

BIG MONEY PRIZES IN A SIMPLE NEW COMPETITION, IN THIS ISSUE!

Week Ending—
Sept. 16th, 1922.

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No. 191.

28
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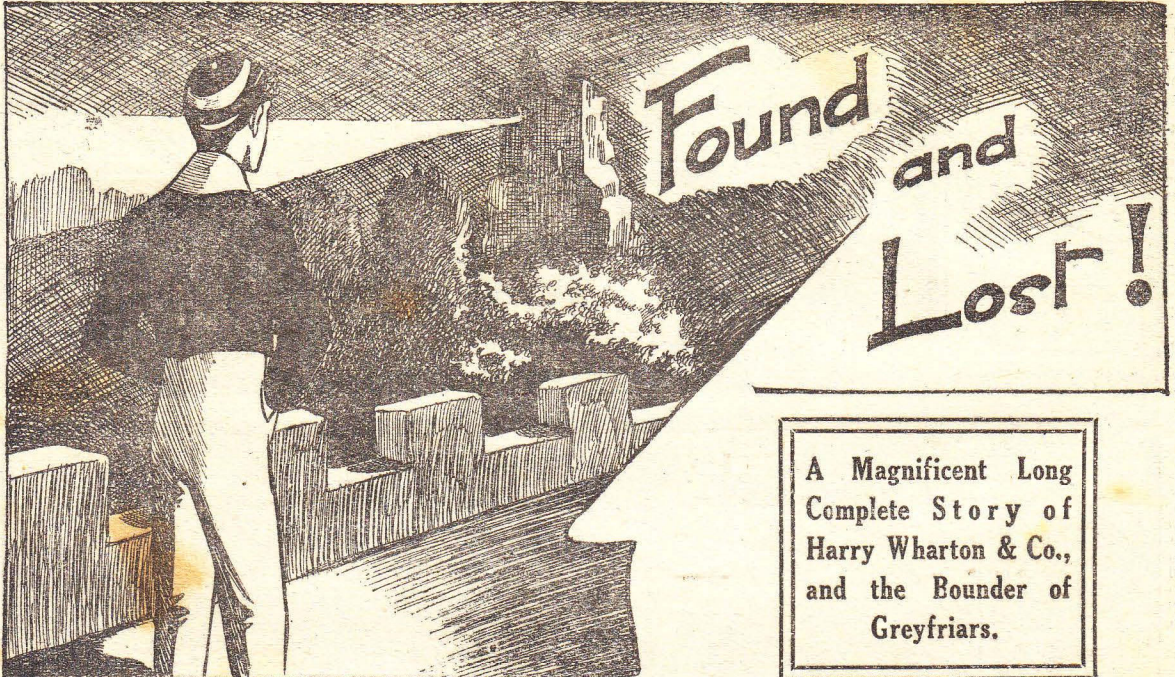


THE BOUNDER SCORES FIRST FOR GREYFRIARS!

(An Exciting Episode from the Long Complete School Story inside.)

2 Starting In This Week's "Magnet," "The Greyfriars Parliament"—

VERNON-SMITH, THE RUNAWAY, RETURNS TO GET HARRY WHARTON & CO. OUT OF A FIX—
AND IS LOST AGAIN!



A Magnificent Long
Complete Story of
Harry Wharton & Co.,
and the Bounder of
Greyfriars.

By FRANK RICHARDS

(Author of the Famous School Tales of Harry Wharton & Co. of Greyfriars, appearing in The "Magnet" Library.)

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

The Mysterious Light.

HARRY WHARTON, captain of the Remove Form at Greyfriars, simply could not sleep when he went up to the dormitory—his brain was working too hard.

Herbert Vernon-Smith was the cause of Harry's sleepless state. He had got into trouble with Mr. Quelch, the Form-master, and had been sentenced to expulsion from the school.

But Vernon-Smith had not waited to be expelled. He had disappeared, and a search had revealed his cap, lying beside the dark waters of a pool just by Greyfriars. And the Removites had gone to bed convinced that they would never again set eyes upon the Bounder of the Remove, as Vernon-Smith was familiarly known.

But at last, Wharton dropped off to a sleep—a restless, uneasy sleep.

He dreamed of the Bounder—his old, bitter quarrels with him; and somehow it came to him, in his dreams, that the Bounder had not always been wholly to blame. He had been cunning, he had been treacherous; but there had been faults of temper on Wharton's side.

The junior awoke suddenly from troubled sleep, and his thoughts ran on on the same subject. It was rotten about poor old Smithy! Of late he had shown the best side of his nature—he had proved that he was a good sportsman, at all events, with all his faults.

It was rotten that Fate should be so hard upon him just when he seemed to have a prospect of pulling out of his unpleasant past, and winning the respect and liking of his comrades.

Boom!

One o'clock struck. Wharton closed his eyes and tried to sleep, but he could not. Somehow or other the thought of the dark pool, murmuring amid the rushes, was in his mind, and refused to be driven away. What new secret of horror was hidden now by those dark, swirling waters?

Wharton sat up in bed at last. He knew he could not sleep, and he gave up the

attempt. In the darkness and solitude of the night he felt lonely and restless.

"Any of you fellows awake?" he asked, in a low voice.

He did not want to disturb any of his companions, but he would have been jolly glad of company in his wakefulness.

But there was no reply—only the steady breathing of the juniors and the deep, bass snore of Billy Bunter.

Harry Wharton turned out of bed at last. The dormitory seemed stuffy to him, and he thought of a turn in the Close to ease his worried nerves. But it was strictly forbidden to the juniors to leave the School House at night.

But at the back of the School House there was a window that gave upon the flat, leaded roof of the school museum, and in the daytime that was a favourite resort for "swots" who wanted a quiet spot for grinding Latin or mathematics.

Wharton slipped on his clothes and a pair of rubber shoes, and left the dormitory quietly. He made his way in the gloom to the window in the passage at the back, and opened it, and dropped out upon the leads.

All was silent about him. Every window in the house was dark at that hour. Only a glimmer of starlight fell upon the buildings and the leads and the old elm-trees. From the leads in the daytime the surrounding country could be seen, and nearer at hand, the ruined tower that was a relic of the earliest days of Greyfriars, the tower from whose loopholes Norman soldiers had watched for Saxon foes in days long, long past, and whose old stone walls had been shattered by Cromwell's cannon in later days, when the tower was held for the King.

Wharton glanced towards the tower now; but it was swallowed up in darkness, and he could not see the faintest outline of it.

Suddenly, through the gloom, came the twinkle of a light.

The junior started.

For a moment that light twinkled through the gloom from the direction of the old tower. Then it vanished, and all was dark again. Wharton rubbed his eyes.

Who could be in the old tower at that hour—almost half-past one in the morning—when all the school was sleeping? Had he

fancied it? For all was dark again now—pitchy dark!

Wharton, with a curious beating of the heart, watched intently. From the darkness the light came gleaming out again—and this time it gleamed steadily, and burned clearly in the night.

And Wharton, breathing hard, stood upon the leads, and watched with startled eyes the mysterious light from the topmost loophole of the old tower.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

A Startling Discovery!

STEADY and clear, burning on through the darkness, the light shone.

The tower was hidden in darkness, but from the summit that light came; and Wharton, who knew every inch of the old place, knew that it was burning in the topmost chamber.

The old tower was in ruins—the very walls were insecure, and had been propped up with stout wooden beams to preserve them—but the interior of the tower was strictly "taboo" to the Greyfriars fellows.

It was dangerous to climb up the rickety stone spiral stairs that led to the summit. There were gaps and pitfalls, and in the dark, especially, anyone ascending the old tower took his life in his hand. But someone was there—that was certain. That light gleaming out into the black night was proof of it.

Who was it?

Wharton thought that he could guess; but he meant to know for certain.

From the leads it was impossible to reach the ground. He turned back to the window, and climbed into the house, and descended to the lower passage, and let himself out upon the roof of an outhouse, whence he could drop to the ground. Then he started towards the old tower.

The light was still burning clearly.

The narrow slit in the thick, stone walls in the old days had served both as loopholes for arrows and for a window to admit light. Now it was allowing the light to escape, to betray the presence of the refugee, whoever he was, in the tower.

It was not likely, of course, that anyone would be awake at that hour in the school,

and looking forth; it was but by chance that Wharton had made the discovery.

His brow was grim as he neared the tower. He suspected whom he would find there, and he had something to say to him when he found him.

He reached the tower. The old oaken door had long fallen to decay; but there was a new door, and it was fastened.

Wharton felt it all over. He knew that it was kept carefully chained and padlocked to keep out enterprising juniors, who might have risked life and limb in ascending the tower. The chain and padlock were intact, and that discovery staggered Wharton for a moment.

He stepped back, and looked upward. The light was still burning.

Whoever had entered the tower had not entered by the door. He must have climbed outside, by means of the ivy, to one of the gaps in the old structure, and gained admittance to the staircase that way—a terribly perilous adventure in the dark.

There were few fellows at Greyfriars who would have had the nerve for such an act—and Vernon-Smith, the Bounder, was one of the few.

Wharton set his teeth. Whoever it was in the tower, Wharton could do what he had done.

He selected a place for ascent carefully, and climbed into the ivy. It rustled and swayed under his weight; now and again a tendril snapped or came loose, but he climbed on, and reached a gap in the wall of the tower, where an ancient loophole had been shattered by a cannon-ball of two or three centuries ago. He climbed in over the crumbling stone. Fragments fell, and clinked lightly on the ground twenty feet below.

Dusty, and with aching limbs from his exertions, Harry Wharton dragged himself upon the stone stairs within.

Above him the tower rose fifty feet higher, and the higher it went the narrower the spiral stairs became. And in places it was broken away, and a false step meant a fall through yawning gaps—and a terrible death. Wharton felt every inch of the way carefully. With his hands groping before him, he picked every step as he ascended.

Now a light glimmered upon his eyes from the darkness.

The stairs ended in a circular room, of which part of the roof was gone, and a part of the walls. In that room the light burned.

Wharton, as he raised his head above the level of the floor from the spiral stairs, blinked, and looked about him.

A small electric lamp was hanging upon a peg in the old wall. In a corner of the room lay a couple of blankets, an overcoat, and a rug. Near by them stood a portmanteau, open, half-packed, and about it were various articles that had been taken out of it—mostly provisions. Further on, a spirit-stove flickered with a blue flame, and a tin saucepan upon it contained several eggs, and bending over the saucepan was a well-known figure.

It was the Bounder!

Wharton, amazed as he was, understood. The Bounder had returned to the school under cover of darkness, and was camping out in the inaccessible summit of the old tower.

The tower had been searched for him the day before, and it was not likely to be searched again, of course. Unless he betrayed his presence there, the Bounder was safe from discovery.

Wharton drew a deep breath.

The recklessness of the Bounder struck him more than anything else. In that round room at the top of the tower the floor was broken away; nearly one half of the room was a yawning gap. Darkness lay below the gap—darkness, and space, and shattered brickwork, and—death! One step over the edge meant the end of all things. And yet the Bounder was camping out in the round room, and intended to sleep there, evidently in the blankets—within six feet of yawning death!

"Smithy!"

Harry Wharton's voice broke the dead silence suddenly.

The stooping figure by the spirit-stove straightened up suddenly, and swung round with a startled gasp.

The two juniors stood face to face, as Wharton sprang up from the steps and stood in the room.

The Bounder receded a pace.

"Wharton!"

Harry advanced into the room, his brow stern, and his eyes gleaming.

"So it's you!"

Vernon-Smith smiled. He had recovered his self-possession in a moment. He nodded coolly.

"Looks like it, doesn't it?" he said.

"So you weren't drowned!"

"I don't feel drowned," said the Bounder agreeably. "In fact, I feel decidedly lively just now, and a bit hungry. Will you share my supper?"

"Your cap was found in the rushes."

"Yes; I left it there."

"To make the Head think that you had jumped into the river?" demanded Wharton sternly.

The Bounder nodded.

"That was a rotten trick, Smithy!"

"I don't see it. They've been hard enough upon me," said the Bounder savagely. "Let 'em worry a bit—serve them right. They've worried me enough!"

"And what about us?" said Harry. "We did all we could for you, and you made us think—"

"Did you care whether I was drowned or not?"

It was quite the old Bounder who spoke—with a sardonic inflexion in his voice, a satirical curl to his lip.

"I suppose we all cared," said Harry.

"Thanks!"

Wharton made an impatient gesture.

"Look here, Smithy, what is all this rot about? You look as if you've arranged to camp here. Is that it?"

"Your observation does you credit," said the Bounder imperturbably. "That's exactly what I intend to do. How on earth did you find me out?"

"I saw the light."

The Bounder glanced round him.

"Ah, the loopholes! That gap is on the other side, away from the house. But that light couldn't be seen from the dorm!"

"I was on the leads."

"My hat! What on earth were you doing on the leads at this time of night?" exclaimed Vernon-Smith, in astonishment.

Wharton coloured. He was ashamed now of the concern he had felt for the Bounder's fate—though ashamed without reason, for his feelings had been generous and kind. But he felt all a healthy boy's distaste for anything approaching the sentimental. The Bounder was eyeing him curiously.

"I couldn't sleep," said Harry hastily. "I went out on the leads to get some fresh air."

"You don't mean to say you were worrying about what had happened to me?" the Bounder exclaimed.

"Perhaps that, among other things. There's the football match to-morrow, too; and we're most likely booked for a licking."

"I—I didn't know you would take it to heart in any way," the Bounder said, with a change in his voice. "After all, we've never been friends. We've got on better lately; but—but we never did pull together. And I didn't think— Look here, Wharton, I've done a lot of thinking lately. If I get a fresh chance in the school I'm going to run things a bit differently."

"I'm afraid it's too late for that," said Wharton, with a shake of the head.

"I don't know. How did they take the news—when my cap was found, I mean?"

"Everybody is anxious. But when the Head finds out that you're safe and sound, he won't feel any concern about you, of course. He'll be ratty about your playing such a trick. It only makes matters worse for you. Not that there was any chance before."

"You mean, he won't allow me to come back to Greyfriars unless I'm really drowned?" said the Bounder, with a grin.

Wharton laughed at the idea.

"Well, I suppose it's like that," he agreed. "And that would be rather too big a price for you to pay for pardon, wouldn't it?"

"Just a trifle," said the Bounder, with a chuckle. "I shall have to think of something a little less dramatic, and a little less painful and conclusive."

"Do you mean that you haven't given up the idea of staying here?" the captain of the Remove exclaimed, in amazement.

"This doesn't look as if I had, does it?" asked Vernon-Smith, with a wave of the hand towards his camping supplies.

"But—but this is sheer lunacy! You can't stay here."

"Why not?"

"What good will it do? You'll be found sooner or later, and turned out."

"Sufficient for the day is the evil thereof," said the Bounder coolly. "My hat!" There was a sputtering as the tiny tin saucepan boiled over, and a strong smell as the spirit-stove was extinguished. "My eggs have boiled hard as bricks by this time! All your fault. Never mind. Will you have a hard-boiled egg with me?"

"No, thanks. Look here, Smithy, this can't go on."

"You don't mean to say that you're going to give me away, Wharton?" The Bounder's brows darkened. "I have never thought you a sneak."

"I can't allow the Head and the fellows to go on thinking that you are perhaps drowned," said Harry steadily. "They must know you are alive."

"They won't know unless you tell them."

"I must tell them. I cannot leave them in anxiety now that I know the truth."

Vernon-Smith bit his lip.

"If you mean that, Wharton—"

"I do mean it. Can't you see for yourself that it's impossible?" Wharton exclaimed hotly. "The police have been called in. The Head's worried to death about it. The fellows won't put any heart into the match to-morrow, thinking about what may have happened. You've no right to give them such trouble. I don't want to give you away, but the school's got to know that you are alive and well, and that's flat!"

"Leave it to me, then. I don't want it to be known that I'm inside the walls of Greyfriars. I'll show myself to-morrow somewhere, where I can be seen, and that will be enough."

"Well, I suppose that's all right. I'll keep the secret on that understanding. But you will have to leave here before daylight if you don't want to be seen."

"Trust me for that!"

"It's not safe to stay here," said Wharton uneasily. "You might break your neck at any minute in this ramshackle place."

"I'm safe enough. The tower is out of bounds, and I shan't be found here. Look here, Wharton, I'm going to stay. I haven't been able to lay any definite plans excepting this—that I'm not going to leave Greyfriars if I can help it. I've sworn that, and I mean to keep my word. If I get a fresh chance here I'm going to do better. And I think you might back me up all you can."

"I will. But—"

"Then keep my secret, and leave the rest to me."

"You promise that the Head shall know by to-morrow that you are safe?"

"All Greyfriars shall know—honour bright!"

"Well, I suppose you're your own master; and, goodness knows, I don't want to be down on you at a time like this!" said Harry. "We'll leave it at that. I suppose you've let your father know you're safe?"

"You bet!"

"And he allows this?"

"He allows anything I choose," said the Bounder coolly. "I haven't explained anything to him of the details of this matter—I haven't seen him since I saw him here yesterday—but I've written to tell him I'm safe and sound, and that I hope not to leave Greyfriars. He's very keen on my staying, of course. One thing's jolly certain—they won't find it easy to get rid of me. Sure you won't have some coffee. I've got everything here for a good spread."

Wharton shook his head.

"I'll get back to the dorm."

"Mind you don't break your neck. I used this electric lantern coming up—I'll show you a light down."

And the Bounder lighted Wharton's way down the dangerous stair, and watched him climb out on the ivy. Harry Wharton returned to the Remove dormitory with his brain in a whirl.

He was glad to know that the Bounder was alive and well; but the cool daring, the utter recklessness of the Bounder's plans, astounded him. Sooner or later he must be found, and driven out in disgrace. Surely that was certain. What chance could crop up to save him? If any chance came of helping the Bounder, Wharton was ready to do his part heartily. But— He shook his head as he thought of it. The Bounder's latest move was bold and reckless, but he was struggling with the inevitable; he would have to go.

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NEXT TUESDAY!

"A PARDON WELL EARNED!"

A SPLENDID TALE OF THE JUNIORS OF GREY-FRIARS. By FRANK RICHARDS.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

Rotten Luck!

HARRY WHARTON was heavy-eyed when the rising-bell clanged out on the following morning. He had slept soundly enough after returning to his bed, but he had lost the greater part of his night's rest. But his heart was lighter when he rose than it had been the day before.

He knew now, at all events, that no grim tragedy had happened in the swirling waters of the Sark; and it irked him sorely that he could not tell his comrades so. As he heard the endless speculations among the Remove fellows as to the Bounder's fate, he felt the burden of the secret he had promised to keep. It gave him a feeling of hypocrisy to hear them, without telling them at once that there was no need for concern.

After school the football committee met in Study No. 1 to discuss the arrangements for the match. And then Wharton could stand it no longer. Only fellows that he could trust were present, and he felt that there was no harm in giving them a hint, at all events, that there was no cause for anxiety regarding the Bounder.

"Makes you feel so jolly rotten, you know!" Bob Cherry was saying. "Blessed if I feel like playing a good game of footer at all!"

"Same here," said Nugent. "I'm blessed if I half like taking Smithy's place in the team, you know," said Tom Dutton, the deaf junior, who was to play outside-right in the place of the missing winger. "But I suppose somebody must. But I shall feel rotten."

"Look here," said Wharton abruptly, "there's no need to feel anxious about Smithy. He's all right."

"How do you know?" asked Bob. "No news since yesterday, is there?"

"Well, I do know," said Harry. "Then you've heard something?" Nugent asked.

"I'd rather you didn't ask me any questions," said Wharton. "I can't answer them. But it's all right, and you can take my word for it. I'm not talking out of my hat. Of course, not a word is to be said outside this study. But you can take my word for it that Smithy is as well as any fellow here."

"Blessed if I see how you know!" said Bulstrode.

"Still, if you do know, that's all right," said Johnny Bull, with a curious glance at his chum. "I won't ask you any questions—but you are sure?"

"Quite sure!"

"You know it for a fact?" asked Peter Todd.

"Yes."

"That settles it!" said Bob Cherry, whose face had brightened up very much. "We'll take your word for it, Harry; though the dickens only knows how you know any more about it than we do!"

Surprised as the Co. were by Wharton's information, they did not doubt it. They guessed that he had heard something from the Bounder, and had promised not to speak. And what he had told them was a relief to their minds—and the other members of the Remove football eleven were told as much—on the understanding that it was to go no further. The rest of the school would learn the truth when the Bounder kept his promise to Wharton, and allowed the fact that he was safe and sound to be discovered.

Before dinner the eleven went out to practise for half an hour. Wharton was anxious about his team. He had lost Vernon-Smith, his champion winger—and Hurree Jamsat Ram Singh was on the sick list—and Penfold, the inside-left, could not play that afternoon, being occupied at home. Penfold, the scholarship boy, was the son of the village cobbler, and sometimes he helped his father on half-holidays—and this was one of the occasions. Three of the Remove's best men, therefore, were off the list—and though Wharton was able to fill their places easily enough, the newcomers were not by any means up to the form of the missing trio.

And more bad luck was awaiting the Remove. In the footer practice, Tom Brown stumbled and fell in a rush, and did not rise again at once. When he rose, he was limping. Harry Wharton ran up to him anxiously.

"Not hurt?"

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NEXT TUESDAY!

"A PARDON WELL EARNED!"

The New Zealand junior made a painful grimace.

"Ow! My ankle!"

"Oh crooked! Don't say you're crooked!" groaned Wharton. "We shall have to draw on the giddy fags to make up a team, at this rate."

But Tom Brown was, unfortunately, crooked. He had twisted his ankle, and it was only too clear that he would not be able to play that afternoon. Tom Brown was left-back in the team, but he was equally good as a forward, and Wharton had intended to play him in Penfold's place in the front line. But it was unhappily certain now that the New Zealand junior would not be able to go to Redclyffe at all.

"What ghastly luck!" groaned Bob Cherry. "That's a total of four men out!"

"Oh, it's rotten!"

"Redclyffe will walk all over us!" said Bulstrode dolorously. "I suppose you can put in Bolsover major at back. But—"

Wharton compressed his lips.

"Our luck seems to be out, all along the line," he said. "It can't be helped. We'll give Redclyffe a tussle, at all events."

"If only we had the Bounder!" sighed Nugent.

"But we haven't! It's particularly rotten—Redclyffe beat us last match, and they looked as if they regarded it as a foregone conclusion," said Wharton moodily. "If they beat us this time, they'll grin us off the

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field. I did want to lick them—but I suppose it can't be helped. Our luck's out."

And it was not with very high hopes that the Remove team took their places in the brake that was to bear them over to Redclyffe School.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

The Redclyffe Match!

FANE, the Redclyffe junior skipper, greeted Harry Wharton & Co. with much politeness—but there was a certain something under his politeness that made the Greyfriars juniors feel a keen yearning to win that match. Fane did not say anything of the sort—his manners being irreproachable—but it was only too easy to see that he regarded the match as a matter settled in advance. The Redclyffe fellows had, indeed, agreed among themselves that it was all over bar shouting, before it started. They had beaten Greyfriars on their own ground, so they were not likely to lose at home. Fane's private opinion was that it was a cheek of the Remove to play Redclyffe at all.

"Nerve, you know," Fane confided to Byng, his centre-half and right-hand man. "They're not even a junior team, you know—simply Lower Fourth. We play Greyfriars juniors, and beat 'em—Fourth Form and Shell fellows, like ourselves. Now these kids of the Lower Fourth think they can play us. Funny, ain't it?"

Byng chuckled.

"Keeps us in practice, and it won't be anything of a fag," he remarked. "I'll tell you what we'll do, Fane, old man—pile up a score that'll make 'em turn quite green when they tell the fellows at home. Make it twenty, or something like that. It will be a standing joke as long as Greyfriars is a school."

"Ha, ha, ha! We'll do it," said Fane.

And the chuckling Redclyffians all agreed that they would do it. It would be the joke of the season. Redclyffe School would simply howl with merriment over it, and it would be a lesson to these cheeky Greyfriars kids. And the Greyfriars kids would howl, too, with wrath and chagrin.

And as the talk was carried on in careless tones quite near the window of the dressing-room where Harry Wharton & Co. were changing, they heard it all, quite simply. Fane was too polite to intend that, but he was careless—and that was how it was.

And the feelings of the Greyfriars juniors were almost too deep for words as they listened.

"Isn't it enough to make a chap punch somebody's head?" grunted Bob Cherry. "Smithy ought to be boiled in oil for getting into trouble and leaving us in the lurch for the whole football season."

There was a tap at the dressing-room door, and Fane looked in. He did not know that the airy talk outside had reached the Greyfriars juniors, and his manner was still the extreme of urbanity.

"Chap asking to see you," he said. "Shall I let him come in?"

"Certainly! Thanks!"

"This way!" called out Fane.

A junior in an overcoat walked in cheerfully. Fane politely retired, and closed the door after him. There was a yell from the Greyfriars fellows.

"Smithy!"

"The Bounder!"

Vernon-Smith it was. The footballers gathered round him in wonder. Harry Wharton stared at him in surprise. He had known that the Bounder would keep his word, and allow it to become known that day that he was alive and well. But he had not thought of its happening in this sudden and dramatic way. He might have guessed it, however—for it was very like Vernon-Smith. The Bounder of Greyfriars dearly loved the limelight.

"Smithy! So you're not drowned, after all!"

"Alive and kicking—eh?"

"Where have you been?"

"Where have you sprung from now?"

Questions were rained upon the Bounder, as he stood with a cool smile upon his face, his hands in his pockets.

"Never mind where I've sprung from," he remarked. "I'm here—that's the point! I was on the ground here when your brake arrived. You're not playing Pen or Brown, Wharton?"

Wharton shook his head.

"Pen's home to-day, and Tom Brown's crooked," he replied. "We're putting in the reserves instead. It's rotten luck, of course!"

"You'll have a tussle of it."

"We all know that."

"Do you want me to play?" asked the Bounder.

Wharton started.

Vernon-Smith being expelled from Greyfriars, he had never even thought of the possibility of his playing for the Remove again. It had not occurred to his mind that the Bounder would think of turning up at Redclyffe. But Wharton's face lighted up at the thought. With the Bounder in the team, things would be very much changed, and the programme of the Redclyffians, as mapped out by Fane and Byng, would be subject to very extensive changes.

"My hat!" Wharton exclaimed. "If it were possible—"

"Well, it's possible enough. I'm here, if you want me, and in top form."

"But you don't belong to Greyfriars now," said Harry.

The Bounder winced.

"Don't rub 'it in!" he said.

"I don't mean to," said Harry hastily.

"But—but it's a fact. Still—"

"I haven't left yet!" grinned the Bounder. "I've dodged that so far, haven't I? I'm still a Greyfriars chap; but even if I wasn't, you're at liberty to play anybody you like in your eleven."

"That's so!" said Bob Cherry. "I say, A SPLENDID TALE OF THE JUNIORS OF GREY-FRIARS. By FRANK RICHARDS."

Wharton, it would be a surprise for those merchants outside who are going to give us such a walloping!"

"Yes, rather, Wharton!"

Wharton made up his mind at once. It occurred to him that trouble at Greyfriars might follow the Bounder's playing in the team. The Head might be angry, and so might Mr. Quelch, when they heard of it. But, after all, there was no harm in it. Even if Vernon-Smith was not to be considered as a Greyfriars' fellow now, he could certainly claim to be regarded as an old boy—a very young old boy, certainly—and so he was entitled to play for the school. Wharton's desire to give Redclyffe a good tussle overpowered every other consideration, especially as all the team were for playing the Bounder. He nodded a cheerful assent.

"You're going to play me?" said Vernon-Smith, his eyes sparkling.

"Yes, if you like."

"Dutton was going to take my place, I suppose? He can lend me his footer things—they will fit me," said Vernon-Smith coolly.

"I say, Dutton, old man—"

"Hold on," said Wharton. "I shall put Dutton in as inside-left, in Penfold's place, as you've turned up, Smithy. I shall have to ask you to stand out, Russell."

Russell grinned dolefully.

"Right-ho!" he said. "I'll lend you my things, Smithy, like a shot. They'll fit you all right."

"Thanks!"

Russell changed again, and gave his football outfit to the Bounder, who was soon dressed. Tom Dutton looked at him inquiringly, and then at Harry Wharton.

"Is Smithy playing to-day?" he asked.

"Yes."

"Then you won't want me?"

"Yes; you're going to play inside-left."

"Yes, I suppose I've got left, now Smithy's turned up," agreed Dutton. "But I don't mind, as it will give the team a better chance, I suppose. I may as well change again. I shall stay and watch the match now I'm here."

"You're going to play!" shrieked Wharton. "You play inside-left!"

"Oh!" said Dutton. "I see!"

"I say," Nugent remarked, as they left the dressing-room, "the Head ought to know about Smithy being safe. Why not send him a wire to tell him? We needn't give any particulars—only that he's all right."

"Good egg!" said Wharton at once.

And Russell, as he was not playing, volunteered to go to the Redclyffe post-office and send the telegram which was to lift a weight of worry from the mind of the Head of Greyfriars. The telegram was, as Bob Cherry said, short and sweet:

"Dr. Locke, Greyfriars.—Vernon-Smith alive and well.—WHARTON."

The Bounder shrugged his shoulders, but did not raise any objection, and Russell took the telegram away. It was enough to relieve the doctor's worried mind, without giving any indication of how the Bounder was occupied at Redclyffe. The juniors did not want to risk any interference from Mr. Quelch, as had happened in the St. Jim's match. Later on the Remove master would know that Vernon-Smith had played for Greyfriars; but by that time it would be too late for interference, and Redclyffe—at least, Wharton hoped so—would be beaten.

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

Playing to Win!

HARRY WHARTON & CO. came out into the field.

Owing to the sudden and unexpected appearance of the Bounder in their midst, there had been some delay, which was added to by the sending of the telegram, and the visiting team, therefore had kept the home side waiting a little.

Fane & Co. were quite convinced in their minds that the visitors were suffering from funk, and were reluctant to begin the game which was to consist of their being chased and charged and run off their legs, and beaten by a ridiculous score. The crowd of Redclyffe fellows round the ground were beginning to pass remarks, demanding to know whether the visitors had gone to sleep in the pavilion; whether they were taking an after-dinner nap; whether they were going to play at all? The appearance of the Remove eleven in the field set their doubts at rest.

NEXT TUESDAY!

"A PARDON WELL EARNED!"



THE RETURN OF THE RUNAWAY!—A junior in an overcoat walked cheerfully into the dressing-room. The skipper of the Redclyffe team politely retired and closed the door after him. There was a yell from the Greyfriars fellows. "Smithy! So you're not drowned, after all!" (See Chapter 3.)

"Sorry we've kept you waiting a bit, Fane," Wharton said apologetically. "Smithy arrived at the last minute, you see."

"Oh, don't mench!" said Fane airily. "If you're sure you're quite ready, we'll begin!" And there was a sarcastic accent on the "quite."

"Quite!" said Wharton.

"Oh, good!"

"Better buck up, too," Bob Cherry remarked. "You'll need all your time to take twenty goals or so, won't you?"

Fane smiled a sticky smile.

"Ahem! I didn't know you—you could hear—ahem!"

"Window open—couldn't help it. But never mind!" said Bob Cherry cheerily. "We know what to expect now, Fane. We're not going to let you have those twenty goals. We're going to put all our beef into it, and play up for all we're worth, and see if we can keep it down to only nineteen!"

And the Removites chuckled.

"Ahem!" murmured Fane.

"Perhaps only eighteen to nil, if we have any luck!" added Johnny Bull. "Who knows? Football's an uncertain game."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I think we'd better toss for ends," said Fane hastily.

Fane won the toss, and gave the visitors the wind to kick-off against. The whistle went, and the ball rolled, and the Redclyffe match started.

Round the ground, the Redclyffe crowd looked on with interested eyes. They were prepared to see Fane's programme carried out, and they had their shouts all ready to acclaim the first goal for Redclyffe. But those exclamations had to be kept bottled-up, as it were. They were not needed. For the Redclyffe goals seemed a long time in coming, and the dead certainty became more and more uncertain as the minutes ticked away.

Fane & Co. attacked hotly, and for some time Harry Wharton & Co. were chiefly on the defensive. The only satisfaction the eager onlookers had was the fact that the tussle was mostly in the visitors' half. But

the defence was sound, and even when the Redclyffe forwards got through, Bulstrode, in goal, was equal to the occasion. He sent the ball out when Fane sent it in, and Johnny Bull cleared to the half-way line.

After that, try as they would, the Redclyffians could not get at the Greyfriars goal again. But they were attacking all the time, and the spectators consoled themselves with the reflection that they were bound to get through sooner or later; while as for the attack being transferred to the other end—that was wildly impossible.

But the wildly-impossible thing happened. Harry Wharton captured the ball from a pass from Nugent, and ran it up the field, and the Redclyffe forwards, much to their astonishment, were left simply standing. They had not looked for that pace on the part of the Greyfriars skipper. Neither had they expected him to wind through the halves like a giddy serpent, as Fane expressed it afterwards—but he did.

But the backs were there, and ready—he was not going to pass the backs. His forwards were not up with him to take the pass—with one exception. His rush had left his supporters behind; but Vernon-Smith was speeding, along the touch-line like an arrow. Wharton did not need to look—he knew that the Bounder was there, he knew that he was ready, he knew that he would take the pass at exactly the right moment, as if it were an operation of exact mechanism. The ball went out on the wing, and Vernon-Smith captured it as Wharton was charged over. The Bounder rushed in and kicked—and the goalkeeper, who had expected anything but that, was taken quite by surprise, and beaten, to the wide.

Right into the net the leather bumped, the goalie clutching after it seconds too late! From all the Greyfriars players came a chirrup:

"Goal!"

And from the Redclyffe crowd a gasp:

"Goal!"

Goal it was—and first blood to the Greyfriars team. Wharton staggered to his

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By FRANK RICHARDS.

A SPLENDID TALE OF THE JUNIORS OF GREY-FRIARS.

feet. He had had a somewhat heavy fall, and the breath had been knocked out of him; but his eyes were dancing with pleasure. He had known that he could rely on the Bouncer, and the Bouncer had not failed him.

The goalie tossed out the leather rather glumly, and it was taken back to the centre of the field. The Removites of Greyfriars were grinning. The expressions on the faces of Fane & Co. were worth, as Bob Cherry remarked, a guinea a box!

"Blessed if I think they'll even get eighteen goals, unless they hurry up a bit!" Johnny Bull observed to the world in general. "I shouldn't wonder if they have to be satisfied with seventeen or so!"

And the Removites chuckled, and the Redclyffians were observed to turn pink, and exchange sickly glances.

The first success in the match had an inspiring effect upon the Greyfriars fellows. After the restart they attacked, and the home team, to their great surprise, found that it was necessary to fall back in defence of their citadel. And for the remainder of the first half all the attacking was done by Greyfriars, and, although it did not materialise into goals, there was no doubt that if Tom Brown and Hurree Singh had been in the team instead of the reserves the visitors would have added at least one goal to the score. As it was, the whistle went with the score unchanged—one goal to nil.

"Blessed if I know where Fane's going to dig up those twenty goals!" Bob Cherry remarked, as he sucked a lemon. "Unless he's got 'em in his pocket, he will have to do without 'em, I fancy!"

And when the second half commenced it really looked as if the Redclyffians would have to do without them.

Redclyffe kicked off against the wind after the change of ends. If Greyfriars had scored one to nothing against the wind, it seemed that they would probably do as well, if not better, with the wind in their favour. The swank had departed from Fane & Co. now. They realised that they were in for a hard struggle, and that they had all their work cut out to equalise, let alone win, and they put all their energy into it.

But they found equal keenness on the other side. Harry Wharton & Co. were playing up for all they were worth.

Again the Redclyffians attacked hotly, and the tussle was all on the Greyfriars side of the line, for ten minutes or more. But the ball did not get through. And when the attack slackened the visiting forwards were ready. Peter Todd, at centre-half, sent the ball right down the field, and the forwards broke away after it like hares.

Then Fane & Co. had to fall back and defend—and they had a long struggle before them—and the goalie only saved by the skin of his teeth, as it were, from a long shot by Harry Wharton.

It was a gruelling game, and there were bellows to mend on both sides when at last Fane succeeded in putting the ball in. The score was level, with ten minutes more to play, and the Redclyffians breathed with relief.

But all their energy seemed to be expended in that effort, and at the restart Greyfriars attacked hotly and carried all before them.

They rushed the ball down the field, with the wind behind them, and the forwards kept in line, passing like clockwork. The defence was hopelessly beaten; the attack had it all its own way. From one to another the ball buzzed merrily. Nugent was charged over, but not before he had sent the ball out on the wing, and Vernon-Smith sped on with it, and centred to Wharton just in time, and Wharton slammed it home.

"Goal!"
Two up for Greyfriars.

Five minutes more to play. The Redclyffians spent those five minutes in a vain attempt to get through the Greyfriars defence. Then the whistle went.

"Two goals to one!" murmured Bob Cherry. "Poor old Fane! He's nineteen goals short!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

And the Greyfriars footballers rubbed themselves down and changed in high good humour.

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NEXT
TUESDAY!

"A PARDON WELL EARNED!"

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

In Custody—and Out!

HARRY WHARTON & CO. chuckled as they changed after the match. After the anticipations of the Redclyffe fellows, the result of the match struck them as funny. Redclyffe had been beaten by two goals to one, and beaten by sheer good play. The "cheeky kids," with whom Fane & Co. had intended to wipe up the ground, had made their claim good to be considered as footballers quite up to the Redclyffe standard—if not a little bit above it.

A sharp knock at the door interrupted the cheerful chat of the footballers.

The door opened.
Then the smiles died off the faces of the Greyfriars eleven, and there was a general ejaculation of dismay.

"The Head!"

It was Dr. Locke.

The juniors had heard the sound of a motor-car on the road while they were changing, but they were thinking about their football victory, not about the Head of Greyfriars.

Dr. Locke stood in the doorway, regarding them with a stern brow, and the juniors, half dressed, looked at him. Harry Wharton had his jacket in his hand; Bob Cherry, with a stud held in his teeth, was about to put on his collar; Vernon-Smith had his trousers half on. The Bouncer set his teeth.

He was caught!

"G-g-good-afternoon, sir!" stammered Wharton.

"I received your telegram, Wharton," said the Head. "I thank you for sending it. As it was sent from Redclyffe, I judged that Vernon-Smith was here."

"Ye-es, sir!" said Wharton, and he could not help wishing that he had not been quite so keen about relieving the Head's anxiety.

"Therefore, I came over immediately," said the Head. "It is my duty to take charge of you, Vernon-Smith, until you can be handed over to your father's care."

"Indeed, sir," said the Bouncer quietly. And he went on dressing.

"Yes, indeed! You have caused him and myself and others more than sufficient anxiety," said the Head sharply. "I will not say what I think of your conduct. As you no longer belong to Greyfriars, I shall not punish you for the wretched trick you have played in giving the impression that you had met your death in the Sark. It was a heartless trick, Vernon-Smith, and I trust that you are ashamed of it. Now you will return with me to Greyfriars, and you will remain under lock and key until I can send a master with you to your father's house. There my responsibility will end."

"You wish me to return to Greyfriars with you, sir?"

"I order you to do so!"

"Very well, sir."

"Finish dressing as quickly as possible and come with me!" said the Head, frowning. "I will wait for you here. I am sorry to say, Smith, that I cannot trust you out of my sight."

The Head stepped outside, leaving the door open. Evidently he was not without suspicion that the Bouncer might attempt to elude him by means of the window.

The footballers looked at the Bouncer sympathetically. He was caught, and because he had come there to play for Greyfriars they felt that it was hard lines on the Bouncer.

"But you won't be licked," said Bob Cherry comfortingly and in a low voice. "The Head can't lick you now you don't belong to Greyfriars, you know."

"I don't care for a licking!"

"And you'd have had to go home sooner or later, anyway," Nugent remarked.

"Do you think so?"

"Well, I suppose so!" said Nugent, puzzled. "You won't be able to stay at Greyfriars, so I suppose you must go home. I don't see why you haven't gone already."

The Bouncer made no reply.
He finished dressing, and said good-bye to the Greyfriars juniors and joined the Head.

With a stern brow, Dr. Locke took him away to the motor-car which was waiting in the road that ran by the Redclyffe football-ground.

Vernon-Smith looked quickly round.

There was no chance of bolting. He knew that Dr. Locke would grasp his collar at the first sign of it. The Bouncer was quite reckless enough to bump over the reverend and respected Head of Greyfriars if it had suited his purpose, but he knew that that would not do. It would make it impossible for him ever to get back to Greyfriars, of course, and his object was to get back there if he could. It was necessary to treat the Head with the most profound respect.

"Step in, Smith," said the Head coldly.

Vernon-Smith stepped into the car. Dr. Locke followed him in. He was not running any risks with his prisoner.

"Greyfriars," said the Head briefly to the chauffeur, and the car glided away.

Dr. Locke sat grimly silent, without glancing once at the equally silent junior sitting by his side.

The car covered the ground at a good speed, and before long it was passing through the old High Street of Friardale. A few minutes after that the grey tower of the school rose into sight over the trees. The Bouncer's eyes glimmered at the sight of the old tower. At the summit of that ancient building, in the round room, was his camp, where he intended to remain, whatever happened. Five minutes more and they would be in Greyfriars, and escape would be impossible.

To be taken back in custody, locked in a room, and then to leave the school in charge of a master! The Bouncer's cheeks burned at the thought of the humiliation of it.

He sat very quiet, but he was watching for a chance. At any cost, any risk, he was determined that he would not be taken back to the school in custody of the Head. And his chance came at last. A lumbering market-cart blocked the lane, and the chauffeur tooted loudly with his horn and slackened speed. The market-cart drew towards the side of the road in a leisurely manner, and the car came almost to a standstill.

That was the Bouncer's opportunity. The Head was looking up the road towards the obstructing cart. Vernon-Smith gave a quick glance round, rose to his feet, and made a spring from the scarcely moving car.

Another second and he had vanished through a gap in the hedge.

Dr. Locke started up.

"Vernon-Smith! Come back! Come back instantly!"

There was no reply. The Bouncer was gone. The Head caught a fleeting glimpse of him speeding across a field, and then he vanished again and did not reappear. Dr. Locke compressed his lips with anger.

It was impossible, of course, for the reverend gentleman to think of pursuing the elusive junior on foot across the fields. The chase would have been hopeless, even if it had not been too undignified.

With a frowning brow, the doctor ordered the chauffeur to drive on to the school.

Half an hour later Harry Wharton & Co. came back in their brake from Redclyffe. They questioned Gosling as they came in.

"Where's Smithy?"

"I dunno!" said Gosling, in surprise. "I ain't seed 'im, Master Wharton. I eard that he'd been found, and the 'ead was going to fetch him. That's all I've eard."

"The Head fetched him from Redclyffe in his car," explained Bob Cherry. "Didn't he bring him back here?"

"I ain't seed 'im."

"Hasn't the Head come in?"

"Yes, he's come in—in the moty-car," said Gosling.

"Didn't he come back with the Head?" shouted Bob.

"No, he didn't come back with the 'ead!" said Gosling.

"Then he must have given him the slip on the road!" said Harry Wharton. "And now he means to—!" Wharton checked himself abruptly.

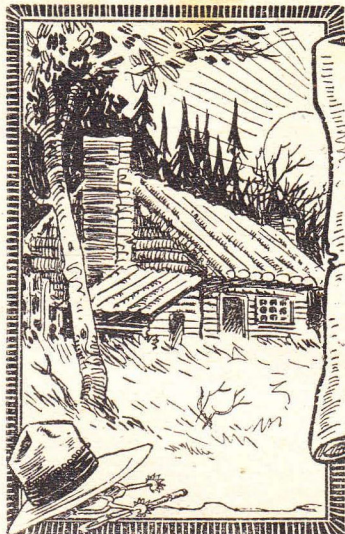
He knew what the Bouncer intended to do, but he had promised Vernon-Smith to keep his secret. The Bouncer would come back to Greyfriars—but how long would it be before the inevitable discovery?

THE END.

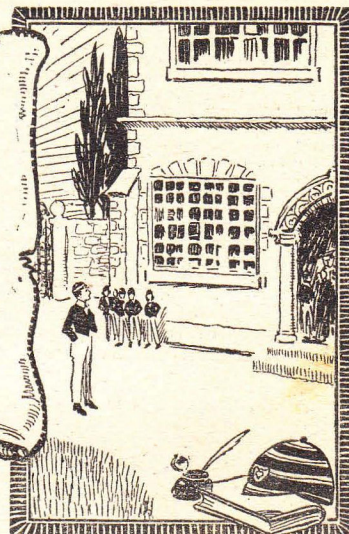
(Don't miss next week's long complete story of Harry Wharton & Co. of Greyfriars.)

A SPLENDID TALE OF THE JUNIORS OF GREY-FRIARS.
By FRANK RICHARDS.

WHEN BEAUCLERC IS OFFERED A HOME IN THE OLD COUNTRY BY HIS ARISTOCRATIC RELATIVES HE FINDS IT HARD TO SAY GOOD-BYE TO HIS CHUMS AND HIS WESTERN HOME!



The Chance of a Life-time!



A Splendid, Long, Complete Tale, dealing with the Schooldays in the Backwoods of Canada of

FRANK RICHARDS

(Author of the Famous School Tales of Harry Wharton & Co. of Greyfriars.)

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

Beauclerc's Choice.

"HOW'S your popper, Cherub?" asked Bob Lawless cheerily, as Vere Beauclerc came out into the ranch-house porch.

Beauclerc's face was very grave. "Nothing wrong, Beau?" asked Frank Richards quickly.

"No. The doctor thinks father had better keep in his room for a few days, but it is not serious," said Beauclerc.

"Good!"

"Then what are you looking so jolly serious about?" asked Bob.

Beauclerc smiled faintly.

"My father told me something. Will you fellows come up and see him before we start for school? There's time."

"Certainly!" said Frank.

The chums followed Beauclerc into the house and up the stairs to the room occupied by Vere's father.

Lascelles Beauclerc, the remittance-man of Cedar Camp, was in bed, propped up on pillows.

He was looking pale and wan.

It was a couple of days since the flood in Thompson Valley, and the rescue of the remittance-man from the shack by the creek.

Frank Richards & Co. were feeling no ill results from their exertions that wild night.

But the experience had told upon Mr. Beauclerc.

The remittance-man was not in a condition to endure exposure and hardship like the healthy schoolboys.

Long devotion to the potent fire-water had sapped away his vitality.

At the first serious strain upon his constitution the unhappy wretch had to pay for a long course of foolish recklessness.

There was a new expression upon the remittance-man's worn face, which was still handsome, in spite of the haggard lines upon it.

He looked more like his son now than ever before.

It was easy enough to see that the unfortunate man was in a mood of remorse and repentance.

On that wild night at the flooded shack, when his son had stood by him with quiet courage in the very shadow of death, Lascelles Beauclerc had seen things in a truer light, and the mood had not yet passed.

He smiled faintly at the schoolboys as they came in.

"I hope you feel better this morning, sir!" said Frank Richards, as they stood by the bedside.

"I shall be well enough soon," said Mr. Beauclerc. "I fear I am giving your father a great deal of trouble, Lawless."

"I guess not, sir!" said Bob cheerily. "The popper was glad we brought you here, and you're more than welcome."

"I have been speaking to my son," said the remittance-man. "I want to ask you, as his friends, to speak to him also—to point out to him what he must do."

Vere Beauclerc smiled slightly and shook his head, while his chums looked at him in surprise.

"Hallo! What's the Cherub been up to?" exclaimed Bob.

"He will not see what is best for him," said Mr. Beauclerc. "I hope that you will be able to influence him. My son has the offer of a home in England."

"I do not want it!" said Vere Beauclerc. "Let me explain," said the remittance-man quietly. "My brother, a very wealthy man, has offered to take charge of Vere, to give him a home in England, and an education suited to his proper station."

"Father!" murmured Vere.

Bob grinned faintly.

The remittance-man had never lost the ideas he had imbibed in the Old Country in wealthy and idle surroundings.

To Lascelles Beauclerc life in the West was a grim exile of hardship, but his son looked upon it with a very different eye.

To him Canada was not a place of exile, but a beloved home.

The remittance-man coloured a little as he caught the involuntary grin on Bob Lawless' face.

He went on rather hastily: "Vere would have great prospects in England. He would have a future. But the foolish boy refuses to go. He does not understand. He chooses to remain buried in this wilderness. You must speak to him."

"I shall not part from you, father!" said Vere quietly. "And my friends wouldn't advise me to go. They don't think as you do, father."

The remittance-man eyed the two chums. "What do you say, Lawless?" he asked.

"Well, I'm a Canadian, born and bred in the West," said Bob. "I think the Cherub

would be an ass to go back to the Old Country, and live like a loafer, when he has a chance of learning to be a farmer out here."

"A—a what?" ejaculated Mr. Beauclerc. Bob coloured.

"Excuse me, I shouldn't have put it like that," he said. "But—but of course, you wouldn't look at it as we do."

"Vere is the nephew of an English earl," said Mr. Beauclerc, with a touch of pride. "In England he will have a wealthy home, he will go to a public school, and after that to the University."

"Well, I suppose there's a lot in that," admitted Bob. "It's a jolly good offer, Cherub. You won't have to work, anyway."

"Rot!" said Vere Beauclerc briefly.

"What do you say, Richards?" asked Mr. Beauclerc. "You have only lately come from England, and you were at a public school before you left, I understand. You do not agree with Lawless."

Frank hesitated.

"You, too, have learned Canadian ideas, then?" asked the remittance-man, with a forced smile.

"Well, yes," said Frank candidly. "I think a man ought to lead a useful life. I shall go back to England some day, I suppose; but it will be to work. I don't think a man ought to spend his life hunting and shooting and lounging about the West End of London. If that's the new life for Beau, I think he'd do jolly well to stick to Canada."

"I made a mistake in calling you to my assistance," said Mr. Beauclerc, smiling again. "I think that Vere ought to accept his uncle's offer, but I shall leave him to make his free choice."

"I have chosen already," said Vere.

Mr. Beauclerc nodded, and his head sank back upon the pillow.

The three schoolboys left him. They came down to the porch and looked out on the sunny plain, with the great summits of the Rocky Mountains in sight on the far horizon.

"So you're going to stick to this, Cherub?" said Bob. "You don't want to change the plains and the Rockies for smoky old London?"

Beauclerc laughed. "Not at all," he said. Then his face became grave. "Besides, I couldn't go. It's impossible! My father doesn't want me to

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Mr. Lawless had guessed well. As Moose Creek glistened in the sun in the distance, two white patches were sighted beside the shining waters. Bob gave a shout as he spotted them. "There they are, dad!" "I guess so," said the rancher. "Have you got your gun, Billy?" "Have I got my head?" was Billy Cook's reply, an answer apparently conveying an emphatic affirmative. "Keep it handy—you will want it."

"You bet!" Billy Cook gave his belt a hitch, and the butt of his "gun"—a big Colt's revolver—came into view.

The beat of the horses' hoofs on the plain was a ceaseless tattoo. The white horses in the distance became clearer and clearer.

The two rustlers were riding along the creek in a southerly direction.

As matters stood, they were likely to be headed off.

But Euchre Dick and his pard were accustomed to "keeping their eyes peeled"; they needed to, in their peculiar way of life.

The white horses halted by the creek, and the two rustlers stared across the plain at the approaching horsemen.

Had they been riding their own steeds, there was no reason why they should have been alarmed.

But that the horses they were riding were stolen was evident from the fact that they took the alarm at once.

The sight of the rancher and his companions galloping towards them at top speed warned them that they were suspected, and that was enough for the horse-thieves.

They turned from the trail they were following, and plunged into the swollen creek at its side.

"That settles it," said Mr. Lawless quietly. "But they will not get away."

The two rustlers swam their horses across, and clambered up the opposite bank.

But time had been lost, and the pursuers plunged in, and went splashing across the creek.

The chase was taken up on the other side. Euchre Dick and Dave Dunn were riding hard now.

It was not only the loss of their plunder they had to fear, but the punishment for stealing horses—a very serious offence in the West.

The white steeds—not quite so white since

their plunge in the creek—were lashed savagely, and spurred without mercy.

"I guess thar'll be trouble with that hoss if it's Demon," Billy Cook jerked out. The ranch foreman was right.

The big horse, lashed and spurred cruelly by its rider, was already giving trouble.

Instead of galloping on, Demon was giving an exhibition of buck-jumping.

Euchre Dick, forging ahead, glanced back at his confederate.

"Get on, or you're a gone coon!" he yelled back.

"I can't get on!" yelled Dunn desperately. "The hoss's got the devil in him. Stop for me."

"I reckon not." Dave Dunn brandished a revolver.

"Stand by your pard, you coyote!" he roared.

It was so evidently his intention to shoot in earnest if he was abandoned that Euchre Dick, with a curse, wheeled his pony and rode back.

The big horse was still prancing savagely. "Stand by me, and see it through!" snarled Dunn. "Get out your gun, you pesky coyote! We're not taken yet!"

The pursuers were very close now.

The big horse calmed down as Dave Dunn ceased to use whip and spur, but further flight was impossible.

Billy Cook's big Colt was glistening in the sunlight, and the horse-thieves were within easy range.

They faced the pursuers savagely as the rancher and his party rode up.

"What do you want with us, hang you?" exclaimed Dunn fiercely.

"I guess we want those horses," answered Mr. Lawless. "You'll get down—sharp!"

"They're our horses."

"Do you generally paint your hosses to improve their complexions?" grinned Billy Cook.

"I guess—"

"Demon!" called out Vere Beauclerc softly. Dunn's steed whinnied, and trotted towards Beauclerc, heedless of the savage drag on the rein.

"Get down!" rapped out the rancher.

"I guess I'm keeping this horse," said Dunn, grasping the revolver savagely. "The galoot that tries to take it will get hurt."

"Put up that shooter, Dave Dunn," said the rancher quietly. "This isn't Arizona or New Mexico, you rascal! Put it up, I tell you!"

He rode straight at the rustler, grasping his riding-whip.

The ruffian's six-shooter came up to a level.

"Keep back!" he said hoarsely—"keep back, or—"

Crack!

There was a yell of anguish from Dave Dunn as the shot rang out from Billy Cook's "gun."

The revolver went spinning from his grasp, and the ruffian sucked his hand wildly.

It was red now.

"I reckoned I could do it," said Billy Cook complacently. "I guess you'll have a sore finger, Dunn. It's your own funeral."

Dunn mumbled furiously over his injured hand.

The rancher grasped him by the shoulder, spun him out of the saddle, and sent him crashing to the ground.

"Take your horse, Beauclerc!" he said, unmoved.

Euchre Dick had his hands up. He was not there for a shooting-match.

"I guess I pass, pards!" he exclaimed, in a great hurry. "Don't shoot! I reckon I'm no hog, and I know when I've had enough."

"That's your pony, Frank."

"Yes, uncle. I know him now," said Frank Richards.

"Take him!" Euchre Dick slid hurriedly from the saddle, and Frank recaptured his pony.

The rancher fixed a stern glance upon the horse-thieves.

"You ought to be taken to Kamloops Gaol!" he snapped.

"Let up, old man," pleaded Euchre Dick.

"You've raked in the jackpot. Go easy on a galoot!"

Mr. Lawless reflected for a moment.

"I don't want to be bothered with you," he said. "Billy, give them a dozen each with your trail-ropes, and let them go."

"I'm your antelope," answered Billy Cook promptly.

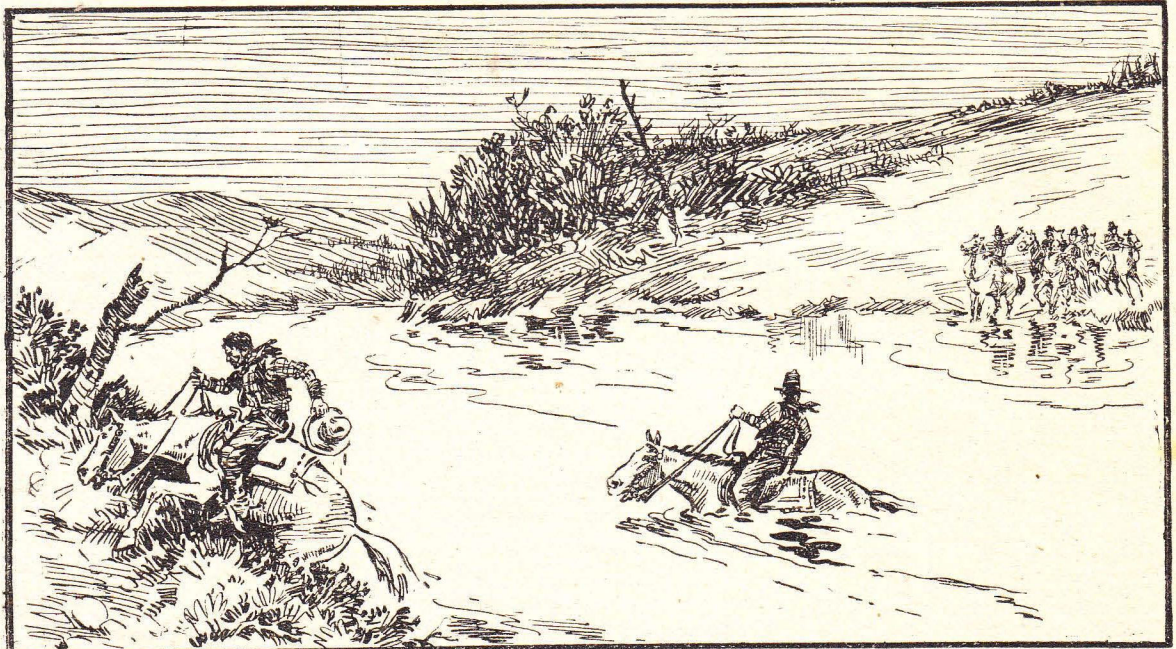
"Look here—"

"That or Kamloops Gaol!" said the rancher grimly.

The horse-thieves looked at one another. Kamloops Gaol was not an attractive residence.

They decided upon the trail-ropes. Billy Cook handed the coiled trail-ropes as if he were beating carpet.

The loud cracks rang across the prairie,



CORRALLING THE HORSE THIEVES!—The rustlers turned and plunged into the swollen creek. "That settles it!" said Mr. Lawless as he saw them swim their horses across and climb up the opposite bank. "But they will not get away!" (See Chapter 3.)

10 Starting In This Week's "Magnet," "The Greyfriars Parliament"—

and louder still rang the yells of the unhappy horse-thieves.

They were left yelling. Mr. Lawless and his companions rode away, taking the recaptured horses with them, and Euehre Dick and his pard, after groaning in chorus for a quite considerable time, set out on a twenty-mile tramp to Thompson. Truly, the way of the transgressor was hard in the Thompson Valley.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

The Decision.

VERE BEAUCLERC and his father remained at the Lawless Ranch for nearly a week, and then they left. There was fine, springlike weather in the Thompson Valley, the floods were over, and Cedar Creek ran at its normal level.

The shack by the creek, where the Beauclercs lived, had been wrecked in the flood, but there were many hands to help in the rebuilding of the little home.

Neighbours came to lend a hand—and in Western Canada a "neighbour" is anyone within thirty miles.

Frank Richards & Co. helped, after school and on the days when there was no school.

Lumbermen from the river, and cattlemen from the ranches, dropped in to "do a spell."

The shack was rebuilt, the materials growing near at hand and free of cost, needing only the axe and a stout arm to procure them.

Frank and Bob were sorry enough when Beauclerc left the ranch. They would have been very glad if the Cherub could have remained with them.

Of the offer in the letter from England nothing more had been said, but the chums had not forgotten it.

Frank Richards wondered whether anything would come of it.

It was a great opportunity for Beauclerc, in one way.

It opened a prospect before him that many a fellow would have been overjoyed to take advantage of.

But Frank knew the Cherub's devotion to his father, and the invitation from England was not extended to the remittance-man.

Lascalles Beauclerc was not wanted. That was a bitter item for Beauclerc, who was devoted to his father, perhaps all the more on account of the unfortunate man's faults and weaknesses.

His uncle's offer evoked more resentment than gratitude in Beauclerc's breast on account of his father, to whose faults he was indulgent, if not quite blind.

But the lesson the remittance-man had received had not been lost on him.

He had lain in the shadow of death on that terrible night when his son's arm had held him back from the seething flood, and he had not forgotten.

There was a change in Lascalles Beauclerc.

It was not likely that it would last, but as yet it was there.

When Vere came home from school he would find his father cultivating the clearing, with a patient devotion to hard work that was surprising enough in the lounge of the Cedar Camp bars.

Beauclerc rejoiced in the change; he only hoped that it would be permanent.

"I have had another letter from England, Vere," said Mr. Beauclerc, one day after Vere had returned from school.

"Yes, father."

"My brother has repeated his offer."

Vere Beauclerc was silent.

"He must have his answer," continued the remittance-man. "It must be 'Yes' or 'No,' and it will be final."

"No, then," said Vere firmly.

"You must think, my boy," said the remittance-man gently. "If the answer is 'No,' it does not merely close the matter for the present—it closes it for ever."

"All the better, father."

"Your uncle will, I fear, be offended—he means kindly."

"He has no right to be offended," said Vere.

"Why should I leave my home and my own father, to go among strangers?"

"This is no home for you, Vere," said the remittance-man, with a sigh. "Your uncle points that out, and quite truly. My boy, you have learned strange ideas in this country, but you must remember that you come of a noble family, that it is possible that some day you may bear an old and

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honoured title, and that you were not born to be a brewer of wood and a drawer of water. You must think of your family, and the claim of your name, Vere."

The boy was silent.

"Your uncle's offer is generous. You will have every chance that I had, and you will make better use of your chance. Cedar Creek School, my boy, is not the place for you—you may go to Eton or Harrow, if you choose. After that, to my old college, to do better there than I did. Money will not be wanting. Here, my dear boy, what is your prospect? To become, perhaps, a farmer, a rancher, or a miner, and spend your life in a remote province, far from the heart of things, from the people you ought to know. You will make friends—"

"I could not make better friends than I have already."

"Perhaps so, in a way. But there are other considerations. Vere, I have thought the matter out. It will almost break my heart to lose you, but—"

The schoolboy started.

"Father! You don't want me to go?"

"You know I do not. But it is for your good. I am older and wiser than you are,"

♦♦♦♦♦

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♦♦♦♦♦

my dear boy; wiser for you, if not for myself. I will not command you, Vere, but I ask you to accept your uncle's offer."

"I—I can't!"

"You must!"

Vere Beauclerc rose to his feet.

His father's face was troubled, but there was an inflexible determination in it.

He had made up his mind, and Vere Beauclerc's heart sank as he realised it.

The remittance-man, in his new mood, was determined to do his duty, to atone, as much as he could, for the harm his way of life had done to his son.

There was a long silence.

"You will do as I wish, Vere!" said Beauclerc at last. "I have already written to your uncle."

"Father!"

"When the post-wagon passes to-morrow, I shall post the letter. The die is cast, my boy. You must go. When you have entered upon your new life, you will thank me for this, and you will wonder that you could ever have dreamed of refusing such a chance."

Vere did not speak.

Nothing more was said, but the matter was

evidently taken as settled by the remittance-man.

With a troubled face and a heavy heart, Vere set about getting the simple evening meal in the shack.

The next morning he saw his father hand the letter to the driver of the post-wagon, and his heart beat painfully.

He watched the wagon drive on, and disappear over a rise in the prairie, with heavy eyes.

The die was cast now.

"You feel this now, my dear boy," said Mr. Beauclerc gently. "The time will come—and come soon—when you will be glad of it. You must depend on your father's judgment in this, my boy."

"I will do as you wish, father," said Vere heavily.

"That is right."

Vere Beauclerc's face was clouded as he mounted his horse and rode away on the trail that morning.

He was later than usual, and Frank Richards and Bob Lawless were already at the fork, waiting for him.

"Hallo, slacker!" called out Bob, in his cheery, ringing tones. "Here you are, at last!"

Frank Richards looked quickly at his chum. "What's the matter, Beau?" he asked.

"Hallo! Something the matter—eh?" asked Bob. "What's the merry old trouble?"

The same thought had come into the minds of the chums at once—that the remittance-man had "broken out" again, and had been painting the town red.

Perhaps Beauclerc guessed their thoughts, for his handsome face flushed.

"Let's get on," he said.

They rode in silence towards Cedar Creek School.

It was Beauclerc who broke the silence at last, as the lumber school came in sight in the distance.

"Would you fellows miss me much?" Frank started.

"You're going then, Beau?"

"Yes."

"Oh, Jerusalem!" ejaculated Bob Lawless. Vere Beauclerc's face was darkly clouded.

"My father thinks it is best for me," he said, in a low voice. "I don't think with him, but I can't refuse what he wishes. I don't want to leave Canada—I don't want to leave Cedar Creek—I—I don't want to leave you chaps. But—but—"

"If your father really wishes it, you must go, old chap," said Frank Richards quietly.

"I guess that's so," said Bob dismally.

"By gum, we shall miss you, Cherub."

Beauclerc's lips trembled.

"My father will miss me; I know that," he muttered. "He thinks it's the best for me, and he's written to my uncle accepting his offer. It's settled now. I—I must go!"

"Perhaps it is best," said Frank, with a dismal attempt to console. "After all, your pater's a man of the world, and he knows what's best, I dare say. And you'll have a good time in England."

"I don't care about that."

No more was said, and the chums arrived at school.

He was only a little more serious than usual, when he rode on the homeward trail with his chums after school.

After they had parted with him, Frank and Bob rode on to the ranch, in a very subdued mood.

"It's rotten to lose the old Cherub," said Bob at last.

"Rotten!" said Frank.

And that was all.

Vere Beauclerc rode up to the shack, and his father met him at the door, with a somewhat anxious expression.

The boy forced a smile to his face.

"I've been busy to-day, Vere," said the remittance-man.

"Yes, father."

"I've made all the arrangements. Your place is taken in the wagon from Thompson on Wednesday. You will go in the wagon to Kamloops, and get on the railway there. I shall come with you as far as the railroad. In a short time now, Vere, you will be in the Old Country. You will be happy there."

"Yes, father," said the boy dully.

Beauclerc went slowly into the shack.

THE END.

(There will be another grand long complete story of the Backwoods Chums next Tuesday. Order early.)

NEXT TUESDAY!

"SAVED FROM HIMSELF!"

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

THE UNCONQUERABLE RED ROVERS PAY ST. JIM'S A VISIT, AND MANY UNFORESEEN THINGS HAPPEN!



THE WONDER TEAM!



A Splendid Long Complete School Tale of TOM MERRY & CO.,
The Chums of St. Jim's.



By MARTIN CLIFFORD.

(Author of the famous stories of St. Jim's appearing in the "Gem.")

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

The Coming of the Rovers.

"IF Baggie Trimble had told us this," said Tom Merry, "we should never have believed it. But the information came from Kildare of the Sixth. And Kildare's neither a fibber nor a leg-puller." "Oh, it's true enough," said Manners. "The Red Rovers are coming to St. Jim's. They're going to be the school's guests for a week, and then they're going to play us at footer."

"And lick us to the tune of ten goals to nil!" chimed in Monty Lowther.

Tom Merry laughed. "I don't think it will be quite as bad as that," he said. "Mind you, the Rovers are a dazzling sort of team, by all accounts. They went through the whole of last season without being licked, and they're hoping to repeat the performance this season."

"By the way, who are these Red Rovers?" asked Manners. "Are they hefty louts of eighteen or so, or are they wonderful infant prodigies from some preparatory school?"

"Neither," said Tom Merry. "They are working boys from London. Kids who haven't long left school. I should say their average age was sixteen."

"Sweet sixteen, and never been licked!" murmured Lowther.

"We'll try to put a stopper on their run of successes," said Tom Merry. "We'll field our very strongest eleven, and play like giddy Trojans!"

"Hear, hear!"

There was a tap on the door of Study No. 10.

"Enter!" exclaimed Monty Lowther dramatically.

The visitors were Jack Blake and Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, of the Fourth.

"Are you fellows aware that the Red Rovers are arriving this afternoon?" asked Jack Blake.

Tom Merry nodded.

"Well, what about going down to the station to meet them?"

"We don't know which train they're coming by."

"They're bound to twavel by the three-thirty f'rom London," said D'Arcy. "It's a fast twain. I vote we go down and meet them, an' play them up, deah boys!"

"Play them up?" echoed Tom Merry, in surprise. "What are you babbling about, Gussy?"

"I am not babblin', Tom Mewwy. I am makin' a bwiliant suggestion. I w'pouse that we form a bwass band, an' play the Wed Wovahs up to St. Jim's."

"Oh!"

"They deserve a good weception," went on Arthur Augustus. "They are weally a wondahful team!"

"H'm! Not a bad idea, meeting 'em with a band," said Tom Merry thoughtfully. "But where are the instruments coming from?"

"Hewwies has got a cornet—"

"As we all know to our sorrow!" murmured Monty Lowther.

"An' I've managed to bowwow a twombone—"

"Help! Herries' cornet is bad enough, but if you're going to start snorting on a trombone, Gussy—"

"Weally, Lowthah! I shall not snort. An awistocwat nevah snorts. I shall play weally 'inspirin' music—"

"Groo!" Monty Lowther made a grimace. "If your music is anything like your tenor solos, Gussy, we shall never survive it!"

Arthur Augustus pushed back his cuffs.

"I wefuse to be insulted in this mannah!" he exclaimed hotly. "Put up your hands, you wottah!"

Monty Lowther did so. But he didn't put up his hands in the sense that Arthur Augustus intended. He held them above his head and cried, "Kamerad!"

The rest of the juniors chuckled.

"Go easy, Gussy!" said Tom Merry. "We can't have you committing assault and battery in this study, you know."

Arthur Augustus breathed hard.

"If Lowthah will apologise like a gentleman—"

he began.

"Done!" said Monty. "Sorry I

ruffled your feathers, Gussy. Now, what about this brass band? Where can we dig up some more instruments?"

"Grundy's uncle has just sent him a big drum," said Jack Blake. "Goodness knows why. Grundy makes quite enough noise as it is. But we'll borrow the drum, and complete the band with mouth-organs and tin whistles."

"Good!" said Tom Merry. "Time we made a start, isn't it?"

"Yes. Let's assemble the merry musicians," said Monty Lowther.

It didn't take long to organise the band.

Grundy lent his big drum to Jack Blake, on condition that the latter didn't puncture it with one of his hefty swipes. Herries turned up with his cornet, and Arthur Augustus with the borrowed trombone. The Terrible Three had their mouth-organs in readiness, and there was quite an army of tin whistles.

The Red Rovers would not be expecting such a reception, and it would be sure to please them. So the juniors thought, anyway.

Under Tom Merry's command, the musicians marched down to the station. They did not play en route. They needed all their breath for when the train came in.

On reaching the station, the St. Jim's musicians lined up on the platform.

The signal was down, and the train from London was due to arrive.

Presently a puff of smoke in the distance heralded its approach.

"Get ready, you fellows!" exclaimed Tom Merry.

Herries put his cornet to his lips. Arthur Augustus D'Arcy followed suit with the trombone. Jack Blake grasped the drumstick in a business-like manner. The mouth-organists and the tin whistlers prepared for action.

The train came rumbling in. As it drew slowly to a halt, the musicians struck up. They started playing "The British Grenadiers." It was a popular tune, with which they were all familiar.

Heads were craned out of the carriage

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“RATTY ON THE WARPATH!”

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

NEXT
TUESDAY!

windows as the train came to a standstill.

The St. Jim's band made a terrific sensation.

Whilst they were playing, Tom Merry & Co. glanced expectantly towards the carriage doors. But only one of them opened.

Dame Taggles, the proprietress of the school tuckshop, stepped out. The worthy dame had been into Wayland to do some shopping. She beamed at the St. Jim's juniors. It was quite obvious that she thought they were playing for her benefit.

"Really, this is very kind of you, young gentlemen!" she said.

Jack Blake scowled as he hammered at the big drum.

"We're not doing this for you, ma'am!" he said.

"Oh!"

"We're expecting a team of footballers," said Blake. "Have you seen anything of them on the train?"

"No, Master Blake, I haven't!" snapped Dame Taggles, who was very aggrieved to find that the reception was not for her. "Seen' that it happens to be my birthday, I thought you young gents had come down to the station to give me a cordial greetin', so to speak."

Jack Blake did not reply. He was scanning the carriage doors. No more of them opened.

The train rumbled on its way, and "The British Grenadiers" was cut short in the middle.

The musicians exchanged glances of dismay.

"They—they haven't come!" faltered Tom Merry.

"We've wasted our breath for nothing!" growled Herries. "Where's

the tame lunatic who said the Red Rovers would be on the train?"

"Weally Hewvies, I honestly thought they would come by this twain, as it happens to be a fast one," said Arthur Augustus D'Arcy. "They must have been delayed in London. We shall have to wait for the next twain."

"Which won't be in for a couple of hours!" grunted Jack Blake. "We're not going to wait here all that time. Let's get back to St. Jim's."

Greatly discomfited, the musicians beat a retreat.

Their plans had gone sadly adrift. For some reason or other, the Red Rovers had not chosen to arrive by the fast train from London.

The members of the brass band trudged back to St. Jim's. And they had a big surprise on arriving at the school.

The Red Rovers were waiting for them in the quadrangle!

Tom Merry nearly fell down when he saw the footballers.

"How the merry dickens did you fellows get here?" he asked. "Did you drop from the skies?"

A curly-headed youth, with a haversack over his shoulder, stepped forward.

"We came on foot," he explained.

"We thought a walk from London would keep us fit. We started out early this morning."

"My hat!"

"Sorry you went to the fag of going to the station to meet us," the curly-headed youth went on. "I'm Billy Maxwell, the skipper of our eleven."

"Jolly pleased to meet you!" said Tom Merry, extending his hand.

"Wish we had known you were coming by road."

"There's nothing to prevent us playing them through the quad," said Herries. "Strike up, you fellows!"

The musicians lined up in front, and led the way across the quadrangle, playing boisterously as they went.

Herries puffed at his cornet until he was purple in the face. Arthur Augustus D'Arcy produced weird sounds from the trombone. Jack Blake thumped at the big drum like a blacksmith swinging his sledge. And the mouth-organists and tin-whistlers made as much noise as they possibly could.

There was very little harmony, and nobody would have suspected that the St. Jim's brass band was playing "The British Grenadiers."

Billy Maxwell & Co., however, realised that their hosts' intentions were good, even if their music wasn't. And they greatly enjoyed the reception.

The band played them into the dining-hall, where an excellent tea had been prepared. And whilst the Red Rovers enjoyed the meal, Tom Merry & Co. chatted with them, and found that they were very decent fellows. They didn't swank about their football achievements. In fact, they hardly spoke about football at all.

"Our employers have given us a week off," explained Billy Maxwell, "and we mean to make the most of it. A week at St. Jim's will suit us down to the ground!"

"We'll do our best to entertain you," said Tom Merry.

"I'm sure you will."

"Would you care to come and have some footer practice after tea?"

"No, thanks," said Billy Maxwell. "We've had enough exercise for to-day. It's a long walk from London to St. Jim's, you know. I think we'll turn in early."

"Where are you sleeping?" asked Manners.

"In the sanny. It's a case of the fit sleeping where the unfit ought to be. But there don't happen to be any invalids at St. Jim's at present, so the sanny is at our disposal."

"Good!" said Tom Merry. "What would you fellows like to do this evening?"

"See the sights of St. Jim's, and then toddle off to bed," said Clare, who was vice-captain of the Red Rovers.

Tom Merry & Co. duly escorted their guests over the old school, and the Red Rovers were very interested in what they saw. Then they bade their hosts good-night, and retired at a very early hour to their sleeping quarters in the sanny.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

Startling Developments!

BILLY MAXWELL & CO. had several days in which to prepare for their tussle with St. Jim's. Yet they made no preparation whatever.

On the day following the arrival of the Red Rovers, Tom Merry asked them if they were coming down to the football-field to practice.

Billy Maxwell smiled blandly.

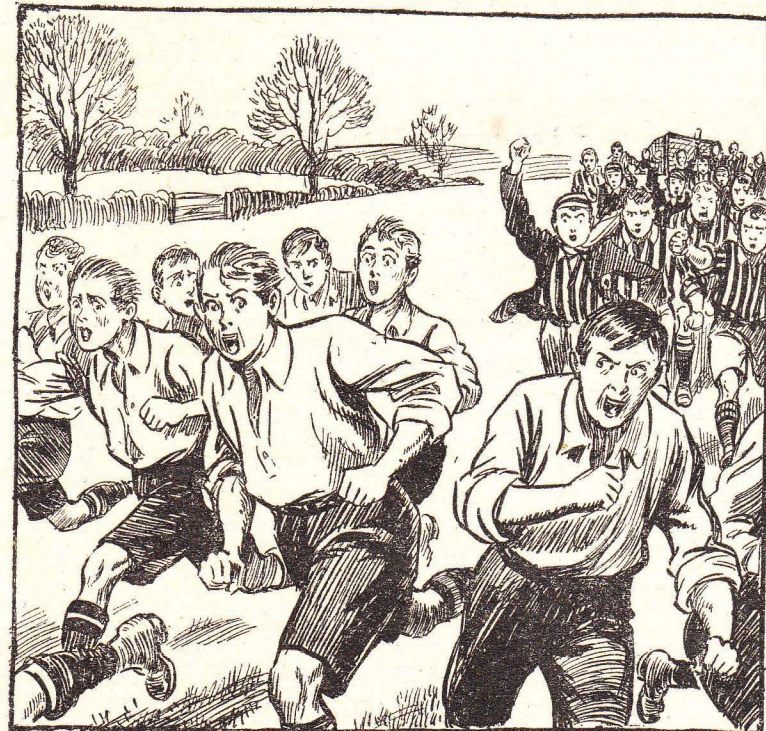
"No, thanks," he replied. "Don't think me conceited, but I don't think we need any practice."

Tom Merry stared.

"You—you're not going to kick a football until you meet us on Saturday?" he gasped.

"No. We shall be doing a lot of walking and sprinting, and that ought to keep us fit. Too much footer

(Continued on page 17.)



CHASED OFF THE FIELD!—"The game's up!" said Harper. "Let's get out quick!" There was a sudden stampede on the part of the bogus Red Rovers. Instantly a great shout arose. "After them!" Quite a crowd of St. Jim's juniors set off in pursuit of the cads of Redclyffe. (See Chapter 3.)

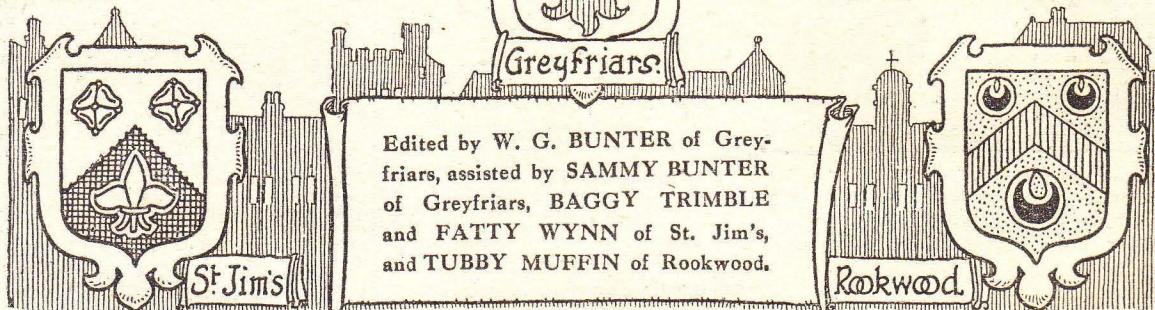
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NEXT
TUESDAY!

"RATTY ON THE WARPATH!"

A NEW LONG TALE OF ST. JIM'S. : : : :
: : : :
By MARTIN CLIFFORD.

BILLY BUNTER'S WEEKLY



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,—Shopping is a very fascinating pastime, even more fascinating than playing footer, or nocking spots off a punching-ball.

I don't do a grate deal of shopping myself, for the simple reason that I haven't the wearwithal to shop with! You can't shop without munney, any more than you can run without legs.

When my postle-order comes along, however, I shall have a sort of Field Day. I shall pop over to Courtfield, and buy myself all sorts of things.

I have made out a list of what I shall rekwire. Here it is:

1 Moter-bike (komplete with sidecar)	£ 5 0 0	s. d.
1 Grammar-phone	10 0	
1 Typewriter	7 6	
1 Wireless Outfit	5 0	
1 Model Airopplain	3 6	
1 Pear of Skates	1 6	
6 Hampers of Tuck (at One Ginny each)	6 6 0	
	£12 13 6	

I showed this list to Bob Cherry, and he said, "You silly porpuss! How do you imagine you are going to buy all that lot out of one small postle-order?"

"It can be dun," I said.

The minnit my postle-order arrives—it's been on the way for some years—I shall purchase the artikles in queschun. And then I, shall be a fellow of vast possessions, and Harry Wharton & Co. will grovel before me on their hands and neeze.

May that happy day soon dorn!

Billy Bunter
Editor

Supplement I.]

UNCLE CLEGG, OF COURTFIELD!

By **Dick Penfold.**

I'm Uncle Clegg, of Courtfield Town, A gentleman of great renown. I'm honest, and I'd have you know, sir, You'll never find a finer grocer. If you want some new-laid eggs, Get 'em fresh at Uncle Clegg's!

The folks come all the way from Wapping To visit me and do their shopping. I never, never profiteer On cakes or buns or ginger-beer. I serve grand coffee—not the dregs, So come and drink at Uncle Clegg's!

When Master Bunter comes to me And wants some sausages for tea, I tell him—many a time I've said it—I never serve a boy on credit. Whether you're buying pies or pegs, You pay cash down at Uncle Clegg's!

I've got some really good York hams, And you should taste my juicy jams! My lemonade is nice and fizzy, The serving of it keeps me busy. Old-fashioned ginger-beer, in kegs, May be obtained at Uncle Clegg's!

Young gentlemen of Greyfriars School, I'm proud to serve you, as a rule. But boys like Bunter, I don't trust 'em; I won't give tuppence for their custom. I'll lay my broom across their legs, If they should call at Uncle Clegg's!

A Ripping Football Story

by

DICKY NUGENT,
Of the Third Form,

In Next Week's Issue:

also

Another Poem by
DICK PENFOLD.

HINTS ON SHOPPING!

By **Sammy Bunter.**

If you go into Courtfield to buy a packet of pins, or a sheet of flypaper, don't take a pantecknicon with you!

If, on the other hand, you wish to lay in provisions for a seege, and to buy quids and quids worth of groceries, don't take a small paper bag with you!

If the shopkeeper will let you have goods on credit, all well and good. Never pay cash down if you can possibly avoid it. A fool and his munney are soon parted.

A fellow of grate weight, like myself, should never sit on a stool in a tuckshopp. It is liable to kollapse!

When you enter a sweetsshop, always raise your cap to the lady behind the counter. She will then drop an eggstra booleseye into the bag.

N.B.—If you don't happen to be wearing a cap, tuch your fourlock.

Always see that you get proper weight. If you ask for a quarter of a pound of toffee, see that you get a quarter of a pound, and not three ounces!

If your Form-master asks you to do some shopping for him, don't go in your lezzure hours. Take it out of Form-room time!

When you order goods by tellyfone, see that you get on to the right shop. Don't go ordering a sultana-cake from the hare-dresser's, or a brush and comb from the pastrycook's!

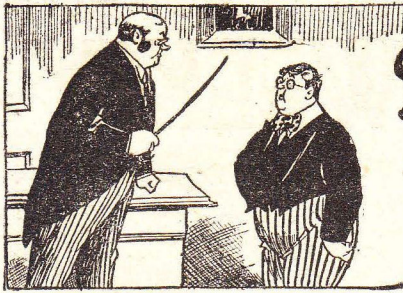
Ordering by tellyfone is the safest plan, bekwase the shopkeeper can't give you a hefty kick when you ask for tick!

When you go shopping, don't be afraid to ask for free samples. I've had many a nice snack in this way. One day I went to every konfektioner's shop in Courtfield, and sampled half a duzzen chocolates in each!

Sammy Bunter.

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THERE WILL BE A SPECIAL FOOTBALL NUMBER NEXT WEEK!



Shopping for Prout!

By Harold Skinner.
(Greyfriars.)

BUNTER major!" Mr. Prout bore down upon the fat junior in the Close. Billy stopped short, and blinked at the master of the Fifth through his big spectacles.

"Are you doing anything this afternoon, Bunter?" asked Mr. Prout.

"No, sir. I ought to be playing in the footer match against Highcliffe by rights, but that beast Wharton—"

"Has refused to give you a place in the team?" said Mr. Prout, with a smile. "Well, well! Life is full of disappointments, my boy. I was wondering if you would care to go into Courtfield for me?"

"I'd love to, sir!" said Billy Bunter, his eyes glistening at the prospect of a "tip."

Mr. Prout beamed. "Here is my shopping list," he said, handing Bunter a sheet of paper. "I have placed the prices against the respective items, so that there will be no difficulty."

Billy Bunter blinked at the list. It ran as follows:

	s.	d.
1 Madeira Cake	...	2 6
1 lb. Jam-Roll	...	1 6
8 Doughnuts at 1½d.	...	1 0
6 Bananas at 2d.	...	1 0
6 Oranges at 1d.	...	6
1 lb. Assorted Chocolates	...	3 6
1 box of Figs	...	2 0
1 box of Turkish Delight	...	2 0
1 tin of Toffee	...	1 0
	...	15 0

The mere sight of that list of luxuries made Billy Bunter's mouth water.

"You will get the cakes at the bunshop, the fruit at the fruiterer's, and the sweetmeats at the confectioner's," said Mr. Prout. "Is that clear?"

"Oh, quite, sir! And what about the money?"

Mr. Prout handed over a ten-shilling note and a couple of half-crowns.

Had the master of the Fifth been wise, he would not have entrusted his shopping to Billy Bunter. The Owl of the Remove was the last person in the world that any sane person would send on a shopping expedition. But Mr. Prout could find no other fellow who was disengaged that afternoon. Everybody seemed to be on the football field.

"I shall want these things by five o'clock, Bunter," said Mr. Prout. "At that hour, I am giving a tea in my study, and several of the masters have been invited. I must not disappoint them, so I trust you will be back in good time."

"That's all right, sir," said Billy Bunter reassuringly. "I sha'n't dawdle. I'll be back long before five!"

"Excellent!" Mr. Prout fumbled in his pocket and produced the magnificent sum of one penny. He handed the copper to Bunter.

"Get yourself a bag of bullseyes, my boy," he said generously.

"Oh, thank you, sir!" said Bunter. "Mean beast!" he added, under his breath.

And then he set off on his shopping expedition. To Bunter's credit be it said that he had no intention of "doing" Mr. Prout. He did not, for instance, intend to pay one-and-sixpence for a Madeira cake, and pretend it had cost half-a-crown. Neither did he propose to buy a sixpenny tin of toffee, and declare that he paid a shilling for it. Billy Bunter set off from Greyfriars with perfectly honest motives.

On reaching Courtfield, he went first of THE POPULAR.—No. 191.

all to the bunshop. Here he obtained the cake, the jam-roll, and the doughnuts.

The cake was a splendid one. The jam-roll looked simply delicious, and the fat, sugary doughnuts nestled against each other in the paper-bag, and looked extremely inviting.

Billy Bunter glanced wistfully at his purchases. Then he went along to the fruiterer's and obtained the bananas, the oranges, and the box of figs.

"I'm getting along famously!" murmured the fat junior.

Armed with a number of bulging bags, he crossed the road and entered the confectioner's.

"I want a pound of assorted chocolates at three-and-six, a box of Turkish delight at two-bob, and a tin of toffee at a bob, please!" he said.

"Very good, sir!" said the confectioner, who was mightily pleased to get such a handsome order.

A few moments later, Billy Bunter



"Now that I've made a start, I might as well go the whole hog!" murmured Billy Bunter, and he started operations on the large cake.

staggered out of the shop. He was laden with good things, like a plump Santa Claus.

"Wish I could get rid of some of these bags!" he muttered. "It's going to be a fearful fag carting this little lot to Greyfriars!"

As he plodded his weary way back to the school Bunter became conscious of gnawing pains in his interior.

He was no stranger to these gnawing pains. They frequently molested him, especially if he had not had a square meal for some hours.

"I simply must have something to eat, or I shall faint!" he murmured, as he staggered towards a stile. "If I helped myself to just a couple of doughnuts, I shouldn't think old Prout would notice that there were only six instead of eight."

He set the paper-bags on the ground, and opened the one which contained the doughnuts. They looked more inviting than ever. Bunter took one, and it swiftly disappeared into his capacious interior. He took another, and the second disappeared just as rapidly as the first.

Instead of appeasing the fat junior's appetite, the doughnuts had the effect of whetting it.

Billy Bunter battled with his conscience

for a few brief seconds. Then he made a further inroad into the paper-bag.

One by one the remainder of the doughnuts were devoured.

Eight doughnuts at one sitting was pretty good going. But Bunter's appetite was far from satisfied. He gazed longingly at the jam-roll; then he took out his pen-knife and cut off a goodly portion.

The jam-roll was delicious. It fairly melted in Bunter's mouth.

"Now that I've made a start, I might as well go the whole hog!" murmured Billy.

And he started operations on the Madeira cake. He didn't demolish the whole cake, but he consumed a hefty slice.

By this time Billy Bunter was beginning to feel "good," as the Americans say. He felt that he had laid a solid foundation, and that a little fruit, by way of dessert, would go down well.

He helped himself to a banana. Then to an orange. Then to a fig. After which, he dipped into the tin of toffee and the box of Turkish delight.

Mr. Prout's supplies were sadly diminished by this time. It was a miserable handful of stuff that Billy Bunter carried back to Greyfriars.

The fat junior felt rather worried, which was not surprising, in the circumstances. He wondered what sort of an excuse he could make to the master of the Fifth.

"I'd better dump these things on to his study table and clear off," he murmured.

But there was no opportunity of doing this. For on entering the school gateway Billy Bunter fairly bumped into Mr. Prout.

"Ah! You have completed the shopping, Bunter?"

"Yessir!"

Mr. Prout stared at the scanty collection of paper-bags.

"Surely you have not brought everything I asked you to bring, Bunter?"

"Ahem!"

"Pray hand me those bags." Reluctantly, Billy Bunter obeyed.

"Why, bless my soul!" gasped Mr. Prout. "Where are the doughnuts?"

"Gone, sir!" stammered Bunter.

"Gone?" thundered Mr. Prout. "Where?"

"Ahem! I—I met a man on the road, sir—a starving tramp. He told me he hadn't had a meal for three weeks, sir. His bones were sticking out through his flesh, and he was wasting away under my very eyes, sir."

"Boy!" hooted Mr. Prout. "Do you expect me to give credence to such a cock-and-bull story?"

"Oh, really, sir—"

"I am satisfied, Bunter, that you have consumed the doughnuts yourself! You have also tampered with the jam-roll, and the Madeira cake, and the fruit, and the sweetmeats. What you have brought me is only a tithe of what I originally ordered."

"Oh crumbs!"

"Yes, crumbs!" shouted Mr. Prout. "That is all you have brought me—crumbs! You have had a gluttonous orgy at my expense, and I will see that you are effectively punished. Follow me at once to my study!"

Mr. Prout strode away with rustling gown. Billy Bunter rolled along behind him.

"This is what comes of befriending a starving tramp!" groaned the fat junior.

"Be silent, wretched boy! How dare you persist in that ridiculous fabrication!"

On reaching his study Mr. Prout selected a stout cane. And that cane came into close and painful collision with Billy Bunter's palms.

It was a severe swishing, and Billy Bunter's yells might almost have been heard in Friar-dale.

The Owl of the Remove will have good cause to remember the day on which he went shopping for Prout!

**SPECIAL
FOOTBALL NUMBER
NEXT WEEK!**

[Supplement II.]



TUBBY AT THE TUCKSHOP!
By Val Mornington.
(Of Rookwood.)

TUBBY:
All right; I'll take it on approval,
So please arrange for its removal.

SERGEANT:
I want cash down for this 'ere pie.
I don't serve things on tick, that's why.

TUBBY:
The fact is, sergeant, I am "broke."
You look as if you're going to choke!

SERGEANT:
How dare you come into my shop
An' try to catch me on the hop!

TUBBY:
I want that pie, and want it quick!
Surely you don't object to tick?

SERGEANT:
You keep me hangin' here all day,
An' then you tell me you can't pay!

TUBBY:
I'll let you have the money soon,
You silly, aggravating coon!

SERGEANT:
Look here, my lad, you'd better scoot,
Or you will feel my hefty boot!

(Tubby Muffin promptly scoots, minus
the rabbit-pie.)

SHOPPING NEWS!
By Jimmy Silver.
(Of Rookwood.)

Hansom of the Fifth has purchased a
gramophone. I am unable to say how
much he gave for it, but I expect it was
a "Hansom" figure!

Adolphus Smythe's latest purchase is a
cricket bat. Just like Smythe, to buy a
bat at the beginning of the footer season!

The Fistical Four have invested in a
rowing-boat. We have christened it
"Food Prices," because it will never go
down!

Teddy Grace has just purchased a
model aeroplane. We always did think
that Teddy was a "fly" young fellow!

Mr. Manders has bought a new cane.
Had it been a sugar-cane it would have
been "sweet" of him. But, alas! It is
an implement of torture!

Judging by the pools of ink on the
carpet in Tubby Muffin's study, our fat
friend has just purchased a fountain-pen!

Tommy Dodd, it is rumoured, has
just bought a fox-terrier. He calls it
"The Bully," because it "licks" him!

Lovell minor has obtained a new collar.
But it will soon be as badly frayed as
the one he has been wearing for the last
month, I'm a-frayed!

Sergeant has purchased his namesake—
a kettle. Now we know he's got plenty
of "tin."

Val Mornington returned from his
latest shopping expedition with a packet
of bird-seed. Mornny will now start sing-
ing first thing in the morning, so get
your ammunition ready!

My minor Algy, who is not over fond of
washing, as a rule, has just purchased a
pump! But you needn't imagine that
Algy is reforming. It happens to be a
bicycle pump!

We don't eat a great deal of fish in
the end study. But my pal Lovell has
just returned from the village with a pair
of skates!

Tubby Muffin has recently acquired a
wrist-watch. We presume he got it on
"tick"!

TUBBY MUFFIN (entering the tuck-
shop):
Ah! Good-morning, Sergeant Kettle!
Hope I find you on your mettle?

SERGEANT:
Pleased to see you, Master Muffin!
Have you come to do some stuffin'?

TUBBY:
Yes. I'm hungry as a hunter—
I mean, as hungry as a Bunter!

SERGEANT:
I've made a lovely rabbit pie,
Fit to delight a schoolboy's eye!

TUBBY:
Good! That will do me quite a treat.
It's years since I sat down to eat!

SERGEANT:
The pie is standin' in the fender.
You'll find the rabbit nice an' tender.

TUBBY:
When did that rabbit bite the dust?
Not in the days of old, I trust?

SERGEANT:
I shot that rabbit with my gun
This mornin' 'neath the risin' sun!

TUBBY:
And is the piecrust nice and hard?
Did you use margarine, or lard?

SERGEANT:
That piecrust is the finest ever!
I made it, an' I'm jolly clever!

TUBBY:
Say, sergeant, 'tis my earnest wish
That there's some gravy in the dish.

SERGEANT:
Yes, there's a plentiful supply.
I tell you, it's a perfect pie!

PEEPS INTO THE FUTURE!
By George Kerr.



AUBREY ANGEL.
(Dandified Fop.)

Supplement III.]

—AND BETTER EVERY WEEK! MORE SPECIAL NUMBERS TO COME!

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THE TRIALS OF TAGGLES!

By Fatty Wynn.
(St. Jim's Representative.)

"TAGGLES, deah man!" exclaimed Arthur Augustus D'Arcy.
"Allo!" grunted Taggles.
"I'm just goin' ovah to Wayland—"

"Well, go!" growled Taggles. "I ain't a-stoppin' yer, am I?"
Arthur Augustus adjusted his celebrated monocle, and glanced severely at the school porter.
"Your wudeness, Taggles, is appallin'," he remarked. "Howevah, I will make allowances, as you do not know bettah. As I was sayin', I'm just goin' ovah to Wayland, to do some shoppin', an' I want you to accompany me."
"Eh?"
"There are some parcels to be cawwied," explained Arthur Augustus.
Taggles snorted.
"Wot do you take me for—a yewman pantechnicion?" he demanded.
"Not at all. I merely wish you to give me some assistance. I shall be pleased to make it worth your while," added Arthur Augustus, jingling some silver in his pocket.
Taggles began to sit up and take notice, so to speak. He didn't mind converting himself into a beast of burden for Gussy's benefit, so long as his labours were crowned with a substantial "tip."

When he heard the jingling of the coins, the porter's surliness vanished as if by magic.

"Which I shall be werry pleased to give you a 'and, Master D'Arcy," he said.
"Come along, then."

"Wait a bit," said Taggles. "Seein' as 'ow I'm goin' to walk over to Wayland in such extinguished company, I'd better put on me best coat an me tall 'at."

So saying, Taggles disappeared into his lodge. When he came out again, he was resplendent in his Sunday coat and his high hat. Not every day was Ephraim Taggles privileged to walk side by side with a young nobleman like Arthur Augustus.

Together, they set out for Wayland. Taggles had some difficulty in accommodating himself to Gussy's long, springing stride. He was soon panting like a thirsty dog.

When they reached Wayland, Arthur Augustus disappeared into a hosiery establishment.

"I sha'n't be a moment," he said to Taggles.

The "moment" proved to be half an hour. Taggles, fretful and impatient, stood kicking his heels on the pavement.

At last the swell of St. Jim's appeared, laden with parcels of all sorts and sizes.

"Gwab hold, deah man!" he said, transferring the parcels to Taggles.

"Sure this is the lot, Master D'Arcy?" said Taggles sarcastically.

"By no means," replied Gussy blandly. "I have several more places to visit. Kindly accompany me to the bootshop."

Taggles sullenly obeyed. He staggered along the street like a heavily-laden camel.

Arthur Augustus popped into the bootshop, where he selected nearly a dozen pairs of shoes, on approval.

"I'll have the whole lot taken up to St. Jim's, an' I'll return those I have no use for," he told the assistant.

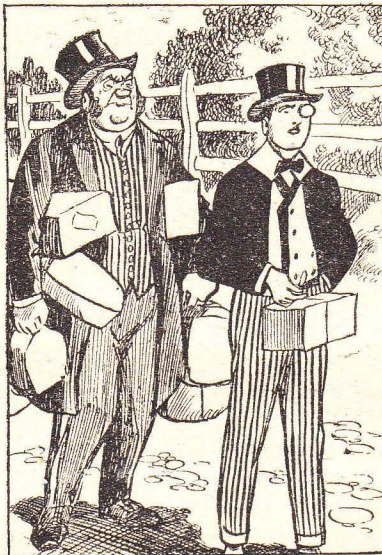
"Very good, sir!"

A further avalanche of parcels descended upon the unfortunate Taggles. By this time he had quite as much as he could cope with. His arms were full, and a couple of parcels, attached to each other by a length of string were strung round his neck. A passer-by, catching sight of Taggles, sang out:
"Good old Santa Claus!"

Taggles gave a despairing grunt.

"Ow do you imagine I'm goin' to get

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Taggles stumbled along the dusty road like an overweighted mule.

back to the school, Master D'Arcy?" he asked.

"On foot, of course!" replied Gussy cheerily.

"Wot!"

"I've just got to pop into the pastwy-cook's an' buy some cakes. There will be one more parcel for you to cawwy, Taggles."

"Then I shall 'ave to balance it on me blinkin' 'ead!" muttered Taggles. "There ain't no room anywhere else."

Arthur Augustus purchased his cakes. They were packed in a cardboard box.

Fortunately for Taggles, the swell of St. Jim's consented to carry the cakes himself. Had Taggles attempted to poise the cardboard box on the top of his hat, disaster would have followed.

"I think I've finished my shoppin' now," remarked Arthur Augustus.

"About time, too!" grunted Taggles.

"We will now proceed to St. Jim's. An' don't let any of those parcels dwop, what-evah you do! I have some valuable neckties an' fancy waistcoats there, and I wouldn't have them mud-soiled for worlds!"

That journey back to the school was one long nightmare to Taggles. He fervently wished he had never set out on the expedition. He stumbled along the dusty road like an overweighted mule.

"Wot I says is this 'ere, I ain't comin' on no more of these shoppin' discursions!" declared Taggles. "I'm a porter, I am; not a goods-van!"

"Weally, Taggles—"

"I'm fed-up!" groaned Taggles. "Right up to the 'ilt, as ever was! Can't you relieve me of some of these 'ere parcels, Master D'Arcy?"

"Afraid not, deah man! You see, if I attempt to cawwy anythin' else, I shall cwumple my coatsleeves."

"Bust yer coatsleeves!" snarled Taggles. He was thoroughly exasperated by this time.

It seemed an age before the school gates came in sight.

After a werry eternity, Taggles arrived at his destination. He tottered through the

YOUNG GENT'S OF ST. JIM'S!

Why Do Your Shopping in the Village?

Patronise your own tuckshop, which is a land flowing with milk and honey!

Who makes the best cakes?
Dame Taggles!
Whose ice-creams are famous throughout the civilised world?

Dame Taggles!
Whose home-made toffee fairly melts in the mouth?

Dame Taggles!
Who makes pastries which are a dream and a delight?

Dame Taggles!

Keep the flag of the school tuckshop flying! If you go farther, you will fare worse!

Here are a few recent testimonials:

MASTER B. TRIMBLE writes:
"I am not very fond of feeding, but whenever I want a light snack I know where to go. Dame Taggles makes delishus doonutts, and her three-cornered puffs are simply divine! I gorge on them by day, and dream about them by night."

"N.B.—Whoever says that Dame Taggles gave me a bag of jam-tarts for writing this testimonial is a fibber!"

MASTER DAVID WYNN writes:

"Those who are not satisfied with the school fare will find everything they can desire at the school tuckshop. As one who patronises the place twelve times a day, I can thoroughly recommend it. The service is prompt, and the grub top-hole. One feed at the St. Jim's tuckshop is worth six at the bunshop in the village!"

MASTER M. LOWTHER writes:
"Tuck, tuck, glorious tuck!
Go to Dame Taggles and try your luck!
I pity the fellow who growls or haggles At the grub that's sold by good Dame Taggles!"

These testimonials are entirely unsolicited, and they speak for themselves.

When your next remittance arrives, you will know where to spend it.

Don't squander your pocket-money at inferior bunshops. Satisfy your inner school-boy at Dame Taggles!

(Established in the reign of Queen Victoria, and still going strong!)

"THE TRIALS OF TAGGLES!"

(Continued from previous column.)

gateway, and conveyed his load into the parlour of his lodge.

"I'll bring 'em along to your study by an'-by, when I've got me breath back," he said. "I'm fair puffed!"

Having set the parcels down on the table, Taggles held out his hand. He wanted his "tip." And he expected a very substantial one.

Arthur Augustus groped in his pockets. A look of dismay came over his face.

"Do you know, Taggles," he said, "I've spent all my money—ewevy penny, bai Jove!"

"Elp!" said Taggles feebly.

"I shall have to wait till I get another wemittance frowm home."

Taggles looked almost homicidal.

"Get hout!" he roared.

"Eh?"

"Get hout, afore I lays my broom across yer shoulders!"

It was, no idle threat. Arthur Augustus glanced at Taggles, and he saw that the porter was at the end of his tether.

To quote Shakespeare, Gussy stood not upon the order of his going, but went at once!

[Supplement IV.]

THERE'S A LAUGH IN EVERY LINE OF "BILLY BUNTER'S WEEKLY"!

THE WONDER TEAM!

(Continued from page 12.)

practice makes a team stale, you know."

"I—I suppose so."

Nevertheless, Tom Merry was greatly surprised. And so were the rest of the St. Jim's fellows.

"It is weally extwaordinawy!" exclaimed Arthur Augustus D'Arcy. "How can the Wed Wovahs expect to lick us, unless they pwactise ewwy day?"

"Strikes me they're a set of swankers!" growled Jack Blake, out taking the trouble to practise. My "They imagine they can lick us with-hat! I hope we can manage to put it across them! It will be the biggest take-down they've had in their lives!"

"Yaas, wathah!"

The Red Rovers spent a thoroughly enjoyable week at St. Jim's. They were the school's guests, and they lived on the fat of the land in consequence. Whilst Tom Merry & Co. were swotting Latin verbs in the Form-room, they went for long country rambles; and every evening they went for a sharp sprint as far as the village. A special table had been reserved for them in the dining-hall, and they lived like fighting-cocks. And every night they retired to the sanny and slept the sleep of the just.

They seemed decent enough fellows, all of them. But Tom Merry & Co. could not quite understand them. It was simply amazing that they should cut footer practice out of their programme.

The week wore on, and on the eve of the great match Tom Merry was in his study, discussing the prospects of the St. Jim's team, when Kildare of the Sixth looked in.

"You're wanted on the telephone, Merry," he said.

Tom Merry jumped up.

"In the prefects' room, Kildare?"

"Yes."

Greatly wondering, Tom Merry made his way thither. Manners and Lowther accompanied him.

"We'll come and see what it's all about, Tommy," said the latter.

Tom Merry went to the phone, and placed the receiver to his ear.

"Merry speaking," he said. "Who's that?"

"Harry Harper," came the reply over the wires.

"Sorry; but I've never heard of you."

"Then I'll explain. I'm the skipper of the Red Rovers."

Tom Merry gave a jump.

"Say that again!" he gasped.

"I'm Harry Harper—skipper of the Red Rovers. I rang up to tell you that we shall be arriving at St. Jim's to-morrow morning. We should have arrived several days ago, but there was a hitch in the arrangements."

Tom Merry stood thunderstruck. He nearly dropped the receiver.

"Where—where are you speaking from?" he gasped, after a pause.

"From London."

"But you—you can't be the skipper of the Red Rovers!"

"Oh! And why not?"

"Because the Red Rovers are here now—they've been here nearly a week. And their skipper is a fellow named Maxwell."

An exclamation of amazement sounded over the wires.

"You say that there's a team already at St. Jim's, calling themselves the Red Rovers."

"Yes," said Tom Merry.

"Then they are impostors."

"What!"

"They're sailing under false colours. They've fooled you! I tell you, the Red Rovers are here, in London, and I'm their skipper."

"Great Scott!"

Tom Merry was fairly staggered by this information. His brain was in a whirl.

Not for one moment had he dreamed that Billy Maxwell & Co. were impostors. The news flabbergasted him.

"Strikes me you've been fooled by a party of japers!" came the voice of Harry Harper. "They've been staying at St. Jim's as your guests, and having a high old time. And they're not the Red Rovers at all."

Tom Merry could only gasp.

"What are you going to do about it?" pursued the voice over the wires.

"Do!" exclaimed Tom Merry, finding his voice at last. "Why, kick them out, of course! My hat! To think that we've been spoofed like this! It fairly makes my blood boil! I might have known there was something wrong, because these fellows haven't kicked a football since they've been here."

Harry Harper chuckled.

"They were afraid of betraying what awful duffers they were!" he said.

"Well, look here, Merry. The genuine Red Rovers, captained by me, will arrive at St. Jim's to-morrow morning. As for that gang of impostors, the sooner you give 'em marching orders, the better! Au revoir! See you to-morrow."

And Harper rang off.

Tom Merry replaced the receiver on its hooks like a fellow in a trance.


The knowledge that Billy Maxwell & Co. were a set of spoofers came as a big shock to the captain of the Shell.

Manners and Monty Lowther were no less astonished. They had heard enough of the telephone conversation to know what had happened.

"Great jumping crackers!" ejaculated Monty Lowther. "Does this really mean, Tommy, that these bounders have been having us on toast?"

REAL
Autographs
of your
FAVOURITE
FOOTBALLERS

Not printed copies,
but the players
actual signatures.
SEE THIS
WEEK'S



Sports Fun 2^o
The "One-Long-Laugh" Paper
Buy Your Copy TO-DAY!

Tom Merry nodded grimly.

"We were blind fools not to have tumbled to their deception," he said. "Goodness knows who they are, or where they came from, but they're not the Red Rovers. I've just been jawing to the skipper of the Rovers, and his team isn't arriving till to-morrow."

"Meanwhile," said Manners, "it's up to us to chuck these impostors out neck and crop!"

"Yes, rather!"

As soon as the news spread through St. Jim's, there was a great outcry. Everybody was furious at the audacity of Billy Maxwell & Co. in coming to the school under false colours.

"It's really a matter for the authorities to deal with," said Tom Merry; "but we'll take the law into our own hands, and give those rotters the order of the boot!"

"They ought to be made to run the gauntlet!" cried Jack Blake hotly.

"And they shall be!" declared Tom Merry. "You needn't worry on that score. We'll line the fellows up in two rows, in the quad, and give the rotters the send-off they deserve!"

This heated conversation took place in the quad. And the juniors were still discussing the amazing affair when Billy Maxwell & Co. came strolling on the scene.

Billy Maxwell stopped short in surprise. He stared curiously at the St. Jim's juniors, many of whom were engaged in knotting their handkerchiefs. "What the thump—" he began.

Tom Merry eyed the speaker contemptuously.

"The game's up!" he said.

"Eh? What do you mean?"

"We've tumbled to your little game, and now we're going to kick you out!"

Billy Maxwell was staggered.

"Would you mind being a bit more explicit?" he said. "We're no good at riddles."

"You needn't try to brazen it out," said Tom Merry sharply. "You had the barefaced cheek to come here calling yourselves the Red Rovers, and you're not the Red Rovers at all! You're a set of spoofers!"

"My dear chap—"

"I'm not going to argue with you!" said Tom Merry. "I consider it was a low-down trick to play! You've accepted the school's hospitality for nearly a week under false pretences."

Billy Maxwell and his followers stared speechlessly at Tom Merry. Their leader tried to say something, but words failed him. He, like his fellows, could only stand and stare.

Meanwhile, the angry crowd, armed with knotted handkerchiefs, lined themselves up in readiness.

Tom Merry pointed towards the school gates.

"Get out!" he said fiercely.

At last Billy Maxwell found his voice. "Well, if you insist upon kicking us out," he said, "you might at least let us fetch our haversacks first. They're in the sanny."

"Get a move on, then!"

The haversacks were fetched, and Billy Maxwell & Co., looking utterly dazed by the turn events had taken, passed through the quadrangle.

As they went, the knotted handkerchiefs descended upon them from each side with terrific force.

Billy Maxwell and his followers broke into a run, but they could not evade that avalanche of blows.

It was running the gauntlet with a

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vengeance, and the St. Jim's fellows when they smote, smote hard.

A derisive yell followed Billy Maxwell & Co. as they staggered through the school gateway and out into the road.

"Yah!"

"Spoofers!"

"Get out!"

"And don't dare to show up at St. Jim's again!"

Having wreaked summary vengeance on the fellows who had been their guests, the St. Jim's juniors went back into the building, still very angry at the thought of how easily they had been spoofed.

"We've chucked them out on their necks, that's one consolation!" growled Manners. "And to-morrow we shall see the genuine Red Rovers."

"Yes, rather!"

There was only one topic of conversation in the junior Common-room that evening, and that was the great match which was due to be played on the morrow.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

Two Kinds of Football.

HARRY HARPER, the fellow who had spoken to Tom Merry on the telephone, arrived at St. Jim's next morning with his team.

The Red Rovers were very disappointing to look at. They didn't have the appearance of being good footballers.

Harper himself was a sallow-faced, unhealthy-looking fellow, and none of his comrades would have taken prizes in a male beauty contest.

"Bright lot of beauties, aren't they?" was Monty Lowther's comment.

"It's never safe to judge by appearances," said Tom Merry. "They may be nothing much to look at, but they are giddy geniuses at footer. Their unbeaten record proves that."

There was great excitement when the two teams took the field in the afternoon.

All St. Jim's seemed to have turned out to witness the tussle.

It was the general opinion that Tom Merry & Co. would be beaten. But the spectators wanted to see them make a good fight of it.

Play started sensationally.

Arthur Augustus D'Arcy broke clean away on the wing, and sent across a perfect pass to Tom Merry.

The captain of the Shell took a shot at goal, but there was very little power behind the kick. It was, in fact, a feeble shot, which any goalkeeper should have saved.

But the Red Rovers' goalie failed to save it. He made a half-hearted attempt to gather the ball, but fumbled badly, and the sphere rolled past him into the net.

"Goal!"

Everybody marvelled that St. Jim's should have opened the scoring with such a soft shot. And Tom Merry marvelled most of all.

"I believe that fellow deliberately fumbled it, so as to give us a little encouragement," he remarked.

"Rather a risky game to play," said Talbot. "They might be sorry for it later on."

The ball was kicked off again from the centre of the field, and once again the St. Jim's forwards attacked.

The Red Rovers were playing far below their reputation. Indeed, their play could only be described as feeble. They showed no judgment, no anticipation, and no combination. Their kick-

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ing was wild and erratic. They were playing like a set of novices.

Within five minutes St. Jim's had scored again. This time the ball whizzed in from the foot of Jack Blake and crashed into the corner of the net.

"Hurrah!"

"Two up, by Jove!"

Some of the spectators thought that the Rovers were fooling, and that presently they would wake up and begin to play football in real earnest.

But the game went on, and the Rovers' forward scarcely got a sniff at the ball.

There was only one team in it, and that team was not the Red Rovers.

Half-time came with St. Jim's leading by four goals to nothing.

Tom Merry & Co. were frankly amazed. They could not understand it. Here was a team that had gone right through a season without a defeat. It was called the "Wonder Team." The only wonder about it was that they had avoided defeat for so long!

The second half of the game was a fiasco.

St. Jim's put on six more goals, and completely overplayed their opponents.

**A MAGNIFICENT
NEW FEATURE!
THE
GREY FRIARS
PARLIAMENT!
Starting in this
week's issue of
The "MAGNET!"**

The Red Rovers were never in the picture. They had given a most disappointing display throughout.

The match ended in silence—the silence of utter stupefaction. The spectators were even too astonished to cheer.

Then Grundy of the Shell arrived on the field. And with Grundy's arrival came some staggering revelations.

"How did the game go?" inquired Grundy of Tom Merry.

"Ten to nil for us."

"Great Jupiter!"

Grundy glanced curiously at the members of the defeated team. This was the first time he had set eyes on them.

On catching sight of Harper, Grundy gave a violent start.

"My only aunt!" he ejaculated.

"What's up?" asked Tom Merry.

"I know that fellow!" he exclaimed dramatically.

"Do you? That's Harper, the skipper of the Red Rovers."

Grundy gave a loud snort.

"It's Harper all right," he said. "But he's no more skipper of the Red Rovers than I am!"

"What?"

"He's a Redclyffe fellow. I knew him before I came to St. Jim's—when I was at Redclyffe, you know—and he's one of the biggest wasters in the school!"

"My hat!"

"I can recognise some of the others, too!" said Grundy excitedly. "They all belong to Redclyffe. This is a trick! It's their idea of a jape against St. Jim's!"

Tom Merry was utterly taken aback. But he could not doubt the truth of Grundy's statements. He realised, with overwhelming suddenness, that these fellows—Harry Harper & Co.—were the impostors, and that Billy Maxwell & Co. were the genuine Red Rovers. And the genuine team had been driven from the school!

Whilst Tom Merry was digesting this awful truth, Harper happened to catch sight of Grundy. Instantly he beckoned to his followers.

"The game's up!" he muttered. "There's a fellow here who used to be at Redclyffe. He's spotted us. Let's clear out—quick!"

There was a sudden stampede on the part of the bogus Red Rovers. They would have got clear away had not Tom Merry recovered his presence of mind in time to give the alarm.

In a few breathless sentences Tom Merry explained the situation to the St. Jim's fellows. And instantly there was a hue-and-cry.

"After them!"

"Collar the rotters!"

Quite a crowd set off in pursuit of the cads of Redclyffe. They were soon overpowered, and they received a very rough handling. They were fairly mobbed, and every man-jack of them was sent rolling in the mud.

They had just about enough energy left to crawl away to the railway-station, and that was all.

"Aftah this, deah boys," said Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, "we must make the amende honourable to Billy Maxwell & Co."

"They have gone back to London by now," said Tom Merry gloomily.

As luck would have it, however, the genuine Red Rovers were still in the district. They had put up at an hotel in Wayland, where they intended to stay until the St. Jim's fellows had come to their senses.

Tom Merry & Co. apologised most humbly for the way in which they had treated their former guests, and a match was arranged for Monday afternoon.

The match proved a very different affair from the one which had preceded it.

St. Jim's put up a gallant fight against the Red Rovers. In fact, they led by two goals to one at half-time.

But the superior class of the Rovers told its tale in the second half, and the famous London team won a hard-fought game by four goals to three.

Before they left St. Jim's Billy Maxwell & Co. were royally entertained by Tom Merry & Co., and when they parted the warmest good-fellowship prevailed on both sides.

"Later in the season," said Billy Maxwell, "we'll give you fellows a chance to turn the tables on us."

"Good!" said Tom Merry. "You're jolly fine players, there's no doubt about that; and, what's more, you're ripping sportsmen!"

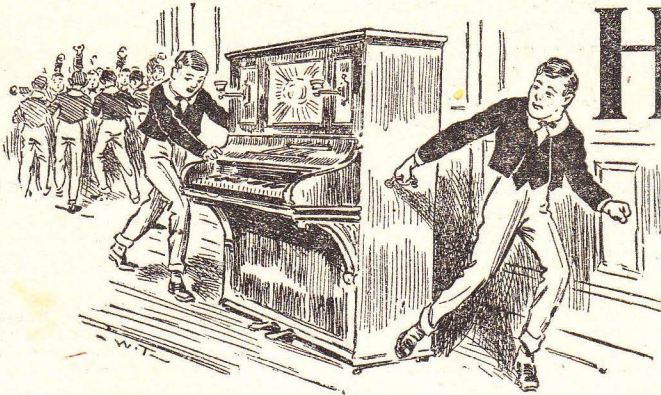
"Hear, hear!" cried the St. Jim's juniors in chorus.

And nearly all the school turned out to give the Red Rovers a rousing send-off.

THE END.

(You must not miss next week's grand long complete story of Tom Merry & Co., of St. Jim's, entitled "Ratty on the Warpath!" by Martin Clifford.)

THE TALE OF DEADLY RIVALRY AT ROOKWOOD, AND OF A RECORD CELEBRATION!



HONOURS EVEN!

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

By OWEN CONQUEST

(Author of the Famous Tales of Rookwood, now appearing in the "Boys' Friend.")

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

Burying the Hatchet.

"SOMETHING extra special!" said Jimmy Silver thoughtfully. "Very extra special!" agreed Lovell. And Raby and Newcome nodded approval. The Fistical Four were quite agreed on that.

It was a special occasion—a very special occasion.

There was to be a celebration, and the celebration was to be something extra-special. For the Fistical Four of the Fourth were about to retake possession of their old quarters, the end study in the Fourth Form passage.

Rookwood School had been under canvas for some time, but while the school work had been carried on alfresco, workmen had been busy on the school buildings.

The work was finished at last. Rookwood School presented its old appearance, save that here and there touches of newness showed among its ancient stones.

School under canvas had been an agreeable change, but all the fellows were glad to get back to their old quarters.

And such an occasion demanded that there should be a celebration, and when Jimmy Silver proposed a house-warming, his chums backed him up heartily.

Tubby Muffin, who was listening to the discussion under the beeches, nodded his head in emphatic approval.

"Jimmy, old chap, you've fairly hit it!" he said. "Of course, there must be a house-warming! A big spread—a regular feast of the gods, you know!"

Tubby's eyes rolled at the vision.

"Fathead!" said Lovell.

"You can't have a house-warming without a spread," said Tubby warmly. "It wouldn't be a celebration unless there was a feed. Don't be an ass, Lovell! I'll help!"

"There'll have to be a—a—a cold collation," said Jimmy thoughtfully. "Funds won't run to anything more elaborate."

"Oh!" said Tubby, disappointed.

"All the same, we must do the thing in as much style as possible," added Jimmy.

Tubby brightened again.

"And, without exceeding the speed-limit there's no reason why there shouldn't be a handsome tea!" said Jimmy.

Tubby beamed.

"And a little music," said Lovell.

"Eh?"

"A little music."

"Are you thinking of moving the grand piano out of the music-room into the end study?" asked Raby, with a grin.

"Well, that couldn't be done," admitted Lovell. "But there's the cottage piano that the fags thump on. We could get that along."

"By Jove, that's not a bad idea!" said Jimmy Silver. "Rawson can play the piano in great style. We'll get him on the music-stool, and lots of the fellows can sing."

"I don't mind giving you a song," said Arthur Edward Lovell modestly.

For some reason Lovell's chums did not look enthusiastic. Jimmy Silver went on rather hastily:

"It's a good idea. We'll have a little music, and we can managed to bag the small piano. I think we'd better speak to the Moderns about this."

"Oh, blow the Moderns!" said Newcome.

"It's going to be a Classical celebration!"

The captain of the Fourth shook his head.

"No," he answered firmly. "Of course, as Classicals, we take the lead. That's understood. But on an occasion like this both sides at Rookwood ought to pull together. We'll ask the Moderns to join up."

"They haven't rebuilt the end study a dozen sizes larger," hinted Raby. "It won't hold half the Classical chaps we want."

"My dear man, we're going to ask them, all the same. There will be an overflow gathering in the passage."

"Oh!"

"The end study will be the headquarters, and the Fourth Form passage will accommodate all who can't get inside," said Jimmy Silver.

"I really think that the Moderns ought to appear in this, to make it more—more representative, you know. On such an occasion we bury the hatchet. Afterwards we make the Moderns cads sit up as usual."

"Oh, all right!" said Lovell. "I don't mind. Let's go and speak to Tommy Dodd."

The chums of the Fourth entered Mr. Manders' house, and proceeded up the staircase to the study tenanted by Tommy Dodd and his friends of the Modern Fourth.

The three Tommies had just taken possession of their study, which was looking cleaner and tidier than it had ever looked before during their tenancy.

Dodd and Cook and Doyle were deep in discussion there when the Classicals presented themselves.

Tommy Doyle gave them quite a cordial look.

"Trot in, you chaps!" he exclaimed.

"Just talking about you."

"Oh, good!" said Jimmy Silver. "And we were just talking about you. We're thinking of giving a house-warming, Duddy."

"My hat!" ejaculated Tommy Dodd.

"Nothing surprising in that, is there?" asked Lovell.

"Well," said Tommy Dodd, grinning, "we were just thinking of the same thing, that's all. We were going to ask you fellows."

"And we were going to ask you!" said Jimmy, laughing. "On this occasion we thought we ought to bury the hatchet."

"Same here, old top!"

"Begorra, just what I was saying," said Tommy Doyle. "We're going to manage a real spread somehow."

"Exactly," said Jimmy Silver. "My idea is to pool resources."

"Mine, too!" agreed Tommy Dodd.

"The end study will accommodate the chief guests, and there's the passage—"

"The end study?" repeated Tommy Dodd.

"That's on the Classical side."

"Yes, that's the place for the house-warming."

"Oh! Our house-warming will be in this study, of course."

"Yes, rather!" said Tommy Cook decidedly.

"Well, if you Moderns want to play the goat," said Jimmy Silver, "go ahead and play it. You're missing a good thing. We're bagging the small piano for our celebration, and it will be rather in style."

"You can't get the piano to your study—you won't get permission."

"We're not going to ask. We can manage it."

"What cheek!"

"By gad, if the piano can be bagged, we'd better bag it!" exclaimed Tommy Doyle.

"Chaps on this side can sing."

"Good egg!" said Tommy Dodd heartily.

The Fistical Four glared.

This cool proposal to adopt their scheme, and bag their piano, was neither grateful nor comforting.

"Why, you cheeky asses!" exclaimed Newcome wrathfully. "Let us catch you laying your Modern paws on that piano!"

"You won't catch us," grinned Tommy Dodd. "Now, look here, Jimmy Silver, leave the matter in our hands. We can run it successfully. We undertake to make a really good, successful house-warming of it. What's the good of you fellows trying it on and making a mess of it? I put it to you as a sensible chap."

"Ass!"

"We'll give you a fair show," added Tommy Dodd. "Everything you like, excepting letting Lovell sing."

"What!" roared Lovell. "Why shouldn't I sing?"

"Well, that wouldn't do, of course, as we want the party to enjoy themselves—Here, stoppit!" yelled Tommy Dodd.

But Arthur Edward Lovell did not "stoppit." He collared Tommy Dodd, and yanked him out of his chair, and the Modern junior sprawled on the carpet.

"Now, can I sing?" yelled Lovell.

"Yaroooh!"

"Can I sing?"

"Like a siren!" gasped Tommy Dodd. "I mean a steamer's siren."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Bang!

Tommy Dodd's head smote his carpet, and Tommy Dodd roared.

The next instant Cook and Doyle had hold of Lovell, dragging him off, and the three rolled on the floor together.

Naturally, Jimmy Silver & Co. rushed to the rescue, and in a moment more there was a terrific scrap raging in the study.

The four Classicals had the best of it till Towle and several other Modern juniors rushed in to the help of the three Tommies.

Then the tables were turned.

The Fistical Four were overwhelmed, and they departed from the study in a succession of bumps.

There was a chorus of howls as they landed in the passage outside.

They sat up breathlessly.

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A GRAND STORY OF ROOKWOOD SCHOOL.

By OWEN CONQUEST.

NEXT TUESDAY

"A ROOKWOOD MYSTERY!"

He found himself in the midst of a Modern crowd, and he was buffeted on all sides before he reached his comrades.

The Classics made a rush, but the odds against them drove them back, and they were forced up the stairs again.

Then Tommy Dodd and Doyle grasped the brass handles of the piano, and rushed that instrument away on its castors down the passage, while the rest of their party kept the infuriated Classics at bay.

With a shrieking sound, the piano sped away down the passage, amid shouts of victory from the Moderns.

It crashed into the communication-door, and sent it flying wide open, and slid through, and then Tommy Dodd yelled:

"This way!"

The Moderns rushed after their leader, and the Classics at once rushed in pursuit.

At the door there was another tussle; but again the odds told, and the Classics were driven back, and the door slammed.

Then a key turned.

Jimmy Silver hurled himself on the door, but in vain. It was locked on the Modern side, and the piano was on that side.

The Classics raged on the wrong side of the door.

"They—they—they've got it!" stuttered Lovell.

"We're done!" said Mornington, laughing. "This is where the Moderns do us in the eye!"

Jimmy Silver breathed hard.

There was no doubt that his old rivals had done him in the "eye." The piano was bagged beyond hope of recapture.

Modern voices were yelling derision and scorn through the keyhole.

But suddenly those yells died away.

A deadly silence reigned on the other side of the big oaken door.

Through the silence, quite audible to the Classics through the big door, came a sharp and penetrating voice—the unpleasant voice of Mr. Manders, the senior Modern master.

"What is this? What is this dreadful disturbance? How dare you take that piano from the music-room? I repeat, how dare you?"

"Oh, my hat!" murmured Jimmy Silver.

Lovell chuckled softly.

"It's old Manders! He's heard the row, and come up!"

"This is where we clear!" murmured Mornington. "The old bird will report us to Bootles if he sees us."

"Buzz!" said Jimmy Silver tersely.

And the Classics promptly "buzzed."

In half a minute there was not a Classical near the scene, excepting Jobson of the Fifth, still tied to the leg of the grand piano in the music-room, and yelling for help.

Jimmy Silver & Co., in the hurry of the moment, overlooked Jobson, and he stayed there.

The unfortunate Moderns could not flee.

Mr. Manders had come on them crowded round the Modern side of the communication-door, which was locked, and they were fairly cornered with their prize.

The Modern master's eye almost seemed to bulge through his spectacles at the sight of the piano, which was showing signs of harder usage than it had been accustomed to.

Tommy Dodd & Co. blinked at him in utter dismay.

From the point of view of the Modern Fourth, they were more than justified in "dishing" the Classics by any means that came to hand, but they were not sanguine enough to expect Mr. Manders to see eye to eye with them on that subject.

They blinked at Mr. Manders, who stared at them grimly and angrily.

"I repeat, what does this mean?" snapped Mr. Manders. "Dodd, I presume that you are the ringleader in this."

"Ye-e-es, sir," stammered Tommy.

"You have taken that piano from the music-room. Have you the permission of a master to do so?"

"Nunno, sir."

"Where are you taking it?"

"To—to—our study, sir."

"Boy! Are you out of your senses?"

"I—I—I hope not, sir."

"You are removing that piano from the music-room to your study!" roared Mr. Manders. "How dare you!"

"Ahem! I—I— We—we—" said Tommy Dodd helplessly.

"How did you contrive to open that door, which is always kept locked by order of the Head?"



PREPARING FOR THE HOUSE-WARMING!—The piano came up to the end study with a shriek and a rush, and Lovell guided it round and it was rushed in to the accompaniment of a fiendish yell from Jimmy Silver, who was brushed off the top. (See Chapter 4.)

"I—I found a key, sir."

"The key is kept by Mack. Where did you find another key, Dodd?"

"I—I found it in Mack's lodge, sir."

"Dodd! You abstracted the key from Mack's lodge in order to take this instrument from the music-room to your study?"

"I—I—"

"Open that door at once, and return the piano to its place!"

"Yes, sir!" groaned Tommy Dodd.

"I will deal with your outrageous conduct afterwards!" added Mr. Manders sternly.

In the deepest depression of spirits the unfortunate Moderns, no longer elated with their victory, opened the big door, and the piano was wheeled back.

As it was conveyed into the music-room the yells of Jobson smote on their ears, and, worried as they were, they grinned at the sight of the undignified-looking Fifth-Former.

"Come and let me loose!" yelled Jobson, as they came in.

"Go and eat coke, you Classical worm!" growled Tommy Dodd, in response.

"I'll smash you!"

"Rats!"

"I—I say, come and let a chap loose, will you?" mumbled Jobson, changing his tune, as it were.

The soft answer turneth away wrath, and Tommy Dodd was not proof against that appeal.

He cut through the whipcord, and the Fifth-Former was released. He did not stay to thank his rescuers.

He went to look for Jimmy Silver & Co., and he appeared to be pressed for time.

The Moderns pushed the small piano back into its place, and returned to the spot where Mr. Manders was awaiting them.

"Go to my study, all of you!" said the Modern master severely. "Give me that key, Dodd! I will take charge of it."

With glum faces the unhappy Moderns trooped away.

Mr. Manders locked the communication-door very carefully, put the key in his pocket, and followed them.

In Mr. Manders' study there was quite a painful scene.

In the faint hope of touching the Modern master's heart, Tommy Dodd ventured to explain about the intended house-warming in his study.

"A house-warming!" said Mr. Manders. "Utter nonsense!"

"Oh, sir!"

"I forbid anything of the kind taking place in your study, Dodd!"

"Oh!"

"And now hold out your hand!"

"Yow-ow-ow!"

The Moderns quitted Mr. Manders' study squeezing their hands, and with feelings in their breasts too deep for words.

The Modern house-warming was off.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

Tommy Dodd is Equal to the Occasion.

JIMMY SILVER came out of the School House with a smile on his cheery face about half an hour later.

Having allowed a discreet interval to elapse, to make sure that Mr. Manders was off the scene, Jimmy had gone to his comrades in the quad with good news.

"Well?" said Lovell and Raby and Newcome together.

"All serene!" said Jimmy. "Manders must have dropped on 'em heavy. The piano's been put back, and we can bag it when we like."

"Bravo!"

"The big door's locked, too, and you can bet Manders has taken away the key," added Jimmy. "The Modern worms won't be able to wriggle in again. We can bag the piano any time we choose."

"Good egg!"

"Ripping!"

Jimmy glanced up at the clock-tower.

"Plenty of time before lessons," he said.

"Nothing like striking the iron while it's hot! Come on!"

The Fistical Four proceeded to the School House, with Erroll, Mornington, Conroy, and Pons and Van Llyn.

They were enough for the "moving" job. Before they reached the house, however, Jobson of the Fifth bore down on them.

He had an ashplant in his hand, apparently borrowed from a prefect's study.

"I've been looking for you!" he announced. "Well, now you've found us!" said Jimmy Silver affably. "Do you want to be tied up again? If so, come along to the music-room!"

"I'm going to give you a jolly good hiding!" roared Jobson.

"I don't think!" grinned Jimmy. And Jimmy was right.

Jobson of the Fifth had time for one "lick" with the ashplant, and then he found himself sitting in the quad, with the stick shoved down his back, and his cap stuffed into his mouth.

The juniors left him there to sort himself out, surrounded by a grinning crowd, and when he sorted himself out Jobson of the Fifth wisely decided to let the matter drop.

The Fistical Four were rather too tough a handful for him to deal with.

The Classical juniors reached the music-room in great spirits.

They had had rather the worse of the contest with the Moderns, but the intervention of Mr. Manders had turned the tables for them, and there was no danger of any further conflict with Tommy Dodd & Co.

The cottage piano was wheeled out again, and wheeled along the passage to the little stairway.

There it was lifted up, and bumped down in the upper passage with great success.

To run it along the Fourth-Form passage to the end study was quite easy, and Jimmy Silver sat on it in transit, giving orders from the bridge, as it were, to his crew.

It came up to the end study with a shriek and a rush, and Lovell guided it round, and it was rushed in to the accompaniment of a fenshish yell from Jimmy Silver, who was brushed off the top as it flew into the study, and crashed on the table, leaving Jimmy Silver sitting in the passage, roaring.

The table was deposited in the fender, but the piano was brought to a halt at last, and dragged round to the window.

"You silly chumps!" roared Jimmy Silver, following his comrades in. "Couldn't you give a chap time to get down before you pushed the dashed thing in the doorway!"

"Looks as if we couldn't!" remarked Raby. "Ha, ha, ha!"

"Shut up, Jimmy, old chap!" said Lovell, pulling a chair to the piano, and sitting down. "It's ripping to have the thing here—don't grumble! Now be quiet, and I'll give you a song!"

Lovell ran his fingers along the keys, and started his song, to his own accompaniment. There was a sudden rush of feet.

Arthur Edward Lovell, in surprise, stopped at the third bar, and looked round.

The study was empty. Lovell put his head out of the doorway; Jimmy Silver & Co. were vanishing towards the staircase.

"You silly chumps!" roared Lovell, in great wrath.

But his comrades were gone, and Lovell closed the piano-lid with a slam like a cannon-shot, and followed them, snorting.

His chums smiled as he rejoined them in the quadrangle; but Arthur Edward did not smile.

He frowned. "I rather think the house-warming is going to be a success," remarked Jimmy Silver.

"We've bagged the johanna—I mean, the piano. Not much good those silly Moderns trying to compete with us."

"Not a bit," agreed Raby and Newcome. "Not if Manders chips in, anyway," grunted Lovell morosely. "Don't swank! It was Manders got the piano for us, if he only knew it."

"Lovell, old chap, you let your chin wag too much!" said Jimmy Silver reprovingly. "We've got the goods, and that's the main thing. And the shopping committee have done rather well. There will be something like a spread."

"Good!"

"And those blessed Moderns don't look as if they're enjoying life," added Jimmy Silver, glancing towards Tommy Dodd & Co., who were walking lugubriously under the beeches.

The three Tommies were looking very glum.

"You'll be pleased to hear that we've landed the piano all right, you chaps!" called out Raby, with a grin.

"Only through Manders shoving in his oar!" growled Tommy Dodd. "We had it."

"You had it—but we've got it!" said Jimmy Silver. "Fortune of war, old scout. I'll tell you what; we'll let you come to the house-warming if you'll behave yourselves and wash your necks!"

"Go and eat coke!"

The three Tommies walked away, leaving the Classicalsmiling. The fortune of war certainly seemed to be in favour of the Classicalsm just now.

"Sure, we're done in the eye!" groaned Tommy Doyle. "Those swanking asses are having it all their own way—and all through Manders intirely!"

"It wouldn't matter so much if we could have our house-warming," said Cook. "But we can't have even that."

"Not on the Modern side!" said Tommy Dodd thoughtfully.

"We can't have it anywhere else, I suppose," grunted Cook. "Thinking of picking up the study and carrying it somewhere else?"

"Don't be funny, kid!" said Tommy Dodd severely. "I've been thinking a bit. As

matters stand, the Classicalsm win all along the line. But we're not quite beaten yet. We can't house-warm in our own study. But Jimmy Silver is going ahead with the Classical house-warming—"

"Sure, we know that!"

"We got out of the Form-room an hour before those Classical chumps!" went on Tommy. "It 'stinks' this afternoon, you know, with Manders."

"What the thump difference does that make?"

"Lots."

"Faith, and what are ye driving at intirely?" demanded Tommy Doyle impatiently. "Give it a name, ye gossoon!"

"Don't you see?" chirruped Tommy Dodd. "There's no end of preparations for a terrific house-warming in the end study, on the Classic side."

"Don't we know it, ass?"

"They've got the biggest spread they can get, and the piano, and so on."

"Well, ass?"

"And they'll be in the Form-room right up to the usual time, digging into cheery old Classics with Bootles, while we shall be doing chemistry with Manders."

"Come to the point!" yelled Cook.

"I'm coming, dear boy!" smiled Tommy Dodd, and he lowered his voice. "We shall be finished 'stinks' before they finish in the Form-room. We get out early, don't we?"

"We usually do, so I suppose we shall; but what the thump—"

"Don't you see now? We're out, and they're in, and what's to prevent us from strolling up to the end study—"

"Eh?"

"And walking into it?"

"Wha-a-at?"

"And fastening the door!" grinned Tommy Dodd.

"Oh!"

"You see!" Tommy Dodd chuckled. "Easy as falling off a form! That's the game for us, my innocent infants." He lowered his voice deeply and mysteriously, and said, in a thrilling whisper:

"BAG THE HOUSE-WARMING!"

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

Bagged.

JIMMY SILVER & CO. turned up to classes that afternoon in cheery spirits.

From the Classical point of view all was going well.

True, the juniors felt that, upon such an occasion, the Head would have done well to grant Rookwood a whole holiday, or, at least, a half.

That had not seemed to occur to Dr. Chisholm, however. Perhaps he was not keen on such celebrations as house-warmings.

But though a holiday would have improved matters, Jimmy Silver & Co. felt that all was going well; in fact, all was for the best in the best of all possible schools.

As soon as they were free from classes, the house-warming was to begin; and, considering the preparations that had been made, it could not fail to be a great success.

The Moderns were simply nowhere. Indeed, it was known by this time that Mr. Manders had prohibited a house-warming on the Modern side, so manifestly there was nothing left for the three Tommies to do but to hide their diminished heads.

Some of the Moderns were looking glum when they came into the Form-room, but the three Tommies, strange to say, seemed to have recovered their spirits.

Classicalsm and Modernsm had the first lesson together, with Mr. Bootles; and then the Moderns left the Form-room, to go to the chemistry class under Mr. Manders.

The Classicalsm were left with Mr. Bootles to pursue more Classical courses, chemistry not being a Classical subject.

It was customary with the fellows on the older side of Rookwood to proclaim the superiority of Classical studies, while turning up their noses at such subjects as German and chemistry and book-keeping, but it must be admitted that Jimmy Silver & Co. did not display a pronounced interest that afternoon in the tongue of Horace and Livy.

Their thoughts wandered to the house-warming, especially Tubby Muffin's. Tubby being in a state of beatitude at the mere thought of the etables accumulated in the end study.

The shopping committee had done well, A GRAND STORY OF ROOKWOOD SCHOOL. By OWEN CONQUEST.

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NOW ON SALE! GET A COPY TO-DAY.

THE POPULAR.—No. 191. NEXT TUESDAY!

"A ROOKWOOD MYSTERY!"

A GRAND STORY OF ROOKWOOD SCHOOL. By OWEN CONQUEST.

and all the "house-warmers" had shelled out manfully for the purchase of supplies.

And as yet Tubby Muffin's greedy fingers had not been allowed to touch the good things; he had only seen them and yearned for them, like a podgy Peri at the gate of Paradise.

When the house-warming started, Tubby meant to distinguish himself, though there were some other fellows who thought that Tubby should not distinguish himself so much as he intended.

Seldom had good Mr. Bootles seemed so prosy as he did that afternoon; very seldom had the Classics seemed so terrific a bore.

But all things come to an end at last, and so did afternoon classes for the Classical Fourth of Rookwood.

In great relief, the Fourth-Formers trooped out when Mr. Bootles at last gave the word to dismiss.

"Blest if I thought it would ever end!" yawned Arthur Edward Lovell. "Bootles really seemed to be wound up."

"Hallo! Where are you going, Tubby?" roared Jimmy Silver.

The fat Classical was already scuffing off. "I—I'm just going to see that it's all right in the end study, Jimmy," stammered Tubby.

"Take hold of his ear, Lovell."

"Yaroh!"

"Gentlemen," said Jimmy Silver, "we're going to get ready now. Guests will begin to arrive ten minutes from now."

"Rely on us," said Oswald.

"Hear, hear!"

And the Fistical Four proceeded to the end study to give the finishing touches to the preparations before the great celebration started.

Tubby Muffin followed them with a hungry gleam in his eyes.

The door of the end study was closed, and, to the surprise of the Classics, sounds of merry music proceeded from the room.

"Somebody's playing our piano!" ejaculated Jimmy Silver, in astonishment.

"My hat!"

They ran on to the study.

Jimmy Silver turned the handle, but the door did not open. It was locked on the inside.

Within, someone who had apparently not completed his studies as a pianist, was thumping out a triumphal march.

It bore some distant resemblance to the prelude to the Third Act of "Lohengrin," and was probably intended for that, but the pianist was putting in a good many things Wagner had never dreamed of in his most Wagnerish moments.

But it certainly expressed great joy and jollity, and was played with terrific energy.

Jimmy Silver thumped on the door wrathfully.

"Who's in there?" he shouted.

The blare of the cruelly-used piano ceased.

"Hallo!" came back a voice from within, the well-known voice of Tommy Dodd of the Modern Fourth.

"Dodd!" yelled Lovell.

"What are you doing there?" shouted Jimmy Silver.

"Eh? This is our house-warming," was the reply.

"What?"

"House-warming!"

There was a roar of laughter in the end study, following that explanation.

Evidently Tommy Dodd was not alone there.

He had brought his friends with him, and, judging by the roar, the end study was pretty well crowded.

Jimmy Silver stood petrified.

"The—the Moderns!" he stammered.

"They—they—they've bagged our study!"

"And our piano!" said Lovell sulphurously.

"And our house-warming!"

"And our grub!" wailed Tubby Muffin, looking on the verge of tears. "Our grub, you know! I—I say, they've bagged the grub!"

Lovell kicked furiously on the door.

"Let us in, you Modern rotters!" he roared.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Crash! Thump! Bang!

The music recommenced, while the Fistical Four raged impotently outside. And now the guests began to arrive.

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

The Lion and the Lamb.

"WHAT'S the row?"

"What's up?"

"What the dickens—"

The Classical Fourth, as they arrived on the scene, were apprised of the state of affairs, and there was towering wrath in the Fourth Form passage.

Mornington laughed, and Erroll smiled, but most of the juniors were furious.

The house-warming had been bagged. There was no doubt about that, and the Moderns were enjoying it—and enjoying still more their triumph over their old rivals.

The enraged Classics held an excited council of war in the passage, what time merry strains of music proceeded from the end study.

The Moderns, in the exhilaration of triumph, were letting themselves go.

"They'll bring somebody up with that row, if they don't draw the line," remarked Mornington. "Hallo! Talk of angels—here comes Bootles!"

"Oh, my hat!"

The Classical juniors vanished into the studies as Mr. Bootles was seen by the staircase at the end of the passage.

Evidently the somewhat reckless celebration in the end study had disturbed the Form-master, and he had come to inquire into the cause—probably very much surprised by the sound of a piano from the Fourth Form passage.

The Classics had vanished as Mr. Bootles came along, and the little gentleman blinked round him over his glasses in surprise.

"Bless my soul!" said Mr. Bootles. "I am sure I heard voices here—several voices, and in somewhat excited tones! Dear me!"

He walked on to the end study, from which a terrific din was proceeding, and tapped at the door with his knuckles.

"Oh, buzz off!" came Tommy Dodd's voice from within. "Get a move on, you duffer, and hop it!"

"What!" ejaculated Mr. Bootles. "What! What! Is that you, Dodd? How dare you address me in such a manner!"

"Oh, my hat!" gasped Tommy Dodd, recognising the Form-master's voice. "Is—is that Mr. Bootles?"

"Certainly it is Mr. Bootles!"

"Sus-sus-sorry, sir! I—I thought it was Jimmy Silver!"

"There is a very extraordinary noise proceeding from this study, Dodd. The door appears to be fastened," said Mr. Bootles, trying the handle. "Kindly open it at once, and admit me!"

"Oh, jiminy!"

"What—what did you say, Dodd?"

"N-n-nothing, sir! Just a minute! We—we'll open it!"

There was a sound of dragging furniture, and then of a key turning. The door of the end study opened.

And just at that time, too, a good many other study doors opened, and the Classical Fourth swarmed into the passage again.

Now that the disputed door was open, they did not mean to let it be closed again after Mr. Bootles was gone.

The Form-master's arrival was a godsend to Jimmy Silver & Co. They were not responsible for it—in fact, it was the Moderns' uproar that had brought him there, but they were quick to seize their advantage.

As Mr. Bootles walked majestically into the study, Jimmy Silver & Co. could be seen grinning behind him.

Mr. Bootles glanced round the study in surprise at seeing only Modern juniors there, and he was still more surprised to see the piano.

"Bless my soul!" he said. "This is—is

extraordinary! How did that piano come to be in a Fourth Form study, Dodd?"

"It—it was brought here, sir," stammered Tommy.

"I am aware that it was brought here, Dodd," said Mr. Bootles. "But by whom, and for what purpose, was it brought here?"

"We—we—we're having a house-warming, sir!"

"Bless my soul!"

"Jimmy Silver was kind enough to bring the piano in for us, sir," said Tommy Dodd meekly.

Some of the Moderns grinned, and Jimmy Silver shook his fist at Tommy Dodd behind Mr. Bootles' back.

Mr. Bootles glanced round at the same moment, and Jimmy hurriedly turned his threatening gesture into scratching his nose, just in time. Mr. Bootles looked at him curiously.

"We—we thought we'd have the piano, as—as it's a special occasion, sir," said Jimmy, crimsoning.

"You should have asked permission, Silver," said Mr. Bootles. "However, there is no objection for this occasion only, though you should certainly have asked leave. But you must not make so much noise here. I heard the piano in my study, and was very much surprised and disturbed."

"I should be sorry," continued Mr. Bootles, in his benevolent way, "to throw cold water upon a harmless celebration, but, really, you must keep yourselves within bounds."

"Yes, sir!" gasped Tommy Dodd.

"Yes, sir!" stammered Jimmy Silver.

"Pray continue with your little celebration," said the benevolent Mr. Bootles. "I will not interfere with it; but, at the same time, I request you not to make too much noise."

"T-t-thank you, sir!"

"Not at all, my boys!" said Mr. Bootles graciously. And he retired from the end study, and the rustling of his gown died away down the passage.

Tommy Dodd held the door for him as he went out, and would gladly have shut it when he was gone, but three or four Classical boots were in the way.

That door was not destined to be shut again.

Classicals and Moderns glared at each other in the doorway till Mr. Bootles was gone.

The Moderns drew together for defence, but they were well aware that they had no chance, with nearly all the Classical Fourth swarming to the attack.

"Rush the rotters!" exclaimed Lovell.

"Hurrah! Sling them out!"

But Jimmy Silver held up his hand.

In the hour of triumph Uncle James was generous.

"Hold on!" he exclaimed.

"Rats! What is there to hold on for?" exclaimed Jones minor. "Kick those Modern rotters out on their necks!"

"Order!" said Jimmy Silver sternly.

"Gentlemen, this is a house-warming, not a dogfight! Under the—the circumstances, we extend the olive-branch to these Modern rotters—I mean, to these gentlemen of the Modern side! Tommy Dodd, old scout, the invitation still holds good! Bury the hatchet, and let's have the house-warming together!"

Arthur Edward Lovell gave a snort.

"Isn't that just like Jimmy, when we've got them fairly by the neck?" he exclaimed.

"Order!"

Tommy Dodd grinned.

"Jimmy, old scout, you're a Briton!" he said. "We accept the invitation, with thanks! We'll call it a draw, and we'll house-warm together—the giddy lion and the merry lamb! Walk in, gentlemen!"

And so it was settled, and the gentlemen walked in, as many of them as could find room, the passage accommodating the rest. For once the hatchet was successfully buried, and Classicals and Moderns celebrated together—and great was the celebration thereof!

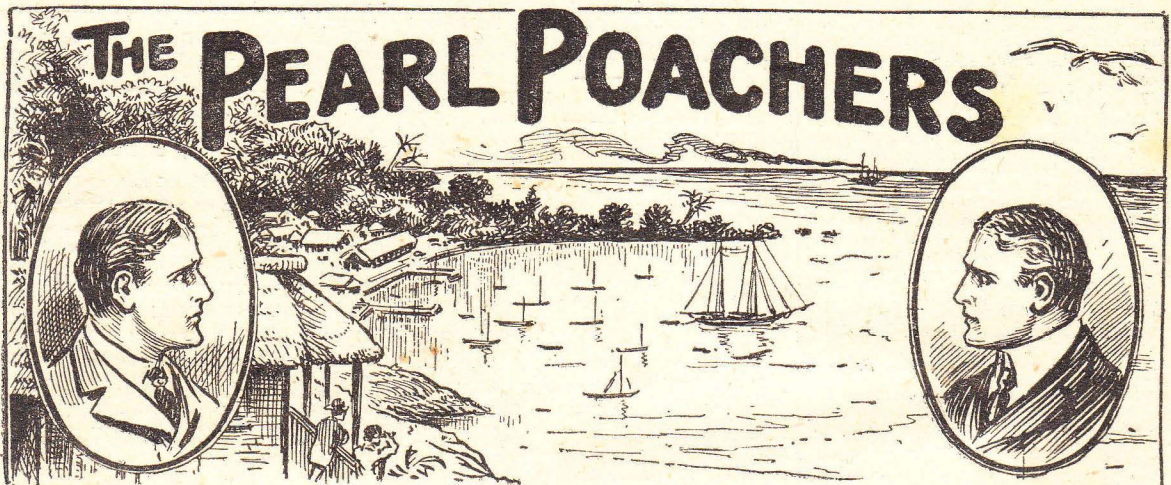
THE END.

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NEXT TUESDAY'S GRAND STORY:

"A ROOKWOOD MYSTERY!"

A Magnificent Story of the Most Baffling Mystery Jimmy Silver & Co. ever faced.
By OWEN CONQUEST.



A Grand New Serial, introducing Ferrers Lord, the Millionaire Adventurer, Ching Lung & Co., and the Daring Pearl Raider, Harper Blaise, the Terror of the South Seas.

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, and get away in the yacht, after taking the thousands of pounds of pearls and gold from her.

When the Lord of the Deep arrives at the pearling-station, Ferrers Lord is kidnapped, and Blaise takes his place and sets sail on the millionaire's yacht for Gan Waga's island. Unaware of the impersonation, Rupert Thurston and Prout go with him.

Soon after the departure of the Lord of the Deep Ching Lung, with Hal Honour and O'Rooney, arrives on the prince's yacht. They hear of the daring scheme from Jimmy, the black, Donelan's servant, and detain the rascally manager until they are able to find Lord Sharkfin Billy, in command of Blaise's big motor-launch, follows Ching Lung & Co.,

and torpedoed them. Unable to protect themselves against the fire of Sharkfin Billy's vessel, they run ashore in the lagoon of an island, on which they afterwards discover Ferrers Lord. Meantime, Donelan disappears. The Chinese crew desert Ferrers Lord & Co., and they find themselves in a very tight corner.

Ferrers Lord & Co. abandon the yacht, and in a small motor-launch make their escape round the back of one of the islands. Almost before they are out of sight, Sharkfin Billy and his crew of filibusters attack the stranded yacht and board it.

Whilst cruising about, attempting to find a safe hiding-place, Ferrers Lord & Co. come up against the raider, deserted, save for Donelan, whom they find lying unconscious with a bad attack of fever. They take possession of the vessel.

Later they surprise the pirates on the yacht and recapture the vessel. Donelan and Sharkfin Billy are sent ashore during the rebuilding of the yacht, and there is great trouble with the ex-commander of the raider when he finds out that his request for tobacco has been refused.

(Now read on.)

Wonderful Progress.

BILLY'S second attempt to obtain tobacco was as futile as the first. It was a sharp punishment for such a confirmed smoker. The millionaire was not so stern with the other rascals, but those who shirked work had their rations cut down. They were a cowed and beaten mob, and any man except Harold Honour would have given them up in despair.

To the engineer the English language contained no such word. He vowed to break them in, and he succeeded.

On the fourth morning after the recapture of the yacht she was afloat. To patch the hole in her side, when he had managed to keep her from leaking, he cut out two steel bulkheads from the coal-bunkers, and drilled them for rivets and bolts.

It was slow and dreary work, but Honour never faltered or lost heart. Next came the task of reconstructing the shattered bridge and damaged funnel. Little by little his mongrel workmen began to learn something about their duties, and to understand and obey his gestures.

THE POPULAR.—No. 191.

NEXT
TUESDAY!

"A PARDON WELL EARNED!"

The prince had shipped ample stores of all kinds, and, although the yacht had only been aground for a comparatively short time, the blazing sun and the salt water, and that most damaging thing of all, neglect, had quickly destroyed her smart appearance. Honour was thorough. He could easily have waited to have had her reconditioned in port now that he had got her seaworthy again, but there was time to spare, and he did not see why his pressed workmen should kick their heels idly and eat their heads off.

He set them to clean the yacht and paint her, and very well they did it under his watchful eye. The shattered mirrors in the saloon could not be restored, but in their place Honour hung some beautiful old Chinese panels the prince had brought as a present to Ferrers Lord.

And when the carpet had been washed and dried, the saloon looked almost as well as ever; and, mirrored in the blue waters of the channel, and gleaming white in her dazzling coat of white paint, it was difficult to believe that the yacht had ever been torpedoed, fired at, and stranded.

"You're a born wonder, Hal!" said Ching Lung, as he shook hands with the engineer. "It's hard to think that even you could have done this, wonderful as you are when you get going! I'd made up my mind that she was going to stick here till she rusted out and fell to pieces. I'm very grateful to you, old lad, believe that!"

"Bedad, Oi'm not surprised that Hal did it, for he'd have done it single-handed wid toime enough!" said Barry O'Rooney. "The surprise is that he could get any work at all out of those ugly hoodligans! Oi touch my hat to you bhoys, wid all respect! You're a great man, and, though not ornamental, mighty useful!"

Honour smiled as he filled his pipe, and looked up at the funnel, from which smoke was rising. He nodded to Barry, and pointed down at the deck.

"Right," grinned Barry. "Oi'll go and see how the rogues enjoy handling shovels and firebars in the stokehold, and, bedad, Oi'll hustle them up!"

Ferrers Lord took his place on the bridge, and, impressing a couple of the prisoners to act as greasers in the engine-room, Hal Honour went to see the worst of it or the best of it.

From the island, Sharkfin Billy and Bruce Donelan, who was rapidly regaining his health, watched the yacht as the winch began to work and the cable went clattering over the drum and lifted the dripping anchor to the cat-head.

"By thunder, they're too good for us, Donelan!" growled the one-eyed man. "We tackled the wrong crowd, bad luck to it! We were beat from the start!"

"If you'd have let that cursed yacht go away unmolested we might have come out on top, you fool!" said Donelan, with bitterness.

Ferrers Lord signalled half-speed astern. For an anxious moment or two the stiff engines jibbed, and then, as the propeller began to churn the blue water into white foam, Barry O'Rooney uttered a whoop of delight, and Gan Waga gave a squeal of joy.

The raider had been shifted from the channel, and lay at anchor in deep water two miles out, with only Jimmy, the black, in charge of her.

As the yacht backed down the channel to the open sea, a sudden panic of terror gripped Sharkfin Billy and Bruce Donelan. They thought they were being abandoned and marooned, and, though Billy was a stout-hearted rogue, the prospect of such a fate washed all the courage out of him.

A SPLENDID TALE OF THE JUNIORS OF GREY-FRIARS. By FRANK RICHARDS.

Both men ran along the white beach, waving their arms and shouting terrified supplications. When they could go no farther they dropped on their knees.

"Those chaps are in a pretty stew, Chief," said the prince, pointing to them. "They've a notion that we're packing up for good, and they don't like it a little bit!"

"And yet they had no compunctions about marooning me, Ching," said the millionaire. "This is a pleasanter climate than Gan Waga's island, if they only knew it, and always with the chance of being found and taken off by some native fishermen or adventurous pearler. Of the two I prefer the marooning."

"Then you intend to send them to the island to work as convict's in the mines, Chief?"

"Exactly," answered Ferrers Lord. "I shall act justly, give them a fair trial, and apportion the punishment to fit the crime. I consider Donelan the biggest rogue of them all, for he has eaten my bread. One cannot help having a certain amount of foolish admiration for Harper Blaise, for one cannot help admiring a dashing adventurer."

"That's perfectly true, Chief," admitted Ching Lung; "but Blaise went too far and was too reckless. As an adventure it was dazzling, but you tell me he intended to ring down the curtain with blood and murder and rank piracy. This is going beyond adventure. Though I may admire his cleverness, I have no time for Mr. Harper Blaise."

"Nor I, for he had gone much too far in this amazing business. A dashing rascal, utterly fearless, and tremendously self-confident, but arrant scoundrel, greedy as a wolf, and without a particle of humanity and pity. Billy, his jackal, makes no secret of it. The moment Blaise and the gold were safely aboard the raider they were to play the trick the German submarines played during the war to torpedo my yacht and sink her with all hands, and, if possible, without a trace, leaving their grim secret with the sea. A charming plan that might very easily have been carried out. They lost through interfering with you."

"But why did they interfere with me, Chief? I meant to ask Billy that very question myself. I presume you have asked him."

"Just because he was suspicious of you. He could not understand why you were prowling about the reef and the islands. He tells me that the torpedo was fired by mistake, through an order being misunderstood, but we can believe or disbelieve that as we choose. Naturally, the rogue would try to do the best for himself when he found himself in the trap, and lying comes easily to such a rascal. It was a bad blunder for Sharkin Billy and Harper Blaise, and a very fortunate one for ourselves. I can lend you a few men when we meet the Lord of the Deep, or do you intend to look for your old crew if they have managed to escape?"

Ching Lung hesitated before answering, and squared his chin.

"They came out with me, and they are going back with me, Chief, if I can collect them," he said. "They won't mutiny a second time. I have no island for my convicts, but I am not going to let them go unpunished. In any case, the Government here would deport them, and send them back to China. So I may as well make them work their passage with me, for I promise you they'll get no pay."

As the yacht swung round the island they caught a last glimpse of Bruce Donelan and Sharkin Billy. The two men had flung themselves down on the beach, their faces pillowed in their arms in attitudes of hopeless despair, feeling certain that the yacht had gone for good and that they were marooned.

"How much provisions did we leave behind, Ching?" asked Ferrers Lord.

"I couldn't say, but enough for three days or so," answered Ching Lung.

"Then we must not stay away too long, or they will be fighting over the food, and I don't wish Billy to rob me of Donelan," said the millionaire.

The Message Comes At Last!

HERE had been a kind of court-martial on board the yacht. The prisoners were brought before Ferrers Lord one by one and questioned and cross-examined. The millionaire wrote the names of each man in his pocket-book, and when the examination was over he placed certain marks against the names.

"A queer collection, and we have heard some lurid histories, Ching," he said lazily, when it was over. "What a gang of desperadoes? And how clearly they had managed to evade the gaols. And what unblushing and shameless liars! Well, I can give them a chance to repent, if there is any repentance left in them!"

"Isn't it a bit rough on Gan Waga's island to dump that lot of rubbish there, Chief?" asked the prince. "Won't the decent miners object to this human garbage?"

There will be nothing to complain about. They will be in their own gang, and the decent miners will not come in contact with them at all. I shall have a camp made in Whalebone Hollow, where we have just struck a new lode. It is the dreariest spot on the whole dreary island, but quite good enough for such wretches. They will wear convict's dress, and be under an armed guard night and day. Honour has shown us that they can work, and there's no lack of work in the mines of Desolatia."

"A beastly place for anybody to work in," said the prince. "If it wasn't so vile, I suppose we'd be able to make double the profits?"

"Easily! We have to pay enormous wages and salaries to tempt men there at all, but the profits are quite satisfactory. We can't catch enough rogues to run the whole thing by convict labour, I'm glad to say, but we keep adding to the number gradually. Harper Blaise and Bruce Donelan will be quite respectable convicts, and give an air of refinement to the gang, which at present is a very dilapidated one. I prefer this simple method of mine to handing them over to the authorities."

"And you're robbing the newspapers of the biggest stunt since newspapers were invented, Chief," said the prince. "They'd pay fortunes to get the full story!"

"As they may never know what they've missed, the newspapers won't regret it," said Ferrers Lord. "You know how I detest notoriety, Ching. I like to do everything quietly and in my own way. You may think I sometimes take the law into my own hands too much, but would you care for this to be made public?"

"I'm not so sure that I would," answered Ching Lung. "Not that I bother much about the publicity, but the delay. We might be kept hanging about for weeks, or even months, before the trial came on, and I want to get back to Kwai-hal and settle a few things there before I start roaming again. And you, Chief?"

"We talk as if everything had come to an end," said Ferrers Lord with a smile. "We haven't laid our hand on Blaise yet, or recovered the Lord of the Deep. When that is done, I shall, of course, have to take my prisoners back to the island. You have still to pick up your crew, for you can't run this big yacht without one. Why not go to the reef and see if they are there. We need not remain here to get Blaise's message."

"But what about the raider?"

"O'Rooney and the black can take care of her, and you and I and Honour can easily keep these fellows in hand. It will be a saving of time, and I am tired of this place."

Barry O'Rooney saluted when he heard that he was to be left behind with Jimmy. Though the prospect was not an enticing one, Barry put on a smile, but he growled a few things to relieve his feelings when the yacht steamed away, and whistled dolefully as her smoke slowly dwindled to a grey patch that faded into the blue sky.

"Bedad, Jimmy bhoj, you're elegant, but av Oi could have selected my company, ut wouldn't have been you," he said. "Oi'd sooner have had that fat haythen, Gan Waga. Oehone, phwat else can a man expict whin he's crazy enough to go to say! Never be a sailor, Jimmy. Be a scavenger

or swape or a dustman, but don't go to say, for ut's a dog loife. And Oi wonder, my green-oided pet, av any white man was ever left alone with anybody uglier than yourself!"

"Savee Jimmy not allee top-hole ugly," said the black. "Savee lotta whilemen not allee top-side handsome."

"A fact, bhoj—a solemn fact!" said Barry. "But, bedad, use some water to your hands afore you start cooking, Jimmy, and be loively, for Oi'm hungry."

Before sunset, Barry took a solitary trip in the launch to see how Sharkin Billy and Bruce Donelan were faring. At the sound of the propeller the two men came down the beach. They looked greatly relieved at the sight of O'Rooney, for they had seen the launch steam away. Barry stopped his engine at the edge of the deep water within easy talking distance. He badly wanted someone to talk to, for Jimmy's gibberish got on his nerves when he had had much of it.

"Say!" cried Billy, holding up something between his finger and thumb. "I'll give you this for an ounce of 'baccy, mate?"

"Phwat is it?" asked Barry. "O'ive got good oiesight, Billy, but not quite good enough to see that. Phwat d'ye want to give me, bedad?"

"A black pearl, by thunder, worth easy anything up to two hundred pounds!" said the one-eyed man. "I got it from Kanaka Jim, for he thought you'd find it on him and take it away. By thunder, did you ever have such a chance afore. Two hundred pound's worth for an ounce of 'baccy and a box of matches."

"Sure that sounds noice and comfortable, and chape at the price," said Barry O'Rooney. "but where does the rare owner come in? Phwat about Kanaka Jim, sor?"

"To the sharks with Kanaka Jim! What does that black dirt matter. He never got the pearl honest, you can be sure. It about drives me mad to see you sitting there smoking that pipe, when I'm crazy for a puff or two. Sling the 'baccy and a box of matches ashore and then come a bit closer and I'll pitch the pearl to you."

Donelan had not missed his pipe much, for he was not a great smoker, but Billy's temper was so vile and violent, that he wanted his fellow-prisoner to obtain the tobacco, hoping that it's soothing influence would put him in a better humour.

"I should value the pearl at more than a couple of hundred," he said, "and I know a pearl when I see one. It's only fault is its shape. If it hadn't been a little fattened seven or eight hundred pounds would be nearer the proper price. All for an ounce of tobacco, O'Rooney, and a box of matches, the best bargain of your life!"

Barry O'Rooney took his pipe out of his mouth to whistle drearily and then shook his head.

"The Chafe has said 'No,' and that's enough for me," he said; "so, bedad, there's nothing doing, though Oi'd loike to swap you a bushel of 'baccy for the gewgaw av ut was yours, Billy. Being fond of my 'baccy Oi know the want of ut must come hard, but atther all you're a black rogue, and you asked for ut."

"Look at it, you fool!" cried the one-eyed man desperately. "More than a sailorman's wages for a twelvemonth for a bit of 'baccy. By thunder, look at it!"

Billy tossed the tiny pearl towards the launch. He threw it too far, and Barry's hand just failed to reach it. It struck the port gunwale, bounced outwards, fell into the sea, and was gone. Sharkin Billy let out an angry oath, and Donelan promptly retreated as he clenched his fists, for he had discovered that when Billy lost his temper the man who happened to be in reach of his fist generally suffered for it.

"Bedad, Oi'd not seen anything sillier than that done for donkey's years, and mighty long wans at that," said Barry O'Rooney. "Bang goes two hundred pounds to the bottom of the say. You wouldn't have had any 'baccy for ut, not for a whole rope loike ut, but ut's a wicked waste of good sthuff. Oh, Billy, Billy! Phwat a goat!"

O'Rooney waved his hand and turned the launch. He ran slowly round the north side

NEXT TUESDAY!

"SAVED FROM HIMSELF!"

A MAGNIFICENT TALE OF FRANK RICHARDS & CO. By MARTIN CLIFFORD.

of the island, and there something caught his keen eye that he was not expected to see. The two men had constructed a raft of palm-logs. It lay on the beach, and would float with the rising tide. Barry went to the locker, took out an axe, and threw it ashore. At his shout, Sharkfin Billy and Donelan came slowly towards him, and saw that he had an automatic pistol in his hand.

"Ut won't do, bhoys!" he said. "Bedad, ut won't do at all, at all! O'll sthoph your sup-ploies av you thry springing thricks loike this on us. Pick up that hatchet, wan of you, and make forewood of that thing. Ut's not an aisy craft to navigate, and O'd croy my oies out av Oi had you drownded, so carrve ut up, Billy, and do ut quick."

Billy's temper was still on edge, but it was foolish to argue with a man armed with a pistol. He slashed at the raft till it fell to pieces.

"Look out!" yelled Donelan frantically. "Head down, man!"

Barry ducked promptly, and the axe the one-eyed man had hurled at his head whizzed over him harmlessly and splashed into the sea. Barry O'Rooney took in a deep breath.

"Sure, you're a noice koind bhoy, William, and your mother must have been proud of you!" he said. "Av Oi tell Mистер Ferrers Lord about that bit of poloteness, O'im thinking ut would go pretty harrd wid you. Bedad, as you've got no 'baccy, O'im not inclined to be too rough, for O've knowed phwat ut is to nade a smoke, and ut's not blissful. Och, you're a black-hearted rogue, Billy, and the finish of you won't be a good wan. You nearly got me bhoy, and you've lost me a good hatchet."

With a nod of thanks to Donelan for having returned him, Barry restarted the engine and warned to the raider and Jimmy.

It was a dismal time for O'Rooney, for he had a lively nature, and liked good company. Jimmy was not good company, for it was very difficult to understand his pidgin-English, and when he was not chattering he sat on the floor, staring at Barry with his curious yellow eyes. In the day-time the raider grew intolerably hot, and before she had time to cool down properly between dusk and dawn the sun was up again to give her another gulling. Each evening O'Rooney looked up his prisoners for a chat and to make sure that they were building no more rafts or attempting some other from of trickery.

And in the dawn certain yells from Jimmy brought him out of his sweltering bunk, pistol in hand. There was nothing to be alarmed at, but something to rejoice over, for Jimmy was pointing excitedly to a patch of smoke, and they knew it must be the smoke of Ching Lung's yacht, and that their dreary vigil was over.

The prince had found his faithless crew interned in a compound on the reef, and the police who had rounded them up had been only too thankful to hand them over to him with their blessing. Barry went aboard the yacht as soon as she anchored and saluted the millionaire.

"All's well, sor," he said. "or, at laste, Oi hope so. Oi haven't seen the prisoners since sundown, but they were safe then."

"Very good, O'Rooney," answered Ferrers Lord. "You are relieved. Mr. Honour will take charge of the raider now."

Later in the day, Sharkfin Billy and Bruce Donelan were brought aboard the yacht and taken below. They took the raider in tow and headed away from the islands.

"Tell you what it is, Gan, my jewel," said Ching Lung, looking back. "The sea is blue and the beaches are white and the islands are green and everything in the garden is lovely and as pretty as paint, but I don't think I want to see this place again for quite a long time, do you, most fat and friendly one?"

"I nots; it a lot too hotness, Chingy, old beans," gurgled the Eskimo. "We offs now to find Ruperts and Ben Maddocks and old Tommy Prout and the rest, hunk?"

"I fancy that is a part of the official programme," said the prince. "And we shall find them, sure enough; and I think, somehow, they'll be glad to see us."

"And yo' nots think the crew play any

(Continued on page 28.)

THE POPULAR.—No. 191.

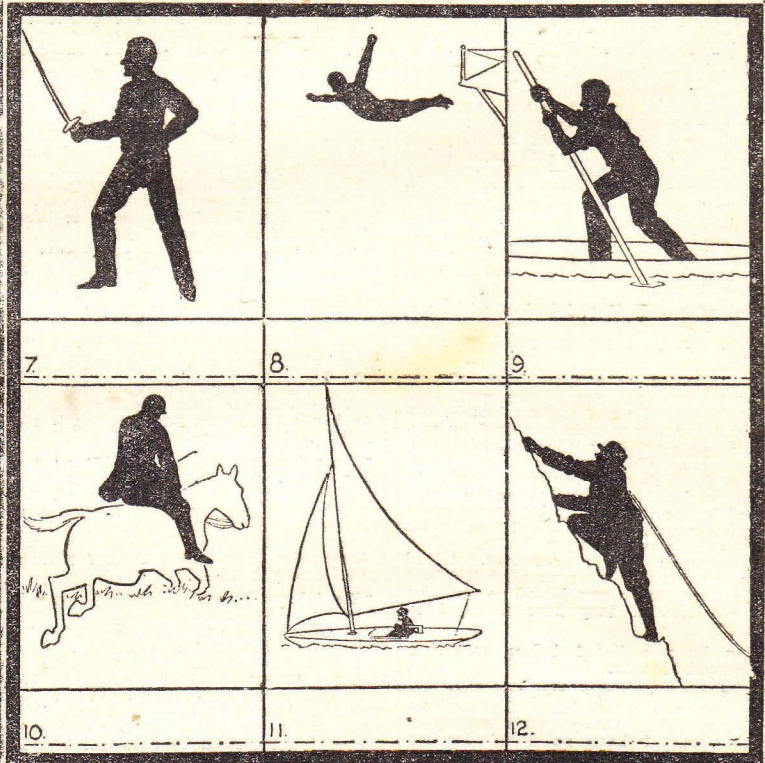
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This competition is run in conjunction with the "Boys' Friend," "Gem," and the "Magnet," and readers of those journals are invited to compete.

Employees of the proprietors of this journal are not eligible to compete.

It must be distinctly understood that the decision of the Editor is final and binding.

A WORD WITH YOUR EDITOR!

Address your letters to: The Editor, The "Popular," The Fleetway House, Farringdon Street, London, E.C. 4.

FOR NEXT TUESDAY!

Included in the splendid batch of stories I have in preparation for next week's issue, which will make its appearance on Tuesday, there will be a grand long complete story dealing with the adventures of Harry Wharton & Co., the chums of Greyfriars, entitled,

"A PARDON WELL EARNED!" By Frank Richards.

When the Bounder disappears for the second time from Greyfriars after his dramatic return in this week's story, no one knows where he has hidden himself, until—by a strange piece of good fortune, Billy Bunter blunders into his new hiding-place. That Vernon-Smith is furious can well be imagined; but he is able to keep Bunter's mouth shut for a short time—only for a short time, it appears. Bunter lets fall some remarks which are picked up by Mr. Quelch, and from them the Form-master is able to discover, for himself, where the Bounder is hiding himself. Then comes the most dramatic and thrilling part of the story.

Following this will be another grand long complete tale of Frank Richards & Co., the Cedar Creek chums. The story is entitled,

"SAVED FROM HIMSELF!" By Martin Clifford.

With much reluctance, Vere Beauclerc is called upon to bid his father, his chums, and his beloved Western home, farewell. The parting is extremely hard for him, as it is for the others, more especially Mr. Beauclerc. Of late the remittance-man has changed very much in character, and to such an extent that everyone wonders, some congratulating him, and others depreciating the fact. But there is also something strange and ominous about the manner of the ex-wastrel which the Cherub cannot understand. The story is one of the finest Mr. Martin Clifford has given us, and I am sure you will all enjoy reading it.

There will also be another fine long complete tale of Tom Merry & Co., the famous chums of St. Jim's, under the title of,

"RATTY ON THE WARPATH!" By Martin Clifford.

Mr. Ratcliff, the tyrannical master of the New House, is never loved at the best of times, but when he goes on the warpath, everyone sees it's his duty to keep clear of the New House master.

The fourth long complete school story will be about Jimmy Silver & Co., of Rookwood School, entitled,

"A ROOKWOOD MYSTERY!" By Owen Conquest.

There is great excitement at the school when it becomes known that Captain Lagden, an old Rookwooder, who had made a name for himself on the battle-field during the war, and who had lost an arm in doing so, is coming to take up the post of footer coach for the Sixth Form. But when the hero makes his appearance, there are many disappointments; for he does not turn out to be the man the fellows imagine him to be. In fact, he turns out to be something of a mystery. In some quarters he is looked upon as being an interfering cad. Lovell of the Fourth is particularly hurt at the unpleasant manner of the captain, so plans to get even. Then another sensation is caused when Arthur Edward Lovell does not make his appearance at breakfast one day. Parties search in vain for the missing junior. Where has he gone? What has become of Lovell? The questions are unanswered!

THE SUPPLEMENT!

Billy Bunter, the fat editor of our grand four-page supplement, tells me that next week's will be a "Special Football Number." To quote Billy's own words, "Who knows more about football than me? Who is more suited to run a football number than me? No one!"

OUR SERIAL!

We are drawing near to the conclusion of our amazing serial of adventure,

"THE PEARL POACHERS!" By Sidney Drew,

and I am sure it will be with much regret that we read the last chapters.

Last, but by no means least, there will be another part of our "Silhouettes" Competition, in which big money prizes are being offered.

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Mr. LEONARD ROE, Quorn, Leicestershire, writes: "I have mended my watch from the instructions given in 'The Amateur Mechanic,' though it had not been going for twelve months. Now I am going to restore the colour of a pair of brown boots. Your articles on 'Miniature Electric Lighting' are very interesting to me. I have already fitted up my cycle with electric light from the directions given in these articles."

Mr. F. H. PARKES, Brighton, writes: "The work is excellent. It is almost impossible for any amateur worker to desire knowledge which is not to be found within these four volumes. I am working in a small shop, odd-jobbing, taking everything that comes my way, and my scope has been enlarged as though I had served innumerable apprenticeships. I am even contemplating taking up some entirely fresh trade as a spare-time occupation. I have already made a successful attempt at watch and clock repairing by getting a watch and a clock in going order that had been returned as hopeless by three watchmakers! My entire information on the subject came from 'The Amateur Mechanic.'"

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U.J.S., 1922.

THE PEARL POACHERS!

(Continued from page 26.)

more monkey-tricks, Chingy, like they play when Sharkfin Billy pepper those shells at them, hunk?"

"I'll watch it, my bright lad," said Ching Lung grimly. "They're only Chinks, Gan, and you can't expect them to have heroic nerves like yourself; and, after all, it isn't very jolly to have shells buzzed at you, especially those spiteful hoppers. They got the wind up, but they're steady enough now, and I'll watch it very closely."

The crew were in a mood of meek repentance, and had sent a deputation to Ching Lung to express their shame and sorrow, and the prince had kicked the deputation out. Though unreliable and untrustworthy in an emergency, they were quite useful sailors in normal times, and Ching Lung did not expect another emergency.

The prince and the millionaire were at dinner when a servant, with a deep salaam, announced to the prince that he was wanted on deck.

"It's Hal Honour, Chief," said the prince. "He's flash-lamping from the raider as nobody can understand good English bawled through a megaphone."

They went up together. The launch was at half-speed, towing the raider astern of her on a lazy sea with a clear sky overhead spangled with stars.

"It's come," cried the engineer's voice.

"The message for Sharkfin Billy—the message from Harper Blaise?"

"Yes."

That was all, and Ching Lung and Ferrers Lord went back to dinner as quickly as if nothing of importance had happened. In their conversation they did not even mention Harper Blaise. Two people had been working for the millionaire—the ship's Chinese tailor, who was skilful at his trade, and Harold Honour. Dinner over the millionaire lighted a cigarette and leaned back in his chair

watching the wisping blue smoke through half-closed lids.

"Do you intend to come with me, Ching?" he asked at last. "I'm not suggesting that the crew would elope with the yacht, but is it perfectly safe to leave them?"

"Perfectly safe; and you may be sure I'm coming with you to be in at the death," answered Ching Lung. "And even if they did elope, the Lord of the Deep is knots faster than my tub, and we'd very easily catch her again. That's all over, and I can trust them when it's plane sailing, though they did disgrace me, the cowards!"

"Very well, Ching. Slow down, and we'll go aboard the raider. Lend me half a dozen of your men—the best you can pick out. We know how Prout will steer, so I'll set a course for the yacht to follow. Your tailor has made my suit admirably, so I shall begin to look myself again. So now, my friend, to settle our account with that arch-rogue Harper Blaise."

(There will be another grand instalment of this amazing serial next week.)

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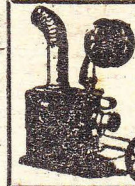
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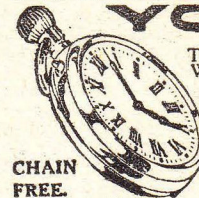
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