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Week Ending—
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New
Series
No. 179.

28
Pages.

The POPULAR 2d

GREATLY ENLARGED.

SPECIAL
SUPPLEMENT
INSIDE.



GUNTEN IS CAUGHT EAVESDROPPING!
(A Dramatic moment in the long complete tale of Frank Richards & Co. inside.)

SERGEANT LASALLE IS CALLED IN TO INVESTIGATE A MYSTERY, AND EVENTUALLY CLEARS FRANK RICHARDS' NAME.



A Grand Long Complete Story of FRANK RICHARDS' Schooldays in Canada.

By **MARTIN CLIFFORD,**

Author of the famous tales of Tom Merry & Co. of St. Jim's, appearing in The "Gem."

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

Under a Cloud.

CHUNKY TODGERS met Frank Richards & Co. as they arrived at the gate of Cedar Creek School in the crisp winter morning.

Chunky's usually humorous fat face was very serious.

"I guess you're in for it, Richards!" he remarked, shaking a fat forefinger at Frank.

"In for what, Chunky?"

"A jolly good scalping!" said Chunky impressively.

"Hullo, who's going to scalp Franky?" inquired Bob Lawless. "Is Gunten on the war path again?"

"Tain't Gunten!"

"Who is it, then?" asked Vere Beauclerc. "Frank hasn't any other enemies at Cedar Creek."

"Unless it's Gunten's pal, Keller," said Frank, with a smile. "Well, let him trot out. There's time before morning lessons, and I'm feeling specially fit this morning."

"Tain't a scrap!" said Todgers.

"Then what is it, Podgy?" demanded Bob. "What are you chewing the rag about, anyhow?"

"It's Miss Meadows."

"Well?" demanded Frank.

"You've been up to something," said Chunky Todgers sorrowfully. "I'd never have thought it of you, Richards!"

"You're talking in riddles," said Frank, in bewilderment. "Is Miss Meadows offended about something?"

"You bet she is. You should have seen her face," said Chunky. "Gunten says she's been crying, and it's a beastly shame!"

"If you're not potty, tell me what you mean!" exclaimed Frank, in exasperation. "I've done nothing to offend Miss Meadows that I know of."

"Rats!" said Todgers. "Anyhow, you can tell Miss Meadows that. She's told me to send you in as soon as you came. You'll find her in her room. She knows what you've done; and so do all the fellows—it's leaked out somehow."

"Miss Meadows wants to see me?" asked Frank very quietly.

"Yes, and at once."

"Well, I'll go."

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Frank Richards left his chums, and hurried towards the schoolhouse. His face was troubled now, and his mind, too.

He had a great respect for Miss Meadows, the schoolmistress at Cedar Creek, as all the fellows had.

It was news to him—and unpleasant news—that Miss Meadows had a serious cause of complaint against him.

Two or three fellows were standing by the porch as he went in, and Eben Hacke called out:

"Shame!"

Frank Richards spun round.

"What do you mean by that, Hacke?" he exclaimed fiercely.

Hacke gave him a grim look.

"Oh, don't snort at me!" he said contemptuously. "You've played a dirty trick. I dare say you thought it was funny. Perhaps it was. But I calculate it was a dirty trick, all the same; and all the galoots will tell you so."

"Rotten, I call it!" chimed in Kern Gunten, the Swiss, with a sneering laugh.

And two or three fellows called out shame!

Frank stood rooted to the ground.

He had always been popular at the lumber school, and this unexpected reception astonished him more than it angered him.

Mr. Slimmey stepped out of the porch, and touched Frank on the shoulder.

"Go in at once to Miss Meadows, Richards!"

"Yes, sir!" Frank looked at the young master. The kindly face of Mr. Paul Slimmey was hard now and unsmiling. There was wrath and scorn in the glance he gave Frank over his gold-rimmed glasses. "Mr. Slimmey, what have I done?"

"You know very well," said Mr. Slimmey coldly. "Go in at once!"

Frank Richards turned into the porch, almost dazed.

Mr. Slimmey had always been kind to him; he was kind to everybody. What did his cold and contemptuous look mean? What was Frank supposed to have done? His conscience was clear.

As he went into the porch he caught the sneering grin of Kern Gunten, and a suspicion flashed into his mind. He swung round again towards the Swiss.

"This is something of your doing, Gunten!" he broke out. "You have been lying about me, you foreign cad!"

Gunten shrugged his shoulders.

"Gunten has nothing whatever to do with the matter, Richards," said Mr. Slimmey icily. "Your rascally action has been discovered, that is all!"

"My—my what?" gasped Frank.

"Miss Meadows is waiting for you. Go in at once!" rapped out the assistant-master.

Frank went in, dumb.

He tapped at the door of Miss Meadows' study, opposite the school-room door in the passage.

"Come in!"

Miss Meadows' voice was low and hard.

Frank entered the room.

Miss Meadows was seated at her desk, and she turned her eyes upon the flushed, dismayed schoolboy as he came in. The expression on her face struck Frank like a blow.

There was no kindness there. She was a little pale, and her face was set, her lips compressed.

Frank looked at her speechlessly.

"Oh, you have come, Richards."

"Yes, ma'am!" gasped Frank.

"You know why I have sent for you?"

"No."

"The trick you played upon me has been discovered."

Frank only looked at her in bewilderment.

"Trick?" he repeated. "I've played no trick! What do you mean, Miss Meadows?"

The schoolmistress' lip curled.

"It is useless to discuss the matter, Richards, and it is a disagreeable subject to me. No doubt you would not hesitate to lie, after what you have done. I could never have believed it of you; I had a good opinion of you. I know better now. I shall give you a letter to take to Mr. Lawless, to explain to him why you cannot remain in this school. And you will leave at once."

Frank Richards staggered.

But indignation overcame his dismay. His eyes flashed, and he straightened up, and met the schoolmistress' eyes fearlessly.

"I will not go! I will not take the letter to my uncle!" he exclaimed. "Tell me what I've done!"

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

The Accusation.

MISS MEADOWS compressed her lips. Whatever it was that was laid to Frank Richards' charge, it was evident that the schoolmistress of Cedar Creek fully believed in his guilt, and that the subject was distasteful to her. But Frank Richards stood his ground firmly.

He did not mean to be condemned unheard. There was a long pause, but Miss Meadows spoke at last in a low, clear voice, cold as steel.

"You have a right to be heard, Richards, even if you are only speaking the most palpable falsehoods. I will hear you if you insist upon it."

"You have no right to say that I am speaking falsely!" exclaimed Frank passionately.

"Richards!" "I am not a liar, Miss Meadows! Ask any of the fellows whether he has ever known me to tell a lie. Nobody can say so!"

"That is enough!" "It isn't enough!" broke out Frank hotly. "You've told me I'm to get out of the school, and you haven't even told me what I'm accused of. I'm only asking for fair play. Everybody has a right to that!"

"Very well. The other day I asked you to ride over to Thompson with a letter from me to the office of the 'Thompson Press.'"

"I did it," said Frank. "In that letter an advertisement was enclosed for a handy man to help in the work here."

"I understood so," said Frank. "You opened my letter on your way to Thompson, and destroyed my advertisement, and placed another in the envelope in its place."

"I did not!" shouted Frank. "Silence! The new advertisement, written by you, was one calculated to bring me into contempt and derision!" Miss Meadows' face flushed as she spoke. "It was an advertisement for insertion in the Matrimonial Column of the 'Thompson Press.'"

"Oh!" gasped Frank. "Mr. Penrose, the proprietor of the 'Thompson Press,' was surprised to receive such an advertisement from me, but as it was accompanied by a letter in my handwriting, which he knows well, he took it as genuine, and printed it."

"I—I saw it in the paper!" muttered Frank. "Everybody in the section has seen it, I think!" said Miss Meadows bitterly. "It has become a standing joke in every bar-room in the Thompson Valley. What have I done, Richards, that you should hold my name up to scorn in this wicked way?"

"I—I did not!" Frank panted. "It's a trick! Miss Meadows, you can't believe that I would do such a thing? It was mean and cowardly!"

"I am glad you can see that, at all events!" "And—and you believe I did it?" "I know you did!" "I swear I did not!"

"You need not perjure yourself, Richards. My letter was in your hands, and your hands alone, until it was delivered to Mr. Penrose at the 'Press' office in Thompson. No one else could have touched it—without your connivance, at least. Mr. Penrose is about to publish a special edition of his paper to explain the wicked deception and do me what justice is now possible. It is all that can be done now; but your wicked prank has shamed me before everyone in the section. It was base—cruel!"

Miss Meadows' voice faltered. The break in the schoolmistress' steady voice went straight to Frank's heart. He made a step forward.

"Miss Meadows, if I'd done that I should deserve to be kicked out of the school—and out of my uncle's house as well. And I should be if Mr. Lawless believed it. But—but it isn't true! I never knew the advertisement had been tampered with—I never even suspected it at the time. But I know who did it. Miss Meadows, your letter was taken away from me—"

"Come, come!" "Won't you let me explain?" panted Frank. "You may say what you like," said Miss Meadows wearily. "It will make no difference, but I will hear you."

"I was stopped in the timber on my way

to Thompson that day!" exclaimed Frank breathlessly. "Kern Gunten and Keller were waiting for me there, and Gunten lassoed me, and they tied me to a tree for over an hour."

"What?" "Gunten took your letter from me, and said he would deliver it at the office in Thompson, and that he would leave me tied up in the timber all night!" panted Frank.

"He came back after an hour or so. I thought he had only taken the letter away to make me believe that he was really going to leave me there all night to give me a scare."

"Richards!" "I don't know how he opened the letter; it didn't look as if it had been opened when he gave it me back," continued Frank. "But he must have done it, and that's why he roped me in in the timber. While I was tied to the tree he was out of sight in the timber with Keller. I thought then that he was only trying to scare me. I know now—"

"You said nothing of all this at the time, Richards," said Miss Meadows, her eyes searching the schoolboy's flushed face.

"Of course I didn't!" exclaimed Frank. "I thought it was only a trick on me, and I'm not a sneak! Why should I have complained about him to you? Chaps don't run and inform against a fellow for a trick. I never thought of telling you about it, of course. I'd have jolly well licked Gunten for it, but he made me promise to let the matter drop before he untied me."

Miss Meadows was still scanning his face. There was sincerity in the boy's look and voice. But the explanation was a strange one, and it came late.

Frank Richards was a little pale now, and his face was troubled.

He had only been eager at first to be brought face to face with the scheming Swiss. But he realised now that the weight of evidence was on the side of Gunten.

There were two witnesses against one. Frank had to prove that Gunten lassoed him in the forest.

How was he to prove it, when he had been alone at the time? And Keller evidently was prepared to swear that Gunten had not been there at all.

"The matter rests between you," said Miss Meadows, looking alternately at the schoolboys. "Gunten, Richards declares that you tied him up in the wood, with the aid of Keller, and took my letter from him!"

"It is a lie, ma'am!" said Gunten calmly. Frank clenched his hands.

"Someone," said Miss Meadows, "opened my letter, took out the enclosure, and inserted another, and closed the envelope again before it reached the newspaper office at Thompson. If you took the letter from Richards, Gunten, it was for this purpose."

"I did not, ma'am!" "Did you meet Richards at all on his way to Thompson that afternoon?"

"No, ma'am!" "Did you, Keller?" "No, ma'am!" "What have you to say now, Richards?" Frank set his teeth.

"I have to say that I am innocent, Miss Meadows; that Gunten lassoed me and tied me to a tree, and Keller helped him, and that Gunten took your letter and kept it for an hour or more!"

"And opened it?" "Certainly!" "Yet you did not observe that it had been opened when you received it back?" Gunten grinned.

"I—I never thought of looking!" stammered Frank. "It never occurred to me that he was after the letter all the time. I thought he only took it away to make me believe he was going to strand me in the timber all night, as he said."

Mr. Slimmey broke in. "May I speak, Miss Meadows?" "Pray do, Mr. Slimmey!"

"It is certain," said the young man quietly, "that the letter was opened on the way to Thompson, and closed again, without leaving a trace, because Mr. Penrose, at Thompson, did not observe that it had been opened before it reached his hands. It would be no more difficult for Gunten to do this than for Frank Richards to do it. As Mr. Penrose did not detect that the letter had been opened, it is natural enough that Richards should not have detected it, if the matter is as he states."

Frank Richards gave the young master a grateful look. Miss Meadows nodded.

"Quite so, Mr. Slimmey—quite so." "The letter," continued Mr. Slimmey, "must have been opened by steam, in order

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Gunten raised his eyebrows. "No, Miss Meadows." "Did you assist Gunten in doing so, Keller?"

"Certainly not, ma'am!" said Keller calmly. "They are lying!" exclaimed Frank.

Miss Meadows made a gesture for silence. "Lawless and Beauclerc, Richards says that he told you of this incident after his return from Thompson that day."

"I guess that's so, Miss Meadows," said Bob Lawless at once. "He was a jolly long time gone, and he told us Gunten had roped him in and tied him to a tree for an hour."

"He certainly told us so, Miss Meadows," said Beauclerc. "And we knew that it was true, too."

"How could you know that, Beauclerc?" "Because we know Frank Richards, ma'am," said Beauclerc calmly. "I know very well that he would not tell a lie."

"Same here!" said Bob. "If Gunten denies it, he's lying!" "You two boys only know what Richards told you about the matter?" asked Miss Meadows.

"Yes, ma'am." "Then you cannot give any evidence of value," said Miss Meadows, "excepting your faith in Richards, which I shall bear in mind. You may go, Lawless and Beauclerc."

The chums reluctantly left the room. Frank Richards was a little pale now, and his face was troubled.

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THE THIRD CHAPTER. Not Proven.

BOB and Vere Beauclerc joined Frank at once. They had already learned from the other fellows what he was accused of. They left it in no doubt that they were standing by their chum.

Gunten and Keller stood together, their heavy faces expressing no emotion whatever. They were not nervous.

They were prepared to lie without limit; and, so far as they could see, there was no way in which their falsehoods could be detected.

"Gunten!" "Yes, Miss Meadows?" "Did you lasso Richards in the wood when he was riding to Thompson, and take a letter from him?"

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to leave no trace. Someone must have heated water over a fire or a lantern for the purpose. It was difficult for Gunten to do so, but no less difficult for Richards to do so in the timber. All the circumstances in connection with the letter itself prove no more against one than against the other."

"You are quite right, Mr. Slimmey." "There's another thing, too!" exclaimed Frank Richards. "Ask any fellow in the school whether I've ever told him a falsehood. Then ask him whether Gunten has. There isn't a chap at Cedar Creek who doesn't know that Gunten is a born liar!"

Miss Meadows started. It was, at least, a kind of evidence. She had observed Frank Richards' character, and she had observed Gunten's. A dozen times, at least, she had known the Swiss to lie.

Gunten gritted his teeth. "You are lying now, Richards!" he said. "Every fellow in the school knows what you have done!"

"And how do they know?" exclaimed Frank. "How do the fellows know anything about it? Miss Meadows can't have told them. It's been let out by somebody. You spread the yarn round before I came in this morning!"

"What is this?" exclaimed Miss Meadows. "Do the other fellows know what are you accused of, Richards?"

"They started on me about it the minute I came!" said Frank bitterly. "Gunten took care to get his yarn in first."

"It is very extraordinary that they should know. Neither Mr. Slimmey nor I have said a word in the hearing of the school. Gunten, if you spread the story, how did you know that I was about to accuse Richards of this?" exclaimed Miss Meadows, with a sharp look of suspicion at the Swiss. "I did not spread the story, Miss Meadows," said Gunten calmly. "I think it got out through Richards bragging yesterday of the trick he had played on you."

"Why, you bound—" shouted Frank. "Silence, Richards!"

"But—but I—" "Silence! I cannot decide between you!" said Miss Meadows. "There are two witnesses against you, Richards; but I cannot forget that both Gunten and Keller have been reprimanded more than once for speaking falsely, while I have certainly not known you to be untruthful. There is no other evidence, and I cannot decide yet. The matter must remain in abeyance for the present." The schoolmistress bit her lip. "I cannot risk committing an act of injustice. I shall reflect upon the matter. For the present, you may go."

And the schoolboys left the study, leaving the mistress of Cedar Creek with a troubled brow.

The matter which had seemed so simple at first was complicated now.

It was hopelessly perplexing, and there seemed no way out. Yet it could not remain where it was. That was impossible.

Miss Meadows had plenty of food for thought that morning.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER. The Benefit of the Doubt.

FRANK RICHARDS took his place in the class as usual that morning.

The Cedar Creek fellows were surprised enough to see him doing it.

Frank's face was flushed, and he did not meet the curious and scornful glances that were cast upon him from all sides.

His schoolfellows condemned him; they had not heard his version of the story yet.

Gunten had had his innings first, though he had been very careful to allow the story to leak out without betraying that it came from him.

It seemed impossible to nail the falsehood of the cunning Swiss.

At the best, it was to be Frank Richards' word against his and Keller's.

Miss Meadows took no special note of Frank when she took the class that morning.

She had resolved to let the matter stand until some fresh evidence was forthcoming. It was all she could do.

Frank did not heed his schoolfellows' looks; but his chums did, and Bob and Vere gave angry looks in return.

After morning lessons the three chums left the school-room together, and there was a

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NEXT
TUESDAY!

"TURNED OUT!"

buzz in the school-ground as they were surrounded by half Cedar Creek.

"So Miss Meadows has let you off, Richards!" exclaimed Eben Hacke.

"Shame!" "I guess we're not going to let him off!"

shouted Tom Lawrence. "Who's for riding him on a rail out of the school?"

"Hear, hear!" "That's a cinch!"

"Collar him!" Frank Richards clenched his hands.

"You thumping, silly galoots!" roared Bob Lawless. "Can't you listen to what a chap has to say first?"

"What's he got to say?" growled Dick Dawson.

"Give him a chance!" said Hopkins. "I believe in givin' every cove a chance. Go it, Richards, and when you've done we'll 'andle you fast enough!"

"Good for you, Cockney!" said Chunky Todgers.

Frank's eyes gleamed at the crowd. In a quiet voice he told his own version of the story, Gunten and Keller listening to him, with sneering looks.

Frank's story made a good impression on the Cedar Creek fellows.

They knew Gunten. More than one of them had had experience of his bitter malice.

"By hokey, that puts a different complexion on it, I calculate!" remarked Eben Hacke. "I dare say it was Gunten all the time!"

"It wasn't!" yelled Gunten furiously.

"Well, we know you're a liar, Gunten, and we don't know that Richards is!" said Tom Lawrence.

"'Ear, 'ear!" chimed in 'Arold 'Opkins. "I know Richards came to lend us a 'and at the clearing the day we came 'ere, and I thought he was a decent cove. And I know Gunten is a swindlin' 'ound!"

The Swiss strode away, his face furious.

There was no proof possible in the case, but public opinion was veering round in favour of Frank Richards.

It was something to have a reputation for honourable and straight dealing, and Frank's good name stood him in good stead now.

The fellows, at all events, reserved their judgment; but, upon the whole, they were more inclined to be "down" on Gunten than upon Frank Richards now that Frank had had a chance of putting his case.

"Silly duffers!" grunted Bob Lawless, when they went in to dinner. "They ought to know Gunten by this time!"

Frank Richards had a troubled look at dinner that day.

The matter was in abeyance, and it looked as if it never could be decided. That was a far from satisfactory state of affairs.

Miss Meadows had been humiliated and persecuted by Gunten's cruel trick, and although Frank was not adjudged guilty, suspicion rested very strongly upon him.

He was trying to think a way out of the

impasse, but he could not. It seemed that there was nothing to be done, and that he must endure allowing that odious suspicion to cling to him.

His face was clouded when he came out with his chums after the school dinner.

"This is rotten, you chaps!" he said dismally. "It looks as if the truth can never come out now!"

"I guess I've been thinking a think," said Bob Lawless.

"How do you mean?" "You remember Sergeant Lasalle, who came down here to round up the rustler?"

"What about him?" "He's still at Thompson," said Bob. "The North-West Mounted Police are awfully keen chaps, you know—they have to be. Suppose we saw Mr. Lasalle, and asked him his opinion about it. He's a sort of a kind of a detective, in a way, and he might hit on something to do."

"If he believed me," said Frank.

"Well, he knows you; we helped him round up the rustler," said Bob. "Anyhow, let's try him."

"It's a good idea," said Beauclerc. "It won't do any harm, at any rate."

Frank had brightened up a little. He remembered Sergeant Lasalle, and he had great faith in the sergeant's capacity.

There was a chance, at all events, that the keen-witted French-Canadian sergeant might be able to help.

Frank and Bob brought out their ponies, and started for Thompson. Beauclerc had no mount, and it was necessary to lose no time.

They were likely to be late for afternoon lessons, in any case.

But luck was their way, for, a mile from the lumber school, they caught sight of a scarlet coat on the trail ahead.

"The sergeant!" exclaimed Bob.

Sergeant Lasalle returned their salute cordially. He remembered the two boys.

They wheeled their horses to join him.

"Sergeant, we're in trouble, and we want you to help!" exclaimed Bob Lawless.

"You'll do it?" The big, bronzed sergeant smiled.

"Anything I can, sonny. What's the trouble?"

"Tell him, Franky."

The schoolboys rode one on either side of the big Canadian, while Frank Richards told him the story.

Sergeant Lasalle gave him several keen glances during his narration.

His brows knitted a little.

"I've heard about this thing in Thompson," he said quietly. "It was as mean a trick to play on a woman as I ever heard of. If you did it, Frank Richards, you ought to be cowed till the skin came off!"

"I should deserve it!" said Frank. "But I did not do it. Kern Gunten did it, only I can't prove it!"

The sergeant nodded.

He rode on for some time in thought.

They came in sight of the lumber school at last.

"I was calling on Miss Meadows before leaving for Kamloops," said the sergeant. "I shall look into this while I'm at the school. I believe your yarn, Richards; I guess I know a straight kid when I see one. I shouldn't be much use in the Mounted Police if I couldn't. But it can be put to the proof, I guess; and that's what I'm going to do."

Frank's heart bounded.

"You've thought of a way?" he exclaimed.

"I guess so."

"Oh, good!" They did not question the sergeant, but their faces were brighter when they rode up to the school.

The sergeant went on towards the school-house, and here Beauclerc joined his chums.

"I guess it's all O.K.!" said Bob jubilantly.

"The sergeant's thought of a way, he says. And Lasalle is the real goods!"

And the chums of Cedar Creek waited, in keen anxiety, outside the lumber schoolhouse.

THE FIFTH CHAPTER. The Sergeant's Way!

MISS MEADOWS greeted the sergeant, when Black Sally showed him in, with a somewhat troubled smile.

"I was coming to say good-bye, Miss Meadows, before I lit out from Kamloops," said Mr. Lasalle. "I met two of your boys on the way—Richards and Lawless."

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Miss Meadows' brow clouded. "They've spun me a yarn," continued the sergeant. "I guess that kid Richards is straight goods, and I believe him. Would you object, Miss Meadows, to my taking a hand in this inquiry, and getting out the facts?"

"I should be very much obliged if you could," said Miss Meadows. "I have thought over the matter very carefully, but I cannot decide what is to be done. I intended to ask you for your opinion concerning Richards and Gunten."

"I guess I've had some experience in sifting evidence," said the sergeant. "Whichever one is lying, I fancy I can spot him. With your permission, then, I'll try."

"By all means." "Call in the two foreign boys, then." Gunten and Keller were called into the room.

The sergeant eyed them both with his keen, quiet eyes.

Gunten was cool and collected, but Keller showed some signs of uneasiness under the sergeant's steady scrutiny.

He had not his confederate's nerve, and he was not nearly so thorough a rascal as Gunten.

The sergeant's official uniform and his grim, bronzed face had a dismaying effect upon Keller.

"Your name?" asked the sergeant. "Keller, sir." "Then the other is Gunten? Very well. You may go, Gunten, for the present." Gunten hesitated.

He did not want his confederate to be questioned separately, if he could help it. He was beginning to have a vague sense of alarm.

"Well, what are you waiting for?" rapped out the sergeant.

"I—I'm going," muttered Gunten. He left the room, reluctantly closing the door.

Sergeant Lasalle rose quietly, stepped to the door, and threw it open again.

Gunten started back in the passage, with a crimson face.

"Listening?" said the sergeant grimly. "I—I was not! I—"

"Vamoose!" Gunten went down the passage, biting his lip.

The sergeant closed the door again, and turned to Keller.

"Now, Keller, my lad, I want you to answer some questions," said the sergeant. "Don't be uneasy; you've nothing to fear if you tell the truth."

"Yes, sir!" muttered Keller. "You deny having waited with Gunten on the Thompson trail for Frank Richards?"

"Certainly!"

"Did you go home with Gunten that night?"

"We always go home together, sir, as we both live in Thompson."

"Quite so. Then you were with Gunten after he left the school, and till he arrived at his father's store in Thompson?"

"Certainly, sir!" said Keller, recovering confidence.

He had nothing to fear from questioning like this, so far as he could see.

"Then you can bear witness that Gunten did not lay for Richards on the trail?"

"Yes, sir!"

"Having been with him all the time, you know it for a fact?"

"Yes."

"Did you arrive home at the usual time?" Keller paused.

"We—we were later home than usual," he said at last.

"Ha! Why?"

"We—we had a ride round," said Keller. "We do sometimes, sir, when the weather's fine."

The sergeant nodded.

"You rode round a bit before going home?" he remarked.

"Yes, sir. No harm in that."

"None whatever. At the time Richards declares that you and Gunten were roping him up you were simply taking a ride together?"

"Just that, sir!"

"Where did you ride?"

Keller paused. It dawned upon him now why the sergeant was questioning him separately from his associate.

"We—we rode through the timber," he stammered.

"In what direction?"

Keller breathed hard.

"I—I don't quite remember."



TROUBLE FOR FRANK RICHARDS!—"I guess we're not going to let you off!" shouted Tom Lawrence. "Who's for riding him on a rail out of the school?" "Hear, hear! Collar him!" Frank Richards clenched his hands hard. "You thumping, silly galoots!" roared Bob Lawless. "Can't you listen to what a chap has to say first?" (See Chapter 4.)

"Try to remember, my lad!" said the sergeant grimly.

"We—we rode up the creek!" muttered the unhappy Swiss.

"Up the creek?" said the sergeant. "Back towards the school, then?"

"I—I mean down the creek."

"Oh, you rode down the creek? Towards Cedar Camp?"

"Ye-es."

"Did you reach the camp?"

"Nunno!"

"You must have ridden slowly, then. It is not a great distance to the camp, following the creek."

"We—we rode slowly," said Keller, licking his dry lips.

"You rode slowly down the creek, and turned back before you reached the camp, and then went home to Thompson?"

"Yes, sir!"

"Very good!" said the sergeant. "You will wait here. You are quite sure, Keller, that you and Gunten rode slowly?"

"Quite sure!" muttered Keller.

"You did not gallop at all?"

"No, sir!"

The sergeant went to the door, and down the passage.

He beckoned to Kern Gunten, who was biting his lips in the porch.

"You are wanted, Gunten!"

The Swiss followed him back to Miss Meadows' room.

"Keller, you will not speak to Gunten," said Sergeant Lasalle. "You are forbidden to say a single word while I am questioning Gunten. Do you understand?"

"Yes, sir!" gasped Keller.

"Gunten, I have a few questions to put to you, your schoolmistress having placed this matter in my hands. You were late home on the evening that Frank Richards took the letter to Thompson."

Gunten hesitated a brief second. But he knew that Keller must have admitted what could easily be proved, and he answered:

"Yes, sergeant!"

"You went for a ride round with Keller?"

"Yes, I went for a ride with Keller," said

Gunten desperately, hoping that it was the same yarn that Keller had told.

"Very well," said the sergeant, unmoved. "You need not fear to speak the truth, Gunten. I want to know why you went for a gallop with Keller?"

Miss Meadows started a little.

This was not in accordance with Keller's statements. But the sergeant knew what he was doing.

"It—it was fine weather, sir!" muttered Gunten. "We—we sometimes do, in fine weather, sir."

"Quite so; but did you have any special motive for going on a gallop that evening?"

"Oh, no, sir!"

"You simply wanted to enjoy a gallop?"

"Yes."

"In what direction did you go?"

Gunten's tongue clove to his teeth. He could not even see Keller's face, with the bulky sergeant interposing.

"I—I forget!" he stammered at last.

"Gunten!" said Miss Meadows warningly. "Your memory is as bad as Keller's," smiled the sergeant. "That is a very curious coincidence. You galloped along, but you do not remember in which direction?"

"No, I don't!" muttered Gunten.

"You were not going to any special destination, then?"

"No."

"Then why did you gallop?"

"I—I enjoy a gallop!" muttered Gunten. "I'm a good rider, and I'm fond of a good gallop. No harm in that, I suppose?"

"Not at all."

"I don't see what all this leads to," said Gunten sulkily. "I can go for a gallop if I like, I suppose? It has nothing to do with Miss Meadows' letter."

The sergeant nodded.

"Your statements are quite clear," he said. "You cannot remember where you went; you can only remember that you and Keller galloped in some direction."

"Yes. That's enough, I suppose?"

(Continued on page 23.)

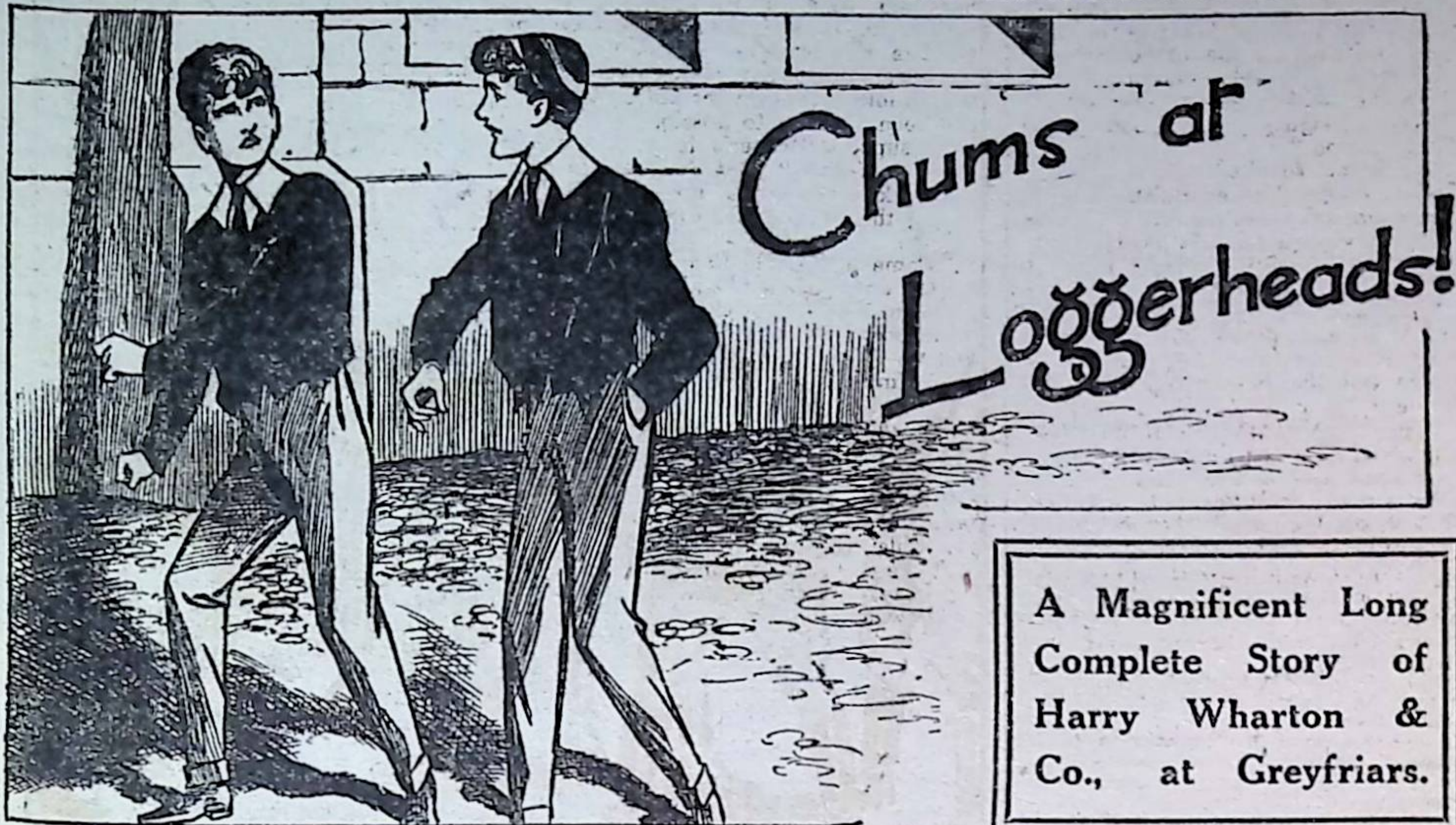
THE POPULAR.—No. 179.

A MAGNIFICENT STORY OF FRANK RICHARDS & CO.,
By MARTIN CLIFFORD.

NEXT
TUESDAY!

"TURNED OUT!"

A SPLendid TALE, TELLING OF A RIFT IN THE LUTE, AND HOW OLD CHUMS BECAME PARTED.



By FRANK RICHARDS

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

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

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

Bob Cherry—Swot!

"HA, ha, ha!"
A roar of laughter went up from the crowd of juniors of the Remove Form at Greyfriars. They were standing by the notice-board, upon which was pinned the names of the entrants for the Bishop's Scholarship.

"Bob Cherry!"

"That boob!"

Skinner would not have called Bob Cherry, the fighting man of the Remove, a "boob" to his face. But Bob Cherry was not present. And, for that matter, Bob Cherry had "cut" cricket that afternoon, and the juniors had not seen much of him.

The Removites did not know why Bob Cherry had cut cricket, neither did they know why he had entered his name for the exam.

Only Harry Wharton & Co. knew that Major Cherry, Bob's father, had lost a very large sum of money owing to the faults of an unworthy nephew. A moneylender was demanding his cash, and the major, having to pay out, was likely to find it impossible to pay the high fees prevailing at Greyfriars in order to keep Bob there.

Hence Bob's desire to win the exam. To Bob it was serious business. To the juniors it was funny—distinctly funny. For Bob had never exactly shone as a student, whatever he could do on the playing fields.

"I suppose that's why he's stood out of the cricket this afternoon!" chuckled Ogilvy. "He's been swotting!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The idea of Bob Cherry swotting sent the Removites into hysterics.

"You'll have to look out for your laurels now, Smithy!" chuckled Bolsover major.

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NEXT
TUESDAY!

"TO SAVE HIS ENEMY!"

The Bounder roared.

"Wharton was the only chap I was nervous of," he said. "Now he's out of it, and I could take it with my eyes shut. Temple and Benson haven't an earthly!"

"Why, you cheeky fag—" began Temple of the Fourth wrathfully.

"You haven't!" said the Bounder coolly. "That exam's mine now—right in my pocket. And I mean to get it—more than ever now."

The Bounder gritted his teeth as he spoke. He had no need of the scholarship himself; he had entered for it simply to show that he could do it if he liked. But now that Bob Cherry had entered, the Bounder had an additional incentive for working hard at the exam and making sure of it. He had been turned out of the team and ordered off the field by Harry Wharton. He would return that favour with interest by making assurance doubly sure that Harry Wharton's chum did not win the scholarship.

"But what on earth has Cherry entered for?" said Russell. "It can't be a joke. He can't put his name down and withdraw it afterwards without giving the Head a reason."

The Bounder's lip curled.

"He wants the scholarship!" he said.

"But what does he want it for? He's not like Penfold and Linley, with nothing else to live on," said Bolsover major.

"How do you know?"

"Why, we all know his people are well off," said Bolsover. "His father's a retired major. They're not rich, but they've got enough."

"That's where you're off the mark. Retired majors sometimes dabble in business matters and get left," said the Bounder.

"Do you mean to say that you know anything about it?"

"Perhaps I do."

"Have Cherry's people had bad luck?" asked Newland.

"Better ask him," said the Bounder, with a yawn. "I wondered what he would do, but I never expected he'd have the cheek to enter for the Bishop's. That's too rich!" And the Bounder roared again.

"Well, I'm sorry if Cherry's people have come a cropper," said Bolstrode. "It's rotten for Bob, for he hasn't an earthly chance of getting the Bishop's."

"Not a giddy earthly!"

"He must have been an ass to enter."

"Where is he now?" asked the Bounder. "Haven't seen him all the afternoon. Is he swotting—grinding up giddy knowledge to astonish the examiners? My hat, he'll astonish all Greyfriars if he gets within a mile of passing the exam!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"He's swotting!" grinned Bolsover major. "Bob Cherry swotting! Something like an elephant learning to dance! Ha, ha, ha! Let's go and have a look at him!"

And the grinning juniors crowded away to Bob Cherry's study. The sight of Bob swotting over books would be a sight worth seeing. Bolsover opened the door of Study No. 13 in the Remove, and the crowd of fellows looked in, grinning.

Bob Cherry and his chum were at work at the table. Bob had a wet handkerchief tied round his head. There was an expression of deep and almost desperate determination on his rugged face.

There was no doubt about it. He was swotting!

The two juniors looked up as the door was flung open. Mark Linley gazed in surprise at the grinning crowd. Bob Cherry sighed wearily.

"What do you want?" asked Mark.

"We want to see the show!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

A GRAND TALE OF THE JUNIORS OF GREYFRIARS.
By FRANK RICHARDS. 11

"Joke of the season," explained Vernon-Smith. "We've just seen Bob Cherry's name on the list entering for the Bishop's."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"That's right," said Bob grimly. "I've entered."

The juniors roared.

"Is it a joke?" asked Bulstrode.

Bob snorted.

"No, it isn't a joke, fathead!"

"You're really going into the exam?"

"Yes, ass!"

"Oh crumbs! What are you doing it for?"

"To get the scholarship if I can," growled Bob.

There was a fresh yell at the idea of Bob Cherry getting the scholarship.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"When you've finished you might clear off," suggested Mark Linley politely.

"We're rather busy just now."

"Swotting?" grinned the Bounder.

"Yes, swotting. Clear off!"

"Bob Cherry swotting! Bob Cherry entering for scholarships! Ha, ha, ha!"

"Awfully funny, isn't it?" said Bob, with miserable sarcasm. "Grin as much as you like. I'm going to do my best. Only go and grin somewhere else, please!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Can't we watch you swotting?" demanded Fisher T. Fish, the American junior. "I guess it's a sight for sore eyes—just a few!"

Bob Cherry jumped up, and picked up a cricket-stump. He charged at the grinning juniors in the doorway, and they scattered. Bob Cherry slammed the door. He gave his Lancashire chum a hopeless look.

"You see what the fellows think of it, Marky!" he groaned.

"They'll think differently after the exam," said Mark.

Bob Cherry settled down to work again. Downstairs, in the Common-room, the Removites were very hilarious. Bob Cherry was the subject of their hilarity. There were very few fellows in Bob's Form who did not consider his entering for the Bishop's Scholarship as the joke of the season. And poor Bob was very much inclined to agree with them.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

The Secret Out!

"I SUPPOSE you fellows haven't been talking?"

Bob Cherry asked that question as he came into the study the next afternoon. There was a frown on Bob's usually cheerful face.

"Rather not!" said Harry Wharton.

"Why?"

"All the giddy Form seems to know about it now," said Bob lugubriously.

"It's—it's not very nice, you know."

"The knowfulness is terrific!"

"Well, I suppose it can't be helped," said Bob, with a sigh. "I did want to keep it dark about my poor old pater being in such a bad way. If a giddy miracle happened, and he pulled through after all, nothing need have been known at all, you see. But it's out now, worse luck!"

The chums of the Remove looked decidedly uncomfortable.

Bob Cherry had kept his miserable secret to himself for several days, and had surprised them with his grumpiness and his fits of the "blues." They had almost forced him to tell them what was the matter, in the end. And now he

had told them, it seemed that all the fellows knew, and the only assumption possible was that one of Bob's friends had been indiscreet. And yet each of the juniors was quite certain that he had not been the one to gossip.

"I suppose Bunter's found out something somehow," said Nugent, at last. "You know what a nose he has for nosing things out! The fat bounder!"

Tap!

"Come in!" said Wharton irritably.

The door opened, and Billy Bunter came in. The Owl of the Remove blinked round the study through his big spectacles. He was too short-sighted to see the grim expressions on the faces of the Famous Five.

"I say, you fellows, is Cherry here?"

"I'm here!" growled Bob.

Billy Bunter blinked at him. There was a smirking grin on the fat junior's face. It was tea-time, and tea was on the table, but for once the Falstaff of the Remove had not come in search of a feed.

"I say, Cherry, is it true?"

"Is what true?" growled Bob savagely.

"About your pater."

"What have you heard about my pater?"

Bunter sniggered.

"About his borrowing money from moneylenders, and being sold up," said the fat junior. "I say, is it true? Is that why you've entered for the Bishop's, because your pater can't afford to keep you at Greyfriars any longer?"

Bob Cherry crossed to the door and closed it. Bunter caught the expression on his face at last and edged towards the door. But Bob was in the way now.

"Not going, Bunter, are you?" said Bob, with grim pleasantry.

"I—I say, I'm in rather a hurry—"

"Sorry, for you can't go! You've got to answer some questions first. Did you find out about my pater by listening at a keyhole?"

"Oh, really, Cherry—"

"Did you?" roared Bob.

"Then it's true?" asked Bunter.

"Never mind whether it's true or not. How did you know anything about it?"

"Skinner told me. I came to ask you whether it was true," said Bunter. "Of course, I'm sorry if it's true. I don't see what you want to drop on me for because I came to offer you my sympathy, Bob Cherry."

"Hang your sympathy!" growled Bob.

"I don't want your sympathy, or anybody else's. I want to know who started that yarn about my pater and a moneylender."

"Well, I had it from Skinner. I suppose Skinner had it from somebody who knew. Didn't you tell anybody yourself?" asked Bunter.

Bob Cherry did not reply to that question.

"Sorry, you chaps, I can't stop to tea," he said. "I'm going to see Skinner."

And Bob left the study. Billy Bunter blinked at the chums of the Remove in surprise.

"What's Cherry cutting up so rusty about?" he asked. "I'm sure I didn't start the yarn about his father. Isn't it true?"

"Mind your own business!" growled Johnny Bull.

"Then I suppose it's true. He's told you chaps, and you've let it out," said Bunter. "I must say I'm surprised at you. Fellows should always keep a secret if it's told them in confidence. I'm surprised at you—ow!"

A jam-tart, hurled by Nugent, caught Bunter on the mouth and stopped his utterance. As he spluttered, a hot muffin caught him on the ear, and the Owl of

the Remove rolled out of the study under a shower of missiles. He looked very sticky and jammy when he escaped into the passage and fled.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

The Bounder Explains.

SKINNER was in the Common-room, chatting with Snoop and Stott. The three juniors were grinning, as though they found something humorous in the topic they were discussing. Bob Cherry caught his own name as he came in. He strode straight up to the trio.

They became suddenly silent.

"I want to speak to you, Skinner," said Bob, in his direct way.

"Go ahead," said Skinner, a little uneasily.

"You've told Bunter a yarn about my pater."

"Ahem! I happened to mention what all the fellows are saying, if that's what you mean," said Skinner. "No harm intended. If it's not true, I shall be glad of it. I asked you whether it was, so that I could deny it next time I heard it. You didn't answer me."

"I don't intend to answer questions about my private affairs," said Bob. "What I want is to find out who started this yarn. I want to know what chap it was who's taken so great an interest in my personal affairs as to play the spy and find out things. If you are the spy, Skinner, you'd better own up."

Skinner turned red.

"I don't care twopence for your affairs," he said tartly. "Go and eat coke!"

"Whom did you get the yarn from?"

"I heard Bolsover major telling Russell about it."

"Where's Bolsover major?"

"He was in the gym a few minutes ago," said Skinner.

Bob turned away without another word and made his way to the gym.

His brow was clouded, and his eyes gleamed. Unless one of his chums had betrayed his confidence, someone else had played the spy, and Bob meant to know for certain. The thought that his family misfortune should become the talk of the Remove was bitter as gall to him. The derision of some, and the pity of others, would be equally bitter to his proud nature. The fact itself was miserable enough, without its being made the common gossip of the school.

Bolsover major was in the gym with his minor. He was putting Bolsover minor through some exercises on the parallel bars. Bob Cherry tapped him on the shoulder, and Bolsover major looked round in surprise at Bob's clouded face.

"Hallo!" he said. "What's the trouble? Found that it's no good swotting for the Bishop's?" And the surly Removite chuckled.

"You told Skinner some yarn about my pater, so Skinner says. Did you?"

"Oh, about that moneylender yarn!" said Bolsover major.

"Then you started it?" said Bob, his eyes glinting.

Bolsover major shook his head.

"I didn't exactly tell anybody," he said. "I spoke of it. Fellows do speak of things, you know. I didn't know you were keeping it a secret. If you were, you should have been a bit more careful about it, I should say."

"You mean you heard it from somebody else?"

"Of course I did! I don't suppose you think it was revealed to me in a vision."

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do you?" Bolsover major asked sarcastically.

"Who told you?"

"Vernon-Smith."

Bob Cherry started at the Bounder's name.

He realised that he had been blind. Of course, he ought to have thought of the Bounder at first! A blow of this kind was likely to come only from that quarter. And yet how had the Bounder known anything?

"Vernon-Smith!" he repeated.

Bolsover major nodded.

"Did Smithy tell you how he knew?" asked Bob quietly. "Did he hear it from anybody else, as you all seem to have done?"

"I suppose he did," said Bolsover, puzzled. "He couldn't have dreamed it. He didn't tell me, that I remember, but I fancy he heard it from somebody you told. I gathered as much, anyway. I don't know for certain. But you ask Smithy; he'll tell you."

"From somebody I told!" repeated Bob.

"So I understood. Better ask Smithy."

"I'm going to."

"I say, Cherry," said Bolsover major, as Bob turned away. "I'm awfully sorry if it's true, and I hope you'll get the Bishop's."

"Thanks for your good wishes, but you can keep them!" growled Bob.

And he strode away.

He looked for Vernon-Smith in his study, and found the Bounder there. Vernon-Smith was smoking a cigarette when Bob Cherry came in. He did not remove it from his lips, but looked at the angry face of the junior through a cloud of blue smoke.

"There's a yarn about a moneylender and my pater being sold up," said Bob, coming straight to the point.

"That isn't a yarn," said Vernon-Smith—"that's true."

Bob clenched his hands hard.

"True or not, it seems to have been you who first said anything on the subject," he replied. "I want to know how you knew anything about it."

Vernon-Smith laughed.

"Well, as I'm not a fortune-teller or a magician, I should think you could guess how I knew," he replied. "I was told, of course."

"Who told you?"

"That's asking too much. I want to know why you want to know first."

"I want to know," said Bob, in a low, savage voice, "because I'm going to find out who meddled and spied in my affairs, and give him the hiding of his life. That's why I want to know."

"Suppose it was a friend of yours?"

"It wasn't."

"But suppose it was," persisted the Bounder. "What then?"

Bob Cherry drew a deep breath.

"If a friend of mine gave away what I told him in confidence, he wouldn't be a friend of mine any longer," he said. "But you are lying, as usual; you want me to believe that it was one of my chums, and I don't believe you—not a word of it."

Vernon-Smith shrugged his shoulders.

"What's the good of asking me, then, if you're not going to believe what I tell you?" he inquired.

"Do you mean to say that it was a friend of mine who told you—somebody I had told?" demanded Bob.

"I don't mean to tell you anything. I was told, that's all; and if you're going to hammer the chap who told me, and make a fuss, it's not right for me to tell

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you who it was. I'm not going to give you the chap's name if you're going for him. You can't expect it."

"If you don't give me the chap's name, I shall conclude that you did the spying, and started the yarn."

"And what then?"

"Then, before I leave this study, I shall hammer you till your own father wouldn't know you if he saw you," said Bob grimly.

"Well, I suppose I should have something to say about that," remarked the Bounder coolly. "I'm not exactly a kid, to be handled about as you choose. But I can't give you the chap's name; it wouldn't be the decent thing to do."

"This is the first time you've troubled about doing the decent thing, isn't it?"

The Bounder grinned.

"We all have our fancies at times," he said. "But even if I told you the name you wouldn't believe me. But if you weren't the biggest idiot going—excuse me—you could guess for yourself."

"How could I?"

"Well, you confided the matter to certain persons. You know what fellows you told, and what fellows you didn't tell. If the story's got out, it must have been told by somebody who knew, not by somebody who didn't know. Isn't that clear?"

Bob was silent. It certainly seemed clear enough.

"Think over all the fellows you've told, and decide for yourself which one of them gave you away," said the Bounder.

"That's all I can suggest."

"None of them gave me away!"

"Then how do you suppose I heard anything about it?"

"I suppose you listened at a keyhole when I was telling them."

"Thank you! Call to mind the exact time you told them, and I'll see if I can prove an alibi," said the Bounder lazily.

Bob Cherry reflected.

"I was speaking to them about the matter just after the cricket match on Wednesday afternoon," he said, "in my study."

"I played in that match, and was booted off," said the Bounder. "You are aware of that. As I wasn't wanted in the match, I went out—with Snoop and Stott and Trevor. I went out with them before the innings finished, and I didn't come in till after dark, when I saw your name in the list on the board. I was with three chaps all the time, and they will tell you so."

"I wouldn't believe Snoop or Stott or—"

"You can depend on Trevor?"

"Well, yes."

"Ask him," said the Bounder.

Bob Cherry stood silent. If the Bounder had been out of doors he could not have overheard that conversation in Study No. 13. And indeed, the Bounder, bad as he was, was not given to the sneaking ways of Billy Bunter; he was not exactly the kind of fellow to listen at doors. A gleam of malicious triumph came into the Bounder's eyes. He saw that Bob Cherry was nonplussed.

If the Bounder had not overheard Bob

speaking to his chums on the subject, there was only one way he could have learned anything of the matter; he had been told by someone who knew. And who knew? Harry Wharton, Nugent, Linley, Johnny Bull, and Hurree Jamset Ram Singh. Nobody else!

"Well," said the Bounder lazily, "are you satisfied?"

"No," said Bob.

"Go and ask Trevor questions, then. If you're not satisfied with him, go down to the bunshop in Friardale, and ask them what time we left. That will satisfy you."

"I suppose you must have been told," said Bob reluctantly.

The Bounder nodded.

"As a reasonable chap, you must see that," he agreed. "But don't ask me the name of the chap who told me. I can't tell you—and you can guess for yourself if you think it out long enough. You wouldn't believe me if I told you. I might say it was Wharton, Nugent, Linley, Bull, or Inky, and in each case you'd call me a liar."

"I would!" said Bob.

"Then what am I to do? It's no good saying anything."

"I wouldn't listen to you, if you told me it was one of my chums," said Bob. "I'd soon stop your mouth if you started."

"Then what's the good of asking me?"

That was a poser. Bob Cherry felt that he was beaten all along the line; yet he felt that the Bounder could have enlightened him further if he had chosen.

"I didn't know you were trying to keep it dark," added the Bounder, with an air of great sincerity. "I wasn't repeating it as anything against you; I simply remarked to Bolsover that it was bad news for you, and hard lines on you. I said I was sorry. That's all. I'm sorry for any chap who's down on his luck. It isn't my fault the story's got out. The fellow who told me may have told others; he's not a chum of mine, certainly."

"That means that it was one of my friends?"

"Whom else could it have been?" demanded the Bounder.

Bob did not answer. With a heart full of bitterness and misery he turned away. He could have hammered the Bounder—that would have done no good. Vernon-Smith had made his defence good enough; he had simply repeated carelessly what he had heard—if he was to be believed. And if he was not to be believed, how was his knowledge of the matter to be accounted for at all? Bob Cherry quitted the study with a downcast face, and a heart as heavy as lead.

The Bounder chuckled softly as the door closed.

"I fancy I've put a spoke in their wheel this time," he murmured. "I really think Wharton will be sorry that he ordered me off the cricket-field!"

And the Bounder lighted another cigarette with great satisfaction.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

Bob Cherry Loses His Temper!

THE Remove fellows had seen Bob Cherry's new departure with considerable amusement. That the "swotting" would continue very few of them believed. But the doubting Thomases had to be convinced at last. Day after day Bob was missing from his usual haunts.

He did not play in the matches, he did not join in the excursions up the river, he was seldom seen in the

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shop or lounging about the Close with the fellows.

Indeed, he would have given up all exercise altogether, if Mark Linley had not fairly forced him out sometimes.

All his attention was given to his task of preparing for the scholarship examination. He had written to his father that he had entered for the Bishop's Scholarship, and that he meant to do his best to get it.

And he was doing his best.

The grit and energy he had been accustomed to putting into cricket and rowing he now put into "swotting" over books and exam papers.

It was a hard task—harder to Bob Cherry than it would have been to almost any other fellow in the Form. But he stuck to it manfully. The danger was that he was inclined to overdo it. Mark Linley had to use force sometimes to get him out of the study and down to cricket practice, or for a walk along the river. If he had swotted as hard as he wanted to, his health would certainly have suffered.

Bob Cherry had a clouded brow in these days. His old joyousness seemed to have departed from him.

It was not only the unaccustomed work and confinement to the house that weighed upon him, however. His home misfortunes had become the talk of the Form, and of the school. All Greyfriars knew that Major Cherry was in the power of a moneylender, who was going to sell him up, and that Bob had to leave the school at the end of the term unless he could win the scholarship.

Most of the fellows were sympathetic. Some were quite careless, and some derisive. Bob, kind and good-natured fellow as he was, had his enemies, and they did not lose the opportunity of making him "squirm," as Snoop elegantly expressed it.

It was gall and wormwood to the proud-spirited lad to know that his father's ruin, and his own dreary prospects, were the talk of the school.

Pity was more bitter to him than the derision of the Bounder and his set. To be an object of compassion was worse than anything else.

So it came about that well-meaning sympathisers received very gruff replies from Bob Cherry when they attempted to sympathise, and a great deal of sympathy was killed by that process.

How had the matter become public property? The continual humiliations that made Bob Cherry wince every hour of the day were due to some careless tongue that had let out the secret. For days he had told his chums nothing, in the fear that they might allow a careless word to escape them. He had been almost forced to confide in them; and now the secret was out. The malice of the Bounder had spread it, undoubtedly; but it could not be the Bounder who was to blame in the first place, as far as Bob Cherry could see. The Bounder could have known nothing unless he had been told. Who had told him?

Bob was sure that it was not Mark. The Lancashire lad was naturally reserved and quiet, and he never had anything to say to the Bounder. Between the millionaire's son and the lad who had worked in a factory there was little in common. They very seldom exchanged any remarks at all, and certainly they were never likely to have had a conversation in which Bob's affairs had cropped up. It was not Mark. But who was it? Bob turned that question over in his mind. He had told his chums in confidence, and it was up to them to

keep his secret. Someone had let it out. Who had done it?

With that miserable doubt in his mind, it was natural that a rift should show itself between Bob and his old chums.

He might have forgotten the indiscretion, whoever had committed it, but for the fact that its results were always with him. Hardly an hour passed without some allusion being made to his altered circumstances.

And Bob could not help feeling bitter about it. The least he could have expected of his chums was that they would be careful not to allow his wretched affairs to become the gossip of the Form. And they had evidently not been careful—one of them at least.

As Bob Cherry went up to his study for his usual work, after lessons one afternoon, he heard voices raised in a chorus in the Bounder's study. Vernon-Smith had some friends in to tea, and they burst into song as Bob's heavy footsteps were heard in the passage. It was an old music-hall song they were singing, and the burden of it was that "The Brokers are Hanging on the Backyard Wall."

There was, of course, no allusion to Bob in the words of the song, but he knew very well that it was intended for his ears, and in allusion to his father's ruin.

The Bounder's door was wide open, and Bob paused and glanced in. Vernon-Smith and Snoop and Stott and Billy Bunter were there, all grinning. They affected not to see the dark, clouded face at the doorway.

"The brokers are hanging on the backyard wall," trilled Billy Bunter.

"Waiting for the two-pound-two!" roared Stott.

"You rotters!" said Bob Cherry.

The Bounder looked round with an air of surprise.

"Hallo! Is that you, Cherry?"

"You knew I was here," said Bob.

"Come in, old fellow, and have tea!" said the Bounder.

"Go and eat coke!"

"Thanks! I've got something nicer to eat," said Vernon-Smith imperturbably. "Come in, and be sociable! We're having a little sing-song, you know, and we've got a really ripping selection of songs. 'The Brokers are Hanging on the Backyard Wall' is one. How do you like that for a song?"

And Vernon-Smith's choice company grinned.

"Then there's 'Stony Broke—it ain't a Joke!'" said Vernon-Smith cheerfully.

"That's a ripping song, you know. And 'The Cash was Lent at Ten per Cent.' I dare say you know that song."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Do come in!" urged the Bounder.

"There's a pathetic song in this lot, too: 'When They Sold My Father's Shirt at Auction.'"

And the choice company yelled:

"Do come in, Cherry!"

"Join in the chorus, old man!"

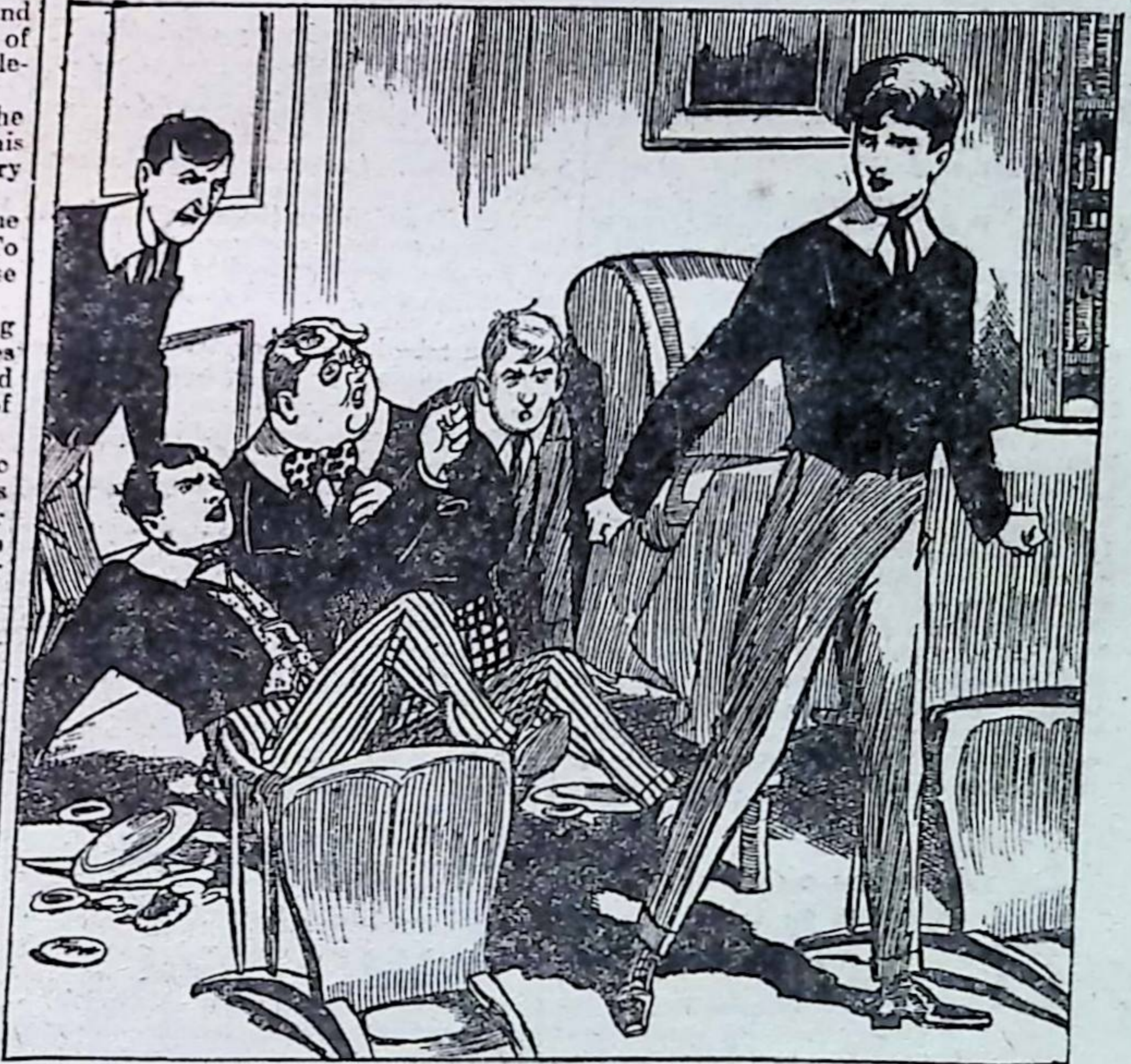
"Yes; I'll come in!" said Bob.

And he came in!

He came in with a rush, and pushed over the chairs Bunter and Snoop were sitting on, and those two youths rolled on the carpet.

Then he took a grip on the edge of the tea-table and tilted it up.

The Bounder, with a howl of rage,



BOB CHERRY RUNS WILD!—Bob Cherry rushed into the study and pushed over the chairs Bunter and Snoop were sitting on, and those youths rolled over on the carpet. Then he took a grip on the edge of the tea-table and tilted it up. The Bounder, with a howl of rage, leaped up, just in time to catch a cascade of tea-things on his chest. (See Chapter 3.)

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A GRAND TALE OF THE JUNIORS OF GREYFRIARS.
By FRANK RICHARDS.

NEXT
TUESDAY!

"TO SAVE HIS ENEMY!"

leaped up, just in time to catch a cascade of tea-things and eatables on his chest.

He staggered back and sat on the floor, with plates and cups and saucers and jam and cake and butter swarming over him.

"You rotter!" shrieked the Bounder. "You—you—"

Words failed him.

Bob Cherry strode out of the study without a word, and slammed the door behind him.

Vernon-Smith & Co. sat up among the ruins of the feed and blinked at one another. Billy Bunter extricated himself from the jam-dish he was sitting on, and put his spectacles straight upon his fat nose.

Vernon-Smith mopped butter and jam from his clothes. But he did not follow Bob Cherry. Bob was not in a mood to be lightly tackled just then.

Bob Cherry had gone into No. 13, where Mark was waiting for him. The Lancashire lad had the books all ready to begin the customary "swot."

But Bob flung himself into the arm-chair, breathing hard. He was not in a humour for work just then. Mark looked at him in surprise.

"What's the matter, Bob?" he asked.

Bob gritted his teeth.

"Only some more of it," he said savagely. "Getting at me over my people being done in—the Bounder and his lot, you know."

"The cads!" said Mark.

"I shouldn't have to stand this if somebody hadn't jawed," said Bob. "One of the chaps I told must have let it out."

"I can't think that, Bob."

"Then how did the fellows get to know?"

"I don't know. But—"

"Somebody has jawed, and I think it's rotten!" said Bob passionately. "I wish I knew who it was. I'd never speak to him again, anyway!"

Mark flushed a little.

"I don't think you ought to look at it like that, Bob. I was one of the fellows you told, and I'm just as likely to have repeated it as anybody else."

"You didn't!" said Bob.

"No, I didn't; I shouldn't be likely to chatter with Vernon-Smith on that subject or any other. But I don't believe the other fellows did, either."

"It's no good thinking about it, Bob," he said at last. "It's rotten, but it can't be helped. Let's get to work."

Bob Cherry drew his chair up to the table. He was in hopes that the Bounder would follow him to his study for vengeance; he was just in the humour to deal with the Bounder at that moment. But Vernon-Smith did not come, and Bob settled down to work. But in the troubled and disturbed state of his mind it was not easy to work, and it was long ere he could force his thoughts into the task before him.

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

A Rift in the Lute!

HOW are you getting on, Bob?" Harry Wharton asked the question as he met Bob in the Close, where the junior had gone out for a breather after his swotting.

"All right!" said Bob shortly.

"Work going all right?"

"Yes."

"Feeling seedy?"

"No."

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By FRANK RICHARDS.

"I suppose it's telling on you a bit, old chap?"

"I'm all right!"

Wharton looked sharply at his chum.

The extreme curtness of Bob Cherry's replies could not be wholly accounted for by the fact that he was tired and out of sorts. There was something more in it than that. Harry slipped his arm through his chum's.

"What's the matter, Bob?" he said seriously. "You're not ratty with me about anything, are you? I'd be sorry to give you any trouble of any kind at a time like this. If I've done anything, tell me what it is and I'll set it right."

"I'm being ragged to death over my father's affairs," blurted out Bob, jerking his arm away. "They're giving me no rest. The Bounder won't let the subject drop. He keeps it in fellows' minds, and a lot of the others are too fond of it to let it die, too."

Wharton's face clouded.

"It's rotten, Bob! But that's no reason for you to cut up rusty with your own pals that I can see."

"Not if they acted like pals," said Bob bitterly.

"Do you mean that we haven't acted like pals, Bob?" asked Harry quietly.

"Yes, I do—some of you."

"Myself, or the others?" asked Harry.

"I don't know—but some of you. I told you about my father's affairs in confidence. I didn't want to tell you; you simply made me. I had kept it to myself for some time, though goodness knows I wanted some chap to speak to about it all. Well, I told you, and the next day it was all over the school. You can't expect me to be pleased about it, I suppose."

"You think I broke my word, then?" asked Wharton coldly.

Bob stirred restlessly.

"I don't say that! But some of you must have jawed, or the thing couldn't have got out. I suppose you don't deny that?"

"Yes, I do. How it got out I don't know, unless the Bounder—"

"The Bounder's proved to me that he was out of doors when I told you about it."

"You take his word against ours?"

"He's proved it, I tell you. I made sure. Trevor was with him, as well as Stott and Snoop. And I asked questions at the place where he'd been, and they confirmed it. I wasn't willing to believe that—that—"

"That we had given you away?"

"Well, yes."

"And you believe it now?"

"Do you want me to believe that Vernon-Smith dreamed it, or that an angel revealed it to him?" demanded Bob angrily.

"I want you to believe that your own pals didn't talk about you and break their promise to you," said Wharton, with equal anger. "I don't know how it got out. I know I haven't said a word, and I'm sure Nugent hasn't, or Johnny Bull or Inky or Linley."

"I know Linley hasn't."

"Then you put it down to one of us?"

"Yes, I do. I don't think you told, but I know you must have talked about it somewhere where the Bounder could hear you—"

"That's not true. We haven't talked about it, unless a word or two that nobody could have made anything of if he'd heard it. Do you think Nugent and I went about saying to one another 'Bob's father's going to be sold up?'" demanded Harry.

"I shouldn't be worried as I am if I hadn't confided my business to fellows I thought I could trust!" snapped Bob. "I shall know better another time."

And he tramped away.

Harry Wharton remained where he was, with knitted brows. If anybody but a chum—and a chum in trouble—had spoken to him like that, there would have been a quarrel on the spot. Wharton thrust his hands deep into his pockets and reflected. How had the secret got out? A slap on the shoulder brought him out of his glum reverie, as Nugent and Johnny Bull and Hurree Jamset Ram Singh joined him.

"Wherefore that worried brow?" asked Nugent cheerfully. "Coming for a stroll along the cliffs?"

"It's Bob!" said Harry shortly.

"What's the matter with Bob?"

"He's being ragged by the chaps about his trouble at home. And he thinks that one of us has let out the secret."

Frank Nugent frowned.

"Well, that's a nice thing to think about us, I must say!" he exclaimed. "We promised him to keep it dark."

"And we've kept our word," growled Johnny Bull. "I know I have."

"The knowfulness of my esteemed self is also terrific," murmured the nabob.

"But how did it get out?" said Harry.

"Give it up!"

"Bob's got his back up about it," said Wharton uncomfortably.

"Well, he ought to know that we wouldn't break our words," said Nugent tartly. "I can understand that he's feeling rotten, but he's no right to turn on his own pals. And I don't want to have anything to say to a chap who suspects me of breaking a promise, and that's flat."

"Doesn't he suspect Linley as well?" demanded Johnny Bull.

"No; he seems satisfied that it wasn't Linley."

"If Bob's got his back up he can keep it up so far as I'm concerned. I'm not going to argue with him about whether I broke my word or not," said Bull. "Let's get out. We're going to the cliffs."

The chums of the Remove went out; but they did not enjoy that stroll along the cliffs in the bright sunshine and with the sea glittering at their feet.

They could not help thinking of Bob and his worries and his unjust suspicions.

When they came in Bob was in the Common-room with Mark Linley, but he did not speak to them.

Neither did he speak when the Remove went up to the dormitory at bed-time.

There was a rift in the lute with a vengeance now.

The Bounder observed it, and he smiled. He felt that he was repaying the incident on the cricket-field with interest now—as, indeed, he was.

And once a breach between the chums had started it was not easy for it to be closed up again.

For the cause of offence still remained. The secret was out, and Bob Cherry's suspicions, groundless or not, continued. And his chums were hurt and offended by his want of faith in them.

The next morning it was plain to all the Remove that Bob Cherry was not on speaking terms with his old friends.

THE END.

(There will be another long complete tale of Harry Wharton & Co., entitled "To Save His Enemy!" by Frank Richards, in next week's issue.)

MANNERS ENLISTS THE AID OF THE SCHOOLBOY INVENTOR TO GET EVEN WITH KNOX.



HARRY MANNERS' BRAIN-WAVE!

A Splendid Long Complete Story, dealing with the adventures of Tom Merry & Co., the Chums of St. Jim's

By **MARTIN CLIFFORD.**

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

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

Knox's Gentle Way.

"FAG!" Gerald Knox's raucous voice resounded down the Shell corridor at St. Jim's.

"Fag!" Monty Lowther of the Shell Form looked up from his tea with a grin. "Knox is in form," he remarked. "Sounds like a coal-heaver," said Manners.

"Fa-a-a-g!" "Dear, dear! He seems excited about something," said Tom Merry, the captain of the Lower School, laughing. "What Knox wants," remarked Monty Lowther solemnly, "is to try the Coue method. You know the thing. I get gentler and gentler every day."

The chums of Study No. 10 listened for a few moments, and then settled down again to their tea. It was quite a festive occasion for the end study. Lowther's uncle had just sent his hopeful nephew a fat remittance, a goodly part of which had been expended on what Monty called a "slap-up feed." Bread and real butter was there in plenty, of course, and shrimp-paste and two kinds of jam. Cake and jam-tarts in galore also graced the festive board. As Manners remarked, "The land was flowing with milk-and-honey."

It was a happy contrast, for the end study had just passed through some very lean times.

"Fag!"

"There he goes again!" grinned Monty. "He ought to be more careful. All our crockery jumped that time."

"Funny he can't get a fag," mused Tom Merry. "There must be a few knocking about somewhere."

"All hiding, I expect," said Lowther. "And I can't blame them."

"Young Reggie was saying this morning that they passed a resolution in the Third Form dorm not to fag for Knox. I expect this is the result," said Manners.

Tom Merry shrugged his shoulders. "Not our bizney," he remarked.

"Knox shouldn't be such a rotten bully. I caught him twisting the arm of young Joe Frayne a few days ago. The poor kid was almost blubbing with pain."

"Knox is a rotten cad!" growled Manners.

"What did you say, Manners?" queried a well-known voice.

Manners turned with a start, to see the unpleasant visage of Gerald Knox in the open doorway.

"Oh, I—ahem!"

"Did you, really?" said Knox, with a sneer. "Haven't you heard me calling for a fag for the past ten minutes?"

"I certainly heard you yelling something," said Manners cautiously.

"Why didn't you answer, then?"

"You know very well, Knox, the Shell doesn't fag," interposed Tom Merry coolly.

"Oh, doesn't it?" said Knox, scowling.

"Then it's quite time they started. Go down to the changing-room and bring up my cricket-boots, Manners."

Manners did not make a movement.

"Did you hear what I said?" demanded the prefect.

"I'm not deaf!" returned Manners defiantly.

"Well, hurry up, and do as you're told, then!" cried Knox.

Manners, however, did not move a muscle. Knox, breathing hard, made a threatening movement towards the junior, his ashplant, which always accompanied him, raised.

The Terrible Three jumped up together, and Knox paused.

"So you refuse to obey a prefect's order?" he roared, glaring at the three juniors.

"Yes, if it's unjust!" said Manners stoutly.

"Hear, hear!" cried Tom Merry.

"Good old Manners!" said Monty Lowther joyfully.

"Very well, then!" sneered Knox ominously. "I'll report you to the Housemaster. It's not the first time I've had trouble with this study."

"The fearful bully!" gasped Tom Merry, as the door closed on their un-

welcome visitor. "Trying to fag the Shell!"

"But it didn't come off!" added Monty Lowther warmly.

"Oh, don't worry about that cad!" growled Manners. "Let's get on with the spread. Pass the paste, Tommy."

Little incidents like that did not bother the Terrible Three for long, and soon the feed was once more proceeding merrily on its way.

Tea was about half-way through when a head peered round the door of the study.

"Hallo, young Wally!" said Tom Merry, looking up. "What do you want now?"

Wally D'Arcy, of the Third Form, for it was he, grinned as he opened the door a little wider.

"What-ho!" he remarked, catching sight of the good things laid upon the table. "Doing your little selves well, eh?"

"You've not come to pass remarks about our feed, I hope," said Tom Merry laughingly.

"Quite right, my son, I haven't," came the cheeky reply. "You little lads have got to go along and see Railton instanter."

"What! All of us?" asked Manners in dismay.

"Yes, rather!" chuckled Wally. "Want to borrow some impot paper?"

Judging from Knox's face when he went in to see Railton, you're going to catch it where the giddy chicken got the chopper—in the neck!"

Tom Merry looked serious as he got slowly to his feet.

"Better get it over!" he sighed. "Come along, my sons!"

It was a somewhat dismal procession that filed out of the end study and made its way to Mr. Railton's study.

Tap!

Tom Merry knocked gently upon the door.

"Come in!" called the voice of the Housemaster.

Tom Merry entered the dreaded

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A NEW, LONG TALE OF ST. JIM'S.

By MARTIN CLIFFORD.

NEXT TUESDAY!

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12 To Add to Your Collection! More Wonderful Coloured Engine Plates!

sanctum closely followed by his two chums.

"Ahem! Did you send for us, sir?" asked the captain of the Shell.

"Yes, Merry, I did send for you, and Manners, and Lowther," replied Mr. Railton. "I have just received a complaint from Knox."

Tom Merry was silent. "Knox informs me," went on the Housemaster, "that he asked one of you to do him a favour, and it was refused. In fact, you were all very impertinent."

"Oh, sir!" murmured Tom Merry. "I told him I should hardly have credited either of you with gross impertinence," continued Mr. Railton; "but he was most emphatic that it was so."

Tom Merry's eyes blazed. It had not occurred to him that the prefect would have presented such a distorted view of the affair to the Housemaster.

"Knox instructed one of us to fetch his cricket-boots for him in a most unpleasant manner," said Tom Merry indignantly.

"And you refused?" "Yes sir! The Shell does not fag."

"Hear, hear!" murmured Manners and Lowther, under their breath. "Really, Merry; that was the position, was it? I should hardly have thought it of you. Whether the Shell is accustomed to fag or not, it is your duty to carry out an order given you by a prefect."

"But, sir—" "In the circumstances I cannot accept an excuse!" said Mr. Railton sternly.

Tom Merry's face burned at the injustice of the situation. "It was I Knox ordered to fetch his boots, sir," blurted out Manners.

"And why didn't you do so, Manners?" asked the Housemaster.

"Because Knox attempted to bully me, sir."

"Oh!"

Mr. Railton's stern looks cleared. He knew of Knox's unsavoury reputation as a bully.

"Really!" he said, not unkindly. "Why did you not tell me of this before?"

Tom Merry was silent. He could hardly have explained to his Housemaster that he had been given no chance to explain their conduct.

"This, of course, puts matters in a different light," went on Mr. Railton. "I must certainly warn Knox that he must not try any bullying with you, or for that matter with anyone else."

"Oh, thank you, sir!" chorused the juniors.

Mr. Railton smiled slightly.

"I cannot overlook the fact that you have refused to carry out a prefect's order, however," he said. "You will each do me one hundred lines of Virgil!"

"Yessir!" chorused the somewhat crestfallen Co.

"You may go now."

The Terrible Three filed out of the master's room.

"One hundred lines of Virgil!" said Manners. "Whew! I thought we were going to get a caning!"

Tom Merry grinned. "I expect Knox thought we would, too," said Monty Lowther. "Here comes the gentleman!"

Gerald Knox came up in his usual blustering way.

"Did you get a whacking?" he demanded, in his sneering voice.

"No; we didn't!" replied Tom Merry, eyeing the prefect steadily.

"What did you get, then?" snarled Knox.

"One hundred lines!" replied Tom Merry cheerfully.

Knox gasped in astonishment. "Is that all? You all ought to have been flogged!"

"Mr. Railton did not think so," said Manners coldly.

"Well, I think so!" howled Knox. "One hundred lines is absurd. You can each take five hundred lines from me!"

Tom Merry started.

"You can't punish us twice for the same thing, Knox!" he said indignantly.

"Oh, can't I?" sneered the bully viciously. "I can, and will!"

"They won't be done, then," said Lowther.

"They'd better be!" warned the prefect, with a dangerous look. "They'll be doubled in the morning if you're not careful!"

"Come along!" growled Manners, starting down the passage. "The air's rather close round here."

The two juniors turned and followed him towards their study.

"This," remarked Manners, as they sat down to finish their twice-interrupted tea, "is a bit thick even for Knox!"

To which the others heartily agreed.

THE SECOND CHAPTER. A Little Plot.

HAVE you done those lines?" Manners stopped short on the stairs as Knox called after him.

"No; I haven't!" said Manners.

"They're doubled, then!" snapped Knox. "Mind they're in by to-morrow!"

Without a word, Manners turned on his heel and walked off in the direction of the end study.

"Seen Knox?" he asked, as he entered.

Tom Merry nodded.

"Yes," he said; "he's just been here asking for his lines. He's doubled them."

"He's just doubled mine!" grunted Manners.

"What shall we do?" asked Monty Lowther dubiously. "Tell Railton?"

"No!" answered Tom Merry decisively. "The end study never tells tales. We'll have to do something off our own bat!"

"Jolly hard trying to get one's own back on a prefect!" mused Manners doubtfully.

"Never mind, my son," said Tom Merry. "It can be done, and it's jolly well got to be done!"

"What about shoving gum in his boots?" suggested Monty Lowther.

"Or ink in his Sunday topper?" Tom Merry shook his head.

"No good, I'm afraid," he said. "What we want is not so much to rag the bully, but to get a hold on him."

"Buy a bulldog!" suggested the irrepressible humorist of the Shell.

"Eh?"

"Buy a bulldog!"

"What for?"

"Get a hold on him!"

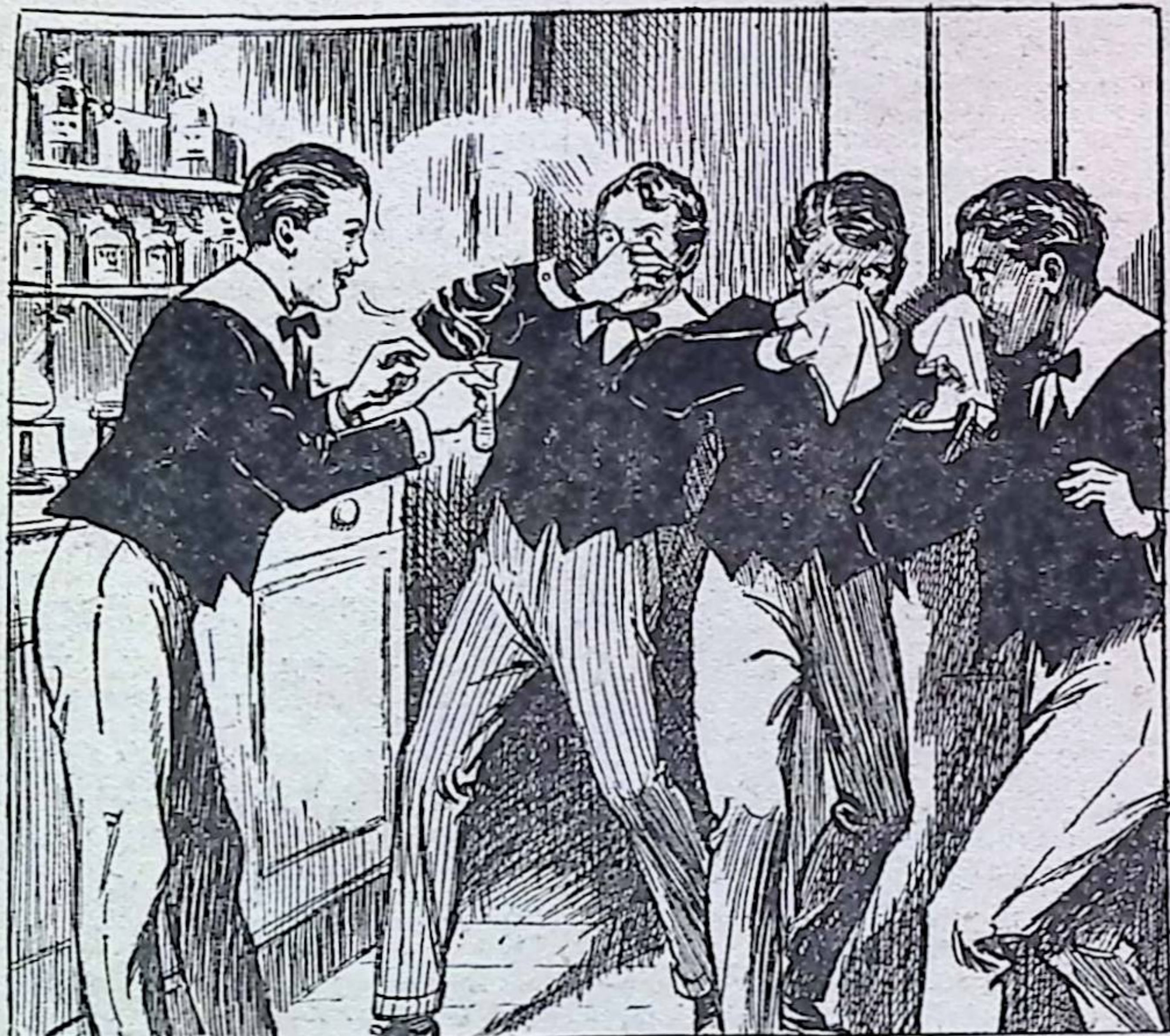
"Idiot! Cut being funny, Monty! This is serious business!"

Lowther made a humorous grimace and subsided.

"Now, what we want to do is to get

(Continued on page 16.)

A NEW, LONG TALE OF ST. JIM'S. BY MARTIN CLIFFORD.




GASSING TOM MERRY & CO. !—"Here we are!" said Glyn, opening the door of the laboratory. "My hat!" gasped Tom Merry, staggering back. "Fetch me a gas-mask, quick!" "It's overpowering!" spluttered Monty Lowther, clasping his handkerchief over his nose. "Glyn, you ought not to be allowed loose, you dangerous lunatic!" (See Chapter 3.)

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NEXT TUESDAY!


"FIRST MAN HOME!"



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,—Many are the bright and brainy wheezes I have evolved since I have occupied the editorial chair. But I have now hit upon a wheeze which puts all the others in the shade.

I thought it would be a grate stunt, for one week only, to allow the local tradesmen—and others—to advertise their wares in my jernal. Not only would it be a boon to those who want to know where to buy things, but it would also be a sorce of revvenue.

Everybody who has advertised in this issow has had to pay a prinsely sum, with the rezult that our coughers are filled to overflowing!

Don't you think it's a wunderful wheeze, dear readers? I should like to do it every week, but I'm rather afraid the Editor of the Kompanion Papers would object! He would say, "Billy, you are filling your paper with advertisements, and crowding out the sick-shun! It won't do!"

My plump subb-editors have worked like niggers in preparing this issow. They have gone round to all the tradespeople collecting advertisements, and in some cases they were ruffly handled—kicked off the premmises, in fact. But it's all for the good of the cause. If you go round collecting advertisements, you are bound to collect a few thick cars into the bargain!

I'll bet Harry Wharton will be awfully waxy when he sees this number. He will ring his hands and tear his teeth and nash his harc. He will say, "That brainy fellow Bunter has brought out a Special Advertisement Number. Now, why didn't I think of that?"

Wharton, as an editor, is much too slow and unenterprising. He will have to pull up his sox!

And now, dear readers, hoping you will thoroughly enjoy this novel number, and trusting you are in good health, as it leeves me at prezzant, with violent toothache and a pane in my chest.

Yours sinseerly,
YOUR EDITOR.

**TUBBY MUFFIN EDITS
NEXT WEEK'S BUMPER
NUMBER.**

Supplement I.]

BUSINESS METHODS!

By Dick Penfold.

- If you have a bike for sale,
Or a little spade and pail,
Don't let 'em rust, or soon get stale—
Advertise!
- If you have a cricket bat,
A parrot, or a Persian cat,
And their delights have fallen flat—
Advertise!
- If you have a gramophone
That makes the fellows growl and groan,
Try the finest method known—
Advertise!
- If you have a pet canary,
Or a pig from Tipperary,
Or a bulldog that's contrary—
Advertise!
- If you have a cheeky fag
You'd like another chap to bag,
Because he's fond of jape and "rag"—
Advertise!
- If you have some worn-out socks,
Or some worthless German clocks,
And you are sadly "on the rocks"—
Advertise!
- If you want to "scrap the lot,"
Every blessed thing you've got,
Strike now, while the iron's hot—
Advertise!

PEEPS INTO THE FUTURE

By George Kerr.



LESLIE GLAMPE. (of St. Jim's.)

ADVERTISEMENT KOLLECTING!

By Sammy Bunter.

ADVERTISEMENT kollecting, let me say at wunce, is not a plezzant hobby, like stamp kollecting, piekcher postcard kollecting, or butterfly kollecting.

When my bruther Billy sent me into Courtfield to kollect advertisements for his paper, I thought I was on a good thing. I soon discovered my mistaik!

I started off all right. Uncle Clegg, who keeps the grocery stores in Courtfield, promptly gave me an advertisement. What was more, he gave me the munney for it!

I walked briskly out of Uncle Clegg's, and vissited Mr. Lamb, the new butcher from Canterbury.

"Good-afternoon, Mr. Lamb!" I said plezzantly. "A warm day, is it not? I fancy we shall have thunder!"

"I think so, too!" said Mr. Lamb grimly. "What do you want, young shaver?"

"Ahem! I am the advertisement manager for 'Billy Bunter's Weekly.'"

"Never heard of it!"

"What!" I almost screamed. "Never heard of my major's wonderful 'Weekly'? It is famous throughout the land. It has a serkulation of over fifty billion—"

"Get out of my shopp!"

"Certainly! But before I go, might I inkwire if you would care to insert a small advertisement in our paper? It will only cost you five pounds."

"You cheeky young bratt—"

"It will bring you lots of kustom," I said persuasiffly. "I'll take the munney now."

Alas! I took Mr. Lamb's boot instead! The next moment I landed on all fours on the pavement.

After feeling to make sure there were no bones broken, I picked myself up, and proceeded to Mr. Clipham, the barber. He brought balm to my broozed sole by giving me a hansom advertisement.

But I was soon in the wars again. This time it was at the hands of Mr. Armstrong, who sells cricket bats and all sorts of sports gear.

Mr. Armstrong—the beest!—poked me out of his shope with a hockey-stick! I came wizzing fourth like a stoan from a catterpult, and pitched headlong into the street. A motor-lorry only just mannidged to swerve aside in time, or I should have come to a sticky end!

After that I vissited about a duzen shops. At one or two of them I was in luck's way. But in most cases I was ejectioned on my neck. And I was a sorry speektacle when I got back to Greyfriars, I can tell you!

I told Billy he would have to pay me well for my afternoon's work; but the stingy beest only gave me tuppense, with which I went along to the tuckshopp and drowned my sorrows in jinger-pop.

Next time Billy publishes a special advertisement number of his "Weekly," he will have to get somebody else to play the part of kollector.

THE POPULAR.—No. 179.



"Oh dear! This is too awful for words!" groaned Tubby Muffin. The fat junior had often been in a tight corner. But he had never been in quite such an unpleasant predicament as this.

Tubby had been attracted by a newspaper advertisement. A lady calling herself "Benefactress" had offered to take a number of schoolboys under her wing during the vacation, and to give them every comfort, including unlimited tuck.

Tubby Muffin had obtained his pater's permission to go to Greycourt Towers, Pinehaven, where this feminine Good Samaritan had her abode. And on arriving at his destination, Tubby, to his horror, found that "Benefactress" was none other than his Aunt Susanna!

Now, Aunt Susanna was a hatchet-faced, angular lady, very strict and severe. Tubby Muffin had stayed with her once, and she had almost succeeded in starving him.

It looked as if history would repeat itself. Aunt Susanna had collected half a dozen schoolboys under her roof. But she had no idea how to feed them. She herself had a poor appetite. And she imagined that everybody else was similarly afflicted. Thin gruel and weak beef-tea—these were her principal items of diet.

Tubby Muffin nearly had a fit when he came face to face with his austere aunt.

He had walked into a hornets'-nest, and there did not seem to be any way out.

The fat junior was a prisoner at Greycourt Towers. And his fellow prisoners were not the sort of fellows he could chum up with. They were high-spirited, cheeky youths. They referred to Aunt Susanna by the disrespectful title of "Old Dutch."

Supper that evening consisted of a basin of thin gruel.

Everybody grumbled. And Tubby Muffin's lamentations rose above the rest.

"This is too awful for words!" he repeated, with a groan.

Aunt Susanna, at the head of the table, frowned at her nephew.

"What is wrong, Reginald?" she demanded.

"It's this gruel, aunt!" moaned Tubby.

"It's getting me down!"

"You mean, it is building you up? It will make a man of you, Reginald!"

"I could do with something more substantial," said Tubby. "A steak-and-kidney pudding, for instance!"

Aunt Susanna raised her hands in horror.

"The worst thing you could possibly eat!" she declared. "I should never permit such an indigestible compound to be served at my table!"

"But I'm awfully peckish, aunt—nearly starving, in fact!"

"There is plenty more dry bread, if you want it."

"Gruel!"

For once in a way, Tubby Muffin was glad when supper was over. He conceived a notion of walking into the town of Pinehaven, and making purchases at a pastry-cook's.

This plan, however, was not carried out. For directly the meal was over Aunt Susanna announced that it was bed-time.

Tubby Muffin found himself in a large room, in which six camp-beds had been installed. He gazed appealingly at his fellow-prisoners in that house of famine.

"You fellows got anything to eat?" he asked.

A youth in spectacles produced some toffee. Tubby's eyes glistened.

"Good!" he said. "Hand it over!"

But the spectacled youth calmly consumed the toffee himself.

"I'm not going to start feeding prize porkers," he said. "It's as much as I can

do to keep my own body and soul together in this beastly hole!"

"Can't we break out and get some grub from somewhere?" asked Tubby vaguely.

"No hope!" said a freckled youth. "The Old Dutch has locked the front door on the inside, and taken the key. We've got to stick here and starve. Ours is a nice house, ours is!"

"There's the window," suggested Tubby.

"Well, if you're pining to break your neck, go ahead! It's a thirty-foot drop. And there's no ivy or rain-pipe, or anything of that sort, to help you."

"Oh crumbs!"

There was nothing for it but to pass the night in a state of semi-starvation. And in the morning there would be beef-tea for breakfast. Tubby Muffin shuddered at the thought. He wished he had gone home for the vac!



"Boys!" said Aunt Susanna, "let this horseplay cease at once! How dare you!"

That wish grew a few moments later, when his companions, by way of breaking the monotony, started laying into him with pillows.

The spectacled youth started the attack. And the others eagerly joined in.

The pillows clumped upon Tubby Muffin's anatomy.

"Yow-ow-ow! Give over, you beasts!" he yelled.

But the bombardment went on. And the unfortunate Tubby would almost have been exterminated had not Aunt Susanna banged on the door at that moment.

"Boys!" she exclaimed, in rasping tones. "Let this horseplay cease! How dare you!"

Instantly the pillow wielders scampered to their beds. They stood in awe of Aunt Susanna. That stern dame had been known to chastise some of her charges with a cane; and the fellows who had endured her "hauders" didn't want any more.

Tubby Muffin crawled into bed, and in due course fell asleep. He was not molested any further that night.

He awoke at dawn—a hopeless dawn, indeed, with its promise of beef-tea and dry bread for breakfast.

Tubby had endured a good deal. But the breakfast at Greycourt Towers was the finishing touch.

It is the last straw that breaks the camel's back. And breakfast was the last straw to Tubby Muffin.

When the meal was over he fled from the house.

Aunt Susanna had given strict instructions that no boy was to leave the premises that morning. Tubby set those instructions at

defiance, and ran as if for his life. He fled down the main street of Pinehaven as if a fleet-footed constable were in hot pursuit.

Presently, outside a shop, he caught sight of the words "Public Telephone."

"Good!" panted Tubby Muffin. "I'll get through to the pater."

After some delay, he managed to get a call through to London. A familiar voice addressed him over the wires:

"Who is that?"

"It's me, pater!" gasped Tubby.

"Bless my soul! Reginald! I trust there is nothing the matter?"

"Everything's the matter!" was the reply. "You remember that advertisement that was signed 'Benefactress'?"

"Of course!"

"Well, Benefactress has turned out to be Aunt Susanna!"

"Dear me!" exclaimed Tubby's pater. "How extraordinary! But you could not have fallen into better hands, Reginald."

"Rats!"

"What was that?"

"Rats! Aunt Susanna's starving me—starving me by inches!"

"What utter nonsense!"

"It isn't nonsense!" bawled Tubby into the transmitter. "It's a fact. Get me away from this hole, pater—quickly, or I shall go mad! Let me come home for the rest of the vac!"

"Impossible!" came the stern answer. "I have already paid for your board and lodging at Greycourt Towers. Under no circumstances will I allow you to come home!"

Tubby Muffin emitted a hollow groan.

"Is that final, pater?" he asked.

"Absolutely!"

It was no use wasting breath in further conversation.

Tubby hung up the receiver, and staggered out of the telephone-box.

There was no escape for him. He must resign himself to starvation and misery at Aunt Susanna's.

But Fate has a habit of becoming suddenly kind to those she has spurned and tortured. And Fate turned up trumps on this occasion.

As Tubby Muffin emerged on to the pavement he bumped into four fellows who were wearing the Rookwood colours. They were Jimmy Silver & Co., the Fistical Four of the Classical side.

Into sympathetic ears, Tubby Muffin poured his tale of woe.

"I haven't had a square meal since I left Rookwood, you fellows!" he said. "Benefactress, who advertised for schoolboys to stay with her as paying guests, turned out to be my Aunt Susanna! She's as stingy as they make 'em! I tell you, I shall be a bag of bones if I stay with her a week!"

"Better go home to your pater," advised Jimmy Silver.

"I can't! I've just 'phoned him, and he won't hear of my coming home. And yet, I can't go back to Aunt Susanna's. Oh dear! What shall I do?"

Tubby Muffin wrung his hands in despair. And Jimmy Silver & Co. were moved to compassion.

Silver and Lovell linked an arm in each of Tubby's.

"Come along, old chap!" said Jimmy. "You can regard yourself as our guest for the remainder of the vac. We can see you've been having a thin time, and we'll rescue you from your aunt's clutches!"

Which they duly did.

Tubby Muffin did not return to Greycourt Towers. He left a suit of pyjamas there, and a brush and comb and a toothbrush and sundry Eton collars. But he cheerfully suffered the loss of these things in order to get away.

The last Word

in Footwear!

Small, Serviceable Boots and Shoes for School-Boys.

Don't hobble about like an old jesser with the gout, in ill-fitting boots! Choose comfortable footwear. Walking boots, riding boots, hunting boots, cricket boots, golfing boots, dominoes boots, and snakes - and - ladders boots always in stock.



Friardale Footwear Emporium, Friardale, Kent

NEW LAID EGGS FROM UNCLE CLEGG'S!

Guaranteed Fresh From the Fowls. No Veterans Among Them.

Note the Reduced Price: 3s. 6d. per dozen.

Young Gents of Greyfriars! You couldn't fare better if you had farmhouses in your own studies!

UNCLE CLEGG'S FOR NEW LAID EGGS!

(Established in Courtfield in the Days of the Druids.)

YOUNG-GENTS AT GREYFRIARS



Don't Forget Your Own Tuckshop.

All Cakes and Pastries prepared on the premises from the most wholesome ingredients. Picnic parties catered for; also study celebrations and dormitory feeds.

TRY MY WONDERFUL ICES!

Strawberry or Vanilla ... 6d.
Peach Melba 1s. 0d.
Mixed Fruit 1s. 6d.

Iced Ginger - Beer and Lemonade Speciality.

Mrs. Jessie Mimble, The Tuckshop, Greyfriars School.

(Established in the reign of Queen Victoria.)



I. CLIPHAM, Ladies' and Gentlemen's Hairdresser

(Member of the Royal Sheep-shearing Society.)

Boys of Greyfriars! Don't go about with straggling locks, like poets or Bolsheviks!

Come and be clipped at Clipham's!

TERMS:

Haircutting,	4d.
Cocoonut Oil Shampoo	1s. 0d.
Common or Garden ditto	6d.
Face Massage	1s. 6d.
Shaving per hair	1d.
Moustache Waxed and Curled ...	4d.
Beard Trimming	6d.

Don't get in a temper at Greyfriars. Come and "get your wool off" at Clipham's!

COURTFIELD TOILET SALOON,
99, High Street, Courtfield.

FEELING PECKISH!

Come and Feed your Inner Man at the Elysian Cafe!

Breakfasts, Luncheons, Teas, and Suppers. Parties Catered For. Large dining-room on the ground floor, and another upstairs. Special Orchestra plays during meals. Conductor: Mr. Twidley Bytte.

Note.—Fat boys in a state of impecuniosity are not catered for, and will be ejected.

THE ELYSIAN CAFE,
High Street, Courtfield.

SMART, STYLISH SPORTS WEAR FOR THE SUMMER.

Sports Coats from 35s. Cricket Flannels made to measure. We have a choice assortment of rainbow-coloured Blazers.

COME AND INSPECT OUR STOCK!

Boys of Greyfriars! Don't walk about like down-at-heel tramps! Don't slouch about in torn and tattered garments! Come to us, and you will have a perfect fit!

"The apparel oft proclaims the man."

—Shakespeare.

DON'T DELAY! COME TO-DAY!

NUTTY & SMART,
(The Superior Tailors),
HIGH STREET, COURTFIELD.
(Opposite Uncle Clegg's.)

The Call of the Open Road.

Save up your Pocket-money and Buy a Bicycle!

All sorts, shapes, and sizes in stock. Every machine brand-new and up-to-date. No old-fashioned gridirons! Mr. S. Q. I. Field (Greyfriars) writes: "It is now three weeks since I bought my machine, and it is still going strong. After sundry collisions with steam-rollers, etc., it still retains its shape. And I hope to get at least another week's service out of the machine you supplied."



The Courtfield Cycle Company,
High Street,
Courtfield.

PINKER'S PALE PILLS!

For Ailing Schoolboys!

Take a couple every evening, and enjoy perfect health.

W. G. B. (Greyfriars) writes:

"Since taking a course of your Pale Pills I have gratefully reduced my superfluous fat; and day by day, in every way, I am getting better and better."

Alonzo Todd, Esq., writes:

"When bed-times comes I always pop a couple of your Pale Pills into my mouth. They are truly wonderful! They were recommended to me by my Uncle Benjamin, who found them to be invigorating, stimulating, and refreshing. Please send a further supply."

PINKER'S DRUG STORES
North Street, Courtfield.

BOYS AND GIRLS.



You want light sickshun?

You want brite, inspiring tails?

You want side-splitting joaks?

THEN READ
"Billy Bunter's Weekly!"

(No konnaection with any other Greyfriars jernal.)
W. G. BUNTER, Soul Proprietor.

HARRY MANNERS' BRAIN-WAVE!

(Continued from page 12.)

him in some way, and then make him promise not to try to fag the Shell."

"Knocks for Knox like," said Monty Lowther, grinning.

"Oh, shut up, Monty, for goodness' sake, and stop chortling at your own feeble puns!" growled the junior captain.

Lowther glared at his leader.

"Feeble puns!" he said indignantly.

"That's a jolly good pun—almost good enough for my column in the 'Weekly.'"

"Well, if it's as bad as that," retorted Tom Merry, "I should bury it before it grows moss!"

"What do you mean?" demanded Monty hotly. "My column's the best feature we've got in the 'Weekly.'"

"Then we'd better bring the 'Weekly' to a close!" remarked Tom Merry.

"There's no hope for it!"

"Look here, Tommy—" began Lowther.

"Quit ragging, you two!" said Manners. "We were thinking of a method to put the kybosh on Knox."

The two stopped their argument. "To get back to brass tacks," declared Tom Merry sagely. "We've got to get Knox under our thumb!"

"The third time!" murmured Lowther.

"Eh?"

"Third time!" Monty repeated.

"Look here—"

"I've got the very thing!" broke in Manners excitedly.

"What!"

"Where?"

"Glyn!" cried Manners.

"Bernard Glyn?" repeated Tom Merry, puzzled.

"Yes; Glyn!"

"What about him?" asked Lowther.

"Why, he's a inventive chemist, isn't he, duffers?" said Manners.

"Yes; but you're not going to poison Knox."

Manners glared and then shook his head.

"You'll see when you get there," he remarked mysteriously. "Follow your leader!"

The two juniors followed Manners wonderingly, as he led the way from the study. Manners had apparently struck an idea, but as to what it was all about they were quite in the dark. Manners led the way to the laboratory, and, sure enough, Glyn was there, deep in a scientific conversation with the "stinks" master.

"Do you want me?" he asked.

"Yes, rather!" said Manners. "When shall you be coming down, Glyn?"

Glyn grinned.

"Just coming this moment," he said.

"Half a jiffy!"

"Good man!" returned Manners.

In a few moments the Terrible Three were on their way back to Study No. 10, accompanied by Bernard Glyn. Arrived there Manners explained the whole situation to Glyn.

"My hat!" gasped Glyn, as the narrative was finished. "What an awful cad! What are you going to do?"

THE POPULAR.—No. 179.

Manners took Glyn aside and unfolded to him a dark plot. Glyn chuckled when Manners started. His grin grew broader and broader as Manners elaborated his scheme, and finally broke into a roar of uncontrollable laughter.

"Do you think you will be able to manage that, Bernard?" asked Manners.

"Yes, rather!" said Glyn confidently. "Leave it to me! Ha, ha, ha!"

"What's the joke?" asked the mystified Tom Merry.

Monty Lowther, too, was all eagerness to hear all about the great scheme. Manners looked at his two chums, then unfolded his plan of action.

Soon two more occupants of the end study were roaring with laughter.

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Tom Merry.

"That's great! It will be the jape of the season!"

"By gad!" cried Lowther, wiping the tears from his eyes. "Simply killing! That will be the cream of all the japes on Knox."

Manners grinned at his chums' enthusiasm.

"It's not bad, is it?" he asked. "If it comes off. It's up to you, Glyn."

Bernard Glyn smiled confidently.

"Oh, it will come off all right!" he said. "You can rely on me."

Tom Merry rubbed his hands together as the chemist of St. Jim's left the end study.

ANOTHER GRAND COLOURED ENGINE PLATE PRESENTED FREE IN NEXT WEEK'S ISSUE!

"Good for you, Manners!" he said, clapping his chum upon the back.

"That'll be absolutely great!"

"What about celebrating the great idea?" suggested Lowther, who was still flush from his recent remittance.

"Good idea!" said Tom Merry heartily. "Come along!"

The Terrible Three walked off arm-in-arm to the tuckshop, where the success of Manners' great idea was toasted in foaming ginger-pop.

On their way back they met Bernard Glyn.

"Come up to the lab!" he cried excitedly. "I've got the very thing."

The three chums followed the inventive genius upstairs in keen expectancy.

"Here we are!" said Glyn, opening the door.

"My hat!" gasped Tom Merry, staggering back. "Fetch a gas-mask—quick!"

Glyn smiled.

"It is rather strong, isn't it?"

"Strong!" gasped Monty Lowther, clasping his handkerchief to his nose.

"It's overpowering, Glyn, old man! You ought not to be allowed loose, you dangerous lunatic!"

Manners chuckled happily. It was well worth a little discomfort, he considered, to ensure the success of his scheme.

"Is it poison?" asked Tom Merry.

"No, of course not, you ass!" said Glyn. "Here are two powders which are quite harmless, by themselves, but

when you mix them together, so—"

"Grooogh!" spluttered Lowther. "I'm choking! Take it away—quick!"

Glyn chuckled as he put the evil-smelling mixture in the fume-cupboard of the laboratory.

"And we put some of the mixture in Knox's study," said Manners.

"Exactly!" replied Glyn, with a smile.

"Does the odour last?" queried Tom Merry.

"Oh, yes!" replied the schoolboy inventor. "For about three days it will be quite strong; and, of course, you could keep replenishing it to last a month if you like."

"I don't think it will be necessary for it to last all that time," broke in Manners. "Knox will have expired long before then."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Bernard Glyn got to work, and soon had packets of the two powders ready.

"Lucky the lab is not in great demand," remarked Tom Merry.

"The flavour lasts," said Monty Lowther, with a grin.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I'll cut along and see if the coast's clear," said Manners.

"Right-ho!"

Manners sped away, and soon returned with the news that the prefect's study was quite empty, and there was nobody about on the Sixth Form passage.

"Good egg!" said Glyn. "Let's get it over, then."

The Terrible Three followed Glyn to the study of the Sixth Form bully.

"Where shall we put it?" he asked. Manners looked about him.

"Under the carpet," he suggested.

Glyn shook his head.

"No fear!" he said. "He's sure to have the place searched. We've got to find a place so obvious that he'll never think of examining it. I've got it!"

"Cave!" cried Lowther from the door.

Glyn hastily mixed the two powders and clapped them in a tin and placed it in the table drawer. As the four juniors dived down the stairs at one end of the Sixth-Formers' passage, Knox and his fellow-blade, Cutts of the Fifth, came up the other.

THE THIRD CHAPTER

Knox's Dilemma.

KNOX and Cutts, quite unsuspecting, strolled up to the door of the prefect's study and walked in. Cutts was the first to enter.

"My hat!" he gasped. "Grooogh!"

He started aback so quickly that he nearly knocked Knox over in his hurry to get out.

Knox, somewhat puzzled, walked in.

"What on earth's wrong—" he began, and then he, too, caught a whiff.

"Ow! By Jove!" he gasped, quickly following Cutts. "What is it, Cutts?"

Gerald Cutts shook his head.

"Should think a cat must have died in there or something," he said. "Do you usually live in an atmosphere like that, Knox?"

"Look here, Cutts," roared Knox, almost beside himself with rage. "You know jolly well I haven't caused the beastly smell!"

"Didn't suggest you had," said Cutts, who, in spite of the fact that he and the bully of the Sixth were fellow-rogues, delighted in goading him. "Anyhow, you must be a chump to think we can go into a hole like that!"

Knox was fast losing control of himself.

"Look here, Cutts, I wasn't to know

A NEW, LONG TALE OF ST. JIM'S.

By MARTIN CLIFFORD.

NEXT TUESDAY!

"FIRST MAN HOME!"

there'd be an awful sniff like this when I asked you along, was I?"

Cutts shook his head. "Don't know, old man," he said coolly. "Anyhow, our little flutter's off, I suppose?"

Cutts turned coolly upon his heel and strolled away, leaving Knox to address the empty air.

The prefect watched him disappear, and then once again attempted to enter his den. The smell was almost overpowering, but Knox managed to stagger across the study and fling the windows wide open.

"Great Scott!" he groaned. "What on earth can it be?"

He searched the cupboard in the hope of discovering a dead rat, but made no discoveries. The corners also proved blank, and further desultory searching on Knox's part brought nothing to light which could possibly be set down as being the cause of the awful odour, and the prefect at last gave up in despair, hoping that by the morrow the smell would have dispersed.

Next day, however, the black sheep of the Sixth Form found his trials added to. Cutts, only too pleased to get a chance of causing the bully trouble, had lost no time in spreading the news round St. Jim's. His fellow prefects eyed Knox queerly as he took his place in their midst at prayers. Fags and the smaller fry openly giggled as he passed. Knox caught Harvey and Hobbs of the Third clasping their noses as he went by, and he savagely turned on them with his ash-plant. The two fags scattered hastily as the prefect rushed at them.

Knox groaned as he went upstairs. Something, he decided simply, must be done. He resolved to really thoroughly examine the study that day.

"Quite an eruption!" remarked Cutts, as he paused at the open door of the Sixth-Former's room. "Found that dead cat yet?"

Knox got up savagely from his task, but Cutts had gone. Indeed, Cutts' remark was quite justified. The furniture of the study had all been displaced, the curtains removed, and the carpet taken up.

Piled upon the study table were the lighter contents of the room, and Knox was upon his hands and knees scrubbing the floor with strong carbolic soap. For a long time Knox laboured, but found nothing which could have caused the smell. The study had been thoroughly cleaned, and everything moved, but still the objectionable odour remained.

The bullying prefect could have almost wept with rage and mortification. Such strenuous manual labour he was hardly

used to, but in this case he could scarcely have thrust the work upon a fag.

"I don't know!" growled Knox, as he surveyed the results of his fruitless labours. "I shall have to see Railton."

The Terrible Three and Bernard Glyn, who had watched developments with high amusement, could have hugged themselves with glee when they saw the bully go up to Mr. Railton's study.

"Working like a charm!" chuckled Glyn, almost dancing round the study in his enthusiasm.

The next day it was observed a carpenter arrived to examine the room. Mr. Railton had visited the prefect's study to ascertain the truth of the bully's astounding report.

The carpenter was instructed to do everything he could to locate the smell, and the carpenter was very thorough in his work.

But he was not successful.

The carpenter reported to Mr. Railton of his non-success. Knox, too, went along to have a further chat with the Housemaster upon the subject.

"Are you quite sure you have searched everywhere, Knox?"

"Quite sure, sir! There's nowhere else to look now."

"Somebody, I expect, is playing a practical joke," said the Housemaster. "Is there anyone with whom you are on bad terms?"

Knox shook his head doubtfully. He was on bad terms with nearly all except the noble army of nuts and blades.

"N-no, sir!" he stammered.

"Oh, come, Knox!" said the Housemaster. "Try to think. Any of the juniors, for example?"

Mr. Railton eyed the prefect curiously. He knew quite well of Knox's bullying ways, and, as a matter of fact, was quite certain he could have placed his hands upon the culprits.

On Knox's part, Mr. Railton's question had given him sudden enlightenment. He had to dissemble, however, in the Housemaster's presence.

"I don't know of any junior who would have cause to do such a thing," he said.

"I should advise you to think it over, Knox," said Mr. Railton.

"Thank you, sir. I will."

As Knox left the study he remembered his latest net of oppression upon the end study. It came to him like a flash, and he went straight to Study No. 10.

"Now you little rotters!" he snarled, throwing open the door. "What have you been doing to my room?"

"Doing to your room?" queried Manners innocently. "What do you mean?"

Knox turned to the speaker savagely.

"Yes! What's the cause of the awful smell there?"

"Smell?" ejaculated Manners.

"Smell?" repeated Monty Lowther, as if a smell in Knox's study was the last thing on earth he could know anything about.

The prefect turned to Tom Merry.

"You're the leader of this crowd, Merry!" he said with an effort. "You've got the whip hand of me, I'll admit. What do you want me to do in order that you will remove that awful smell? I know you are the cause of it!"

Tom Merry glanced at Manners, who nodded slightly.

"I'm quite ready to admit, Knox, that we might perhaps find the offending source," he said boldly. "But—" He paused significantly.

Knox was almost beside himself with rage and humiliation, but he kept himself in hand.

"You want me to let you off those lines?" he asked, almost choking.

Tom Merry flushed. Put so baldly, that seemed such a paltry object.

"It's not the lines," broke in Manners. "We shouldn't have done them in any case. You've got to promise not to be such a rotten bully in future, and not try again to fag the Shell!"

Knox swallowed hard, but thought of the consequences if he did not eat humble pie.

"All right!" he said, with an effort. "I'll—I'll promise."

"And you'd better keep it, my son!" returned Manners, as the prefect turned and left the study.

That evening Knox went for a stroll, and the Terrible Three and Bernard Glyn made their way in high feather to the bully's study.

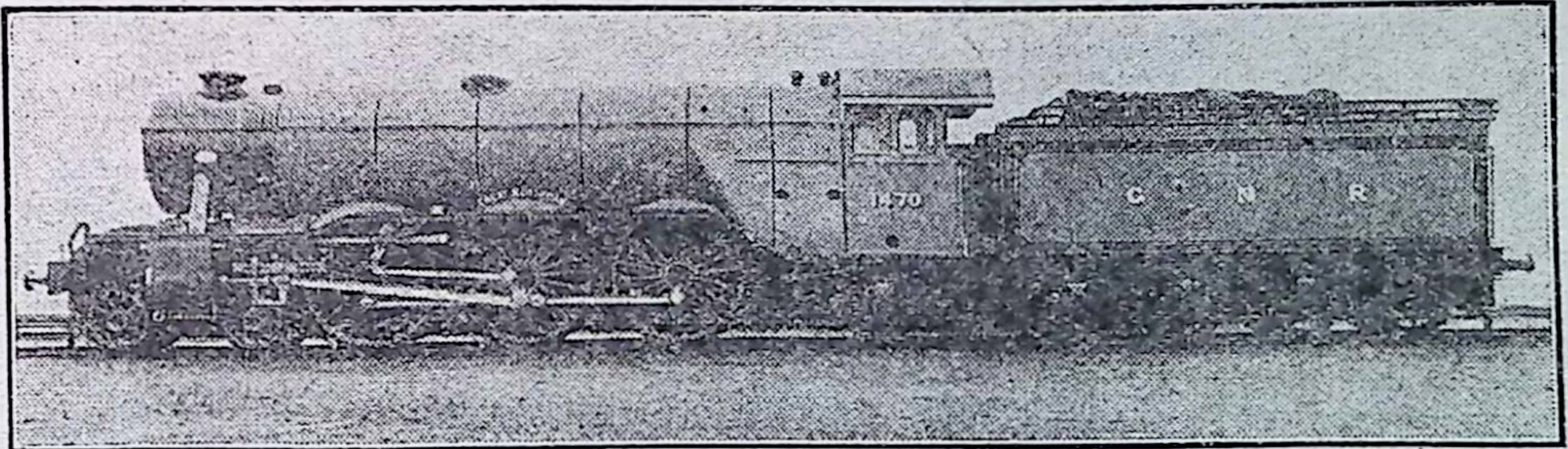
"Here we are!" cried Glyn, as he extracted the tin containing the offending powders from the table drawer, and flung it as far as he could out of the window. "It's just as well Knox saw sense to-day. The effects of the stuff would have worn off by to-morrow, and I doubt if we should have been able to replace it without being spotted!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" Gerald Knox was the laughing stock of the school for some time, but how long he will keep his promise remains to be seen.

THE END.

(Another splendid long complete tale of Tom Merry & Co., the chums of St. Jim's, entitled, "First Man Home!" will be included in next week's grand programme of stories.)

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By OWEN CONQUEST

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

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

The Caravanners.

"**B**OSH!"

Thus Arthur Edward Lovell.

"My dear man—" murmured Jimmy Silver.

"Bosh!" repeated Lovell, still more emphatically.

Evidently Arthur Edward held strong opinions on the subject under discussion.

Raby and Newcome grinned, and said nothing.

But they looked as if they agreed with Lovell.

"Now, look here—" began Jimmy Silver again.

Lovell sniffed.

Lovell's vocabulary, that fine summer morning, seemed rather limited.

"Bosh," however, expressed his feelings.

The Fistical Four, of the Rookwood Fourth, were just finishing breakfast.

But they were not breakfasting, as usual, in the dusky old, oak-panelled room at Rookwood School.

Rookwood School had broken up early for the summer holidays. The chums of the Classical Fourth were going caravanning, which they all agreed was a ripping idea, though there were some details which, apparently, they did not quite agree upon.

After visiting their homes, they had gathered once more at the Golden Lion Inn, in a Kentish village, where the journey was to begin.

The caravan was there, and the horse, and the tent, and the various appurtenances.

Jimmy Silver had arrived first, and inspected the property, and he was satisfied.

After breakfast they were to start, and then came up the question upon which Arthur Edward Lovell pronounced so emphatic an opinion.

Jimmy Silver smiled patiently.

In Rookwood, or out of Rookwood, he was still the tactful "Uncle James," whose word was law in the Fourth.

He opened his lips to reply, but Lovell did not give him time to speak.

"Bosh!" he said once more. "Rubbish! Piffle! Rot! It will spoil the whole thing! What the thump do we want with an elder person to look after us? Can't we look after ourselves?"

"We can," agreed Jimmy.

"First-rate!" said Raby. "I must say I agree with Lovell there. Some dashed old dodderer interfering with us will spoil the fun."

"What do we want with a blessed elder person?" demanded Lovell.

"We don't want him," admitted Jimmy.

"Well, then, that settles it."

"Not quite."

"Oh, don't begin again, Jimmy!" implored Lovell. "Let's take that question as settled. Two in the van, and two in the tent; that's enough for us. Of course, we could squeeze another in the tent; but we don't want to."

"Give a chap a chance to speak," said Jimmy Silver beseechingly. "You're like a

gramophone that won't run down, Lovell. The pater said—"

"Hallo! They're shoving the van out into the road," said Raby, glancing out of the window.

"The pater said—"

"And there's the horse," said Newcome, following Raby's glance. "Looks a bit of an old catsmeat specimen!"

"Did you expect to see a thoroughbred cavalry charger?" demanded Jimmy Silver.

"He's a good horse, plenty of bone—"

"Lot!" agreed Raby.

"Precious little anything else," remarked Newcome.

"Oh, rats! Look here, the pater said—"

"Jimmy, old man, I respect you for admiring your pater, but there can be too much said, even on that subject," said Lovell. "I suggest you give your pater a rest."

"The pater said—"

"Oh, let him get it out, Lovell!" said Raby resignedly. "You know Jimmy. He won't leave off wagging his chin till it's tired."

"The pater," pursued Jimmy Silver victoriously, "said that he could trust us anywhere, and was sure we shouldn't get into trouble; but it seemed somewhat more in accordance with the fitness of things for me to have an elder person with me on such a tour."

"Your pater talks like a picture-book, old man. I believe in letting paters run on," said Lovell generously. "It relieves their minds, and doesn't do any harm."

"I agreed with the pater," continued Jimmy Silver. "I felt that he would be more satisfied if I had an elder person with me. And he didn't care who it was. He knew I should find somebody suitable. And I've done it!"

"You've found the rotter!" exclaimed Lovell.

"Yes."

"Where is he?"

"Here."

"In the Golden Lion?"

"Yes."

"Then I suppose we're bound to take him," growled Lovell. "Look here, Jimmy, you ought not to have sprung this on us. It will spoil the whole thing. Your pater didn't order you to, so there was no need. Br-r-r-r!"

"Well, I felt bound to concede the point," explained Jimmy Silver. "But the chap isn't a bad sort."

"What's he like?"

"Well, he's not very good-looking."

"Bother his looks! That doesn't matter."

"Perhaps you might consider him good-looking, though, Lovell," said Jimmy Silver musingly. "There's no telling."

"Blow his looks, good or otherwise! What's he like in other ways?"

"Well, he talks rather a lot."

"Oh dear!"

"He's awfully emphatic in delivering his opinions."

"Bless him!"

"And he hasn't very much sense, I'm afraid," admitted Jimmy Silver.

"Oh, crumbs!" said Lovell. "Can he drive?"

"He thinks he can."

"Can he help put up a tent?"

"Well, I expect he would muck it up."

"Can he cook?"

"Rottenly!"

"Great pip! And that's the kind of howlin' frump you've planted on us for a caravan tour!" roared Lovell.

"What's his name?"

"Arthur Edward Lovell!"

"Wha-a-at?"

Lovell stared open-mouthed at the captain of the Rookwood Fourth.

Jimmy Silver smiled sweetly and gently.

"You see, you're older than I am, Lovell," he explained, softly as the cooing dove.

"Only a few months, but that makes you an elder person, doesn't it? When the pater said I'd better have an elder person with me, I thought of you at once. You were coming, anyway, so it was all right."

Lovell's face was a study.

Raby and Newcome burst into a roar of laughter.

It dawned upon all three that Jimmy Silver had been gently pulling Arthur Edward's leg.

"You—you—you—" stuttered Lovell at last.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You—you were describing an old frump!" roared Lovell. "You—you said he wasn't good-looking."

"I said you might consider he was. So you might. There's no accounting for tastes."

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled Raby and Newcome.

"You—you—you funny idiot!" gasped Lovell. "Never mind. I suppose that's what you call a joke. So we're going on our own, after all?"

"We are—we is," agreed Jimmy Silver.

"That's all right, then, fathead! Let's go and see the van," said Lovell.

And the chums of Rookwood sauntered out into the road to examine the caravan that was to bear them for days and nights through the leafy Kentish lanes.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

The Caravan.

JIMMY SILVER & CO. were in great spirits that morning.

The weather was glorious, which was very cheering for caravanners. A downpour of rain would have been rather discouraging for the start.

But the sky was blue, dotted with fleecy clouds, and warm sunshine streamed down upon the green earth.

And the fact that they were going "on their own" elated the four.

Three other Rookwood fellows were going caravanning in the same county that vacation—Tommy Dodd & Co. of the Modern side.

But they were taking Sergeant Kettle with them, and, though the sergeant was a

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"SPOOFING THE SERGEANT!"

splendid old character in his way, the juniors regarded him as something of a "cold douche" on a caravan tour.

They did not envy the three Tommies the "looking after" they would get from Mr. Kettle.

The Classical chums of Rookwood surveyed the van with great satisfaction.

It looked a large and roomy vehicle from without, though within it could hardly be called roomy.

It was very fresh-looking, with new paint that glistened in the sun, though how long that paint would remain fresh-looking was a question that was very soon to be answered.

A man was holding the horse close at hand, ready to put in.

The horse did look rather bony, but he looked strong, and Lovell's suggestion that things could be hung on him if there was not room in the van was an exaggeration.

"Ripping, isn't it?" said Jimmy Silver.

"Well, the van looks prime," said Lovell.

"Let's see inside."

He jammed the steps in position and mounted, and tried to open the door.

It remained fast, however.

"This blessed door's stuck!" called out Lovell.

"Can't be," answered Jimmy. "I left it unfastened when I looked in last evening. Use your head, old chap!"

"I tell you it won't open!"

"Bow-wow!"

"Nobby, isn't it?" said Jimmy, pointing to the neatly curtained window. "Like a—like a West End flat, really. Not much elbow-room, but very dainty."

"Topping!" said Raby heartily. "I dare say there'll be room for two in the van. Lucky Tubby Muffin isn't one of the two, though!"

Jimmy laughed.

Tubby Muffin of the Classical Fourth at Rookwood had a circumference which was not at all suited to the confined space of a caravan.

The cheerful Tubby had informed Jimmy that he was "coming," but the opinion of the Fistical Four was that he was not coming.

And Jimmy, though he had received three affectionate letters while at home from Tubby—one each morning—had omitted to reply to them giving details of the arrangements.

Tubby, who was not a good walker, and was remarkably unhandy at everything, was not a desirable addition to a caravan-party, especially as he would have to be watched to see that he did not bolt all the provisions on the first day.

"Is the man going to put the horse in, or are we?" asked Newcome rather doubtfully.

"Oh, we'd better do it!" answered Jimmy.

"Better get into the habit. You only have to back him into place, and—and fasten the traces and buckles and things, and—and there you are, you know! Quite simple!"

"I tell you this dashed door won't open!" roared Lovell.

"Oh, open it, old chap!" said Newcome.

"We want to see in the van."

"It won't open!"

"Let me do it!" said Jimmy resignedly.

Lovell snorted, and made room for Jimmy Silver, who tried his hand on the door.

To his surprise, it did not open.

"Well?" snorted Lovell.

"My hat! It's got stuck!" said Jimmy, in surprise. "It can't be bolted! There's nobody in the van, surely!"

"My hat! Might be some tramp got in it to sleep while it was in the yard last night!" grinned Raby.

"Oh, rot! It's got jammed a bit. The van isn't standing quite even," said Jimmy.

"Never mind it now. Let's get the horse in."

"I shouldn't wonder if there's somebody inside," grunted Lovell. "It looks like it to me."

"Well, if there is, let him stick there!" said Jimmy. "We'll rout him out later on, and give him a long walk back!"

"Oh, good! That will serve him right!"

And the four juniors gave their attention to the horse.

The stableman relinquished that animal to them, touching his hat, and the juniors proceeded to back him into position.

The horse seemed to have some slight objection to backing, however.

He set his front feet firmly on the ground, and they did not budge an inch, and the backing process only caused him to rear on his hind legs.

"Obstinate beast!" growled Lovell.

"What's the matter with him?"

"Wants a jolly good licking, I should say!" gasped Raby. "Here, let the man do it, and we'll watch him. I dare say there's a way of doing these things."

"Shove him in, my man!" said Jimmy Silver.

The stableman grinned, and shoved him in and buckled the harness.

For some reason the horse obeyed the stableman. Perhaps he knew what he would get if he did not.

By the time the horse was harnessed quite a little crowd had gathered round to watch the start.

The Rookwooders were the cynosure of all eyes.

They felt a little uncomfortable at being brought so prominently into the limelight, but they affected to take no notice of the stares that were fixed upon them.

"Where's the tent?" asked Lovell suddenly.

"Packed inside."

"And the grub?"

"Inside."

"Well, the gee-gee's fixed up," said Raby.

"If you're sure everything's in the van, Jimmy—"

"I went over everything specially last evening before you fellows arrived," said Jimmy.

"Then let's start. We shall have half Kent round us soon if we stick here much longer."

"We ought to get that door open first," muttered Lovell. "It may be stuck tight, and we may need tools."

"Better get off!" urged Raby.

The crowd of villagers was thickening round the caravan, and the four chums were coming in for an amount of attention that was rather discomfoting.

One old lady actually asked Lovell if he had brooms to sell, and an old fellow was heard to declare that "them gipsies" ought to be arrested, and that he knew now what had become of his fowls.

It was evidently high time to start.

Jimmy Silver had settled the bill at the inn, and he gave the stableman his tip and went to the horse's head.

"Who's going to drive?" asked Lovell.

"You can, if you like, old top. I'll lead the horse while you do it, in case of accidents."

"You silly ass!"

"Oh, come on!"

Jimmy Silver started the horse.

Lovell took the reins, and Raby and Newcome walked with Jimmy.

The caravan, with a bump and a clatter, was set in motion.

And as it rumbled on the rough road there came a sudden crash from within the vehicle.

"Oh, Jehoshaphat!" ejaculated Lovell.

"That's the eggs!"

"Oh, my hat!"

There was a loud guffaw from the watching villagers.

And the voice of the old inhabitant who had missed his fowls was heard inquiring:

"Where did them young gipsies get them eggs? The perlice ought to be told about this 'ere!"

With crimson faces the caravanners pushed on.

They were quite anxious to get out of the village and away on the long white road that stretched ahead.

ings were so pleasant that their spirits naturally rose.

"We won't stick to the high-road long," said Jimmy. "We turn off at the cross-roads, about three miles."

"Got a map?" asked Raby.

Jimmy sniffed.

"Do you think I should start caravanning without a map?" he inquired.

"My dear chap, there's no telling what you would do," answered Raby affably.

"As soon as we get off the high-road we'll stop and get this van open," said Lovell.

"I'm rather anxious about it."

"Oh, that's all right!"

"That's all very well. But suppose the door won't come open?" said Lovell. "What are we going to do for grub at lunch-time?"

That was a serious question, and Jimmy Silver agreed.

The keen, fresh air was making the juniors think of lunch already.

The caravan rumbled on.

Jimmy Silver ceased to lead the horse and sauntered on beside it, but in a minute or two he found himself sauntering ahead.

The horse had stopped.

"Come on, Lovell!" he called out.

"You're driving, ain't you, Lovell?" inquired Newcome.

Lovell's answer was a snort.

He certainly was driving, but the horse did not seem to be aware of it, for he had stopped, and seemed a fixture.

Lovell cracked his whip furiously.

"Gee-up!" he roared. "Get on, you critter! Go it, good old hoss! Get a move on, you bony beast! Yah! Gee-up!"

"Gee-up!" echoed the rest encouragingly.

Possibly the horse realised that he had only youngsters to deal with, and had already spotted the fact that there was no "elder" person in the party.

Certainly he seemed to be under the impression that he could do as he liked.

Lovell jerked the reins, and tugged at them, and slacked them, and cracked the whip, and shouted, and roared.

The horse moved on at a snail's pace, jerking the van slowly behind him, while he cropped contentedly at the grass on the wrong side of the road.

Sometimes he raised his head, in a bored sort of way, as Lovell put his strength into his tugging, but always his muzzle went down to the grass again.

"The beast!" panted Lovell, crimson with his exertions. "The rotten brute! I'll jolly well make him go!"

Whack, whack, whack!

Lovell did not like whipping a horse, but he was at the end of his patience now, and he laid it on.

The result was startling.

The horse threw up his head and started at a run, and then broke into a gallop.

Jimmy Silver and Raby and Newcome jumped out of the way in time, and the caravan thundered away down the road.

"Stop him!" yelled Jimmy.

"Pull in, you ass!" shrieked Newcome.

Lovell did not answer. He was trying to pull the horse in, and he needed all his wind.

Bony as he was, the caravan-horse was decidedly a powerful animal, and it was barely possible that Arthur Edward Lovell was not a first-class driver.

The caravan jolted and thumped along at a great rate, with Jimmy Silver and Raby and Newcome in frantic pursuit.

"Whoa!" panted Lovell. "Oh, you rotten beast! Whoa!"

But the horse was warming to his work now, and he thundered on.

There was an ominous clattering inside the van.

The crockery was suffering.

Suddenly the horse stopped dead, nearly throwing Lovell on to his back.

Then he began to back the caravan across the road, which was bordered by a deep ditch.

Fortunately, Jimmy Silver came panting up at that moment, and he seized the horse's head and dragged him on.

"I think I'll lead the horse now!" gasped Jimmy Silver.

"No need. I can drive him."

"What?"

"Do you think I can't drive?" roared Lovell heatedly.

"Well, my only hat!" exclaimed Jimmy.

"Yes, old man, I do think you can't drive! Kim on, hoss!"

And Jimmy led.

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THE THIRD CHAPTER.

On the Road.

JOLT!

Rumble!

Arthur Edward Lovell was driving, and he found the horse extremely easy to manage, probably because Jimmy Silver was leading him.

Three of the juniors were walking.

A number of the onlookers followed the van to the outskirts of the village, but after that the caravanners were left to themselves, for which relief they were very thankful.

A long white road lay before them, bordered on one side by green, dusky woods, and on the other side by verdant fields.

The sun shone brightly, and the surround-

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**THE FOURTH CHAPTER.
Tubby Muffin Makes Terms.**

THE caravanners were glad when they turned out of the high-road into a green country lane. It was safer here, as Newcome remarked, if Lovell started driving again. Lovell sniffed. "I can manage horses," he said. "The beast would have gone all right if Jimmy hadn't been leading him at first. That's what did it." "Oh, my hat!" said Jimmy. "Well, we've been jolly lucky," said Raby. "We've come three miles safely, with Lovell driving nearly all the time." "Look here, you ass—" "Shush!" said Jimmy Silver pacifically. "Don't let's begin ragging. Let's get the van open now we've stopped."

The horse was contentedly cropping at the side of the lane, and the juniors were able to turn their attention to the door of the caravan.

Jimmy Silver tried it in vain.

Somehow or other the door was blocked, and certainly it would not open.

"Blessed if I can understand it!" growled Jimmy. "It seems to be locked. But how the thump can it be locked?"

"We shall want tools to open it," said Lovell. "Have we got any tools?"

"Yes."

"Where?"

"In the van, of course!"

"Well, of all the asses—"

"Ought we to have the tools strung outside the van?" demanded Jimmy Silver warmly. "Of course they're inside! Look here, we shall have to burst in the window. Newcome can crawl in."

Jimmy Silver was suddenly interrupted by a voice inside the van.

"Oh, my hat!"

There was evidently someone within the caravan!

"Great Scott!" exclaimed Jimmy. "Then—then there is some dashed tramp in the van after all, and he's locked us out!"

"The cheeky cad!" exclaimed Lovell wrathfully.

"Hold on, though!" said Newcome. "I think I know that voice!"

"How can you know it, fathead? It's some tramp!"

"It sounded to me like Muffin's voice."

"Muffin!" shouted Jimmy Silver. He knocked on the door.

"Who's in there? Answer, you rotter!"

"I say, Jimmy!" came from within. And the Fistical Four shouted in surprised and wrathful chorus: "Tubby Muffin!"

There was no doubt now. It was the voice of Tubby Muffin, the fat Classical of Rookwood.

Lovell kicked at the door.

"Let us in, you fat villain! Have you locked this door?"

"Of course I have, old chap!"

"I'll old chap you!" gasped Lovell. "You wait till I get near enough to wallop you, you fat bounder! I'll burst you!"

"Then you jolly well won't get in!" answered the invisible Tubby.

"How did you get in there, you fat villain?" shouted Jimmy Silver.

"I told you I was coming, didn't I, Jimmy?" said Tubby Muffin, in an injured tone. "I wasn't going to desert you this vac, you know. I telegraphed to your pater as you didn't answer my letters, and he wired back where I could find you."

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"You—you fat rotter!" roared Jimmy. "You must have wired as if you were one of the party, then!"

"Well, I am one of the party, ain't I?"

"You—you—you—"

"I got to the place late last night," continued Tubby. "The Golden Lion was closed, and I thought I wouldn't wake you up, Jimmy; and as the van was in the yard, I got into it to sleep. Don't worry about me. I slept all right."

"Worry about you!" gasped Jimmy.

"I was quite all right," said Tubby reassuringly. "And I've had some brekker. I found the biscuits and the lunch tongue."

"He's wolfed our biscuits!"

"He's scoffed our lunch!"

"We'll spifficate him!"

"Oh, I say, you know!" came Tubby Mullin's voice in protest. "You didn't want

when we get at you, you fat clam!" roared Lovell.

"Then you jolly well won't get at me!" retorted Tubby Muffin. "You can't get in unless I choose!"

"Wha-a-at?"

"If you don't open the door, we'll break in the window, and get in that way!" shouted Raby.

"You can't, old chap! I should shove you out with the broom!"

"Oh, my hat!"

The Fistical Four exchanged glances of hopeless wrath. Tubby Muffin was master of the situation, as a matter of fact.

He was locked in the van, and, without actually demolishing the vehicle, there was no way of getting at him.

And all the provisions were in his keeping,



MARCHING ORDERS!—"But we're not gipsies!" said Jimmy Silver. "I don't care whether you are or not! Get off my land before I lay my whip about you!" roared Mr. Judkins. He flourished the cart-whip in the air, and the unhappy caravanners looked at one another in dismay. (See Chapter 6.)

me to go hungry, did you? I call that jolly selfish!"

"Why didn't you let us know you were there when we started?" roared Raby.

"I wasn't going to bother you, you know."

"You mean you know we'd have kicked you out!"

"Ahem! I—"

"You fat villain!" shouted Jimmy Silver.

"If you'd come into the Golden Lion we'd have booted you out. That's why you snoozed in the van!"

"I'm sure you wouldn't treat a pal like that, Jimmy!"

"I'll pal you!" muttered Jimmy.

"I say, it's getting near lunch-time, ain't it?" went on Tubby Muffin. "This van wants clearing up. There's a lot of eggs smashed, and some crocks broken. Are you fellows ready for lunch?"

"Yes, we are, you fat worm!"

"All serene! I've started already!"

"You—you've started?"

"Yes. I've found the sardines and salmon, and the cold potatoes. I'd rather have something a bit more solid. But it's all right. Don't worry about me. The cucumber is a treat!"

"He's bagged our cucumber!" said Lovell, in sulphurous tones.

"Open the door!" roared Jimmy.

"I say, are you waxy?"

"You'll see whether we're waxy or not

and the Classical chums fairly trembled for them; they knew Tubby Muffin's inordinate appetite of old.

"We—we—we'll slaughter him!" gasped Lovell at last.

"I say, Jimmy—"

"Well, you fat toad?"

"Make it pax, old man! I came to join you as a pal, you know. I'm going to caravan with you, old fellow! I shall be awfully useful. You want a fellow with a head on him to manage—"

"I'll manage you!" howled Lovell.

"I can cook, too," said Muffin. "You know how I can cook. Make it pax, and let's go caravanning together, you chaps."

"We're going to slaughter you!"

"Oh, all right! I'll go on with my lunch while you think it over," was the placid reply of the invisible Tubby.

"Let our grub alone!" shrieked Lovell, in frenzied tones.

"Oh, I say! I'm hungry, you know!"

"You—you—you—"

There was a sound within the caravan of a tin-opener at work on tins.

Tubby Muffin was not waiting.

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

"What the thump are we going to do? You're leader of this show, Jimmy Silver."

"Blessed if I know!" confessed Jimmy.

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"SPOOFING THE SERGEANT!"

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The Fistical Four were perplexed, and at a loss.

How to deal with the egregious Tubby was a mystery.

Forcing in the window and creeping in was not feasible, if Tubby Muffin handled the broom inside as a weapon of defence, and doubtless he would do so, rather than take a ragging and be stranded on the road afterwards.

Evidently the fat Classical had made up his mind to become a member of the caravan party by hook or by crook.

Jimmy Silver's good humour came to the rescue at last, and he grinned.

"After all, let him come," he said. "We'll make him do the cooking, and work. The fat boulder will be useful."

"I'd rather scalp him!" growled Lovell.

"Better make terms with him before all the grub's gone!" grinned Newcome. "You know Tubby!"

Lovell nodded at last.

"It's a go, then!" said Jimmy Silver. And he stepped up to the door and tapped on it. "Tubby, you fat rotter!"

"Hallo, old pal!"

"Let us in! It's pax, and you're coming along with us."

"Honest Injun, Jimmy?"

"Yes, ass!"

"All serene!"

The door was thrown open, and Tubby Muffin's fat face beamed out on the chums of Rookwood.

"Jolly glad to see you fellows!" said Tubby affably. "Quite a happy party—what? Lots of grub left for you. Pile in!"

The looks the Fistical Four gave Tubby Muffin must have withered any ordinary person, but Tubby did not seem to mind.

"Honest Injun!" made the compact inviolable, and Tubby felt quite secure.

And the hungry caravanners gave their attention to lunch, and though Tubby Muffin had started first he finished last.

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

Camping Out.

"I'll drive!" said Tubby Muffin.

Lovell rose from the grass by the roadside, and yawned.

The caravanners had lunched comfortably enough, seated in the grass beside the leafy lane, with a big oak spreading its shady boughs over them.

The caravan was drawn up beside the lane, and the horse was cropping the grass with great satisfaction.

"First of all," said Jimmy Silver, "you'll clean up the van, Tubby. You ought not to have allowed those eggs to tumble over, as you were in the van. You'll clean them up."

"They're not eatable now, old chap," said Tubby. "Leave them there. They'll get trodden away in time."

"You'll get trodden away in next to no time if you don't get a move on!" said

Jimmy. "Clear up the broken crocks, too. When you've done, get out of the van, and walk. Come on, chappies!"

Tubby, on second thoughts, was glad to take on the cleaning operations, as he could do it in the van.

He did not want to walk, especially after a meal.

The horse was induced to leave the grass, not without difficulty, and the van rolled on along the leafy lane.

The Fistical Four walked on with the horse, hoofing it cheerily, while Tubby Muffin busied himself in the van.

Tubby's idea of making himself useful was to put his head out of the van every few minutes and ask Jimmy Silver where the things were.

He could not find a pail or a cloth or a brush or a broom, or, in fact, anything by his own exertions, and after Jimmy Silver had replied to five or six questions he picked up a thick turf from the roadside.

Tubby's fat face came out once more.

"I say, Jimmy!" he squeaked.

"Hallo!"

"Where's the tea-cloth, if I'm to wash these things? Yaroooooh!"

Tubby Muffin disappeared into the van as the turf whizzed through the air and smote him on his plump chest.

There was a roar of amazement and wrath from the fat Classical.

"Yarough! Groogh! Oh—ah—yah! Wharrer you do that for, Jimmy Silver, you mad idiot?"

"Go on asking questions, old scout!" answered Jimmy cheerily. "I've got another clod for you if you do!"

"Groogh! You—you— Look here—"

"Use your head, old chap! This isn't a slacker's procession!"

Tubby Muffin snorted with wrath.

But after that he used his head, and did not ask any more questions.

When the answer to a question came in the form of a whizzing clod, Tubby found that he could find things by looking for them.

"Get down when you've finished!" Lovell called out several times. "You're too big a load for the geegee."

Tubby hung out his jobs as long as possible.

He was debating in his mind whether to start scrubbing out the caravan, in fact, rather than alight, when Lovell came in for him at last.

Lovell helped him out, and after that Tubby Muffin walked with the rest, with a very injured expression on his fat face.

"I can't keep up his pace, you chaps!" he expostulated.

"Don't, then!" answered Lovell.

"But I can't be left behind, can I?" howled Tubby.

"I don't see why not."

"Br-r-r-r!" growled Tubby Muffin. And he found that he could keep the pace quite well.

Jimmy Silver consulted his map once or twice as the caravanners marched on.

He had fixed on a village for camping for the night, where there was a handy field, and "grub" could be purchased at a farm if required.

But the pace was not quite up to anticipations, and the juniors found themselves a little tired later in the afternoon.

It was their first day on the road, and they were not yet hardened to it.

And the sight of a beautiful spot for camping decided them not to push on to their intended destination.

The caravan was following a deep lane, between lines of great trees that shaded the road, with rich cornlands stretching away on either side.

The wheat gave place to pasture, and then the beautiful spot was sighted—a green field, with a shining rivulet crossing it at the bottom, and a clump of great trees near the stream, and a wide gate in the fence.

The eyes of the caravanners rested on that ideal spot, and they exchanged glances.

"That's a ripping place!" said Raby.

"Just what we want!" remarked Lovell.

"No good overdoing it on the first day," Newcome remarked, in a careless sort of way. "After all, we've got to light a campfire, and all that."

"Let's stop!" gasped Tubby Muffin. "I'm tired, you know—jolly tired!"

Jimmy Silver, without answering, surveyed the field. Certainly they were not likely to find a more suitable spot farther on.

And true caravanners never mapped out their proceedings with exactitude. It was more in the spirit of caravanning to follow the fortune of the road.

"We couldn't do better!" urged Lovell.

"Right!" agreed Jimmy. "But we've got to get permission. That's not public land. That's an enclosed field."

"Well, we can ask," said Lovell. "Let's ask that farmer chap."

A man in a velveteen coat and gaiters was sitting on the gate of the field, and smoking a cigarette, and glancing rather curiously at the caravanners.

He was a young man, and looked like a sporting farmer, and the juniors rather liked his looks.

Jimmy Silver left the van, which had halted in the road, and crossed the belt of grass to the gate where the young man was sitting.

The man in the gaiters removed the cigarette from his mouth, and nodded genially to the Rookwood junior.

"Caravanning—eh?" he asked.

"That's it," said Jimmy Silver. "We're thinking of camping now. Any objection to our camping in this field?"

The other looked thoughtful.

"I suppose you wouldn't set fire to the trees?" he remarked.

"No," said Jimmy, laughing.

"Or burn up half the pasture?"

"Of course not. We should be jolly careful not to do any damage if you let us camp here," said Jimmy. "We're willing to pay—"

The young man waved his hand, as if disclaiming the idea.

"I sha'n't charge you anything," he said. "So long as you don't do any real damage I've no objection to your camping here, I'm sure. So far as I'm concerned, you're very welcome."

"Thanks very much!" said Jimmy.

"Oh, don't mention it!"

And, with a smile and a nod, the young man slipped from the gate, and whistled to a dog, and strolled away down the lane.

Jimmy Silver opened the gate, and Tubby Muffin was stationed to hold it wide open while the horse was led in.

The horse did not seem quite to understand, and he backed, instead of going forward; but four juniors clung to him, and persuaded him at last that it was his business to go through the gate.

When that was borne in upon the equine mind, the horse appeared to be under the delusion that it was necessary to pass through the gateway at a gallop, and he did.

"Look out!" yelled Lovell.

The caravan rocked through the gateway after the horse, fortunately just escaping the crash.

Tubby Muffin jumped away in alarm, letting go the gate, which swung to when the caravan was nearly clear of the posts.

Then there was a crash, as the gate collided with a hind-wheel, and the caravan ground

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NEXT TUESDAY!

"SPOOFING THE SERGEANT!"

its way, leaving the unfortunate gate in a serious condition.

"You silly fat duffer!" roared Lovell. "Why didn't you hold the gate?"

"Oh crumbs!" gasped Tubby. "Do you think I was going to be run over? Bother the gate, and bother you!"

The horse slowed down in the field, and began cropping the rich pasture with evident enjoyment.

The juniors surveyed the gate in dismay. It hung by one hinge, and one bar had been reduced to matchwood.

"That will have to be paid for!" said Raby at last.

"Well, we can pay for it!" said Jimmy Silver. "I don't think that sporting chap will cut up rusty; he looked good-tempered. I think Muffin ought to be slaughtered!"

"I like that!" said Tubby indignantly. "Why didn't you lead the horse through properly? You shouldn't have let him go!"

"Oh, go and eat coke!"

The Rookwooders followed the caravan, and came up with it, and the horse was led on towards the stream at the farther end of the field.

Then he was at last taken out, and tethered with a long rope to a peg, which enabled him to crop the grass in a large radius, and also to drink from the stream if he felt so disposed.

Under the trees near the water the caravanners prepared to camp.

Tubby Muffin wanted to start at once on the tinned salmon and sardines and the bread, of which there was a good supply; but he was persuaded not to, Lovell's boot being the chief argument used.

"You fellows gather wood for the fire," said Jimmy Silver. "Get as much as you can, while I get the things out of the van."

"Right you are!"

Four juniors started in search of firewood, of which there was plenty to be gathered under the trees and in the adjoining thicket, and they returned with their arms full.

Lovell built the fire in quite a workmanlike manner.

There was an old newspaper, and it was torn up, dry twigs added, and then a match, and as it blazed up firewood was carefully fed to it—small pieces at first, and then larger ones.

The camp-fire was soon flaring away merrily.

Meanwhile, Jimmy Silver had brought out the big iron pot, and arranged the three sticks that were to support it over the fire gipsy fashion.

Water was to be had in plenty, and there were ample potatoes.

While Lovell tended the fire his comrades peeled potatoes in great numbers and put them in the pot.

"Can you put cabbage in stews?" Raby asked rather doubtfully.

"Certainly!" answered Jimmy Silver, with assurance.

He was not sure, but it would never have done for a leader to admit that he was not sure.

So the cabbage went in.

"And turnips," added Jimmy. "Carrots, too. May as well slice up the carrots," he added thoughtfully. "Put some salt in, and pepper, and—"

"Mustard?"

"No; leave the mustard out!" said Jimmy, with the same assurance of manner. "Plenty of salt, though."

"I say, it won't be much good without any meat in it, you chaps," said Tubby Muffin rather dismally.

"There isn't any meat, ass!"

"We might put in some fat bacon," said Jimmy, taking up a knife in a thoughtful way. "If Muffin doesn't object—"

"Eh? Of course I don't!" exclaimed Tubby eagerly. "It's a ripping idea! I didn't know you'd got any bacon! Where is it?"

"Come on, then!" said Jimmy, flourishing the knife.

"Eh?"

"I've never killed a pig before, but I dare say I can manage—"

"You silly ass!" yelled Tubby, jumping back in alarm as he realised that he was the bacon alluded to. "You—you—you fat-head—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Look here, I don't see how I can eat stew without any meat in it!" said Tubby Muffin sulkily.

"Don't eat any, then, old nut!" said Jimmy Silver.

"What am I going to eat, then?" roared Tubby.

"Is that a conundrum?"

"Well, I suppose I can manage with the tinned things."

"Let me catch you managing with them!" growled Lovell. "I'll manage to stick you head first into the water if I do!"

"Look here—"

"Shurrup!"

It is said that a watched pot is long in boiling, and certainly that gipsy pot seemed a terrible long time to the hungry juniors.

It boiled at last, and Jimmy Silver jabbed a fork into a potato; but it was still quite hard.

The cabbage seemed to get cooked first; and, after a time, the hungry party, throwing ceremony to the winds, fished out floating fragments of cabbage, and ate them with chunks of bread.

Never had bread tasted so delightful as it did that summer evening, after a long day in the open air.

"Bless those spuds!" growled Lovell. "Will they never get done?"

"Ought to have cut them up small, perhaps?" said Newcome.

"Oh, they'll get done in time!" said Jimmy Silver. "Keep smiling!"

"I—I say!" ejaculated Tubby Muffin. "That—that chap looks rather ill-tempered, don't he? I—I wonder what he wants?"

The juniors looked round.

A big, broad-shouldered farmer, with a cart-whip in his hand, was striding into the field, and the expression on his face certainly indicated that he was very ill-tempered indeed.

The caravanners forgot the obstinate potatoes for the moment, and fixed their eyes upon the farmer as he strode up, with a certain anticipation of trouble, though they could not guess why yet.

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

Marching Orders.

"DANG my buttons!" That was the farmer's first remark.

He strode up to the camp, his face purple with wrath, breathless with haste and fury, though why he should be in a fury was a mystery to the Rookwood caravanners.

"Good-evening!" ventured Jimmy Silver, wondering whether the crusty old fellow was a relation of the good-natured young man who had given them permission to camp in the field.

The crusty gentleman did not return the greeting.

He appeared to be about to choke for some moments, and the Rookwooders watched him in surprise and alarm; but at last he found his voice.

"You young vagabones!" he roared.

"What?"

"Get off my land!" roared the farmer.

"Wha-a-at?"

"I'll have the lot of you arrested! By hokey! You gang of gipsy vagabones!"

"Oh, draw it mild!" exclaimed Jimmy Silver warmly. "We've had permission to camp in this field. I don't know who you are—"

"I'm Farmer Judkins, as you know very well, and this is my field!" roared the angry gentleman. "Permission, hay? Who gave you permission? I never did!"

"A—a—a man did!" gasped Jimmy, with a very queer feeling inside. "A—a young man who was—was sitting on the gate gave us permission—"

"Oh, my hat!" murmured Lovell, in dismay.

The wrath of the farmer opened the eyes of the caravanners a little, and the dreadful suspicion came to them that the good-natured young man at the gate was not the owner of the field at all, and had been pulling their leg.

"Oh crumbs!" gasped Tubby Muffin.

GLASGOW'S POPULAR RAILWAY.

All about the Famous Engine which forms the subject of our Free Plate.

AFTER London, probably Glasgow is the most important railway-centre in Great Britain. The metropolis has its London & S.W.R. and the Scottish big city has its Glasgow & S.W.R.

The G. & S.W.R. has a fine big busy terminus in the heart of St. Mungo, called St. Enoch. From this big station trains run to the Clydeside towns and resorts, to the Ayrshire coast, to far-off Stranraer, in Gallo-way—when mail-steamers take one to Northern Ireland in about two hours—and over the Border to "Merrie Carlisle," whence the trains go forward, over the Midland line, to St. Pancras. This Anglo-Scottish service is the "Saints" route, between St. Enoch in Glasgow and St. Pancras in London. The G. & S.W.R. trains that work in the "Saints" service would pass for Midland coaches with most people, for they are built on M.R. lines and to Midland designs; but they are owned jointly by the G. & S.W.R. and the M.R.

The locomotives of the G. & S.W.R. are THE POPULAR.—No. 179.

NEXT TUESDAY!

SPOOFING THE SERGEANT!

however, quite different in appearance and colouring from their Midland colleagues, as comparison of the fine colour-plate in this issue of No. 438, in its smart green livery, with the bright red Midland engines presented a few weeks ago, discloses.

The expresses between St. Enoch and Carlisle have a journey of 115½ miles over a severe course. The G. & S.W.R., with true Scots' perspicacity, looks after the hawbeers, and does not run these trains non-stop; the best expresses stop at Kilmarnock en route. The distance from Carlisle is 91½ miles, covered in 123 minutes, a good speed, considering the nature of the line. The G. & S.W.R. has, however, a quicker run between St. Enoch and Ayr, the 41.4 miles being covered in 50 minutes, the speed being practically 50 miles an hour. The high-speed standard of 1914 has not yet been reached again by the G. & S.W.R., as eight years ago the high-speed mark was 54.6 miles an hour.

The many coast towns between Girvan and

Glasgow are favourite residential resorts for the big business men of Glasgow, and an excellent service of fast morning up and down evening trains are run by the G. & S.W.R. for their convenience. In the summer, also, these resorts are visited by many holiday-makers, whilst the traffic to the Clyde Firth towns served by the G. & S.W.R.'s swift palatial steamers, is a big business during many months of the year. Numerous trains run to and from Glasgow in connection with the steamers.

From what we have written, it will be seen that the locomotives of the G. & S.W.R. have plenty of hard work to do, and they do it extremely well.

No. 438, the fine express engine depicted in the colour-plate, has four-coupled wheels 6 ft. 9½ in. diameter, cylinders 18½ in. diameter by 26 in. stroke, a heating surface of 1,361 sq. ft., with boiler pressure of 170 lbs. per square inch. The tender carries 2,400 gallons of water and four tons of coal. Weight, in working order: Engine, 49½ tons; tender, 31½ tons.

A GRAND STORY OF ROOKWOOD. :: By OWEN CONQUEST. ::

"Don't tell me any lies!" roared Mr. Judkins. "Who could give you permission excepting me, I'd like to know, when it's my land?"

"But—but your son, perhaps—" stammered Jimmy.

"I haven't any son!" snorted Mr. Judkins. "Don't you tell me any more lies! You get off my land before I have you arrested! The last lot of gipsies by here stole my goat! Off you go!"

"But—but we're not gipsies!"

"I don't care whether you are or not! Get off my land before I lay my whip about you!" roared Mr. Judkins.

He flourished the cart-whip in the air as he spoke as if about to use it.

The unhappy caravanners looked at one another in dismay.

Night was falling now, and the landscape was enshrouded in deep dusk.

The camp-fire, leaping up red against the shadows, looked very homely and comfortable, and a delicious scent came from the stewpot.

And they were hungry.

To be ordered off their camping-ground at that moment was a terrible blow.

But the farmer was evidently in earnest.

As a matter of fact, he had some cause for wrath, not being responsible for the practical joker who had given the caravanners permission to camp in the field.

"Look here, Mr. Judkins!" said Jimmy Silver, at last. "We'll pay for the use of the field till the morning if you'll let us stay."

"You'll pay for the damage to my gate, and you won't stay another minute!" snorted Mr. Judkins. "Now, then, off you go! Pack up and get out!"

"But—but—but—"

"Look here—"

"Bill!" roared the farmer. "Harry! Mike! Come 'ere, and bring the bull-terrier!"

"Oh, dear!" murmured Newcome.

There was no help for it.

The juniors were feeling greatly inclined to handle the inhospitable Mr. Judkins, but it was evident that they could not handle Bill and Mike and Harry and the bull-terrier.

Moreover, as the farmhands came across the field one of them was carrying a rake and another a pitchfork, apparently in case there should be trouble.

"See them off my land!" shouted Mr. Judkins. "Chuck their rubbish after them! See them off! And you, my lad, you'll pay for the damage to that gate, or I'll keep you 'ere and give you into custody!"

"Oh, shut up!" snapped Jimmy Silver, his temper rising. "How much do you want for your rotten old gate?"

"You'll pay ten shillings, and you'll get out! Put that horse in, men, and take that van into the road! Look into the van, and see if anything's been stolen and hidden in there!"

"You silly old dummy!" shouted Lovell, in great wrath. "Do you think we're thieves?"

Mr. Judkins grasped his whip, and Lovell caught up a half-burnt log from the camp-fire.

The irate gentleman held his hand.

"Get out!" he repeated. "Get off my land! Out you go, you gang of young rascals! I'll have no gipsies on my land! I desay you belong to the same gang that stole my goat! Out you go!"

The farmhands were already putting the horse in the traces, grinning the while.

With heavy hearts the caravanners packed their belongings back into the van, the stewpot being lifted in bodily with the stew.

A good deal of it was spilled as the caravan was set in motion again and lurched away towards the gate.

Jimmy Silver handed the farmer a ten-shilling note.

It was only reasonable to pay for the damaged gate; and Mr. Judkins received it with a snort, and a repeated injunction to get out.

The caravan rumbled into the road in the gathering darkness.

Inside the van Tubby Muffin was bolting baked potatoes, finding great comfort therein.

The farmer stood frowning and his men grinning as the unhappy caravanners took up their route again, and moved off into the gloom.

For a little while Jimmy Silver & Co. did not speak.

Lovell was the first to break the silence.

"Well, my hat!" was what he said.

"Where the thump are we going to camp at this hour?" murmured Newcome.

"Let's get out the potatoes, and tuck in, anyway," said Raby. "I can't hold out much longer."

He stepped into the van, and then there was a sound of roaring and scuffling.

Tubby Muffin's voice was heard, raised in anguish.

Raby jumped down.

"Well, where's the spuds?" asked Lovell.

"Muffin's bolted all that were left!"

"Yow-ow-ow-ow!" came from the van, in anguished accents. "You beast, you've busted my nose, and blacked my eye, and— and— Ow-ow-ow-wow!"

"Oh dear!" said Jimmy Silver. "I—I wish we could meet that chap who gave us permission to camp in that old boulder's field! I only wish— My hat!"

Even as Jimmy was speaking, the young man in the velveteen coat and the gaiters came in sight, strolling along and whistling, with his dog at his heels.

He stopped as he saw the caravan, and smiled genially.

"Hallo! Didn't you camp, after all?" he queried pleasantly.

The juniors did not answer.

With one accord they rushed upon that pleasant young man, and smote him hip and thigh.

There was a yell from the victim, as he sat down under the rush, and he struggled frantically in the grasp of the Fistical Four. But his struggles did not avail him.

He had been too funny at their expense, and they did not spare him.

By the time they had finished with him the agreeable young man had had a severe lesson on the subject of joking with caravanners.

He was bumped and rolled and pommelled and ragged, and finally pitched into the ditch beside the road, and swamped into black mud.

"That'll do!" gasped Jimmy Silver.

"Gug-gug-gug-gug!" came from the darkness of the ditch.

"Gee-up!" chortled Lovell.

The caravan rolled on, and from behind the caravanners came weird and woeful sounds from a hapless practical joker struggling out of a ditch.

Greatly comforted, Jimmy Silver & Co. tramped on beside the caravan in the summer night, once more in cheerful spirits.

THE END.

(Don't miss the splendid story dealing with the schooldays of Frank Richards in the backwoods of Canada, entitled "Turned Out!" by Martin Clifford, in next week's grand bumper number.)

A ROGUE FOUND OUT!

(Continued from page 5.)

"Quite enough!" said the sergeant tersely. He turned to Miss Meadows. "These boys are the guilty parties, Miss Meadows, and Frank Richards is innocent."

"I know it now, and I thank you for making the discovery," said the mistress of Cedar Creek gratefully.

Gunteu gave a kind of yell.

"It's not so—you fool! How dare you tell Miss Meadows so? I've admitted nothing, and Keller hasn't, I know that!"

The sergeant smiled.

"Keller has stated that you rode slowly in the direction of Cedar Camp," he said quietly. "I purposely led you to suppose that he had stated that you had a gallop together, and you fell into the trap, Gunteu. Both of you know perfectly well how you spent your time. If you went for a ride, it is impossible for Keller to believe that you rode slowly, and for you to believe that you galloped. You are both lying; and you are lying because you cannot account for the time you spent before you reached home that night. You are lying because you are guilty!"

Gunteu panted.

He realised, too late, how the cute sergeant had "drawn" him.

But he had been helpless. Not knowing what Keller had said, he could not make his story agree, in any case.

Even if the two rascals had foreseen this, and had prepared a story beforehand, the sergeant would have caught them upon some point of detail, by taking them separately.

The sergeant reached for his hat.

"I'm glad I've been of some service to you, Miss Meadows," he said. "I leave them in your hands."

Miss Meadows accompanied the sergeant to the door.

"Richards!" she called out.

Frank ran forward.

"Yes, Miss Meadows."

"I am sorry, Richards, that I doubted you. Sergeant Lasalle has proved that that miserable trick was played by Gunteu and Keller."

"Oh!" gasped Frank.

"Bravo!" roared Bob Lawless. "What did I tell you? Put your dollars on the North-West M.P.'s every time!"

There was a cheer from the Cedar Creek fellows as the big sergeant strode away to his horse.

Gunteu and Keller came slinking out of the schoolhouse with pale faces.

Miss Meadows stopped them.

"Gunteu—and Keller!"

"It was Gunteu's fault!" groaned Keller wretchedly. "I was against it all the time, Miss Meadows. I swear it!"

"You coward—you coyote!" hissed Gunteu.

"You know it's true!" snarled Keller. "I was sorry I helped you. I didn't want to have a hand in it!"

"Keller, you will go back to my room. I shall cane you. I think you were led into this by Gunteu. As for you, Gunteu—Miss Meadows' voice grew very stern—"you have not only played a dastardly trick upon your schoolmistress, but you have attempted to lay the blame upon an innocent boy! I shall call upon your father this evening, and tell him you cannot remain in this school. You may go!"

Gunteu slunk away, with downcast face.

"Kick him out!" shouted Bob Lawless.

Gunteu fled, panting, with half Cedar Creek whooping behind him.

Bob thumped his cousin on the back.

"All serene now, Franky!"

And Frank Richards laughed merrily. His face was very bright.

His name was cleared, and stern justice was dealt out to the rogue of the lumber school. He had, indeed, been saved by the sergeant.

THE END.

(There will be a grand long complete story dealing with the further adventures of the Rookwood Caravanners, under the title of "Spoofing the Sergeant!" by Owen Conquest, in next Tuesday's splendid issue.)

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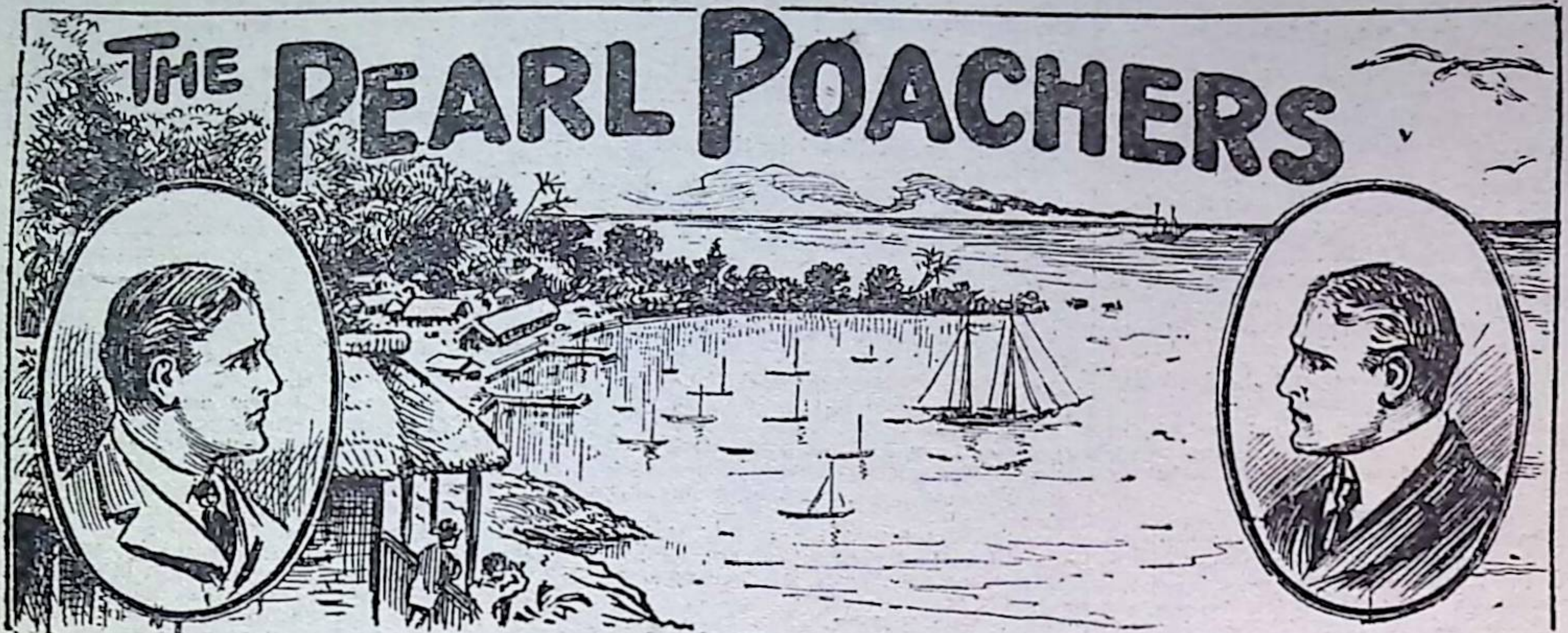
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By **SIDNEY DREW,**

(Author of "Gan Waga's Island.")

INTRODUCTION.

A meeting between Bruce Donelan and Harper Blaise, the mysterious pearl raider, takes place in the manager's bungalow on Ferrers Lord's pearling-station the day before the arrival of the millionaire. Donelan, the manager of the station, is struck by the amazing resemblance between Ferrers Lord and Blaise, and he unfolds a daring scheme for raiding the strong-room on board the Lord of the Deep. Blaise is to impersonate Ferrers Lord, get away in the yacht, then, after taking the thousands of pounds of pearls and gold from her, sink the yacht in the lagoon. The plan is successfully started. Ferrers Lord is kidnapped on his arrival at the station, and secured in the bungalow; then Blaise sets sail on the Lord of the Deep, bound for Gan Waga's Island.

(Now read on.)

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

The Police Arrive Too Late.

BRUCE DONELAN raised the mat curtain with a cautious hand. The victim of their treachery had not stirred. Ferrers Lord was not dead, for there was still a faint tinge of colour in his cheeks.

Blaise had known exactly where to strike and to paralyse the nerve centres. He had told his accomplice that Ferrers Lord would not recover consciousness for at least an hour, and that days might elapse before he was really normal again.

Donelan was taking no chances. He found a length of rope, bound the millionaire's wrists and ankles, and dragged him into the bed-room.

It would have been easier to have killed the man outright, but Donelan had not nerve enough for that. He was superstitious, as many men with criminal instincts are, and firmly believed in the old adage that, sooner or later, murder will out.

He filled one of the slender-stemmed glasses with choice champagne, and took up the envelope Harper Blaise had left behind him.

Suddenly he craned his neck to listen, and rose. His outstretched hand found the flash-lamp, and closed on it. Stealthily he crossed the room.

"That you, Jimmy?" he asked.

There was no reply, and the light showed that Jimmy's sleeping-place was empty. The only sounds he heard were the chattering of some night birds and the sullen booming of the surf.

Donelan went back to his wine and cigar. He had no appetite for the tempting supper. He dragged up the curtain till he could see

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the gleaming lights of the yacht. He was expecting the stewards to return, and carry away the luxurious things they had brought there—the silver electrolier with its hidden battery, the damask cloth and serviettes, the exquisite china plates and table-glass and silver cutlery.

He whistled to himself as he thought of Harper Blaise and the tremendous gamble. The risks were stupendous, but so would be the gains if Blaise carried the scheme to success. It would not be for want of daring or of skill in playing the part he had assumed, Donelan was sure of that. About Blaise's accomplices he knew nothing. Some of them had come ashore on the night he had handed over the pearls to the chief of the raiders, but he had not spoken to any of them.

Suddenly he peered forward. The lights of the yacht were no longer stationary. She was moving out to sea. Donelan laughed, put his old straw hat in front of the lantern, and held it there while he counted sixty. While he counted another sixty he let the light shine out, and then obscured it again.

The sea breeze was blowing strongly, as it usually did between twilight and midnight. As the lights of Ferrers Lord's yacht faded out the unknown man to whom Donelan had signalled came ashore.

He was a great, hulking, bow-legged rascal, and his bare feet made no sound as he approached the bungalow. His dirty white trousers were patched at the knees, and his only other garment appeared to be a shirt. His chin was shaved, but he wore a long, drooping moustache, straw-coloured like his hair. His left eye had gone, but the right one was large, blue, and brilliant. At his hip he carried an old-fashioned revolver, with a long, shining barrel.

"Where's the boss?" he asked gruffly.

"Cleared," answered Donelan. "You're Sharkfin Billy. I take it. I've got a note here that may explain a bit. Blaise scrawled it before he left."

The man tore open the envelope, and read the note through twice. He pulled his moustache thoughtfully.

"This tells me what to do," he said, "but it don't quite explain things. By ginger, you've got a saucy sort of place here, and live in style!"

"Have a drink and a smoke," said Bruce Donelan. "Your boss left it to me to explain to you. Sit tight a bit, and I'll put you wise."

The one-eyed man listened, nodding occasionally, and his only eye seemed to grow rounder and brighter.

"By ginger," he said, at last, "it's a biggish mouthful for even Harp Blaise to

chew, but I reckon, now he's got his teeth on it, sonny, he'll bite it full of holes. He never let me down yet. How about the swell he's impersonating? Have you buried him yet?"

"There's to be no burying!" said Donelan hastily. "Your boss agreed with me about that. You've got to shove him out there, and let him chance it. It will be quite as good as burying him. Give him a mouth of it, and he'll arrange his own funeral by jumping into the sea to feed the sharks!"

"Wonder if he can cook?" said the one-eyed man. "Our Chinese cook had a row with another Chink last night, and got knifed over it. Where is he?"

He followed Donelan into the dirty, close-smelling little bed-room. It was dark in there, and as Donelan turned his flash-lamp on the face of the man who lay on the floor stiff unconscious, Sharkfin Billy blinked his solitary eye, and uttered a grunt of astonishment.

"By ginger, that beats it!" he said, stooping over Ferrers Lord. "It might be the boss done in wax, and done by an artist who knew his job from A to Z! A corker, this is! With a few years off him he'd be Harper Blaise to a hair. They're as alike as a couple of cigars out of the same box. Guess he'll have changed some before he's been out yonder a month!" he added, with a grin. "So that's a millionaire, is it? Well, he's the first of the sort that ever come my way, sonny! Gosh, it's amazing! Perhaps the boss ain't get such a tough lump to chew as I thought for. Want him shifted?"

"I think it would be wise to get him away," said Bruce Donelan. "Can you get him away now?"

"I can get him into the boat, but I'm not shifting myself while there's any wine left," answered Harper Blaise's second in command. "Give me that light!"

A few flashes from the electric torch brought four men hurrying up the beach. They were a mixed crew—one European almost as ragged as Sharkfin Billy, a negro, a Chinaman, and a Kanaka.

The champagne was running low, so Donelan offered the white man a glass of neat whisky and a cigar.

"Swallow that sharp, Nick!" said the one-eyed man. "There's some two-legged luggage I want shifted down to the boat. By ginger, you'll think I've mutinied and laid out the boss when you clap eyes on him! But it ain't Harp Blaise, only his double, the chap who owns the yacht. Harp has cleared out after more loot, and I'll gamble he makes a pretty and profitable little joy-ride of it! I'll tell you more later, sonny."

NEXT
TUESDAY!

"TURNED OUT!"

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

Presently the four men carried Ferrers Lord across the beach. Three of them remained with the boat, but the European came back and sat down to supper. There was very little left when Sharkfin Billy finished.

"The best meal I've tasted since I left 'Frisco!" he said. "I used to lunch and dine at Latanio's, like a top-sawyer swell, while the dollars lasted, but, by ginger, it got too hot! I guess I only dodged the police by the skin of my teeth! Happy days those days were! Losing my eye busted everything. You can fake yourself up with a wig or false whiskers and a change of togs and style to hoodwink any sleuth, but you can't fake a lost peeper. We were in Mickey Burke's gambling den when it happened, Donelan. I won a lot, and got a bit careless. I slipped the wrong ace, for there was five aces in that deck of cards. The mug I was pulling the dollars out of had the twin of that ace. By ginger, he wasn't all the mug I took him to be, for when the barney was over I was laid out and short of an eye! I s'pose we'd better get afloat while the breeze lasts. Heard anything of the police yet, Donelan?"

"I believe a bunch of them have arrived at the Southern Cross," said Donelan. "The blacks are chattering about it down in the village, and they generally get to know a few things. I expect some of them will be along to-morrow."

"A bit late, as usual, and about as much use as the warship!" said the one-eyed man. "It would take the whole British Navy to catch us. We've got a Kanaka who knows every twist and wriggle of those channels, and I give you my word a corkscrew is dead straight compared with some of 'em. I don't suppose there's another man born who knew 'em. And what's your programme? You'll sit tight, and sweat the niggers for all the pearl and shell they can raise—eh?"

"All the time," answered Donelan, with a grin. "I'm in possession, and I shall stick it and get all I can out of it till Blaise comes back. If you see one light up, it will mean that all's safe, though I wouldn't advise you to come ashore. Two lights will mean that the police are about—savee?"

"Savee, good!" said the second-in-command. "The yacht looked a fast craft, but it will be a waiting job. And, by ginger, Donelan, you needn't get nervous about the boss! He's a crook, like the rest of us; but if he's made a bargain with you, he won't go back on it. He's fair with the plunder to the last dollar. Nick Bullen here could bear me out in that, only Nick isn't much of a talker. He's as dumb as that table, but he understands what you say. Ready, Nick?"

The dumb man nodded, and drained his glass. They put off, taking the boat Harper Blaise had left behind in tow. Donelan cleared the table. The electric light still burnt clearly, and the fan was working. He gave a start as he saw the lean figure of Jimmy, who was staring at him with his curious yellow eyes.

"What have you come back for?" growled Donelan. "Didn't I tell you not wanta to-night? Tella you sight of you make big boss sick—eh?"

"Big boss, he gone along!" said Jimmy in his whining voice. "See ship go along. No money getta drunk. More white men on beach, boss."

"What white men, you black rubbish?" "Horses!" said Jimmy, stooping to listen. "Gallop fast! Dumpty-dumpty-dumpty! One, two, three, four—eight! Savee, police come along, boss!"

Jimmy was right. In spite of the hollow booming of the surf, Bruce Donelan could hear the pounding of hoofs on the hard beach. It was the police at last. As they reined up before the bungalow Donelan went out to meet them. He had nothing to fear from the police now.

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

Marooned!

AS the boat met the swell Ferrers Lord began to struggle back to consciousness. A cool wind was blowing, and as he looked up, his mouth parched and his head aching, wondering vaguely where he was, he made out the throat of a sail with a bright star gleaming above it, and heard the hiss of water. Then he realised that his wrists and hands were tied, that he was in a boat, and the boat was under way. A wave struck her, and a little spray came over that fell refreshingly cold on his face. The pain in his head made it difficult to think. His eyes closed again wearily.

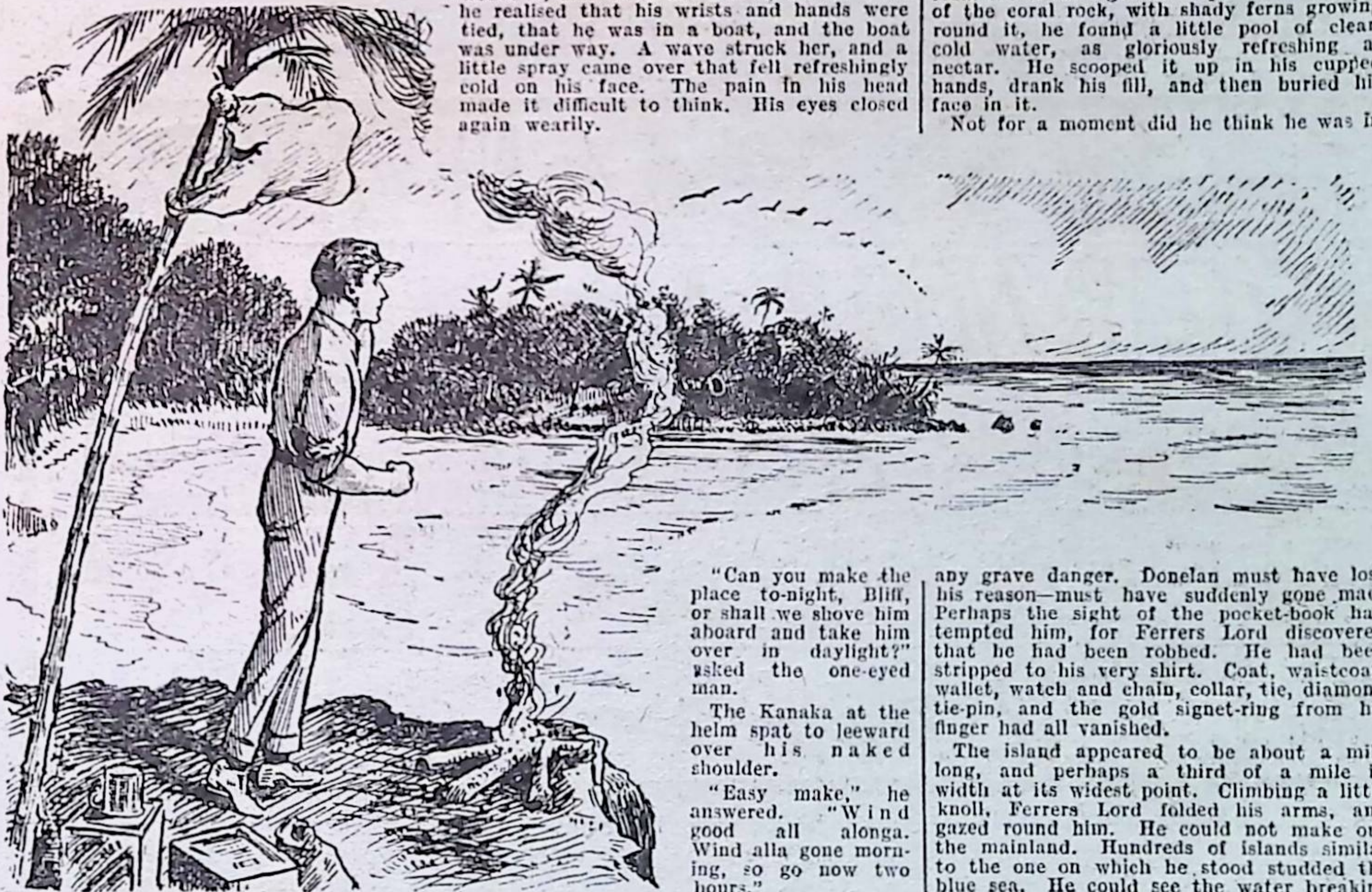
his head the broad leaves of a palm were resting in the breeze. On the white sand beside him lay a few tins of bully beef, a knife, an enamelled cup, and a bag of biscuits. As he moved a seal that had been basking in the sun took fright, and plunged into the water. Slowly the millionaire turned. Behind him, and to the right and left, gleamed the blue water. He was on an island, and in the distance he could see other islands, each with its white beach and cluster of palms.

"Marooned!" he thought, and rose shakily. His throat, lips, and tongue were parched. He saw the bully beef, the bag of biscuits, and the knife, but there was no jar or water-keg. He sank down again, holding his heavy head between his hands. He recalled his visit to Donelan's bungalow. Evidently Donelan had struck him down. He could think of no motive, unless that Donelan was suspicious—suspicious that his story of the theft of the pearls had not been accepted as truth. Even then only a maniac could have been guilty of such a senseless outrage as this, and Ferrers Lord knew that Donelan was not mad. The yacht was there, and her owner had told Prout that he would not be absent more than half an hour. Now it was sunrise, and rack his brains as he would, Ferrers Lord could not fill the gap of those long, black hours.

The harsh screaming of a couple of parrots made him rouse himself. The millionaire possessed a brain and an intelligence far superior to those possessed by most men, but the most active imagination in the world could not possibly have guessed the amazing truth. Ferrers Lord stood up again. His thirst was becoming an intolerable agony. He must find water or perish. The food that had been left would be a torture if the island proved to be waterless.

The parrots rose, screaming, with their clumsy flight, and then more came winging over from one of the nearer islands and settled out of sight. Hoping fervently that they had come there to drink, Ferrers Lord walked heavily to where they seemed to have lighted down. His feet dragged like those of an old man, strangely different from his usual vigorous step. In the hollow of the coral rock, with shady ferns growing round it, he found a little pool of clear, cold water, as gloriously refreshing as nectar. He scooped it up in his cupped hands, drank his fill, and then buried his face in it.

Not for a moment did he think he was in



MAROONED!—Ferrers Lord climbed to the top of the knoll and gazed seawards and towards the island upon which he had been marooned. He had food enough, coarse and unappetising though it was, to last a week. (See Chapter 5.)

"Can you make the place to-night, Bliff, or shall we shove him aboard and take him over in daylight?" asked the one-eyed man.

The Kanaka at the helm spat to leeward over his naked shoulder.

"Easy make," he answered. "Wind good all along. Wind alla gone morning, so go now two hours."

At last Ferrers Lord awoke from his stupor. He sat up and rubbed his eyes. A red sun was lifting itself out of a sea of sapphire blue. Above

any grave danger. Donelan must have lost his reason—must have suddenly gone mad. Perhaps the sight of the pocket-book had tempted him, for Ferrers Lord discovered that he had been robbed. He had been stripped to his very shirt. Coat, waistcoat, wallet, watch and chain, collar, tie, diamond tie-pin, and the gold signet-ring from his finger had all vanished.

The island appeared to be about a mile long, and perhaps a third of a mile in width at its widest point. Climbing a little knoll, Ferrers Lord folded his arms, and gazed round him. He could not make out the mainland. Hundreds of islands similar to the one on which he stood studded the blue sea. He could see the water breaking white in many places, telling of submerged reefs, but there was no sign of a sail or of the smoke of a steamer.

There was plenty of brushwood, but his matches had disappeared with his gold matchbox. Long before this he must have

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A GRAND STORY OF ROOKWOOD. By OWEN CONQUEST.

NEXT TUESDAY!

"SPOOFING THE SERGEANT!"

AGUST

been missed, and there would be a hue and cry from the yacht, and, unless Donelan had taken to the bush, he would have to explain. The millionaire still felt the effects of the blow struck from behind. The back of his head was acutely sensitive when he touched it, and the sun was increasing in power. He filled the enamelled billy with water, and carried it and the bully beef and biscuits into the shade of the scrub. Then he took off his silk undervest, and slashed it downwards from the neck with the knife, and climbed the most slender of the palm-trees and fastened the vest there. In the hot, still air it hung limply.

Once again Ferrers Lord climbed the knoll and gazed seawards and towards the islands with his clear, untroubled eyes. He had food enough, coarse and unappetising though it was, to last a week, and plenty of pure water. A week on that lonely island would be an ordeal, though not a very desperate one. He did not think he would be marooned for such a length of time. To discover him, dead or alive, his men would comb every inch of the beach from the native village to Southern Cross, and search all the nearer islands. As he lay down in the shade, with the burning sun striking down fiercely, the seal came back to its basking-place on the white beach, and a black, triangular thing cut the blue surface of the water and moved up and down—the dorsal fin of a shark. In great stillness and the shimmering heat, the millionaire slept

peacefully enough till the cool breath of the sea-breeze awakened him.

He dropped one of the tins of bully beef into the basin of water, and left it there to cool while he walked round the island. The knife that had been left had one stout blade and a tin-opener. Returning to the pool, he removed the top from the tin, and cut himself a few slices of beef. These, with a hard biscuit and a draught of water, formed his evening meal. The silk vest was streaming out now like a flag of distress when it was too dark to be of any service to him. He had searched the whole beach for a piece of flint that, with the steel blade of the knife, would enable him to create a spark and make a fire with the tinder-dry driftwood.

When he found a piece of flint he managed to make a small fire on the top of the knoll. After the fierce heat of the sun, the sea-breeze struck cold, for he was very lightly clad. With the lid of the tin he scooped out a hole in the sand, throwing up a heap of it as a wind-screen. It formed a snug shelter, and he sat there, gazing up at the shining stars.

Ferrers Lord found his thoughts turning in a new direction. It was all surmise, but the idea seemed more feasible than that of sudden insanity. Bruce Donelan might be in league with the mysterious pearl raiders. Perhaps he had been kidnapped and marooned for the purpose of ransom. Donelan's visits to the yacht must have shown

him that her owner was a man of vast wealth. Although the dead manager, Morrison, had been a man of education and refinement, he may have become familiar with Donelan, for men of the same race, however different in character, do become familiar when thrown together in solitary places. Perhaps Morrison had told Donelan about his stay on Gan Waga's Island, and the huge quantities of gold that were being found in that barren, ice-bound rock in the Antarctic.

"If I am here for ransom," the millionaire thought, smiling, "that makes things more difficult. It seems more reasonable than the theory of sudden insanity. But why should they have robbed me? These pearl raiders seem to have been doing things on a grand scale. If their plan is to demand a ransom, they are not likely to value me too cheaply. And yet here I am stripped to my very shirt."

He shrugged his shoulders and lay back against the soft heap of sand. A huge bat was circling overhead, and dark shapes moved clumsily on the white beach, for the creatures of the sea were coming ashore, turtles and great hairy spider-crabs. Then came a sound, a deep roaring, not unlike the booming of the surf on the reef, but the reef was too far away for that, and the noise had arisen too suddenly.

"A boat!" he muttered, springing to his feet. "Petrol driven and very fast."
(Continued on page 27.)





A NOVEL NEW COMPETITION: Enter To-day.


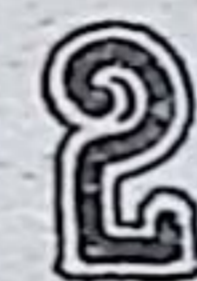


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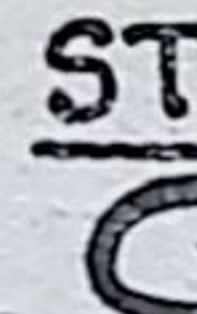


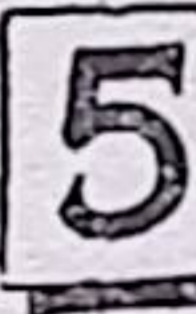
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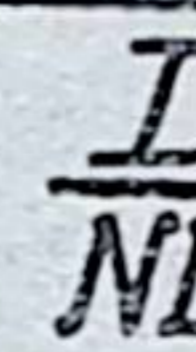
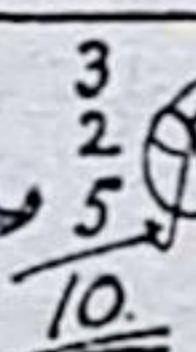

The express condition of entry is that competitors agree to accept the Editor's decision as final and legally binding. There is NO ENTRANCE FEE.

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POPULAR Puzzle No. 1a.

[Fill in this Form]

NAME

ADDRESS

The roar increased, rising in volume, and then dwindled away. The craft seemed to have stopped, but he could not make her out in the darkness. He slept again after watching and listening for more than an hour, and started wide awake in the brightening of the dawn to hear a voice hailing him from the sea.

"Show a leg, chum, if you ain't walked off the raft in your sleep and let the sharks get you!" cried the gruff voice. "By ginger, I wonder if he's outed!"

Ferrers Lord looked over the heap of sand, resting his arms on it. The man who hailed him was Sharkfin Billy. The one-eyed man was standing on the beach smoking a corn-cob pipe, with one sunburnt hand resting on the butt of his long-barrelled revolver. The nose of a small sailing-boat rested on the beach, with a half-naked Kanaka beside it. Sharkfin Billy pulled the revolver out of his belt and handed it to the Kanaka.

"Any hanky-panky, Bliff, and, by ginger, let drive!" said Billy, who wore a wide-brimmed palm-leaf sun-hat. "Having been out all night, the gent may not be in a good temper. Morning, sir!" he added, nodding to Ferrers Lord. "Glad to see you looking more perky than you did last night!"

"Oh, you saw me last night, did you?" said the millionaire quickly.

"Fact." Sharkfin Billy waddled up the beach on his muscular bow legs. "Fetched you out, in fact. Rotten sort of place to bring a gent to, but pretty, in its way. You wouldn't think, not to look at me, that I took any special interest in the sort of scenery that got served out in these parts, but, by ginger, Mr. Lord, I've got a feeling for colour! I like bright things—bright blues and green and whites—and we've got 'em here—sea and beach and sky and palms and scrub. I'm a bit of a photographer, too. These Yankee cinema people brag about the atmosphere of California for taking pictures. They wouldn't crack up California such a lot if they came on the reef. And, talking about photographs, reminds me that I picked one up last night. I ain't hankering for it, so there you are."

Sharkfin Billy plunged his hand into the bosom of his shirt and pulled out a photograph. There was an amused twinkle in his solitary eye as he watched the millionaire. Ferrers Lord's face was like stone. He was astounded, but his expression betrayed nothing. The photograph might have been of himself.

"A bit younger you was when that was took," said Billy, stroking his long moustache. "Not that you've altered much. Have one of these, for the rotten things don't taste any better to me than smoking a bit of burnt hay. Pretty enough to look at, but no flavour in 'em."

He extended a handful of cigarettes. Ferrers Lord recognised them as his own, for on each was printed in gold letters, "Lord of the Deep." He had guessed at once that the one-eyed man was one of the lawless gang of pearl poachers. Was it possible that they had made a sudden attack on the yacht and captured her? How else could the one-eyed rascal have come to be in possession of the cigarettes? And what was the mystery of the photograph?

"Thanks!" he said, his handsome face still like marble. "I can appreciate a good Egyptian cigarette, even if they do not appeal to you. And a match, please!"

"You can have a light," said Billy, "but I ain't giving matches away; they're too scarce. You're wondering where I got the fags, eh, boss? Well, I pinched 'em from Bruce Donelan. There's one thing about this climate, you can do without fies this time of year, so you don't need matches. You might use 'em to make a smoke, but if you put up enough smoke to darken the sun nobody would come near. And you ain't thanked me for the photograph."

"As it doesn't happen to belong to me, I don't see why I should thank you," said Ferrers Lord.

"I knew it didn't, but, by ginger, ain't it like you?" grinned Sharkfin Billy. "That's where you're unlucky. If you hadn't been the spit of that photo you wouldn't have had the freehold of this lovely island presented to you. Seeing we've got you for keeps, I don't mind telling you a few things. It's so funny, I could almost bust myself laughing. By ginger, chum, it's a real fairy tale, only it's a true one. The swell in that photo ain't you, but my boss, Harper Blaise."

"The name conveys nothing to me," said the millionaire, in his even voice.

"I'm not gambling many dollars that it's his real name, anyhow," said the one-eyed man with a grin. "but he's a dandy. One of them cool, quiet sorts, like yourself; only a hustler when there a paying stunt on. That was his stunt to round-up the pearling-stations, and he's done it. By ginger, Blaise is a rattler! Marvellous, the chap is—a regular terror! He's a swaggering millionaire now, bossing your yacht, acting you to the very life, bound for that island of yours where the gold comes from. She sailed last night, soon after Blaise knocked you out in Donelan's bungalow. Amusing, ain't it?"

"Very amusing," said the millionaire, "though somewhat unpleasant for me."

He flicked the ash from the cigarette and again glanced at the photograph that was lying on top of the sand heap. The Kanaka was leaning against the boat as motionless as a bronze statue. Ferrers Lord moved his foot and worked it to and fro to loosen some hard object down there in the sand.

"I seem to have been completely wrong in my surmises," he said. "I guessed that Donelan had played the traitor and joined your precious gang, but my idea was that you had kidnapped and marooned me for the purpose of extorting a heavy ransom. So your friend Blaise is impersonating me on my yacht?"

"Absolutely. Donelan told him about the gold, and how him and you was as alike as two peas in a pod, and that done it," said Sharkfin Billy. "Do you know, boss, that I'm a disappointed man? I came along to tell you the glad news, expecting to see you go mad and tear your hair out by the roots, and it don't seem to worry you a bit. I guess it would worry me some. About a week of it would drive me raving mad."

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U.J.I., 1922.

THE POPULAR.—No. 179.



A WORD WITH YOUR EDITOR

YOUR EDITOR IS ALWAYS PLEASED TO HEAR FROM HIS READERS. Address: EDITOR, THE "POPULAR," THE FLEETWAY HOUSE, FARRINGTON STREET, LONDON, E.C. 4.

THE MOST POPULAR GIFTS.

The most popular gifts of to-day are undoubtedly the magnificent plates and photos which are being given away with the Companion Papers. Thousands upon thousands of boys and girls all over the world are looking upon them with pleasure, for they are indeed worthy of placing in the most prized of albums.

The "Magnet" Library, which is now on sale at all newsagents, is giving every reader a splendid real photo of Harold Gough, the famous Sheffield United goalkeeper, in action on the field of play.

The "Boys' Friend," which is also now on sale, is presenting boys and girls with a magnificent photo of Bugler Lake, the idol of the boxing enthusiasts of both the Navy and the Army.

The POPULAR Coloured Engine Plates are almost as popular for their accuracy in colour and detail as in their general appearance and type. This, too, has proved an enormously popular series, and I will admit now that it comes to me with considerable surprise that some of the keenest readers of the POPULAR to-day are firemen and drivers of the railway-engines which we have shown you!

The "Gem" Library, our mid-week Companion Paper, is also giving readers photos of famous footballers—not mere sketches, but REAL PHOTOS. To-morrow, then, you will

be able to get two photos—one each of F. Roberts and Fletcher, who are popular players for Bolton Wanderers and Barnsley.

The Great Northern Express Engine.

Next week I can promise a real treat to my chums. I am giving a splendid plate of the new Great Northern express engine, of the mammoth Pacific type, about which we have heard so much of late in the newspapers. I have added this magnificent locomotive to the world-famous POPULAR series in response to innumerable requests. Everybody knows that the Great Northern Railway Company possesses in this new engine the largest and the fleetest "flyer" of the iron road in Great Britain, and the interest in it is widespread, as my letter-bag shows. When you open your copy of the POPULAR next week and see the fine production depicting the latest engineering triumph, you will be saying to yourselves that it is some good writing to the Editor and asking for a special feature.

Next week, also, I shall be giving away another lot of photos in the "Magnet," the "Gem," and the "Boys' Friend."

OUR NEXT STORIES.

There will again be four complete school stories in the next issue of the POPULAR, the first of which will deal with the adven-

tures of the chums of Greyfriars. The story is entitled:

"TO SAVE HIS ENEMY!"

By Frank Richards.

The hero of the hour is Bob Cherry, and Bob's enemy at the moment is Herbert Vernon-Smith, the Bounder of Greyfriars. Quite extraordinary events follow Bob's plucky rescue of the Bounder from an extremely perilous position, as you will read next week.

Then comes another complete school story of Jimmy Silver & Co. of Rookwood on their holiday tour. The story is how Jimmy Silver & Co. succeed in

"SPOOFING THE SERGEANT!"

By Owen Conquest.

A story of Frank Richards & Co. in the School in the Backwoods follows, entitled:

"TURNED OUT."

By Martin Clifford.

whilst that, in turn, is followed by another new, long, complete story of Tom Merry & Co. at St. Jim's, entitled:

"FIRST MAN HOME."

By Martin Clifford.

"Billy Bunter's Weekly" is a special issue, being run for one week only by no less a person than Tubby Muffin. Need I say that it is the funniest issue of the "Weekly" ever published?

There will also be a simple competition for big money prizes, and another instalment of "The Pearl Poachers," the most-talked-of serial of the day!

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