carries his audience away!"

* * *

What is the appropriate song to sing when Lovell major is seen chasing Lovell minor?

"The Galloping Major!"

* * *

When the aforementioned Lovell minor feels homesick, what do his schoolfellows play on their mouth-organs?

"The Minor's Dream of Home!"

Supplement III.]



By **RALPH RECKNESS CARDEW.**

(Fourth Form, St. Jim's.)

◆◆◆◆

"YOUR appearance, Trimble," said Mr. Railton, bearing down upon Baggy in the passage, "is revolting! You resemble a Bolshevik! When did you last have your hair cut?" "Somewhere about Christmas, sir," said Baggy.

"Bless my soul! If you go on like this, you will have locks of hair straggling over your shoulders! You will proceed to Wayland immediately, Trimble, and get your hair cut."

The housemaster passed on, and Baggy Trimble stared ruefully after him.

"All very well for old Railton to talk like that," he muttered, "but I'm broke! And I don't suppose I should find a barber who'd cut my hair for six."

Baggy went along to Study No. 6 in the Fourth Form passage.

Jack Blake & Co. were at tea. They surveyed the fat figure in the doorway with hostile glares.

"Buzz off, Baggy!" growled Herries. "There's no grub going spare."

"Oh, really, Herries! I don't want any grub—"

"W-w-what?" gasped Blake faintly. "Don't tell us you're off your feed!"

"I say, you fellows, I want to borrow a tanner—"

The expressions of the juniors became as frozen as icebergs.

"Travel!" snapped Digby. "You've come to the wrong shop."

"I—I want the money urgently, you know," said Baggy. "I shan't blue it at the tuckshop. I want to get my hair cut."

"Oh!"

"Railton's ordered me to go and get my mop shorn; and if I don't get it done at once, it will mean a stiff impot—p'raps a licking!"

"In that case, deah boy," said the good-natured Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, "I'll advance you the necessary money."

"Thanks awfully, Gussy!"

Arthur Augustus tossed a sixpenny piece to the fat junior, who promptly decamped, fearful lest Gussy should change his mind, and repent him of his philanthropy.

Baggy Trimble borrowed Dick Julian's bike—without permission, of course—and rode over to Wayland.

Half-way along the High Street a barber's pole arrested his attention.

Baggy dismounted, left Julian's bicycle standing insecurely against the kerb, and rolled into the barber's saloon.

Trade was evidently far from brisk, for the barber seemed overjoyed on catching sight of a customer.

"This way, sir," he said, adjusting a chair. "What can I do for you, please?"

"Hair cut," said Baggy briefly. "Very good, sir."

Baggy Trimble plumped himself into the chair, which groaned beneath his weight. And the barber made short work of his flowing locks.

"Have I taken enough off, sir?" he inquired.

"Yes, rather! I feel nearly bald!" answered Baggy.

"Would you care for a shave, sir?"

"Don't be a chump! I haven't grown any fluff yet, and I'm, not likely to for some years."

"You'd like a shampoo, of course?" "I'd like one, certainly," said Baggy, "but—"

He was going to add that he hadn't enough money. But the business-like barber gave him no chance to explain. Already he

was pouring an evil-smelling concoction over Baggy's few remaining hairs. He rubbed the stuff in until a thick, frothy lather formed, then he seized Baggy Trimble by the scruff of the neck and ducked his head in a bowl of water.

Baggy gurgled and spluttered wildly. He hated water at all times.

"Gug-gug-gug!" gasped Baggy. "I didn't want a wet shampoo!"

"It'll do you much more good than a dry one," said the barber, jerking Baggy back into the chair and towelling him vigorously.

"Now, would you like a nice face-massage?" "Yes; but—"

"Right you are, sir!" said the barber cheerfully.

The face-massage was a lengthy operation. Whilst it was in progress, Baggy Trimble happened to glance at the price-list which was displayed in the saloon. He saw that face-massage was half-a-crown, and he groaned.

"Am I hurting you, sir?" inquired the barber solicitously.

"Nunno! Not at all!" gasped Baggy.

"You'll be real handsome by the time I've finished with you," the barber went on.

"Surprising what a difference a face-massage makes to a person's appearance. Even my ugliest customers—the speaker looked meaningfully at Baggy—"become almost good-looking!"

The face-massage having been completed, Baggy Trimble rose from the chair.

"You'd better take a bottle of Sprouter's Hair Cream with you, sir," advised the barber. "Your hair's of the dry variety. It needs plenty of grease."

"Thanks," said Baggy. "I should like some of the cream, but—"

The barber thrust a large bottle into Baggy's hand.

"Now, let me see," he murmured. "That will be six-and-six altogether."

Baggy fumbled in his pocket and produced his sixpence. He handed it to the barber.

"Thank you, sir," said that worthy. "This is a tip, I take it? Now what about the six-and-six?"

Baggy stared helplessly at the barber.

"I—I'm broke!" he stammered. "What?"

The barber's suave, polite manner departed in an instant. He became like a raging lion.

"You don't leave this establishment," he said wrathfully, "until I've been paid in full!"

Fortunately for Baggy Trimble, Tom Merry & Co. strolled into the saloon at that moment.

"Hallo, Baggy! What's the matter with you?" asked Tom Merry, as he caught sight of Baggy's doleful expression and the barber's warlike looks. "Been trying to get something out of tick?"

"No, I haven't! I say, you fellows, will you lend me six shillings?" asked Baggy Trimble. Then he proceeded to explain the whole situation to the Terrible Three.

When they discovered the wretched plight their schoolfellow was in, they had a whip-round in order to extricate him.

But if the Terrible Three had not happened to walk in at that moment—well, Baggy Trimble shudders to think of the probable consequences!

**FIVE POUNDS
REWARD!**

(Continued from page 10.)

the damage on the island. He will be flogged for doing so. As for the damage, it shall be paid for."

"I did not come here for money!" snorted Sir Hilton Popper. "The damage shall not be paid for. That is nothing. I came here to see the author of this outrage, sir, properly punished, sir. It is the principle of the thing I am thinking of, not a couple of pounds for damage to my grass, sir!"

"Very well. You have nothing to say in your defence, Todd?"

"No, sir. If Sir Hilton wishes me to be flogged—"

"I insist upon it!" roared Sir Hilton.

"Pardon me!" said the Head icily. "You are allowed to insist upon nothing here, Sir Hilton. I have already said that Todd would be flogged. If it is any pleasure to you to witness it, you may stay and see the infliction."

"I shall certainly do so."

"Very well!"

The Head rang for Trotter, and sent him for Gosling, the porter. Gosling came into the study in a few minutes. The doctor rose to his feet.

"Gosling, you will kindly hoist Master Todd upon your shoulders for flogging."

"Yes, sir," said Gosling, not looking at all displeased. In Gosling's opinion the more all boys were thrashed the better it was for them, and everybody else.

Peter Todd seemed quite calm and cheerful. Sir Hilton Popper looked on with a grim and frowning brow while Peter was hoisted upon Gosling's broad back, and the Head commenced operations with the birch.

**THE FIFTH CHAPTER.
Nothing Like Leather!**

OUTSIDE the study quite a crowd of fellows were gathered, excitedly whispering. The juniors had seen Gosling enter the study, and they knew what that meant.

Todd was to be flogged!

The juniors looked very grim. Flogging was a severe punishment. True, the old-fashioned variety of flogging on the bare back had long ago been abolished at Greyfriars—many years before the oldest fellow in the school had come there. But a flogging was a flogging, whether upon the bare skin or with garments interposing.

"Poor old Todd!"

"Poor old Peter!"

"It's rotten!"

"Sure, it's bastely intirely!"

"I don't quite see how they've proved it against him," said Bob Cherry, puzzled. "There can't have been any evidence."

"I fancy he's owned up," said Harry Wharton.

"My hat! He must be an ass."

"Might have had his reasons," said Wharton, laughing. The Co. looked at their leader very curiously.

"Dash it all, you don't seem very sympathetic!" said Johnny Bull. "Peter Todd is a cheeky boulder, calling his study top study in the Remove. But when—"

"But I'm sorry for him!" said Nugent. Wharton laughed again.

"Nothing to feel sorry about," he said. "I've got a strong suspicion that Peter

won't be very much hurt. He's a deep card."

"Hark!" exclaimed Bolsover major. "That sounds as if he's being hurt."

It was a wild yell from the study. The birch had evidently descended upon Peter Todd, and he had let out a yell that rang through the School House. The juniors started, and shivered. Another and another yell followed.

"My hat!" muttered Tom Brown. "I don't like hearing that. I'm off!"

"It's beastly!"

"The beastfulness is terrific!"

Xell, yell, yell from the study.

"Poor old Todd!"

"My dear fellows!" Alonzo Todd came hurriedly down the passage. "Is my cousin Peter here? Dear me! What is that dreadful sound? Is it possible—my dear cousin—oh dear! What would my Uncle Benjamin say!"

Alonzo ran towards the Head's door. Two or three juniors caught hold of him and stopped him in time.

"Pray let me go, my dear Wharton. I—"

"What are you going to do?" demanded Harry.

"I am going to remonstrate with the Head. My Uncle Benjamin says that flogging is brutal. I am going to tell the Head—"

"You're jolly well not!" said Wharton. "You'll get flogged, too, you duffer, if you cheek the Head in his own study—"

"The flogfulness would be terrific, my worthy and ludicrous Alonzo!"

"My dear Wharton—"

"You stay where you are," said Harry Wharton, keeping a tight grip upon the arm of the Duffer of Greyfriars. "Peter doesn't want you to be licked as well. And you're not so prepared for it as he is!"

"Prepared for it!" said Nugent in wonder. "Do you mean Peter's got some dodge!"

Wharton laughed.

"I've got an idea so! Wait till he comes out!"

"But—but those howls—"

"Spoof, I fancy!"

"Oh, my hat!"

Yell, yell, yell!

The cries from the study were harrowing to listen to. And the fellows, while their feelings were harried, were surprised, too. Peter Todd was as hard as nails, and was the kind of fellow to take his cruel calmly and grimly, without a cry. But he was roaring now as loudly as Bunter or Snoop would have roared.

It was painful to the kind old Head to hear him. But Dr. Locke had his duty to do, and his hand did not falter. Sir Hilton Popper stood with his legs wide apart, and his hands deep in the pockets of his riding-breeches, looking on with a grim brow at the punishment of the junior. Sir Hilton would willingly have lent the aid of his riding-whip.

Twenty strokes were well laid on, and then Gosling was ordered to lower the junior to the floor. The Head laid down the birch.

"You may go, Todd!" he said gently.

"T-t-thank you, sir!" gasped Peter. And he staggered from the study.

Gosling followed him. The Head turned to Sir Hilton Popper.

"I trust you are satisfied?" he said tartly.

"I am satisfied," said Sir Hilton grimly. "I should have recommended twice as many strokes, but, upon the whole, I am satisfied. I wish you good-evening!"

And Sir Hilton took his leave.

As he left, the Greyfriars juniors gave him a deep, deep groan, and Sir Hilton gave them a fierce glare in return as he strode down to the gates.

"Poor old Todd!" said Russell.

"Let's go and see him!"

Peter Todd had gone up to the Remove dormitory. He had gone up with staggering steps, groaning at every step, as if almost overcome. The juniors crowded into the dormitory, expecting to find him in a state of collapse.

But they didn't!

Peter Todd was removing his jacket and waistcoat, and his face was quite cheerful and bright. He seemed to have recovered suddenly from his agony. He nodded to the juniors, and grinned at them as they came in. They stared at him blankly.

"Got over it already?" roared Bolsover major.

"Got over what?" asked Peter.

"The flogging."

"Oh, that! My dear chap, there was nothing to get over!" said Peter airily.

"Wha-a-at!"

Peter went on removing his garments. He drew out from the interior of them a large sheet of thick leather. The juniors gazed at it almost in stupefaction. They began to understand now. Peter Todd had indeed been prepared for the flogging. He had worn that thickness of leather under his garments where the blows fell, and it was doubtful if he had felt the slightest pain through that defence.

"M-m-my only hat!" gasped Nugent.

"You awful spoofer!"

"Oh crumbs!"

"Begad!"

"You—you had that on?" exclaimed Ogilvy.

Peter chuckled.

"What-ho! I got it specially for the flogging. That's the best of the modern system of flogging. You couldn't wear a protection like this in the old days, when you had to strip."

"Great Scott!"

"Then you weren't hurt?" yelled Bulstrode.

"Not a bit."

"Then what were you howling for?"

"Yes, Todd! What were you making that frightful row for if you weren't hurt?"

Todd smiled compassionately.

"My dear chaps, you are obtuse! If I had taken the flogging without seeming to be hurt, don't you think the Head would have smelled a rat?"

"Oh!"

"I was bound to keep up appearances. Besides, why shouldn't I bestow a little harmless pleasure on a kind and tender-hearted old gentleman like Popper? He was enjoying the show. It was giddy music to him."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"There's nothing like leather!" said Peter. "That's an old saying, and it's a jolly true one. Nothing like leather!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You'd better keep this awfully dark!" gasped Nugent. "You terrific spoofer! Blessed if I'd ever have thought of such a thing! And the way you roared—"

"Yes," said Peter, with satisfaction. "I think it was rather artistic. And it was so nice, for a boy like me, to send Popper away feeling happy!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

And Peter Todd redonned his clothes in merry mood, putting away that leather defence and locking it up very carefully. As he remarked, it might be useful on some other occasion in the future. There was no telling what punishments might be handed out even to a good boy.

THE END.

(A splendid long complete story of Harry Wharton & Co., entitled "Loder Pays the Bill" by Frank Richards, in next week's issue of the POPULAR. Don't miss it!)

GRUNDY'S BID FOR FAME!

(Continued from page 12.)

not at all willing to exchange Tom Merry for Grundy as their leader.

Gore met Grundy's cool request that he should join his select band with distinct antipathy, and Grundy left Study No. 9 nursing a severely swollen eye. He gleaned some satisfaction, however, from the fact that Gore was also bathing a nice fat ear.

Talbot roared at Grundy's question. It was evident he would receive no support from that quarter. Blake & Co. heartily agreed with him when he remarked that it was time St. Jim's took to itself a new junior cricket captain, but when George Alfred modestly suggested himself for the office, they all four fell upon him and deposited him, none too gently, on the linoleum of the Fourth Form passage.

At last Grundy was reduced, very reluctantly to apply to the lesser lights of the Lower School to make up his team. He was very nearly in despair as he realised the poor prospects of getting a respectable team together.

The recognised cricketers amongst the St. Jim's juniors were not prepared to serve under his banner. Those that remained were, for the most part, slackers and hopeless. It was not like Grundy, however, to swerve from a set purpose, so he resolved to tackle even those, and by his gentle, persuasive methods coax them into something approaching an eleven.

After all, thought the great George Alfred, he was actually a team in himself, but it would be as well to have the correct number to beat Tom Merry's team.

He made tracks for Study No. 7, and his face darkened as he entered. The study was full of smoke, and the two blades, Croke and Racke, jumped hastily to their feet. It was easy to see what their occupation had been, but Grundy started immediately on his subject.

"Look here!" he began. "I am getting up a cricket eleven which will lick the junior team to a frazzle."

Croke and Racke stared in amazement; and Grundy went on.

"None of the decent fellows seem anxious to join, so I've had to descend to you rotters."

"Thank you for nothing!" snarled Croke.

Grundy looked grim.

"You'd better join," he advised, "or there'll be fur flying around."

Croke was about to make an angry reply when Racke broke in.

"Hold on," he said. "Did you say you were going to do Tom Merry down? If you are, you can count me in."

Croke stared at his fellow-blade. He knew how deep was Aubrey Racke's hatred for Tom Merry, but he hardly thought that the slacker would go to such trouble to gratify it. As he caught Racke's eye, he growled:

"Count me in, too!"

Grundy continued his recruiting, and presently, consulting his list, he found he had nine enrolled. Himself, Wilkins, and Gunn, Racke, Croke, Mellish, Clampe, Lucas, and Serope.

The last two places caused him more

worry. Herbert Skimpole, the genius of the Shell, who knew more about "isms" than he ever would about cricket, was asked to join, and he agreed somewhat doubtfully.

The only other junior that Grundy could think of now was Baggy Trimble, who, after a visit to the tuckshop with him, graciously consented to assist the famous team.

George Alfred Grundy had succeeded in raising an eleven, and the success was assured—or so Grundy thought.

THE THIRD CHAPTER. The Challenge is Accepted.

"HALLO!"

Tom Merry advanced towards the table in the end study, with a puzzled expression on his usually sunny face. On the table was a note addressed to him.

"Love-letter, Tommy?" asked the irrepressible Monty Lowther, as the note was picked up.

Manners grinned.

"My hat!" gasped Tom Merry, as the full meaning of the missive struck him. "Just look at this!"

Manners took the note, and as he read it burst into an uncontrollable chortle. Lowther, who had read it over Manners' shoulder, danced a waltz-dance with delight.

"What shall we do without our Grundy?" he asked. "He's too funny to live long!"

Tom Merry was hardly as much amused as the other two. The missive contained nothing less than a challenge from the great George Alfred to the junior cricket eleven. A clumsy, ill-spelt challenge it was, too. Grundy never was a great hand at spelling.

"But I can't accept this, Monty, you ass," began Tom Merry doubtfully. "It would be the joke of the school!"

Lowther stopped laughing suddenly.

"Of course it would," he said. "That's what we want. Let Grundy amuse the school again. It's a long time since we had anything half so funny. What do you say, Manners?"

Manners shrugged his shoulders.

"Do him good to be taken down a peg or two," he said. "Accept it by all means, Tommy!"

"All right!" he agreed. "That's settled then. Shall we bat and bowl left-handed?"

"I wonder who he's got in his precious team?" said Manners.

"Goodness knows!" said Tom Merry. "I expect he's dug up a few fellows from somewhere."

Monty Lowther and Manners were almost hugging each other with glee at the glorious prospect. Grundy's team against the junior XI! It was almost too funny to be true. Tom Merry, however, wondered what the rest of the team would say when they knew he had accepted the challenge.

Suddenly the door of Study No. 3 was flung open, and the burly form of George Alfred Grundy appeared in the doorway.

"You got my note?" he demanded.

Tom Merry nodded.

"Yes!" he agreed. "Were you serious?"

"Course I was serious!" replied Grundy indignantly. "It's about time you kids saw somebody else who could play cricket!"

Tom Merry laughed.

"You're a bigger ass than I thought you were, Grundy!" Grundy snorted.

"Look here!" said the great man. "You aren't the only pebbles on the

beach. My team will be at the nets in half an hour, and you'll be able to learn something about cricket if you turn up."

Tom Merry winked at the shrieking Manners and Lowther.

"Right-ho!" he said gravely. "We'll be there."

Grundy eyed the Terrible Three suspiciously, and then turned on his heel and left the study.

Half an hour later he had changed into flannels, and went down to the nets with Wilkins and Gunn. Apparently these three were the only ones who needed practice, for there was no sign of any other member of Grundy's team. Grundy waited ten minutes for the missing members, and then strode away with a black brow to find them.

Skimpole he found deeply immersed in a new volume by the famous Professor Balmcrumpet, and it was only upon threatening physical violence that his captain persuaded him to turn out.

Baggy Trimble he found in the passage. Baggy was arrayed as gorgeously as the lilies. His flannels—or rather Arthur Augustus D'Arcy's, for they were his—fitted his plump form like a glove. A positively magnificent scarf of many colours graced his tub-like waist, and a blazer of many hues, like Joseph's coat of old, completed the picture.

"Come along, Trimble!" growled Grundy. "We've been waiting for you."

"Oh, really, Grundy," said Baggy, with his most lordly air. "I had some difficulty in finding my flannels."

Grundy sniffed.

"Appears to me you've found somebody else's," he said bluntly, and passed on.

The rest of his famous team were mostly blades of the first water. Net practice to them was quite unnecessary. Grundy, however, thought differently, and after a little "gentle" argument, managed to convert them to his way of thinking.

In about an hour most of the team had turned up, much to the delight of the spectators.

Skimpole, their captain decided, should take first knock, and he took his stand at the wicket with some degree of nervousness.

"Dear me!" he exclaimed, mildly blinking through his spectacles. "Do I gather that one of you is about to throw that leather sphere at me?"

"You do!" replied Grundy sarcastically. "We're going to bowl at your wicket, and you've got to hit the ball with that bat you are holding."

Skimpole looked at his bat, and then at Grundy, who was preparing to "bowl." Cricket, he decided, was not a game a genius like himself should indulge in.

Grundy took a lumbering run and delivered the ball. Marvellous to relate, the ball went straight for the wicket, and the genius of the Shell shut his eyes and swung his bat wildly.

"Hurrah, Skimmy! Well hit, sir!"

Skimpole's flying bat had caught the ball, which was now sailing away merrily across the field. He blinked round, astonished at the applause.

"Dear me! Did I hit it?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

When the ball was retrieved, Grundy proceeded to bowl again. Once more he took a lumbering run, and turned himself into a miniature catherine-wheel as he delivered it. This time, however, the ball did not travel towards the wicket—it hit Racke, who was standing watching.

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"Oo, you dangerous ass!" yelled Racke. "You've broken my arm!" Grundy stared.

"What's that silly ass hooting for?" he demanded.

The spectators could contain themselves no longer—they simply howled with laughter, and then, it appeared, the team had had enough. One by one they tramped off towards the school, and at last Grundy, with his loyal followers, Wilkins and Gunn, were left alone.

Grundy sighed as he looked at the remnants of his eleven, from whom he had expected such great things. Truly the life of a reformer at St. Jim's was not worth leading.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

The Match!

THE day of the great match dawned bright and sunny, and Tom Merry & Co. grinned cheerfully when they thought of the licking in store for Grundy's merry men.

Not so George Alfred. He took himself and his side perfectly seriously, and was resolved on his part, to hit up at least a century, and so make the result in his favour perfectly certain. Wilkins and Gunn were hardly as sanguine as their leader. They, in fact, anticipated a fearful hiding.

"Now then, young Gunn," began Grundy encouragingly. "Don't get down in the mouth. Just leave it to your uncle, who's going to lick them all by himself."

Gunn made no reply, but glanced at Wilkins, who shook his head despairingly. Grundy was beyond them.

"Let's go and rout out our fellows," Grundy suggested.

"Go and find 'em yourself!" growled Gunn. "I'm not going to be seen talking to them!"

Grundy looked contemptuous at such scruples. Although at heart he was quite a decent fellow, he held that any means were an end to his object.

"I'll see you two on the ground," were his parting words as he left the study.

The "blades" who formed the majority of his team, strangely enough, seemed quite prepared to turn out. Racke was still very sore about his arm, but consented to come, nevertheless.

Herbert Skimpole, Grundy found, had planned a fossil-hunting expedition all on his own, and was about to start with his specimen-case and geological hammer.

"Dear me!" said the absentminded genius of St. Jim's, when Grundy re-

minded him of his previous engagement. "How very unfortunate!"

Trimble he found skulking in his study.

"I say, Grundy," began Baggy plaintively, as his captain burst into the room, "I don't think I can play on a hot afternoon like this."

"You come along, my pippin!" ordered Grundy. "I'll come and fetch you with a cricket-stump if you don't!"

Under this dire threat Baggy decided to go.

At last the team was got together, and left for Little Side. Tom Merry and his cheerful Co. were already there, and had got the big roller out on to the pitch. Grundy went out to meet them.

"Hallo, Grundy, my son!" said Tom Merry. "Thought you weren't coming!" Grundy sniffed and produced a coin.

"Toss for choice of innings," he said.

"Heads!" called Tom Merry, as the coin spun into the air.

"Heads it is!" growled Grundy.

"We'll bat first," said Tom Merry promptly.

Grundy led his team out on to the field amidst ironic cheers from the St. Jim's juniors, who had turned up in force. Trimble turned out proudly equipped with pads and gloves. Grundy had decided Baggy should keep wicket, and Clampe was longstop.

Himself, when he was not bowling, with Wilkins and Gunn were to field in the slips. Skimpole he placed out at long field, Crooke was to be cover-point, and Racke cover. Mellish and Scrope were at mid-on and mid-off respectively, and Lucas at square-leg completed the arrangement of the field.

Wilkins was to have first over, and a great roar arose from the spectators as Tom Merry and Talbot came down the steps of the pavilion and made for the wickets.

Tom Merry was taking first knock, and Wilkins delivered the first ball of the match.

Wilkins was not a bad bowler, so Tom Merry treated the first few balls, which were of good length, with respect. Then came a loose one, and Tom Merry, opening his shoulders, drove hard for the boundary.

There was a roar from the crowd, and another from Skimpole. The genius of the Shell had received the ball full on the chest, and its force had carried him backwards. As the ball struck, he clasped at his chest, and he was grasping the ball in a dazed fashion as he sat on the turf.

"Hurrah! Well held, Skimmy!" roared the crowd in delight.

Skimpole had made the catch of the game—quite unconsciously, it must be admitted, but for all that Tom Merry was out for a duck.

Harry Noble took the vacant place at the wicket, and both he and Talbot got their eye in quickly, and the ball was hit all over the field.

Nearly all Grundy's team had tried to separate them, but without success. The batsmen went merrily on their way, and very soon the 150 was replaced on the board by the 200.

With Noble and Talbot still together at 250, Tom Merry declared the innings closed, and Grundy's eleven, hot and perspiring, left the field, glad of the respite.

The great George Alfred, however, was not downhearted. The game was not lost until it was won, and he should at least get a century himself.

With that intention, he strode to the wicket, accompanied by Mellish, and, after elaborately taking centre, faced Fatty Wynn.

The New House bowler took his short run and sent down a deceptive ball. Grundy hit out at where the ball was not and heard a gentle click behind him.

"How's that?"

"Out!"

Grundy stared in astonishment at his broken wicket.

"Toddle off, old son," laughed Lowther, "and send in another cripple!"

Racke followed in; but he was no match for the New House champion, and the first ball he received knocked his middle stump out of the ground.

Crooke was the next victim, and his downfall was greeted with cheering.

"Hat trick! Well played, Wynn!"

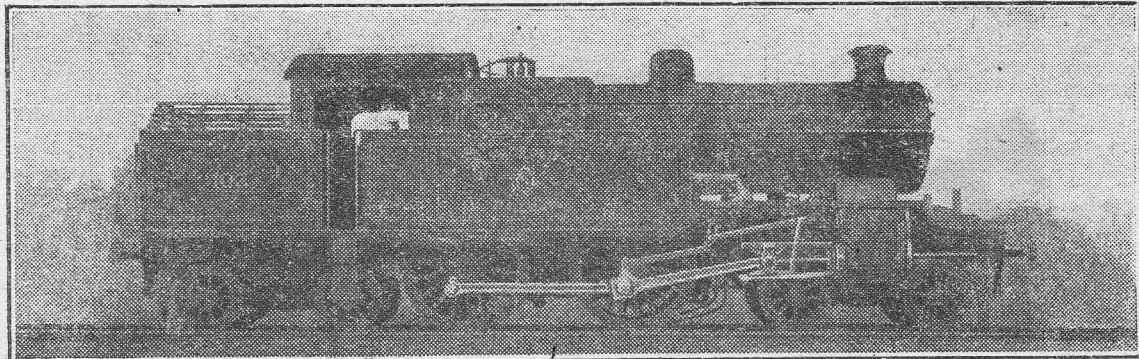
Three further wickets fell to the bowler in that over—Trimble, Skimpole, and Lucas, each only requiring one ball. The whole innings was an inglorious procession to and from the wickets. Gunn managed to make 4, and Wilkins got 3, but that was all.

In three overs Grundy's team had been dismissed for the paltry score of 7.

It was a long time before the St. Jim's juniors stopped laughing over the feats of Grundy's cricket team, and it is quite certain that cricket will not be the medium when next time George Alfred Grundy makes a bid for fame.

(Another splendid story of Tom Merry & Co. of St. Jim's, entitled "The Trap!" By Martin Clifford, in next week's issue.)

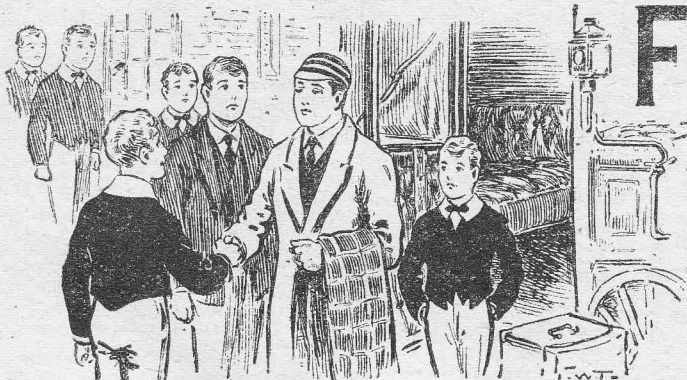
THIS GRAND COLOURED ENGINE PLATE GIVEN AWAY



Subject: The Latest Type of Metropolitan Railway Locomotive.

IN NEXT WEEK'S ISSUE.

CIRCUMSTANCES MAKE IT TOO UNPLEASANT FOR GEORGE BULKELEY TO REMAIN AT ROOKWOOD AFTER HIS FATHER'S DRAMATIC ARREST!



FORCED TO RESIGN!

A Splendid Long Complete Story, dealing with the Adventures of JIMMY SILVER & Co. at Rookwood School.

BY OWEN CONQUEST

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

O:O

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

The Testimonial!

"WHEREAS—" "That's a good word!" said Lovell approvingly. "Jolly good!" said Raby. And Newcome nodded approval. "Whereas—" recommenced Jimmy Silver.

"Sounds well," said Lovell. "Makes it a bit like a legal document. Still, it's impressive."

"Don't interrupt, old scout!" said Jimmy Silver. "Let a chap finish. 'Whereas—'"

"The door of the end study opened as Jimmy Silver reached that point once more. Tubby Muffin looked in.

"You chaps having tea?" he asked. "No!" hooted Jimmy Silver. "Scout!"

"I was going to offer you a whack in my sardines," said Tubby, in an injured tone. "I've got a whole tin.

"Oh, bless your sardines! 'Whereas—'" "Hold on, though!" said Raby. "Tea's pretty skinny to-day, and if Tubby wants to stand some sardines, no reason why he shouldn't. He's generally scoffing a fellow's grub instead of whacking it out."

"Yes, come in and have tea with us," said Lovell. "We've got a cake—no currants in it, but it's a cake of sorts."

"Oh, good!" said Tubby Muffin. And the fat Classical rolled in. Jimmy Silver gave a snort.

He had been busy with pen and paper while his three chums were getting tea, and now he was going to read out his composition, the Co. politely letting tea wait while he did it.

"'Whereas,'" said Jimmy Silver, with a glare at his chums—"whereas, the Rookwood Fourth, Classical and Modern, feel shocked and indignant at the accusation brought against Bulkeley's pater, and whereas they feel sure that it is all a silly mistake, and Bulkeley's pater is as innocent as a baby, and that his accusers are a set of silly idiots, they hereby—"

"Who? The silly idiots?" asked Raby. "No, ass! The Fourth Form." They hereby testify that their confidence in George Bulkeley of the Sixth Form, captain of Rookwood School, is boundless and unshaken, and they are prepared to back him up to the last shot in the locker."

"Bravo!" "That all?"

"No, it isn't all. Listen! They beg Bulkeley of the Sixth, their respected captain, not to think of leaving Rookwood, as some cads have suggested he should, but to stick it out, and see that Rookwood scores at cricket this season. They are further assured that his pater's innocence will be proved in the long run, and all will be serene. In witness whereof—"

"Oh, good!" "In witness whereof, they herewith append their hands and seals."

"Topping!" "Bravo!"

Jimmy Silver smiled a little complacently, quite mollified by that praise from his study-mates.

Jimmy flattered himself that he had drawn up that testimonial rather well. Certainly, it left no doubt as to the opinion of Jimmy Silver & Co., and all the Fistical Four agreed that it ought to please Bulkeley no end.

The Rookwood captain, being under a cloud—and such a cloud—could not fail to be backed by learning that the Fourth Form—Classical and Modern—still reposed the most unbounded faith in him.

At least, the chums of the Fourth were sure of it.

Tubby Muffin blinked up from his sardines. He was busy with them already.

"Chaps going to sign that, Jimmy?" he asked.

"Every chap in the Fourth," answered Jimmy. "It will let all Rookwood know what the Fourth Form thinks of old Bulkeley. Knowles and Catesby and Carthew and other rotters will see that they're in a minority."

"But they're in the Sixth," said Tubby. "They won't take much notice of the Fourth, will they?"

"Fathead! Get on with your sardines, and don't talk rot!"

"Besides, how do you know Bulkeley's father is innocent?" persisted Tubby. "He's been arrested for stealing a lot of bonds from the bank."

"He didn't do it."

"How do you know?" "Oh, you're a silly ass! We know Bulkeley, don't we? Well, it stands to reason that old Bulkeley's pater wouldn't do a dirty trick like that. Sign here, you fellows!"

The Fistical Four signed in turn. "But, I say," began Tubby, who seemed to be in an argumentative mood, "Peele and Gower were saying—"

"Sign here, Muffin!" "But I don't think—"

"You never do. Sign here." "You jolly well sha'n't have any cake if you don't sign!" exclaimed Lovell warmly.

"Oh, gimme that pen, Jimmy, old chap!" said Tubby Muffin. "Of course, I believe that old Bulkeley's pater is innocent, come to think of it. There you are! I'll sign it twice if you like."

"You fat duffer! Now, after tea we'll take this round the Fourth," said Jimmy Silver. "Every chap will sign it, I know. He'll jolly well get his nose punched if he doesn't. I say, these are good sardines. A good idea of yours to whack them out in this study, Tubby."

The door opened again, and Flynn of the Classical Fourth put a somewhat excited face into the end study.

"Seen that thafe of the worruid, Muffin?" he exclaimed. "Oh, there you are! You thaving young sweep—"

"Here, hold on!" exclaimed Lovell. "Let Tubby alone. He's the founder of the merry feast."

"Sure, he's pinched me sardines!" roared Flynn.

"What?" "Me illigant sardines! And, by the same token, I've got nothing for me tea but bread! I'll scalp him!"

"Oh, my hat!" gasped Lovell.

Flynn rushed after Tubby Muffin, who dodged him wildly round the table.

"Keep him off, Jimmy!" he yelled. "You young villain!" shouted Lovell. "They're Flynn's sardines you've brought here, are they?"

"Yaroo! Keep him off!" Tubby Muffin roared as Patrick O'Donovan Flynn collared him.

The Fistical Four glared at him in wrath. They understood now that unexpected generosity on Tubby's part.

He had "whacked out" the sardines in order to get protection when their owner came after them.

"You young Hun!" exclaimed Jimmy Silver.

"Yaroo! Help! Stand by a chap when he's stood you a feed!" howled Tubby. "Yah! Dragginoff!"

The Fistical Four were not proof against that appeal. They seized the infuriated Flynn, and dragged him off.

"Arrah! Leggo!" shouted Flynn. "Sure, I'm going to slaughter him intirely! Me illigant sardines—"

"Kick him out!" said Lovell. "Yes," panted Tubby, "kick him out, the beast! Oh—ah—yah—yaup! Wharrer you kicking me for?"

It was Tubby that Lovell was alluding to, not Flynn, and he promptly suited the action to the word.

The fat Classical departed with a series of fendish yells, and his place at the tea-table was taken by Patrick O'Donovan Flynn, who was grinning now.

Tubby Muffin's masterly scheme had not been very successful, after all.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

Knowles' Chance!

KNOWLES of the Sixth glanced at his study door, to make sure that it was shut, and lighted a cigarette.

"Help yourselves!" he remarked. Catesby and Frampton followed his example.

The three Sixth-Formers of the Modern side were met in Cecil Knowles' study for a consultation.

There was an unusually satisfied expression on Knowles' hard face.

Matters were going well for the Modern captain.

"Of course," said Knowles, with a slight smile, "nobody wants to hit a fellow when he's down."

"Oh, not at all!" said Frampton. "Bulkeley's down," continued Knowles. "He's carried his head jolly high, and has always been pretty lofty towards the Modern side. We've always held that Bulkeley, being a Classical, did not give our side fair play in games, or in anything else. That being the case, we're entitled to get our own back, without being too jolly particular."

"Hear, hear!" said Frampton. "These are good smokes, Knowles."

"Glad you like them. Now, as the matter stands, Bulkeley's father has been arrested on suspicion of robbing the bank. It looks

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NEXT TUESDAY!

"THE NEW CAPTAIN!"

A SPLENDID COMPLETE STORY OF ROOKWOOD. BY OWEN CONQUEST.

a clear case. The police wouldn't act like that without jolly good grounds to go upon."

"That's a cert."

"I don't know," said Catesby slowly. "Mistakes have been made before now."

"Rot!" answered Knowles decisively.

"My uncle seems to believe that his partner will be able to clear himself," said Catesby.

"You know my uncle is Mr. Bulkeley's partner. He seems to be standing by him."

"Well, innocent or guilty, Mr. Bulkeley is under arrest," said Knowles. "To come to the point, we don't want as captain of Rookwood a fellow whose father is arrested on a charge of stealing!"

"No fear!"

"Bulkeley ought really to leave the school. But the least he can do is to resign the captaincy."

Frampton nodded and grinned.

"I believe a lot of fellows think so on the Classical side," resumed Knowles.

"They're bound to. I know Carthew agrees with me. Well, if Bulkeley gets cut, there'll be a new election for captain, and that's where we come in. I think I ought to get in as captain of Rookwood."

"You ought, old chap."

"And that will make things a bit different for the Modern side," said Knowles, with a smile. "We shall get a fair show in the cricket if I'm captain. The Classics can learn what it is like, to be always in a minority in the eleven."

"I shouldn't mention that too soon," remarked Catesby. "You'll have to depend on a good many Classical votes to get elected. They're a majority."

Knowles laughed.

"That's between ourselves, of course," he said. "In public I spin the same yarn as Bulkeley—strict fair play, no favour to either side, shoulder to shoulder for the good of the school, and so on, and so forth. I know the game. It goes down on Bulkeley. No reason why it shouldn't go down from me."

"Now, shall we call on him personally, or shall we put it in a note?" asked Knowles.

"A note, I think," said Frampton slowly. "Might be a row otherwise."

"I don't object to a row, with Bulkeley in the wrong. We should keep our tempers."

"Still, it's better avoided. Make it a polite note, pointing out that for the good name of the school, etc. You know what to say."

"All right."

Knowles drew a paper and pen to him, chewed the handle of the pen for a moment or two thoughtfully, and then began to write.

He smiled as he wrote, not a pleasant smile.

The Modern prefect had said that he did not want to hit Bulkeley when he was down; but that remark was perhaps intended humorously.

There was no doubt that Knowles intended to make the fullest use of the misfortune that had fallen upon the captain of Rookwood.

He had his own personal dislike of Bulkeley to consider, as well as the keen rivalry between the two sides of Rookwood—Modern and Classical.

He showed his note to his two companions when he had written it, and they nodded approval. The epistle ran:

"Dear Bulkeley,—I feel bound to draw your attention to opinion in the school on a certain matter, and I feel sure that you will receive this hint in the spirit in which it is meant."

"Under the present painful circumstances the general opinion seems to be that, for a time at least, you should resign your position in Rookwood. Nothing at all personal is meant by this; it is simply the fitness of things."

"You have my fullest sympathy, and I sincerely hope that your father will succeed in clearing himself from the cloud that rests upon his name. Until that is done, however, you must feel yourself that it would be more judicious for you to take up an attitude less in the public eye."

"I should be glad to hear your views."

"Yours sincerely,

"CECIL KNOWLES."

"Jolly good," said Frampton heartily. "That's putting it plain—and nicely, too. I really wonder Bulkeley hasn't seen it himself and resigned already."

"Call in a fog to take this note, old scout," said Knowles, throwing his cigarette into the grate.

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NEXT
TUESDAY!

"THE NEW CAPTAIN!"

Frampton went to the door. Tommy Dodd of the Modern Fourth was in sight, and the Sixth-Former hailed him.

"Fag!"

"Hallo!" said Tommy Dodd. "What's wanted?"

"You are. Come here!"

Tommy Dodd approached rather cautiously. Knowles' study was not a pleasant place for fags to visit sometimes—the three Sixth-Formers were sometimes given to bullying.

But Knowles & Co. were in high good-humour now.

"Come in, Dodd! Take that note," said Knowles, tossing it to the Fourth-Former. "Take it over to Bulkeley, and wait for an answer."

"Right you are, Knowles!" answered Tommy Dodd, and he trotted off.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

Backed Up by the Fourth!

"JUST in time!" said Jimmy Silver. The Pistical Four were in the Sixth Form passage when Tommy Dodd arrived in the School House, note

in hand. Jimmy Silver had the testimonial to Bulkeley in his hand.

It was quite a long document, and was made by pinning together a number of sheets of impot paper.

Tommy glanced at the testimonial admiringly.

"Finished?" he asked.

"Yes; every blessed word's down," answered Jimmy Silver. "We're going to post it up on the notice-board after presenting it to Bulkeley. That will show all Rookwood what we think of our captain."

"Good!" said Tommy Dodd. Jimmy Silver tapped at the study door.

"Come in!"

The juniors entered. Bulkeley of the Sixth was not alone. Neville, Jones major, and Lonsdale of the Classical Sixth were in the study.

The four seniors had been talking, Bulkeley wearing a troubled and harassed look.

The captain of Rookwood had never looked his old self since that terrible scene in the quadrangle, when his father, while on a visit to Rookwood, had been arrested in the view of all the school.

That blow had hit Bulkeley hard, and his anxiety for his father added to the bitterness of it.

Not that his loyal faith in his father faltered for one moment.

He felt that the truth must come out when Mr. Bulkeley stood his trial; and the truth, he was sure, was that his father was innocent.

But the misery and shame of the accusation and the arrest cut him to the very heart.

He gave the juniors a good-humoured glance, however, as they came in.

His troubles had not embittered his kind temper.

"Hallo! What do you kids want?" he asked.

In the presence of four prefects of the Sixth Jimmy Silver felt a little abashed.

"What on earth have you got there?" asked Neville, glancing at the roll in Jimmy Silver's hand.

"Ahem! You see—"

"Buck up, kid!" said Bulkeley.

"The—the fact is—"

"Arrah, and why don't ye come to the point!" exclaimed a voice from the passage.

"Sure, it's a testimonial, Bulkeley darling."

"Hurrah!" squeaked Tubby Muflin.

George Bulkeley glanced at the doorway in astonishment.

A dozen or more juniors had gathered there.

"What on earth—" began the Rookwood captain.

"It's a testimonial, Bulkeley," explained Jimmy Silver.

"Oh gad! What does it mean?"

"May I read it out?"

"Yes, if you like, but buck up!"

Jimmy Silver proceeded to read out the testimonial.

Bulkeley listened in amazement.

Neville and Lonsdale and Jones major grinned.

Apparently they saw something amusing in that exposition of the firm faith and loyalty of the Fourth Form of Rookwood.

From "whereas" to the last of the signatures, Jimmy Silver read it out, at every pause a cheer coming in from the crowd of juniors in the passage.

"Is that all?" asked Bulkeley patiently, when Jimmy Silver had finished at last.

"That's all Bulkeley."

"I suppose all that's meant as a compliment," said Bulkeley. "I'm much obliged to you. Now run away."

"Ahem!"

"Oh, come on!" said Lovell. "We'll stick it on the board, anyway"

Bulkeley jumped.

"That nonsense—ahem!—I mean that testimonial!" he exclaimed.

"Yes, rather!"

"Don't do anything of the sort!" exclaimed Bulkeley sharply. "You young donkeys, I suppose you mean well."

"Oh, really, you know Bulkeley—"

"Leave it here," said Bulkeley.

"Oh, all right."

"And clear!"

Jimmy Silver & Co. cleared, not feeling wholly satisfied.

The testimonial had not evoked nearly so much enthusiasm in Bulkeley's study as among the Fourth.

Tommy Dodd lingered behind, and Bulkeley pointed to the door.

"Note for you, Bulkeley," said Tommy, with a grin.

"Oh, run away, kid!"

"It's from Knowles."

"Oh, Knowles! Give it to me, then."

"I'm to wait for an answer," said Tommy Dodd, handing over the Modern prefect's note.

Bulkeley nodded, and opened the envelope. His brows came together darkly as he read, and he tossed the note to his friends.

"Read that!" he said.

"The cheeky cad!" exclaimed Neville wrathfully.

"Confound his nerve!" said Jones major. "There's no opinion of the sort in the school—I know that. There may be on the Modern side."

"They're cads enough for anything!" growled Lonsdale.

"Oh, draw it mild!" interjected Tommy Dodd warmly.

"Shut up, you cheeky fag!"

"Well, don't you slang the Moderns, then," said Tommy Dodd independently. "Lots of cads on this side, I can tell you. I'll give you the names if you like."

"Dry up, kid!" said Bulkeley. "I'd better send an answer to this, you fellows."

"Put it plain!" growled Neville. "Tell him what you think of him."

"Well, I must be civil. Besides, I dare say Knowles is only acting from what he thinks is a sense of duty."

"I don't think!"

"Well, I'm bound to take that for granted," said Bulkeley. "I'll let him have his answer."

He scribbled a hasty note, folded it in an envelope, and handed it to the waiting fag.

"Take that to Knowles, Dodd."

Tommy Dodd left the study.

Bulkeley's face darkened as the door closed behind him, and his lips trembled a little.

"I—I wonder—" he began.

"Don't take any notice of what that Modern cad's said!" exclaimed Neville. "We all know what Knowles is after—the captaincy, if he can get it."

"There's a lot in what he says."

"Rats! Bosh!"

"But I can't resign the captaincy," said Bulkeley quietly. "To do so would be like admitting that there was possibly something in the charge against my father. I can't do that. Unless a majority of the Sixth ask me to resign, I shall go on."

"And that's not likely to happen," said Jones major. "You're jolly well not going to resign, anyway. Hang Knowles!"

"Knowles don't count, anyway!" said Neville.

Tommy Dodd presented himself in Knowles' study, on the Modern side, and found Knowles & Co. waiting there.

There was an atmosphere of smoke in the study, which Tommy judiciously affected not to notice.

"Well?" said Knowles.

"Here's Bulkeley's answer," said Tommy Dodd.

"Did he say anything?" asked Frampton.

"Bulkeley didn't say much," answered Tommy. "The others did!"

"Oh, Bulkeley wasn't alone?" asked Knowles, with interest.

"No; three Classical Sixth chaps with him."

"What did they say, then?"

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"Neville said 'Cheeky cad!'"

"What?"

"Jones major said 'Confound his nerve!'"

"You cheeky young rascal!" shouted Knowles. "Do you want me to give you a hiding?"

"You asked me what they said!" replied Tommy Dodd, in an injured tone. "I'm only telling you what you asked me."

"Hold your tongue!"

"Oh, all right. Can I clear out?" asked Tommy.

"Yes!" snapped Knowles.

Tommy Dodd cleared.

Knowles opened Bulkeley's note, and the three Modern seniors read it together.

It was brief, but to the point.

"Dear Knowles,—I had already considered the question of resigning the captaincy, but decided not, as to do so might imply that I had some, even the faintest, doubt of my father's innocence. Thank you, all the same, for your suggestion, which, of course, I take in the spirit in which it is meant.—Yours,

"GEORGE BULKELEY."

"Rather a sting in that last sentence," remarked Catesby, with a grin.

Knowles gritted his teeth.

"It's a refusal," he said.

"Well, you might have expected that."

"Bulkeley will find he hasn't finished with me yet," said Knowles savagely. "He can't ride the high horse over me, hang him! I'll make Rookwood too hot for him yet, mark my words!"

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

Bulkeley is Wanted!

"JIMMY!"

Morning lessons were over the following day, and the Fistical Four were in the sunny quadrangle, when Tubby Muffin rolled up in great excitement.

Tubby's fat face was simply ablaze.

"I say, Jimmy—" he gasped.

"Oh, get out!" said Jimmy Silver. "Don't tell us you've got a tin of sardines you want to whack out, you fat fraud!"

"Tain't that! There's a bobby—"

"A what?"

"A bobby!" gasped Tubby excitedly.

"Do you mean a policeman, fathead?"

"Yes—a bobby, and that detective chap who came here the other day and arrested Bulkeley's pater when he was visiting Bulkeley. I knew him again. He's got a face like a saw."

"What the thump do they want here?" growled Lovell.

"Leggett says he thinks they've come for Bulkeley!" gasped Tubby Muffin.

"Let me hear Leggett say so!" said Jimmy Silver, with a gleam in his eyes. "I'll give him something else to talk about, the cad!"

"But, I say, you know, do you think they've come for Bulkeley, Jimmy? Leggett thinks perhaps he was hand in glove with his pater— Yarooooop!"

Tubby Muffin found himself suddenly sitting on the ground before he could state the rest of Albert Leggett's charitable surmises.

The Fistical Four left him sitting there, gaping, and hurried towards the School House.

A policeman was visible there, with a quietly-dressed man, whom they recognised as Mr. Screw, the detective.

They were going into the House as the Fistical Four spotted them.

Mornington came towards the chums of the Fourth with a knitted brow.

"What the dickens does this mean, you fellows?" he exclaimed. "What does that rat-faced bounder want here again?"

"Can't be anything to do with Bulkeley."

"He's come to see Bulkeley," said Kit

Erroll, joining them. "He asked for Bulkeley. Mr. Bootles is taking him to the Head, and the bobby is waiting in the hall—looks as if he's on the watch."

"My only hat!" said Jimmy blankly.

The Fistical Four were astonished and dismayed.

"What could a detective from Scotland Yard possibly want with George Bulkeley?"

"The—the fools!" muttered Mornington.

"They can't suppose that Bulkeley knows anything about it, even if his pater did it."

"His pater didn't do it!" snapped Lovell.

"No. But even if he did, Bulkeley couldn't know anything about it. They must be potty!"

The news that the detective had returned, and had asked to see Bulkeley, was very quick in spreading.

A crowd of fellows gathered about the doorway, and glances were cast on all sides at the stolid policeman standing in the hall.

Smythe of the Shell even ventured to ask the officer what he had come for; but he received only a stare by way of reply.

Whatever the policeman's intentions were

"On the cricket-ground, sir."

"Kindly tell him at once that a gentleman has called to see him, and that I request him to come to his study immediately!"

"Certainly, sir!"

Jimmy Silver hurried down to Big Side.

"Bulkeley!" he called out breathlessly.

"Don't bother now, kid!"

"The Head wants you, Bulkeley."

"Oh, all right!"

Jimmy delivered his message, and he saw Bulkeley's face brighten.

"News about my pater, I expect, Neville," he said. "They may have found out the facts by this time."

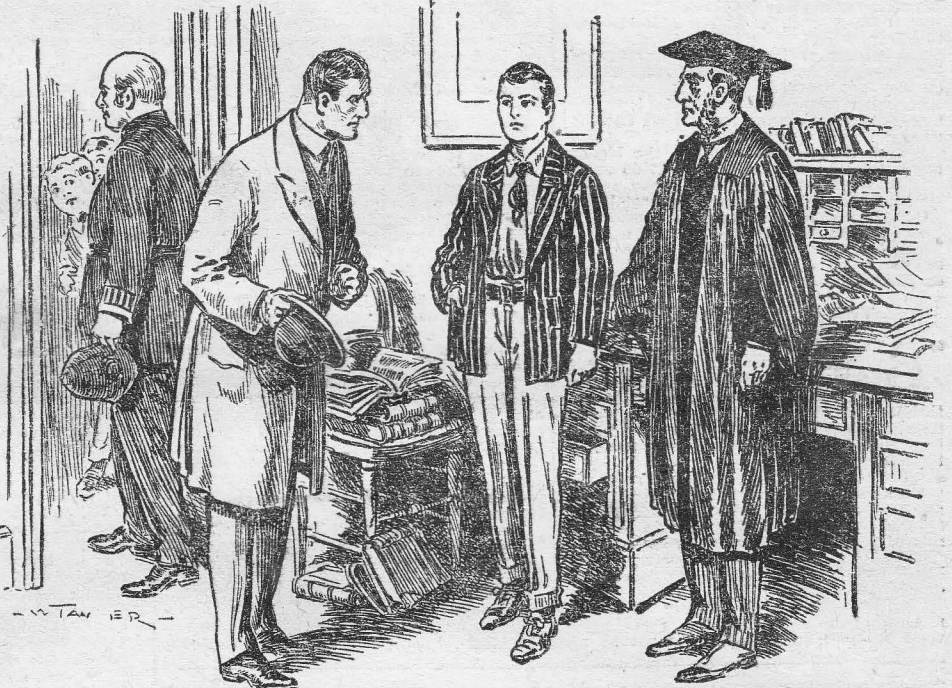
"I hope so, old chap," said Neville.

Bulkeley hurried away to the house, and Jimmy Silver followed, with a clouded brow.

He knew very well that if the Rookwood captain was anticipating good news he would be disappointed.

Whatever Mr. Screw had come for, it certainly was not to give Bulkeley good news of his father.

The Rookwood captain passed through a silent crowd, and entered the house.



UNDER SUSPICION!—"If your father has placed any article in your keeping it will be in your own interest to hand it over to me!" said Mr. Screw. "I have answered you already!" said Bulkeley coldly. "Very well. For the present, Dr. Chisholm, my duty here is done!" And Mr. Screw, with a polite bow, took his leave. (See Chapter 5.)

he did not think fit to confide them to Adolphus Smythe.

Bulkeley was on Big Side, with some of the Sixth and Fifth.

The news soon reached the fellows looking on at the practice; but no one ventured to mention to Bulkeley that a "bobby" had come for him.

There was a buzz among the crowd outside the door when the detective was seen again.

The Head came into view with him.

Dr. Chisholm's face was set, and indicated clearly enough the anger and annoyance he was keeping under strict control.

Mr. Screw was murmuring some apology, and the Head of Rookwood interrupted him.

"You have your duty to do, sir," he said stiffly. "I am astonished that it should be considered needful; but if it is your duty, you must do it. I will take you to Bulkeley's room, and send for him."

"Thank you, sir!"

"You will find nothing there, Mr. Screw, that should not be there," said the Head coldly. "But you shall satisfy yourself, Silver!"

"Yes, sir?" said Jimmy.

"Do you know where Bulkeley is at present?"

He stared a little at the sight of the constable.

But his eyes were fixed upon the Head, calmly and inquiringly.

"You sent for me, sir?"

"Yes; step into your study with me, Bulkeley, please."

"Certainly."

Dr. Chisholm entered the Rookwood captain's study with Mr. Screw, and Bulkeley followed them in.

The door closed, much to the disappointment of the Rookwood fellows.

Whatever the transaction might be, it was evidently going to take place behind closed doors.

"Well, the bobby's come for somethin', I suppose!" said Townsend tartly.

"Bulkeley didn't look scared," remarked Townsend of the Fourth.

Jimmy Silver gave Towney a fierce look.

"Why should he look scared?" he demanded.

"What's all this fuss about?" Catesby of the Sixth had come over from Mr. Manders' house. "Was that a bobby?"

"You bet!" said Leggett. "He's after Bulkeley."

"Shut up, you Modern cad!" roared Lovell

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furiously. "You say that again, and I'll shut you up fast enough!"

Leggett, feeling safe in the presence of a Modern prefect, sneered.

"He's after Bulkeley," he repeated. "He's gone into Bulkeley's study with the Head, Catesby. I can jolly well guess what it means, too. Mr. Bulkeley's accused of stealing bonds from the bank, and they can't be found."

"What's that got to do with Bulkeley?" said Lovell, clenching his hands.

"Plain enough, I think," sneered Leggett.

"Mr. Bulkeley was visiting your cheery skipper when he was arrested. Of course, the detective thinks his son had a hand in it—very likely thinks that Mr. Bulkeley brought the stolen property down here to hide."

Catesby gave a violent start.

"What—what's that?" he exclaimed.

"Well, wouldn't it be a clever dodge?" said Leggett, evidently pleased with his surmise. "Where would you find a safer place to hide stolen bonds, for instance, than in a schoolboy's locker? Nobody would think of looking there. But the detective happens to have thought of it."

"You young fool!" said Catesby harshly. His face was white and set. "How dare you suggest such a thing? Hold your tongue!"

The Modern prefect stalked away towards Mr. Manders' house, several glances resting on him as he went.

Leggett's suggestion seemed to have had a very startling effect upon Stephen Catesby; why, it was impossible to guess.

Leggett would have followed the Modern prefect, but he was not allowed to do so.

Lovell's grasp was upon him.

"Catesby!" yelled Leggett desperately.

Catesby did not even turn his head.

And during the next few minutes Albert Leggett had reason to repent his sage surmises, as the Fisticat Four rubbed his nose on the cold, hard quadrangle.

**THE FIFTH CHAPTER.
Under Suspicion!**

BULKELEY!" The Head's tone was very kind. Ever since the misfortune that had fallen upon Bulkeley's father the Head had been very kind and considerate towards Bulkeley, and the Rookwood fellows had noted it, and liked their headmaster all the better for it.

What the Head's opinion might be on the subject of Mr. Bulkeley himself nobody could guess; but, at any rate, he evidently did not believe that he had a right to visit the sins of the father upon the children.

"Yes, sir?" said Bulkeley, looking at the Head, and taking no notice of the presence of the detective.

"Bulkeley, this is—is a very unpleasant matter. You understand, of course, that what is about to take place is not by my

wish—that my faith in you is quite unshaken."

"You are very kind, sir," said Bulkeley, in wonder.

"You are aware that a number of bonds are missing from the bank of which your father was manager," said the Head. "These bonds have not been found, I am told, and cannot be traced. They represent a large sum of money. I hardly like to—tell you what is now considered possible by the detective in charge of the case, Bulkeley; but—but—" The Head paused. "Kindly explain to the lad, Mr. Screw!"

"Certainly, Master Bulkeley, your father visited you a few days ago, when I had the painful duty of taking him into custody."

Bulkeley nodded.

"Did he on that occasion place anything in your keeping?"

"No."

"Had he on any occasion within the last month placed any article in your keeping?"

"No."

"Have you at the present time any property of any kind, of which you are taking care for your father?"

"No."

The detective coughed.

"Ahem! Well, the bonds cannot be found, Master Bulkeley, though the search for them has been rigid."

"You had better find the thief, and then you may find the stolen bonds," said Bulkeley disdainfully.

The detective smiled slightly.

"To come to the point, Master Bulkeley, it occurs to me as possible that your father's hurried visit to you on that occasion was for the purpose of placing the bonds in hiding here in a safe place."

Bulkeley's eyes glittered.

"I suppose you are doing your duty, Mr. Screw," he said, repressing his anger.

"I can only say that my father handed me nothing."

"He might have placed something in your charge, without stating its nature," suggested Mr. Screw. "He might have called it by some other name—family documents, literary manuscripts—anything."

"He gave me nothing."

"If you have any such thing in your charge, Master Bulkeley, I am willing to believe that you were ignorant of its nature, and if you hand it to me at once a very lenient view may be taken of your conduct. I am here to find the bonds, if they are hidden here. I have a warrant to search for them."

"Search as long as you like!" said the captain of Rookwood scornfully. "You will find nothing here that does not belong to me!"

"Very well. I wished to give you a chance."

"I dare say you meant kindly," said Bulkeley wearily. "But as I know nothing of the bonds, and have never even seen them,

I cannot help you. My father did not take the bonds."

"Very well. I have my duty to do. Please remain."

"I will remain also," said Dr. Chisholm. "I am perfectly convinced that nothing will be found here that does not belong to Bulkeley."

"We shall see," said Mr. Screw calmly.

He opened the door and called in the constable.

Bulkeley handed over his keys, and stood pale and silent while the search proceeded.

It was a thorough one.

Under Mr. Screw's untiring eye the constable ransacked every corner of the study, and every receptacle and recess.

Even the books in the bookcase were taken out, and opened and shaken separately.

It was more than half an hour before the search of the study finished.

The Rookwood fellows had gone into the dining-hall to dinner.

Bulkeley was not thinking of dinner, and the Head forgot that his lunch was waiting.

The search was over at last, and nothing had been discovered.

"Well, sir?" said Dr. Chisholm, as the detective stood with a somewhat balled expression on his face.

"Master Bulkeley will not object to his person being searched?" asked Mr. Screw.

Bulkeley flushed crimson.

"Surely this is an absurdity!" exclaimed the Head. "A number of bonds would be too bulky to be concealed about the person, sir."

"They might be separated, and even severed in pieces," answered Mr. Screw.

"However, if Master Bulkeley objects—"

"Will you allow this gentleman to do as he pleases, Bulkeley?"

"I will do whatever you suggest, sir," answered the Rookwood captain.

"Very well. Proceed, Mr. Screw," said the Head.

It occupied but a few minutes to search Bulkeley from head to foot.

But again the search was unrewarded.

"May I conclude that you are finished here now, sir?" asked the Head, whose impatience was visibly growing.

"Are these the only quarters that Mr. Bulkeley occupies in the school?" asked Mr. Screw.

"Certainly!"

"Very well. For the present—the detective emphasised the word—"for the present, Dr. Chisholm, my duty here is done."

And Mr. Screw, with a polite bow, took his leave, the stolid-faced constable following in his wake.

Bulkeley went to his dinner late.

Neville joined him, and sat chatting to him while he ate.

But Bulkeley hardly answered his chum.

There was a fixed gloom upon his face.

For he had come to the same conclusion now as the Modern prefect.

The fellow upon whom rested the shadow of shameful suspicion was not the right captain for Rookwood School.

**THE SIXTH CHAPTER.
Good-bye to Bulkeley!**

JIMMY SILVER was worried.

It was just like Jimmy to forget his own concerns and trouble his head about the troubles of somebody else.

But George Bulkeley was so great a man in junior eyes—he filled so large a space in the little world of school—that almost all the Rookwood fellows felt concerned about him.

It was known now what the detective had come for.

And there were not wanting ill-natured tongues to hint that perhaps Mr. Screw had been on the right track, though he had not found what he sought.

Bulkeley was popular with nine-tenths of Rookwood, but the other tenth did not like him.

Juniors like Peele and Gower and Tracy, seniors like Catesby and Frampton, Knowles and Cartlew, disliked him and feared him.

He had too strict a sense of duty to be liked by mean-spirited fellows.

And now was the chance of his enemies, the few he had.

His quarters had been searched by the police for stolen property; he was innocent—he might be innocent—but the suspicion, the stain, remained.

It was simply impossible for a fellow in

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N O W O N S A L E

such a position to remain captain of the school.

Even Jimmy Silver felt that it would not do.

And Jimmy knew that Bulkeley had been packing—it looked as if he was leaving Rookwood.

Jimmy felt that as a personal blow.

"I believe he's going; you fellows!" Jimmy said dismally, in the end study that evening.

"I—I suppose it's a bit rotten for him now. Some fellows are cads enough to think evil of him. Poor old Bulkeley!"

"Poor old chap!" said Raby.

"It's sensible of him to get out for a bit, till this is settled one way or the other," said Erroll, who was in the study.

"The position is too rotten altogether. If his father is acquitted, Bulkeley can come back with flying colours."

"But if he isn't—" muttered Newcome.

"Then poor old Bulkeley couldn't stay, anyway. But—but I think the old man's innocent, and if he's innocent, I suppose he will be acquitted."

"Mistakes are made sometimes," said Lovell.

Erroll smiled faintly, but did not reply.

Lovell's meaning was pretty clear; he did not intend to believe anything against Bulkeley or his father, whatever a judge and jury might decide.

Fubby Muffin looked into the study.

"He's going!" he announced.

"Who's going, you fat chump?" growled Lovell.

"Bulkeley."

"Oh!"

There was a rush from the study at once.

Jimmy Silver & Co. dashed down the staircase.

The big door was open. Outside, in the dusk, gleamed the lights of the station cab.

Old Mack and the cabman were carrying out a trunk.

Bulkeley, in coat and cap, was saying good-bye to some of the Sixth.

His face was a little pale, but very calm.

Neville was looking furious, and the other seniors troubled and dismayed.

"Bulkeley!" exclaimed Jimmy Silver. "You're going?"

Bulkeley gave the juniors a kind smile.

"Yes, kid—for a time."

"You're coming back?" exclaimed Lovell.

"I hope so."

Neville went out with him to the cab.

Through the dusk the figure of Cecil Knowles of the Modern Sixth loomed up.

"You're going, Bulkeley?" he exclaimed.

"Yes."

Knowles drew a deep breath.

He composed his features to an expression of sympathetic concern, but he could not disguise the glitter in his eyes.

"I'm sorry you're going, Bulkeley," he said.

"Thank you!" said Bulkeley dryly.

"I hope we part friends," said Knowles.

"I'm sorry there have ever been any disagreements between us, Bulkeley; and I'd like to say that I believe your father is innocent, and believe that the truth will come out in time. And there's my hand on it!"

Bulkeley took his hand cheerfully enough.

"I'm glad to hear you speak like that, Knowles," he said simply. "It's kind of you. Certainly we part friends, old fellow! Good-bye!"

Knowles stood looking after the cab as it rolled away in the dusk.

There was a twinge of remorse even in Cecil Knowles' hard heart.

But as he walked away to his own House his eyes were shining.

"Captain of Rookwood!" he murmured.

"The path's clear now—Captain of Rookwood!"

Jimmy Silver was thinking of that, too, when Bulkeley was gone.

"There'll be an election for captain," he said. "That cad Knowles will think it's a sure thing for him; and we've got to stop him. Do you hear?"

Bulkeley was gone, with a shadow on his name, but it did not seem so certain as Knowles supposed that the Modern prefect would realise his old ambition.

Jimmy Silver & Co. had to be reckoned with.

THE END.

(Don't miss next week's grand tale of Rookwood School, entitled "The New Captain," by Owen Conquest.)

NEXT TUESDAY!

"THE NEW CAPTAIN!"

FRANK RICHARDS' CAPTURE!

(Continued from page 5.)

"Open that door, Richards." He flung a key to Frank. "Open the door, and get into the next room, all three of you!"

Frank unlocked the bed-room door. The three schoolboys backed into the room. The bound man on the bed gave them a look. Paul Slimmey had heard every word that was uttered in the outer room.

He had hoped, for some brief moments, now that the truth was known. But the desperate outcast still held the upper hand.

Rufus Slimmey followed them in, and with his left hand placed the key on the inner side of the door and locked it.

"Now I will deal with you," he said between his teeth. "I shall leave you bound here while I take my chance. And if you resist, beware! Keep your hands up!"

He drew a cord from his pocket with his left hand.

"Make a noose in that, Richards." Frank obeyed.

The outcast threw the noose over Bob Lawless' wrists, and drew it together.

Frank was standing close by a stool under the window, and as the ruffian was securing the cord his hand closed on the stool.

It was a desperate chance, for he knew the man would shoot; but he took it. With a sudden swing of his arm the stool was lifted and flung at the same moment.

Crash!

The ruffian spun round towards him, the revolver up; but the whizzing stool struck him at the same moment, and he reeled.

Crack!

The pistol-shot filled the little room with deafening sound. But the bullet flew into the plank ceiling. The next moment Vere Beauclerc drove his fist under the chin of the staggering man, and Rufus Slimmey went with a crash to the floor.

Beauclerc was upon him in a second, and he kicked the revolver from the rascal's hand before he could pull the trigger again. Frank Richards was only a second behind, and as Rufus Slimmey struggled up Frank hurled himself upon him and bore him to the floor again.

"Back up!" panted Frank.

Panting with rage, Rufus Slimmey struggled in the grasp of Frank Richards and Beauclerc. He would probably have been too much for the two of them, but Bob Lawless had dragged the unfastened noose from his wrists, and he joined in with great vigour. He caught up the fallen revolver and clubbed it, and the heavy butt crashed on the ruffian's head.

Rufus Slimmey yelled, and sank back on the floor.

Frank Richards' knee was jammed on his chest, and Beauclerc grasped his wrists. Bob thrust the revolver muzzle fairly into his mouth.

"Chuck it!" said Bob grimly.

"The cord—quick!" exclaimed Beauclerc.

Dazed by the crashing blow, the ruffian lay almost helpless. Frank Richards caught up the cord and looped

it over his wrists as Beauclerc held them, and drew it tight and knotted it.

Then the schoolboys left him, lying on the floor and panting with rage.

"Fetch the sergeant here, Beau!" exclaimed Frank breathlessly.

"You bet!"

Vere Beauclerc unlocked the door and dashed out. Frank took out his pocket-knife, and cut the bonds that held Paul Slimmey to the bed.

He removed the gag, and Paul Slimmey strove to speak, but no word would come from his numbed lips. He groaned faintly as he moved.

"All right now, Mr. Slimmey?" said Frank cheerily.

There was a heavy tread in the outer room. The sergeant had heard the pistol-shot, and he was already coming towards the cabin when Beauclerc found him. The big Canadian loomed up in the doorway.

"Here's your man, sir!" said Bob Lawless.

"Holy smoke!" ejaculated Sergeant Lasale. "And—and who is this?"

His eyes turned to the man stretched on the bed.

"That's our master, sir—Mr. Slimmey. That villain had been passing himself off as Mr. Slimmey!" panted Frank.

"By gad!"

The sergeant understood now. His bronzed face was very grim as he stooped and jerked Rufus Slimmey to his feet.

"I guess you played a bold hand, my man," he remarked. "But the game's up now. You are the man I want!"

Five minutes later the two Canadian Mounted Police were riding away for Thompson, and, between them, bound upon a horse, was Rufus Slimmey. The lumber school had seen the last of the desperate rascal.

For several days Mr. Slimmey did not appear in the school-room; but he came back at last, looking very quiet and subdued. By that time a judge and jury, in far Vancouver, were dealing with the reckless rascal whom Frank Richards and his chums had laid by the heels.

THE END.

(There will be another grand, complete story of Frank Richards & Co. in next Tuesday's issue of the POPULAR. This story is entitled "Held Up on the Trail!" and is one of Owen Conquest's best stories.)

ANOTHER
FIVE FREE GIFTS
 for readers of
 the Companion Papers
Next Week!
 (See page 28.)

THE POPULAR.—No 173.

A SPLENDID COMPLETE STORY OF ROOKWOOD. BY OWEN CONQUEST.

THE GREATEST ADVENTURE STORY OF THE YEAR!



A Magnificent New Serial of Adventure, introducing Ferrers Lord & Co., and Gan Waga, the Eskimo.
By SIDNEY DREW.
Author of "The Invisible Raider."

WHAT HAS GONE BEFORE.

FERRERS LORD, having cleared up the mystery of the great German treasure trove, decides to make tracks south for an island he has bought from the Portuguese Government. The island is named Desolatia, and the millionaire adventurer puts it up for sale between his friends, PRINCE CHING LUNG, RUPERT THURSTON, HAL HONOUR (his engineer), and GAN WAGA, a fat Eskimo attached to the crew of the Lord of the Deep.

The money from the four friends is given to Rupert Thurston's little hospital, and they agree to play "Put and Take" for the ownership of Desolatia. After once tying with Ching Lung, Gan Waga has the great luck to win the island.

On the way south the yacht is overtaken by a terrific storm. They are swept far out of their course, and the yacht runs foul of a gigantic iceberg in the intense darkness. The ship crashes through the side of the hollow berg, and the entrance freezes up, imprisoning them. They discover a small tunnel leading out of the iceberg, and they find themselves on the shore of Gan Waga's Island. Ferrers Lord, Ching Lung, and Gan Waga are scouting on the island when they are held up by a Mexican millionaire, who tells them he has taken possession of the island, and orders them off. Ferrers Lord & Co. leave the island and return to the camp, which is being built on the ice-floe. Castaro sends Dan Govat with a letter to Ferrers Lord, telling him to surrender while he has the chance; but the millionaire refuses the Mexican's offer, and decides to fight for possession of the island.

During the next few days the weather becomes milder, and causes the ice-floe to break away from the rest of the island.

(Now read on.)

Burglar Proof!

"SOUND wisdom, no doubt, Honour," said the millionaire, smiling. "I'm not too eager to send for outside help. Well, build your boat, and we shall see."

As the ice seemed perfectly sound, the men were not overworked that day, and only a portion of the camp was moved. Honour reported the wireless to be in order, but the operator was not called upon to use it. Having completed one task, the tireless engineer looked over his available stock of material, and proceeded to plan out his new launch. Ching Lung arranged a boxing contest, in which, after a battle royal lasting nine rounds, Enoch Dalblair, the giant blacksmith, knocked out Barry O'Rooney amidst tremendous enthusiasm except on the part of the man who was knocked out.

"P'r'aps, yo' writes some poetry about that, old dears," grinned Gan Waga, as the fallen hero sat up and began to take notice. "How do you likes it, hunk?"

"Bedad, phwat d'ye'mane?" gasped Barry. "Don't tell me Oi'm counted out, bad luck to ut! The watch must have stopped. Sure, Oi only counted six meself, and was just taking a breather. Oi was coming up on the stroke of seven to give him wan to make him slape a month! Who says Oi'm out, is ut?"

"I say you're out, so get out!" said Ching Lung. "Only counted six! Why, you've been lying down there with your mouth open and your eyes shut for the last twenty seconds! A very neat little punch, Dalblair. Until somebody else beats you, you are the heavy-weight champion of Saurian Floe."

In the evening there was a smoking concert in the galley, the largest building available, and the crush was enormous. At nine o'clock "lights out" was sounded, for the next day was to be one of toil. Prout gave the men twenty minutes, and then made his rounds to see that all was quiet and snug. He stopped and gripped his revolver as he saw what seemed to be a couple of red eyes glaring at him out of the darkness, but it was

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only Gan Waga smoking two cigars at the same time.

"By honey, you'll get shot one of these times!" growled Prout. "Why didn't you turn in with the rest? What are you mooning round here for?"

"I watching those funny lights," said the Eskimo, pointing to the eerie will-o'-the-wisps, "and I listening, too, Tommy. What that, hunk?"

Across the brown, evil-smelling waste some unknown monster bellowed hoarsely, and another answered it.

Whatever these creatures of the night might be that bellowed and roared over the ice-floe, Prout did not think it worth while to waken anyone. By morning the wind had veered to the south and it was snowing. The millionaire welcomed the snow. It made the work of moving the camp easier, and it would delay the rotting of the weed and destroy some of the stench that Harold Honour considered to be so perilous to the health of the men. Though the wind had shifted, it was not blowing hard enough to retard the drift of the foe. They knew that the drift was southerly, and Ferrers Lord busied himself with experiments in order to ascertain the pace, but it was very difficult to arrive at anything definite, for there seemed to be two movements.

"We're swinging east as well as creeping south, Ching," he told the prince. "I make the southerly motion about three knots an hour."

"Then at some unknown date we shall hit up against the permanent ice and stop there, I suppose," said Ching Lung. "Or is it land?"

"If there is any permanent ice or land," said Ferrers Lord. "That earthquake may have altered everything, so who knows?"

"We seem to know precious little," said the prince. "I hear that those big nightingales were singing again last night. Two of them this time, howling and barking at each other. None of the Antarctic explorers have mentioned anything of the sort. With the exception of an odd whale and a stray seal,

they never encountered anything larger or more dangerous than a penguin. What are these brutes?"

"If they visit us again we'll find out," said Ferrers Lord. "I had a report from Prout. He thought they were much farther away than the pool where you encountered the first one. Some of the older inhabitants of the world may still exist in these remote seas, though as the great Saurians of the past flourished in warm waters and streaming swamps, it is difficult to believe that they could linger on in these frozen places. Perhaps the thing you fired at was an octopus. Such a brute, with his horny beak, might have straightened out the hook. Those big fellows are occasionally seen in polar waters."

"Perhaps, Chief," said the prince doubtfully. "I've seen a few octopuses—beg pardon, octopi—small and large, but they looked sluggish sort of chaps to me. O'Rooney says the one in the pool came along at the speed of a little destroyer under full steam. That was O'Rooney's version, of course, and we must allow something for his imagination. Has an octopus a voice? Can the beggar bellow and grunt and roar? After all he's only an overgrown cuttle-fish, and I always thought that cuttle-fish, like oysters, were dumb."

"Perhaps it's a brontosaurus, Ching, the chap there was such a lot of talk about in the newspapers some time back," put in Rupert Thurston with a laugh. "They dug up about fifty feet of bones of one of them. As brontosaurus means thunder lizard it ought to have a decently loud voice. If you could get one to perform for the cinema-camera and sing a few gramophone records, you'd make money."

The millionaire turned away, and seizing the rope attached to a loaded sledge, Thurston and the prince helped to haul it to the new camp. Close to the camp the ice had been cleared of weed, and Enoch Dalblair, the smith, was hammering a hollow steel bar into the floe. When he had sunk the bar almost level with the ice he screwed on a second bar and continued to swing his hammer.

Splendid Coloured Working Model of D'Arcy of St. Jim's in "Chuckles" ! 25

"What's the game, here?" asked Ching Lung. "Is this to be a sort of fountain to squirt cold sea-water baths over us, Dalblair?"

"I don't think it can be that, sir, for I'm only to go down twenty feet, and that won't touch water," answered the smith. "I don't know what it's for."

When Ching Lung came that way again a box had been fixed to the upstanding bar. The box contained a dial, and there was an electric bell attached to one side of it. Towards afternoon six or seven inches of snow had fallen. It was colder and the sky was clearing. When they obtained a glimpse of the sea it was as grey as slate and very calm. Then the wind dropped, and the snow ceased to fall.

"By Jove, Ching! If we could only get a real stinger of a frost now it might alter things," said Thurston. "With the sea as flat as that it might give us a first-class skating rink all the way back to Gan Waga's island. Instead of building a launch, Hal could rig up a few armoured motor-sleighs, and we could raid old Esteban in astonishing style. I'd like it to freeze hard enough to turn boiling oil solid."

"If wishes were Rqlls-Royces, you wouldn't see many people driving Ford cars, my friend," said the prince. "I wish the same thing, but I've noticed precious little ice down south fit to skate on. It's all bumps and hollows and crags, which seems to prove that it freezes hardest when the stormy winds are blowing. Let us consult the fat oracle. Hi, Gan! Is it going to freeze, and if so, how much?"

Gan Waga was carrying a shovel and looking round for a suitable site on which to erect another igloo.

"Not muchness freezer, Chingy," he said. "Yo' and Rupert think it jolly coldness soon, but not coldness enough for me."

"If you're going to build a new house, take my tip and put a barbed wire fence round the garden or you'll have O'Rooney and Maddock walking over it again with their large feet," said Ching Lung. "I say, Gan, how far off were those animals you heard squealing last night do you think?"

"I think they juts on the edge of the ices, Chingy," said the Eskimo. "They not so nearness as the pool. They come out of the sea perhaps."

Gan Waga was permitted to build his igloo in peace, for they were all too busy to interfere with him. The snow had transformed the ugly floe, and when darkness gathered none of the weird lights showed, for the rotting weed was buried under a white blanket, and for a time, at least, the process of decay had been checked. Overhead the grey arch of the sky was festooned with gleaming stars. The wireless sent out a few messages, but only Ferrers Lord and the operator knew what the messages were. They remained unanswered except for strange, unintelligible murmurs and buzzings, probably due to some magnetic storm. The waves were of long range, but they brought no reply.

The huts had been wired up for electric light, and the dynamo and petrol engine were in working order, but as darkness had come before the installation could be tested they had to be satisfied with lamps and candles in the huts. This being the case, Mr. Benjamin Maddeck and Mr. Barry O'Rooney were not a little astonished to see bright lights shining out of the gloom, two like huge eyes glaring at them, and a third shooting a brilliant ray upwards towards the sky. Barry and the bo'sun stopped and gazed. Then they went to see what it was all about.

The bright beams came from Waga's igloo. He had four windows in it and also a skylight glazed with ice. Gan had made friends with the electrician, and the kindly electrician had wired up the igloo and provided him with a powerful lamp to illuminate his mansion.

"Souse me, did you ever see the like?" growled the bo'sun. "We've got to go to bed with a silly candle, and here's that fat heathen in his snow-shack fixed up as luxurious as a millionaire. He'll want his breakfast took to him in bed next. This is the limit, ain't it?"

They looked in, each at a window, and saw that the Eskimo was busy. Not only did

he possess electric light, but he also possessed an electric cooking stove. On one part of the stove he was boiling potatoes in an aluminium saucepan, and on another part a couple of plump mutton chops were grilling. The proud owner of this up-to-date igloo was squatting on a tiger-skin rug smoking a cigar and testing the progress of the potatoes with the point of his knife. He looked very chubby and perfectly contented.

"Bedad, ut's amazing to me that they didn't fix him up wid a telephone, and an electric piano to play 'Home, Sweet Home,'" said Barry O'Rooney. "Ut's Bill Ellery who done that for the blubberbiter. Ellery is as soft wid him as the carpenter is. And a candle for us—phwat!"

As they watched, Gan Waga put the cigar aside, took one of the mutton chops off the grill, cooled it by rubbing it against the snowy wall of the igloo, and severed the meat from the bone with one hefty bite. Taking another raw chop from his pocket as he munched, he placed it on the grill, and unscrewed the cup from the top of a large vacuum flask containing hot coffee.

"The ugly cannibal!" said the bo'sun. "Souse me, that chop could only have been warmed through! Oh, you've spotted us, have you, beast?"

The Eskimo looked up. Evidently he saw the handsome faces at the windows, for he put the mutton-bone to his nose in a vulgar manner, and then pulled a string. A couple of tarpaulin blinds fell over the circular slabs of ice, and Barry O'Rooney and the bo'sun saw no more.

"Say the word, Ben, and O'll dance an Irish jig on his odd roof!" said Barry. "This pampering is bad for the boy. Ut ought to be shopped."

"Dance your boots off if you like, but, souse me, I'm not going to be fool enough to encourage you!" said Maddock. "He'll go squealing to the prince if we bust another of his igloos. Leave him alone. He don't understand electric light and electric stoves, and he'll start monkeying about with them till he gets a shock that'll make him howl blue murder and holler for the fire-engine. Leave him to it, and he'll do something silly."

This was probable, but Barry went round to another window, where the blind had not been lowered. This was a square window, not a lump of ice set halfway in the two-foot-thick snow wall. Gan Waga had damped the snow,

and the wooden frame had frozen in quite firmly. Gan Waga, not being a carpenter, had made one slight mistake by inserting the window upside down. Consequently, instead of opening inwards, with the fastening on the inner side, it opened outwards. As an igloo is a fairly easy place to burgle, and the Eskimo had no jewellery or family plate to tempt a Bill Sikes, this little error was not of much importance. But Barry O'Rooney saw something that made him chuckle.

On a ledge of snow that acted as a shelf was a cigar-box. Barry knew the brand. More than once he had tasted the exquisite flavour of Ching Lung's special cigars. They seldom came his way, and only came Gan Waga's way when the prince forgot to lock them up. It seemed monstrous that such treasures should be wasted on a semi-cannibal who devoured mutton chops in a half-raw condition.

"Howld aisy a bit, Ben!" whispered Barry O'Rooney. "O'd niver rob an honest man, but, bedad, ut's no croime to rob a haythen thafe from the backwoods of the North Pole. As the poet says, 'To rob a man, or stale or thave, O'd niver move an inch, but whin O'i see an aisy chance, O'll pinch, my boy, O'll pinch!' Gently does ut. Bedad, ut looks loike a full box of the very best goods—and they're mine!"

Barry blew gently on his cold fingers to warm them, and then unfastened the catch and opened the window. Gan Waga was busy with his third chop. Beyond the stove, leaning against the snow wall of the igloo was a mirror. In the mirror he saw the little window open, and a red hand appear. It was followed by an arm clad in blue cloth, with brass buttons on the cuff. Gan Waga went on with his supper quite calmly. The hand opened, and descended on the cigar-box, and the thiefing fingers closed over that coveted article with greedy eagerness.

A howl broke the silence of the chill Antarctic night—a howl of woe and pain—the shriek of a strong man smitten in fierce and sudden agony.

"Murther and gridrons! Ut's kilt dead O'i am! Hilp! Ochone, ochone! Owool! Murther! Ben, O'i'm electrocuted and kilt!"

The arm vanished, and the astonished bo'sun saw Barry O'Rooney stagger backwards, make several springs and jumps, like an expert on a pogo-stick, and then sit down in the snow, with his mouth open and his

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eyes shut, gasping hoarsely. Gan Waga put his smiling face out of the window.

"If yo' comed to empty the dustbin, or to buy any old bottles, yo' come in the daytimes, old dears!" he gurgled, and shut the window.

The bo'sun grinned as he raised Barry O'Rooney to his feet.

"Souse me, if I'd thought of it a bit sooner, I might have warned you," said Maddock. "I noticed Ellery smoking a nice-looking cigar, and see him and the Eskimo having a grin together. It was a trap, and you tumbled into it. That cigar-box was alive, eh? Full of electric-juice, not cigars! It saves you right. I took you for an honest man, O'Rooney, and now I've found you out to be a common thief I've done with you. Don't you attempt to speak to me again, or I'll clout you with the nearest brick! I'm honest, I am, souse me, and I don't mix up with rogues and pickpockets, so there!"

The bo'sun stuck up his chin and strode away haughtily into the gloom. Barry had not received a very severe electric shock, but it had surprised and hurt him, and he still tingled. As he stood rubbing himself, the window was again pushed open, and the owner of the igloo looked out.

"Run away, yo' boys!" he said. "Go and plays somewheres elses, not in front of my butterfuls igloo. Are yo' there, Barry dears? I thought I heard yo' loveliness voices. How yo' like those cigars, hunk? Ha ha, haah! A bit hotness, hunk? Ho, ho, ho, hoooh!"

Barry O'Rooney did not answer. He stooped and tried to mould a snowball to hurt at the Eskimo, but the snow was too dry and crisp. He felt inclined to charge down on the igloo and flatten it out, but he remembered that Ellery was a very smart electrician, and that Gan Waga's snow-house might be protected in the same way as the tempting box of cigars had been rendered thief-proof.

"Bedad, Gan, you caught me bending that toime!" he said. "Ut's your jape. Being only an ignorant haythen, you don't know phwat a black night's work this manes. Oi don't mind the shock, for Oi'm used to shocks. Oi've been called a thafe, and the man who calls the last of the O'Rooneys of Ballyunion a thafe must doie. Av ye want to see a dead bo'sun, call round about five minutes from now, and Oi'll show you one!"

Barry O'Rooney must have changed his mind, for a quarter of an hour later he was playing a game of whist, and Maddock was his partner.

A Call for Aid.

CHING LUNG put on his overcoat. Gan Waga had not put in his customary appearance, so the prince thought he would look him up.

"I'm going to see if I can rescue any of my cigars," he said to Thurston. "There's another box missing, and only one person to take them. I'm getting tired of it!"

"If you'd only tell Gan not to touch them, and gave him plainly to understand that you meant it, he'd let them alone," said Thurston.

"I don't think it could happen, old lad. You couldn't knock it into his head with a hammer that he doesn't own more of my property than I do. I only wish he'd pick out some of the second-raters instead of the prime stuff. If there are any left, I'll commandeer them, for the stock is running low."

Thurston, as usual, was writing up the log before turning into bed. When the prince opened the door the air struck very cold. The windows of the igloo that faced the camp were in darkness, but a light was streaming up through the roof. Ching Lung listened, expecting to hear the howling of the mysterious monsters that haunted the floe, but he heard nothing except a murmur of voices from the huts and then the sudden purring sound of an electric bell. The sound came from the instrument fixed on the hollow steel rods. A small electric lamp had lighted in the box, and the indicator on the dial was oscillating violently and tracing a zigzag pattern on the sheet of paper fixed behind it.

The instrument was a glaciograph, a device for recording any tremors or disruptions in the ice-field, and very similar to the seismograph that records earthquakes and earth-tremors. The needle was still quivering when the bell ceased to ring, but the light remained burning long enough for the prince to detach the sheet and replace it with a fresh one.

THE POPULAR.—No. 173.

"Come in, please," said a deep, quiet voice, as he knocked at the door of Ferrers Lord's hut. "Oh, it's you, Ching! Any news?"

The millionaire was sitting in front of the oil-stove.

"Something must have smashed, Chief," said Ching Lung. "The glaciograph has been working overtime. I didn't hear any noise or feel any shock, but by the pattern the thing has drawn we must have hit the bottom of the sea and kept on bumping against it. How's this for a record?"

The record resembled a crude drawing of a range of mountains with sharp peaks, gradually ascending in height and then dwindling again.

"See if she's working again, Ching, while I dress," said Ferrers Lord, glancing at the sheet. "If she is, we may have drifted into shallow water, and the floe may have grounded or be scraping bottom. As there was no shock, I'm afraid it is something different. I'll join you in a few minutes."

The electric bell was not ringing, and the electric lamp was out. The indicator was still slightly restless and giving little, spasmodic jerks. Under the bright stars the quiet floe looked white and ghostly, and in the still, frosty air the prince's breath was like steam. Ferrers Lord joined him.

"The glaciograph is a bit uneasy, but making no fuss about it now, Chief," said Ching Lung. "Even if we'd scraped, don't you think we might not have noticed it? The ice is jolly thick, and the weed with the snow on top of it would act as a kind of shock-absorber."

"True. But it could not have absorbed such a shock as that, if the floe is moving at three knots an hour, unless the bottom is soft mud."

"Then something must have parted."

"I think so," answered Ferrers Lord. "The glaciograph has recorded a break somewhere, or a collision. The floe may have run against an iceberg we did not notice, or even against land; but I think it's a break. We had better go and see. Even in the thickest part the floe is not too sound."

They struck across the snow in the starlight, taking a small sledge with them. It was freezing keenly, but Ching Lung noticed that there was no ice on the surface of the pool in which the unknown monster had lurked, and might still be lurking. It lay smooth, glassy, and quiet, reflecting the clear gleam of the stars.

"Why doesn't that freeze, I wonder?" he said. "It ought to have three or four inches of ice on it. Perhaps the brute is still at home, and takes a swim round every now and then to stir the water up and keep it from going solid, just as a seal keeps its blow-hole open. What's wrong with it? It looks different."

"The floe has swung," answered Ferrers Lord. "We have twisted round. That rough ice was exactly opposite Gan Waga's island looking north, and now it faces south. The break must be to the north, so we'll head that way."

In the hollow walking was not easy, for the snow lay in thick drifts, and had kept the frost from hardening the weed, which was still slippery and spongy. Suddenly the southern aurora flickered up, paling the light of the stars. From white the snow-clad floe became tinged with faint green. They climbed one of the weed dunes, and the aurora shone out brightly and more steadily. There was a gap in the stretch of green. A widening gap of grey water stretching east and west without a break—a widening canal, for the floe had split in half.

"Smaller and beautifully less, Chief," said Ching Lung. "I'm not surprised that the glaciograph got busy when it was telling us about that little calamity. If that sort of thing happens a few times we shall have to tie ourselves to what's left of the floe, to keep from slipping off."

(To be continued.)

THE LANKY LOCOS!

By a RAILWAY EXPERT.

OUR crowds of readers in Lancashire and Yorkshire will be greatly interested in the locomotive colour plate presented with this issue. It is of a type of express engine with which they are familiar, and which, moreover, is extremely popular with them because of its many good points.

The Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway, the best known of the provincial English lines, has always been a go-ahead railway, but has just lost its identity by amalgamation with the L. & N.W.R., much to the keen regret of the numerous admirers of the "Lanky," as the L. & Y. is familiarly called at Liverpool, Manchester, Bolton, Blackpool, Rochdale, Bradford, and a score of other big busy towns in the North.

From any of the numerous towns dotted over Lancashire and the West Riding, it is safe to say that a railway journey can be performed by L. & Y. trains, and even if there be a competing route, the L. & Y. is usually chosen by the patriotic native.

The L. & N.W.R. hopes that it will succeed to this goodwill of the L. & Y., but some people are not certain.

The best run in point of speed performed by these big "Lanky" engines is that between Liverpool and Manchester. The distance is 36½ miles, over a very difficult route, abounding with junctions. In pre-war days this was covered in 49 minutes by more than a score of trains a day, the speed being 54.7 miles an hour. Now an extra five minutes has been added to the schedule, lowering the speed to 48.7 miles an hour.

The Liverpool-Manchester high-speed run is only the commencement or end of a longer express journey to or from Hull, York or Bradford, and Liverpool.

The most famous express of the L. & Y. R. is the Blackpool Club train, which runs into Manchester each morning, and returns to Blackpool in the evening. The club passengers are first-class season-ticket holders, and each expects to find a certain seat reserved for him in the club saloon, or one of the first-class corridor coaches attached. The train altogether seats 420 passengers, of whom 268 are first-class. This is probably the only train conveying both first and third-class passengers with so large a proportion of first-class accommodation—sixty-four per cent. The average on a train of usual character is about twenty per cent.

A somewhat similar express runs between Southport and Manchester, and vice-versa, but without the club carriage. The Southport express seats 216 first-class passengers out of a total of 402.

The longest run without a stop on the L. & Y. R. is between Halifax and Blackpool—60½ miles. The speed is not high, averaging only 35 miles an hour. This run is on Saturdays. The daily longest non-stop run on the "Lanky" is from Manchester to Wakefield—47½ miles.

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in **THE "POPULAR."**



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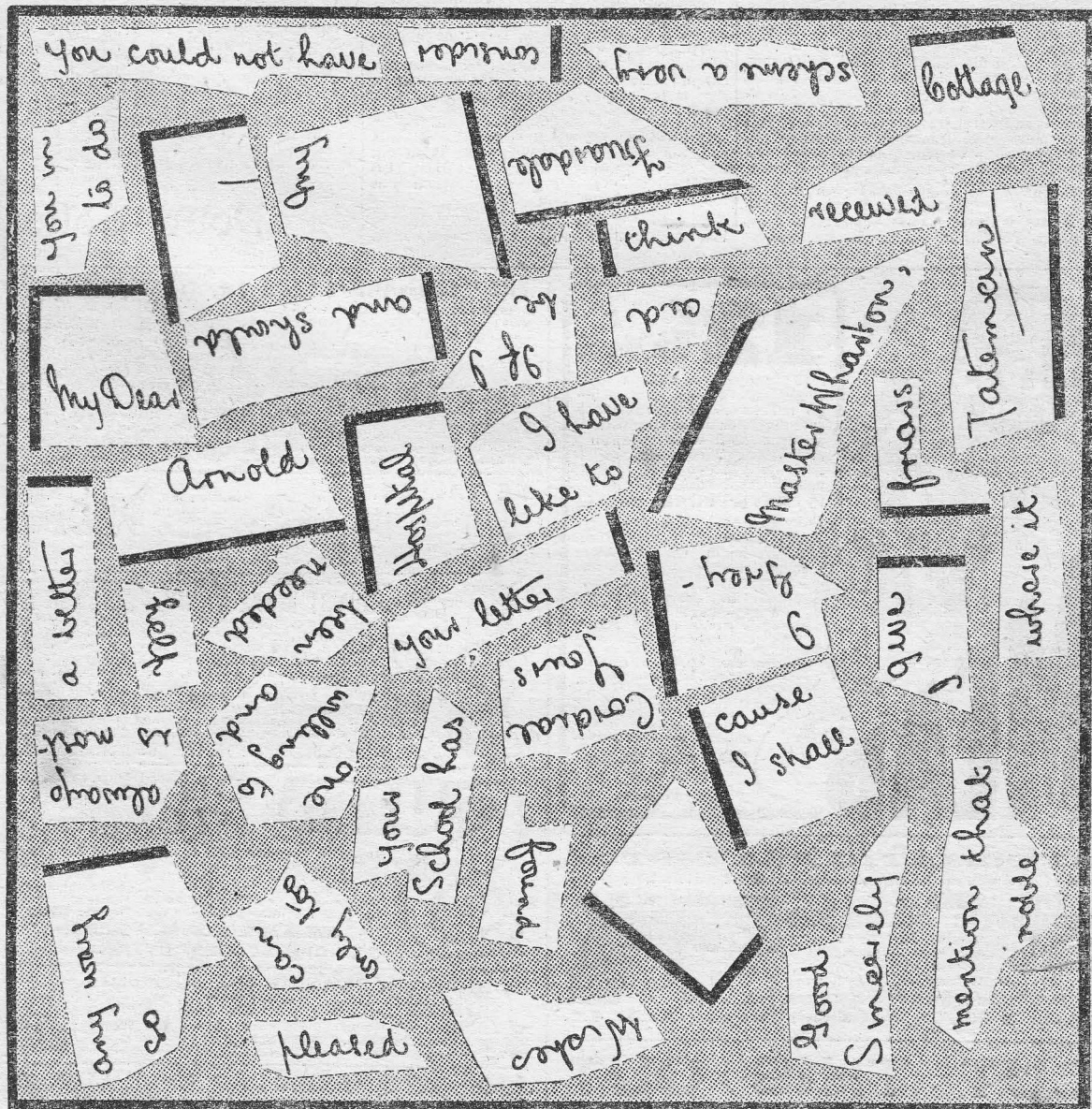
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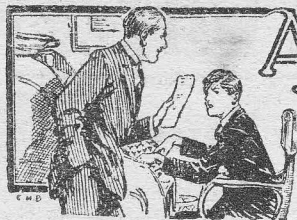
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A WORD WITH YOUR EDITOR

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WONDERFUL GIFTS!

Readers of the Companion Papers are this week enjoying the splendid free gifts which are being given away. No less than FIVE FREE GIFTS are given to readers this week, particulars of which you will find extremely interesting.

In the "Magnet" Library, which is now on sale at all newsagents, there is GIVEN AWAY A FREE REAL PHOTO of famous John Crossbie in action on the field of play. This popular Birmingham player makes a splendid photo, and he was "caught" by our camera in a characteristic attitude. You really must have this splendid photograph, so take a piece of paper and a pencil and write down upon it—the "Magnet" Library.

Another of our Companion Papers now on sale is the "Boys' Friend." This popular periodical is giving away, absolutely free, A REAL PHOTO of Johnny Brown, who is

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In the "Gem" Library this week there will appear a magnificent gift in the shape of TWO FREE REAL PHOTOS of famous footballers—to wit, Alec Donaldson, of Sunderland, and Robert Kelly, of Burnley. The "Gem" Library will be on sale on Wednesday morning—put the name down on your paper!

In this issue you will have found a splendid coloured engine plate. Next week there will be still another GRAND COLOURED ENGINE PLATE for your collection. Put the name down on your paper!

No reader of this paper can afford to miss this golden opportunity to possess splendid

photos of many of the famous footballers in the country. But you run a great risk in getting only half a collection if you do not order your copies of the Companion Papers to be saved for you. The best way to do this is by putting your name and address on the sheet of paper upon which you have written down the names of the Companion Papers, and drop it in at the newsagent's shop. You will then be certain to get what you want.

Readers will find in the "Magnet" Library chat particulars of the manner in which they can secure albums for these wonderful free photos. That is yet another reason why you should be sure to get this week's issue of the "Magnet" Library.

There will be FIVE MORE FREE GIFTS NEXT WEEK for readers of the Companion Papers!

Next Week's Stories.

I regret I have not sufficient space at my disposal this week to tell you about our next Tuesday's programme. I ask all my chums to have a look at the footlines, headlines, and notices at the end of this week's stories, where particulars will be found.

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