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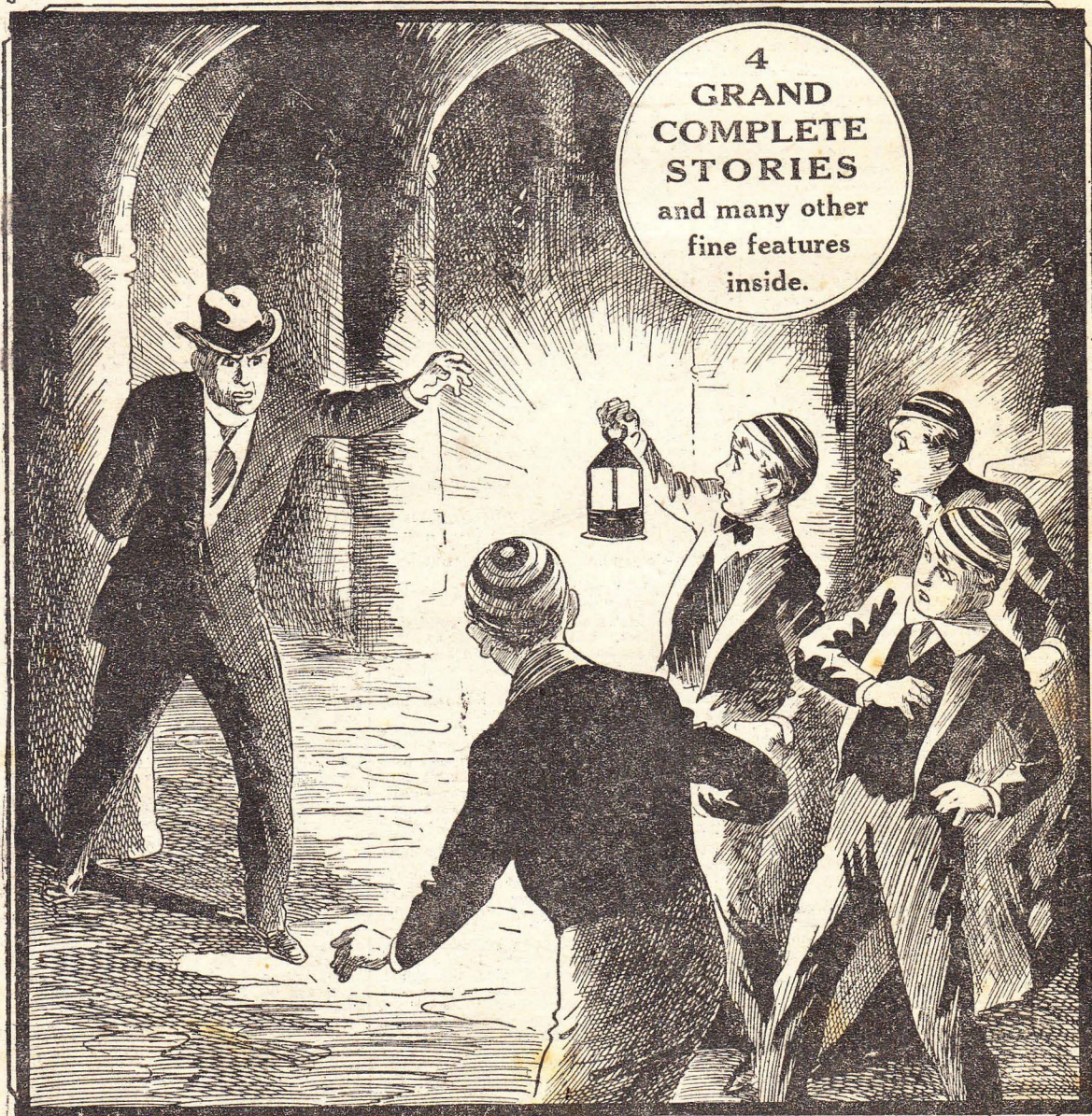
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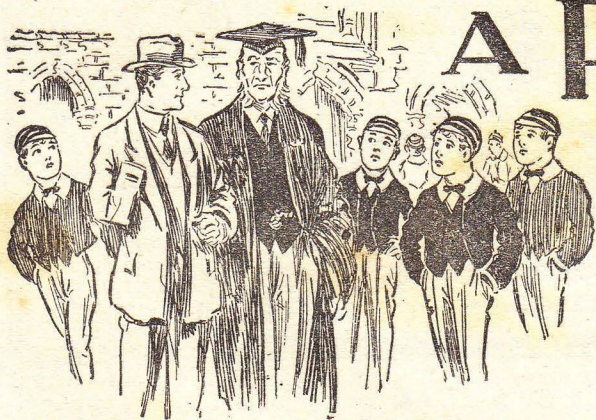


4
GRAND
COMPLETE
STORIES
and many other
fine features
inside.

CAPTAIN LAGDEN SURPRISES JIMMY SILVER & CO. IN THE VAULTS!

(A Dramatic Incident from the Long Complete Story of Rookwood inside.)

ARTHUR LOVELL VANISHES FROM ROOKWOOD SCHOOL SOON AFTER THE APPEARANCE OF CAPTAIN LAGDEN, THE NEW FOOTBALL COACH!



A ROOKWOOD MYSTERY!

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. A Very Distant Relation!

"**C**ome! The Fistical Four of the Fourth Form at Rookwood uttered that expressive monosyllable together, in a sort of chorus.

Jimmy Silver & Co. were at tea in the end study. Supplies were short, and cash was shorter.

Therefore when Tubby Muffin put his podgy face in at the doorway they greeted him as aforesaid.

"Hook it!" added Lovell, with emphasis. Tubby Muffin did not "hook it." He rolled in.

"Bunk!" said Raby. "Disappear!" commanded Newcome. But Tubby only grinned.

"I haven't come to tea!" he said disdainfully. "I know you've only got bread and some mouldy old sardines! I say, I want you fellows to back me up to-morrow when he comes!"

"He!" repeated Jimmy Silver. "What he?"

"Haven't you heard?" said Tubby. "Chap named Lagden—"

"New boy?"

"He, he! No; an old boy. He's coming to-morrow," said Tubby Muffin, "and my idea is to give him a reception."

The Fistical Four stared at Tubby.

"Relation of yours?" asked Raby. "Oh, no! Never heard of the chap before!"

"Then what on earth do you want to give him a reception for?" demanded Jimmy Silver.

"That's my idea, you know! I think he ought to have a reception, and I'm prepared to take the lead and make a speech—a neat little speech!" said Tubby. "You know I'm a bit of an orator—"

"Oh, my hat!"

"And on such an occasion a fellow with a rather commanding presence is required to be master of the ceremonies!" said Tubby, drawing his podgy figure to its full height—which was not very much. "You agree to that?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I don't see what you fellows are cackling at! Considering what Captain Lagden has been through, I think we ought to show him what Rookwood thinks of him! It's a great occasion!"

"Captain Lagden!" repeated Arthur Edward Lovell.

"That's the chap."

"I've got some relations named Lagden," said Lovell. "Distant relations—never seen them."

"Oh, I don't suppose this chap is a relation of yours!" said Tubby Muffin. "He's awfully decent—"

"What?" ejaculated Lovell, while his chums chuckled.

"Quite a nob, I hear," said Tubby.

Lovell looked round for something to throw at Reginald Muffin. That cheery youth rattled on:

"He's a first-rate chap, you know. Lost his right arm in the war. Hard lines on a young fellow, don't you think so?"

"Jolly hard lines!" said Jimmy Silver. "And he's an old Rookwood boy," said Tubby.

"If you fellows kept your eye on the Roll of Honour downstairs you'd have seen his name there. He was reported killed, but he seems to have got off with the loss of his arm. He's coming here to stay."

"What the dickens is an Old Boy coming here to stay for?" asked Newcome.

"The Head's given him a job," explained Tubby. "Being an old Rookwooder, it seems that he got into communication with the Head when he left the Army, and—excepting his pension, whatever it is—he hasn't a leg to stand on. He's going to coach the seniors at footer—football coach, you know."

"Good old Head!" said Jimmy Silver. "But how the thump do you know all this, Tubby? I suppose the Head hasn't consulted you about it?"

"He might have done worse," answered Tubby. "But, as a matter of fact, he hasn't."

"How do you know anything about Captain Lagden?"

"I happened to hear the Head speaking to Mr. Bootles," explained Tubby. "He was in old Bootles' study, and I was coming in with my lines. But it ain't a secret; lots of the fellows know that Captain Lagden is coming to stay here. You fellows are behind the times; you never know anything!"

"Perhaps our ears are not quite so long as yours!" grunted Lovell.

"Well, he's coming to-morrow," resumed Tubby. "Now, that chap has been fighting the Germans, and he's lost his arm, and been wounded in the chivvy—quite spoils his good looks, I heard the Head say—he was a good-looking chap once. Now, that chap's a hero, ain't he?"

"Hear, hear!"

"Well, then," said Tubby, "my idea is to give him a reception."

"Fathead! Do you think he'll want to be bothered by a lot of fags?"

"Rot!" answered Tubby. "Of course he will be pleased! My scheme is to meet him when he arrives and make a little speech. I make the speech, and you fellows stand round and cheer when I give the signal. I've spoken to Erroll and Mornington and Conroy, but they don't seem to catch on. I want you, Jimmy, as captain of the Fourth, to rally the whole Form and support me on the occasion."

"My dear duffer," said Jimmy Silver, "chuck it! You can't spring antics like that on a distinguished visitor!"

"I suppose that means that you're jealous!" said Tubby disdainfully.

"Fathead!"

"What's his front name?" asked Lovell, who was looking very thoughtful.

"Basil."

"My hat! That's my relation, then!" said Lovell, with some excitement. "Basil Lagden isn't a common name. Besides, if it's the chap whose name is in the Rookwood Roll of Honour, that's the man!"

Arthur Edward Lovell rose immediately in the estimation of his chums.

In fact, he rose a little in his own estimation.

It was something to be a relation of a man who had lost his right arm in the service of his country.

"Look here, what regiment was your blessed relation in?" asked Tubby Muffin, apparently grudging Lovell the honour.

"Loamshire Rifles."

"Well, that's his regiment right enough," admitted Tubby. "Fancy you having a relation like that, Lovell! Looking at you, who'd have thought it?"

Whiz!

A cushion hurtled across the study and caught Tubby Muffin just under his fat chin.

The surprised Tubby spun backwards, and sat down in the doorway with a bump that snook the study furniture.

"Yooop!" he gasped.

"Now wag your chin again, and I'll let you have the teapot!" roared Lovell.

"Yaroooh!"

Tubby wriggled out of the doorway, and vanished down the passage. The cushion was quite enough for him, and he had no desire whatever for the teapot.

"I don't see what you silly asses are cackling at!" said Arthur Edward Lovell gruffly. "I'll scap that fat pig if he rolls in here again! Look here, that chap Lagden's my relation right enough. I told you fellows when we found his name in the Roll of Honour, long ago."

"I remember," said Jimmy Silver. "You said you'd never met him."

"No; we never knew the people," said Lovell. "They're only a distant connection, and I believe they lived in the North. It was a sort of cousinship between our grandfathers, I believe."

"My hat! That's distant enough!"

"Well, after all it's not so jolly distant," said Lovell, who seemed to have a desire to make the relationship a little nearer now.

"It's a blood-relationship, anyway. My grandfather was the son of Lagden's grandfather's aunt, or cousin, or something. I remember hearing my pater mention the name once or twice at home, and that's why it struck me when I saw it in the Roll of Honour. I remember my pater said something about looking up that branch of the family, and that he believed Basil Lagden was an orphan. That was when the chap was first wounded, a good time back. I believe he's a good sort."

"You'd better give him a reception instead of Tubby," said Jimmy Silver, with a smile.

Lovell snorted.

"If that fat idiot plays the goat when my relation comes, I'll squash him!" he said. "I shall certainly speak to Lagden when he

comes. A chap ought to know his own cousin."
 "Cousin!" repeated Jimmy.
 "Well, relation," amended Lovell. "Sort of cousin, you know."
 Jimmy and Raby and Newcome grinned. Lovell's relationship to the distinguished visitor was getting closer and closer as he talked.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.
 Reflected Glory.

ARTHUR EDWARD LOVELL was looking very pleased with himself that evening and the next morning. Most of the Rookwood fellows, having heard of the forthcoming visit of Captain Lagden, discussed him and his coming with considerable interest. A man who had been through the war, and had lost an arm there, was certain to be popular at Rookwood.

The fact that he was an old Rookwooder, and had been a footballer of some distinction, added to the interest with which he was regarded.

It was very agreeable for Lovell to be able to remark in an offhand way, when Captain Lagden was mentioned, "A relation of mine, you know!"
 It was undoubtedly a distinction. "I wonder if Sergeant Kettle remembers the chap?" said Lovell thoughtfully, as he was walking in the quad with his chums after dinner. "The sergeant's been here for dogs' ages, and he ought to remember an Old Boy who isn't so very old. I believe the captain isn't over thirty."

"Good egg! Let's ask him!" said Jimmy Silver. And the Fistical Four walked into the school shop, which Sergeant Kettle kept in the ground floor of the ancient clock-tower of Rookwood.

Sergeant Kettle smiled as soon as Captain Lagden was mentioned. It was evident that he had been asked questions on that subject already.

"Yes, I remember him," said the sergeant, with a nod. "Remember him well, Master Silver. Fine, tall, young feller he was. I was 'ere when he came, and when he left. He was in the Second Form when I first saw him. Cheeky little beggar, too! No end of pluck, too!"

The sergeant was clearly an admirer of the former Rookwooder.

"What was he like?" asked Lovell.
 "Good-looking," said the sergeant. "I hear his looks have been spoiled by his wound in the face, more's the pity. He was always a beggar for fighting. When he was in the Fourth Form I remember his fight with Johnson of the Fifth. I saw it from my window." The sergeant grinned at the recollection. "Then there was the time he got lost in the abbey vaults—"

"Did he?" exclaimed Jimmy Silver, with great interest.

"He went exploring the vaults, and the boy who was with him shut him in for a joke," said the sergeant.

"Rotten joke!" grunted Lovell. "I don't call that a joke. He might have been scared to death!"

"He wasn't scared; he tried to find another way out, and got lost," said Sergeant Kettle. "He was lost for twenty-four hours. And Baumann owned up that he had shut him in, getting frightened, and he was hunted for and found. Not a bit scared, either, though he'd been in the dark all the time."

"Good man!" said Jimmy Silver. "Who was Baumann? Sounds like a Hun name."

"That was years afore the war, of course," said Sergeant Kettle. "We didn't think so much about Hun names in them days. That Baumann was a bad egg. He ended up by being expelled from the school. He took to gambling, and stole from a Form-master's desk. A bad egg, if you like. I heard that he went quite to the bad afterwards; but he was never seen at Rookwood again."

"Nice sort of chap to have been at Rookwood!" grunted Lovell. "But about Basil Lagden—was he great at games?"

"I should say so!" answered the sergeant. "Good at football, good at cricket, good at rowing and swimming. Fine fellow, if you like, every way!"

"He's a relation of mine," said Lovell carelessly.

"Then you ought to be proud of him, Master Lovell!" said Mr. Kettle.

The sergeant went on with reminiscences of Basil Lagden, who seemed to have filled

a good space of the horizon while he was a Rookwooder.

When the chums of the Fourth left the tuckshop, Lovell headed for Mr. Bootles' study.

Mr. Bootles was not there, however, and Lovell did not see him till the Fourth Form turned up for afternoon classes.

Lovell rose in his place before lessons commenced.

Mr. Bootles blinked at him over his glasses.

"What is it, Lovell?"

"If you please, sir, I should like to be excused lessons this afternoon."

"Lovell!"

"I'd like to meet Captain Lagden at the station, sir. He's a relation of mine," said Lovell hastily.

"Indeed! I was not aware that Captain Lagden had a relative in the school," said Mr. Bootles.

"He's my cousin, sir—I mean, second cousin—that is to say, a sort of second cousin—"

"Indeed! However, Lovell, you will remain where you are. Dr. Chisholm is going to meet Captain Lagden at the station, and I doubt very much whether he would care for your company!" said Mr. Bootles dryly.

"Oh!" said Lovell. And he sat down.

That finished it for Lovell. He realised that a Fourth-Former was not wanted on the scene when the majestic Head of Rookwood himself was to be there.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.
 The Old Boy.

THAT must be the chap!"

The Fourth Form were "out," and Arthur Edward Lovell's first thought when he emerged from the Form-room was of his distinguished relation.

It was certain that the captain had arrived some time ago, and most of the fellows were anxious to see him if he was on view, so to speak.

As the Fistical Four came out of the School House they spotted the distinguished Old Boy—for evidently it was the Old Boy.

The Head was walking in the quadrangle with a gentleman whose right arm was represented by an empty sleeve.

The Fistical Four looked at him with interest—indeed, their gaze was as near a stare as politeness would allow.

The one-armed gentleman was somewhat thick-set, and looked physically strong. He was in civilian clothes.

His face was traversed by two deep scars, which gave it a strange aspect, and certainly did not improve it so far as beauty went.

But the scars of battle ranked higher than good looks in the estimation of the Rookwood juniors.

The juniors were interested and impressed, but perhaps a little vaguely disappointed.

The one-armed gentleman was not exactly the upstanding, stalwart figure they had imagined.

But they were determined to be pleased with him, as was natural; and they would not admit, even in their thoughts, that he fell short of what they had expected.

Captain Lagden was walking with the Head, apparently viewing once more his boyhood's haunts with great interest.

"I suppose a chap can't speak to him now, while he's with the Head," murmured Lovell. "Don't want to seem pushing. I'll noble him afterwards."

The gallant officer disappeared in the Head's house, and it was fairly obvious he was going to have tea there. Lovell grunted, and went to the end study with his chums.

It was after tea before Lovell found an opportunity to introduce himself to the captain.

"Tap!"

"Come in!"

Arthur Edward Lovell opened the door and entered.

Captain Lagden had been assigned two rooms in the School House—a bedroom and a private sitting-room.

The latter was a very pleasant apartment, with a little balcony outside the window, with iron steps leading down, amid clusters of ancient ivy, into a secluded corner of the quadrangle.

It was at the door of the latter room that Lovell tapped rather timidly.

He entered in response to the captain's "Come in!" his face colouring a little.

Somehow the captain had not the frank, soldierly bearing the juniors had expected

him to have, and though Lovell had seen him several times that day, he had not felt encouraged to speak to him.

Indeed, but for the fact that he had told all Rookwood that Captain Lagden was related to him, it is probable that Lovell would not have claimed acquaintance at all.

It was, perhaps, owing to the scars on his face; but, in spite of himself, Lovell felt that the captain had a forbidding look.

But, after all his talk and—to be candid—his "swank" on the subject of his relationship, Lovell had no choice left, and he was bound to present himself to the captain as a relation.

After all, he argued in his mind, Basil Lagden could not fail to be pleased to find a relation in the school; and, at all events, there was no reason why he should be displeased.

So Lovell presented himself in the captain's quarters, though with a secret feeling of uneasy timidity.

Captain Lagden was seated by the window, smoking a cigarette and looking over a newspaper.

He glanced inquiringly at Lovell, plainly surprised to see a junior schoolboy presenting himself there.

"Well?" he said.

"I—I've come in—" stammered Lovell, much discouraged by the cold, chilling expression on the captain's scarred face.

"You have a message for me?"

"N-no."

"Then what do you want?"

Lovell's colour deepened.

At that moment he fervently wished that he had not known that Basil Lagden was his relation, and had never spoken of him in the school.

But, as matters stood, he was in for it, and he had to go on.

"I—I thought I'd come, sir," he stammered. "I'm a relation of yours, sir, and—and I thought you'd like to know. Excuse me!"

Captain Lagden started.

"A relation of mine!" he exclaimed in a loud, sharp voice, which showed how startled he was by the information.

"Yes, Captain Lagden."

"What is your name?"

"Lovell—Arthur Edward Lovell."

The captain drew a deep breath.

"Oh! Not Lagden?" he said, as if involuntarily.

"No; Lovell. You've heard of your relations, the Lovells?" said the junior.

There was an instant's pause.

"Naturally," was the captain's reply, when he spoke. "So you are Arthur Edward Lovell, and you claim to be related to me."

It was not a pleasant way of putting it, and it made Lovell feel more and more uncomfortable.

When he had first thought of telling the captain of his relationship, he had supposed that he would be met in a cheery, friendly way; but there was certainly nothing cheery or friendly about the captain just then.

His looks told as plainly as words could have done that he was not in the least gratified by the discovery that he had a relative in the Fourth Form at Rookwood.

Lovell wished himself well out of the room, and he stood with a flushed face, in great discomfort.

"What is the precise relationship between us, then?" asked the captain, as the confused junior did not speak.

"Sort of cousin," stammered Lovell.

"Have you ever seen me before?"

"Oh, no!"

Again the captain drew a deep breath.

"It's only a distant relationship, sir," said Lovell. "I believe my grandfather was cousin to your grandfather or grandmother, or something like that."

"Oh!" said the captain. "Something like that?"

"Ye-es."

"And you call that a relationship?"

"I—I—"

"Your father, perhaps, has told you to make acquaintance with me?" asked the captain, eyeing Lovell narrowly.

"My father doesn't even know you're here," said Lovell. "I dare say he would have told me to speak to you. I've heard him speak of you at home, and he was saying once that he would like to meet you."

"Indeed!"

Lovell stood silent. He wondered whether it would do to retire at that point. He would have given a week's pocket-money to be out of the room.

"And you have come here to tell me you are my relation, because of the remote connection you refer to?" said the captain coldly.

"Ye-es. I—I thought—"

"Such a distant connection does not constitute relationship, in my opinion," said the captain. "In fact, to be frank, I look upon your conduct as rank impertinence!"

Lovell was as crimson as a beetroot.

"You needn't!" he blurted out. "I—I thought you'd like to know, that's all! I don't see why you should be ratty! I don't want to claim you as a relation! Why should I? I'm sorry I came here!"

"Shut the door after you!"

Lovell walked out of the room, his face on fire, and closed the door after him with more force than was actually necessary.

A little winding staircase led from the landing outside down into the big staircase, and on the lower stairs several juniors were waiting.

They looked very curiously at Lovell's crimson face as he came down.

"Well, was your merry cousin glad to see you?" asked Jimmy Silver.

"He's not my cousin."

"What?"

"It's only a distant relationship—second or third or fourth cousin, at the very nearest," said Lovell.

Jimmy stared at him.

"My hat! It's farther off than it was yesterday, then!" he said. "He was jolly nearly your twin brother yesterday!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, don't be an ass!" said Lovell irritably.

"Haven't you got on with him?" asked Mornington.

"How could a chap get on with an ill-mannered cad like that?" demanded Lovell.

"A—what?"

"What are you calling him?" exclaimed Raby.

"I call him an ill-mannered cad!" said Lovell, breathing hard. "That's what he is—a rotten, mean cad! He treated me like—like just as if I was a pushing sort of bouncer trying to claim acquaintance with him for some purpose of my own! I only wanted to speak in a friendly way, and he treated me like that! Why couldn't he be civil?"

"Wasn't he civil?" exclaimed Jimmy Silver, in wonder.

"No, he wasn't!"

"Well, I don't see why he couldn't be civil," remarked Mornington. "Perhaps his old wounds are bothering him, though. Old soldiers get a bit rusty for that reason."

"It's not that!" snapped Lovell. "For some reason he's ratty at finding that he's got a relation here. Why, I don't know. He doesn't want to have anything to do with me. As if I want to have anything to do with him, the cad! He can go and eat coke!"

And Lovell marched off, in great wrath and indignation.

Jimmy Silver & Co. could not help wondering.

There was no reason, so far as they could see, why the captain should be displeased at finding that he had a relative at Rookwood.

Poor Lovell had been bitterly wounded—all the more because his rebuff, owing to his own indignant remarks, became generally known, and some of the juniors chortled over it as a good joke.

But it was agreed that the captain had been, to say the least, extremely ungracious. And that, added to many other little circumstances during the next few days, had the effect of making Basil Lagden much less popular with the Rookwooders than they had expected he would be.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

Caught!

"IT'S odd!" said Bulkeley.

"More than odd, I call it!" said Knowles. "Jolly queer, in my opinion!"

Jimmy Silver was sitting on a bench under the beeches, when the voices came to his ears—those of Knowles, the Modern prefect, and Bulkeley, captain of Rookwood.

THE POPULAR.—No. 192.

NEXT
TUESDAY!

He had not heard the two Sixth-Formers approaching, the fallen leaves deadening their footsteps.

Jimmy was "mugging up" "Virgil," his acquaintance with P. Vergilius Maro having failed to come up to Mr. Bootles' requirements that day.

He did not look round, but went on with "Virgil," not being in the least interested in words not intended for his ears.

But he started a little as Knowles spoke again.

"He's come here as football coach, but if ever there was a man not well up in footer, it's he! He can't coach for toffee!"

"Must make allowances," said Bulkeley. "After all, he was a long time in the Army, and may have forgotten his old skill."

"Looks to me as if he never knew much of the game!"

"Well, he must have. He was a great footballer when he was here, and captained the Rookwood team a good many times."

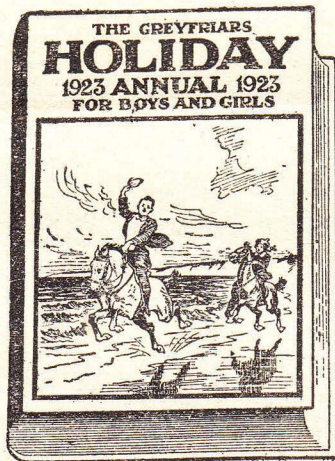
"He's forgotten all he knew, then! Jolly odd, the Head taking him on as football coach for the Upper School; and jolly odd his accepting the post, under the circumstances! I tell you he's no good!"

"He had a big reputation once."

"That's what I can't understand! Judging from appearances, I should say he had always been a fumbler at the game!"

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The two seniors passed on, and their voices went beyond Jimmy Silver's hearing. Jimmy laid his book on his knee.

This was not the first hint he had heard on that subject, though it was the first time he had heard Bulkeley's opinion.

It was strange enough that man who had come to the school as football coach should impress the Rookwood seniors as being anything but an expert at the game.

Lagden of the Sixth, in the old days, had been one of Rookwood's crack players, as Sergeant Kettle remembered very well, and often said.

That was not the only curious circumstance about Basil Lagden.

Jimmy Silver had noticed that Sergeant Kettle, who had looked forward very keenly to seeing Captain Lagden, had lost all his enthusiasm on the subject.

The sergeant never mentioned Lagden now unless he was questioned, and then his answers were short and dry.

It was pretty clear that Lagden had frozen off the sergeant, as he had frozen off Arthur Edward Lovell.

Why the man should be so coldly ungracious to persons who were prepared to like and respect him was a mystery. With the juniors Captain Lagden had little or nothing to do; but most of the juniors had

remarked by this time that they did not like him.

And it was a perplexity to all of them that that cold, forbidding man was the same man who had gone through a career of gallantry during the war.

Certainly the Rookwooders were very disappointed in Basil Lagden.

Jimmy was thinking over that perplexing matter, instead of "Virgil," when Lovell and Raby and Newcome joined him under the beeches.

"Finished?" asked Lovell.

"Well, no," admitted Jimmy.

"Chuck it. all the same; you've had time," said Arthur Edward. "If we're going to explore the vaults before tea, we've got to get a move on. I've got the lantern."

"Well, I ought to dig into this rot a bit more," said Jimmy, rising and slipping his book into his pocket as he spoke. "But I'll risk it with Bootles. Come on, my infants!"

The Fistical Four sauntered away in the direction of the abbey ruins, which, although enclosed within the school walls, were at a considerable distance from the school buildings.

It was a half-holiday, and as there was nothing special on that afternoon, the chums of the Fourth had planned to explore the ruins.

Although, as a matter of fact, the vaults under the old abbey were out of bounds, adventurous fellows often ventured into them to explore their dusky recesses.

It was not a very safe amusement, for the ruins were in a very "rocky" condition, and the vaults were so extensive that it was quite possible to lose one's way in them, and they had not been used for any purpose within the memory of a man.

A legend well known to the Rookwooders told that there existed, or had once existed, a secret passage between the abbey vaults and the more ancient part of the School House, dating from the time when all Rookwood had been a monastic establishment.

Generations of schoolboys had explored the subterranean recesses in search of that secret passage; but if it had ever been found, the discoverer had kept his knowledge to himself.

There was a legend, too, that the old monks of Rookwood had concealed a treasure somewhere in those dusky depths, and nearly every new boy at Rookwood, sooner or later, was certain to have a look for that treasure.

Jimmy Silver & Co. were joined by Mornington and Erroll and Oswald, as they walked to the abbey ruins.

The seven juniors entered the dismantled abbey, of which little remained but the massive walls and fragments of old windows and stone stairs.

They had been in the vaults before, many a time, and they descended at once the stone steps which led to the door giving admittance to them.

That door was of a modern construction, and had been placed there to keep enterprising schoolboys from risking their necks in the dusky recesses.

It was supposed to be kept locked, but, as a matter of fact, it was generally unfastened, left so by the latest explorer.

It was not necessary, therefore, for the party to abstract the key from Mack's lodge, where it hung on a well-known nail.

The door was ajar, and Jimmy Silver opened it wide.

"Light up!" he said.

Lovell lighted the lantern.

"Groogh! Beastly chilly in here!" said Newcome, with a shiver.

"Oh, never mind that!" said Jimmy Silver cheerfully. "I've got a compass here; I got it on purpose. This time we're going to have a really good try for that secret passage."

"If there is one," said Erroll, with a smile.

"Well, the yarn is that there is," said Jimmy; "and if there is, it must lie to the east, as these ruins are west of the School House. There's so many blessed vaults branching off that it's not easy to keep the direction; but with the compass we can manage it. This way!"

With Lovell holding up the lantern, and Jimmy Silver the compass, the explorers set off.

Dark and forbidding enough the damp old stone vaults looked, and in spite of themselves the juniors fell silent as they advanced into the depths.

Jimmy Silver's bright idea of bringing a compass proved very useful, so far as keeping the right direction went.

The vaults certainly extended a good deal

"MISSING!"

A SPLENDID STORY OF ROOKWOOD SCHOOL.
By OWEN CONQUEST.

in the direction of the School House, and Jimmy judged that they were half-way to that ancient building, when he was brought up against a solid wall of stone.

Mornington burst into a chuckle. "That rather stops us," he remarked, "unless there's a giddy secret door. Knock your napper against the wall, Jimmy, and see if it opens."

"Ha, ha, ha!" "Well, it's possible enough," said Jimmy, surveying the great blocks of stone of which the wall was formed. "One of those dashed blocks might move, if we had the secret."

"Jolly cold here!" remarked Newcome, possibly as a hint that he had had enough exploring for the afternoon.

"Hallo! Here comes somebody else!" exclaimed Oswald.

There was a footstep in the dark vaults behind them. "Tubby Muffin, I'll bet my hat!" grinned Lovell. "He thinks we've come down here for a secret feed, and he's after us!" He hastily extinguished the lantern. "Give him a fright. When I groan, you all groan, and he'll think it's the ghost of Rookwood."

There was a soft chuckle among the juniors, and they waited in silence for the footsteps to come nearer.

The chorus of groans was about to break forth, when a sharp voice rang and echoed in the vaults.

"Who is there?" The juniors started in utter astonishment. For the voice from the darkness was the voice of Captain Lagden!

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.
Called Over the Goals.

"LAGDEN!" stuttered Jimmy Silver. "My hat!" "What the thump is he doing here?" muttered Lovell. "Who are you?" The captain's voice was sharp and angry. "You had a light—I saw it! I am quite aware that you are there!" Lovell scratched a match and relighted the lantern.

The juniors did not think of playing ghost now that they knew the identity of the newcomer.

Captain Lagden advanced into the radius of the light.

His scared face was stern and angry. He gave the surprised juniors an angry stare.

"What are you doing here?" he exclaimed. "Exploring the vaults," answered Jimmy Silver.

"Are not these vaults placed out of bounds by order of the Head?" Jimmy was silent.

It was the fact, but that was no business of Captain Lagden's.

"How dare you come here?" Lovell gave his "cousin"—of whom he was not proud now—a glare.

"I suppose we needn't ask your permission!" he blurted out.

"What?" "It's nothing to do with you," said Lovell independently. "We're not under your orders!"

"Not in the least!" said Mornington coolly. "May I suggest, sir, with all respect, that you should mind your own business?"

The captain's eyes glittered. "Leave these vaults at once!" he rapped out harshly.

"Rats!" said Lovell. "What?"

"We'll suit ourselves about that," said Arthur Edward deliberately. "You've no right to interfere with us. A football coach's duty isn't to spy on the Fourth Form, is it?" "Lovell!" murmured Jimmy Silver.

"Let him let us alone, then!" snapped Lovell. "I've had enough cheek from him, I can tell him!"

The captain's face was almost convulsed for a moment, and he made a stride towards Lovell as if he would strike him.

Lovell faced him grimly, grasping the lantern and raising it, with the evident intention of using it as a weapon if necessary.

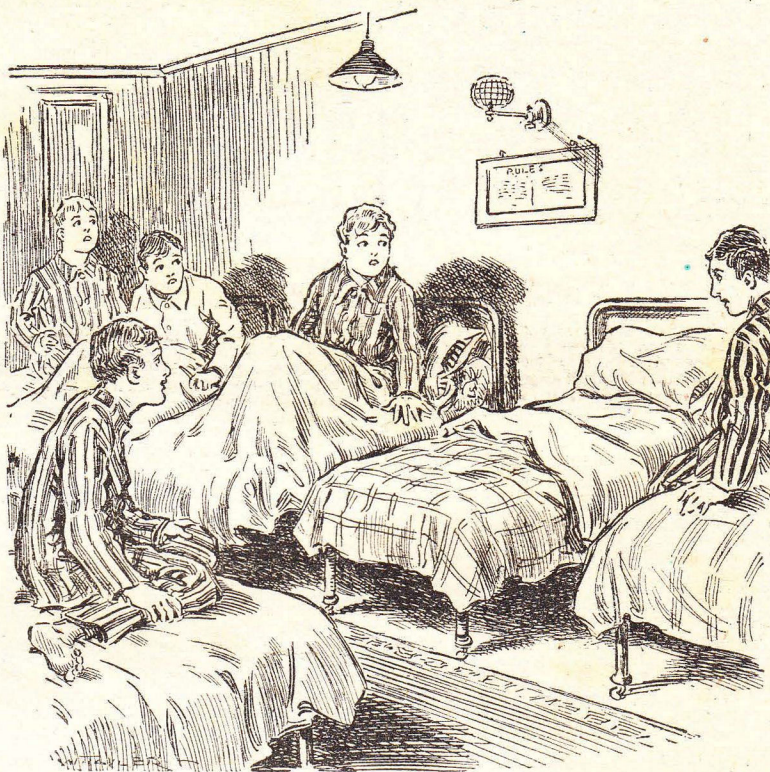
The captain halted. Nobody there wanted trouble with him, but their looks showed that they would back up Lovell if trouble came.

"I shall report this to the Head!" said the captain, between his teeth.

"Report and be hanged!" said Lovell recklessly.

NEXT TUESDAY:

"MISSING!"



WHERE IS ARTHUR LOVELL?—Jimmy Silver sat up and glanced towards his chum's bed. "Lovell—" he began, and then he stopped in sheer astonishment. Lovell was not there! Jimmy gazed at the empty bed, of which the blankets were thrown back, evidently as Lovell had left them the previous night. (See Chapter 7.)

Captain Lagden turned away, and his heavy footsteps rang down the vaults as he strode off into the darkness.

The juniors looked at one another. "Do you think he will report us?" asked Oswald uneasily.

"Jolly certain to, I think," said Lovell dryly. "He's as mad as a hatter with me, at least. I don't care!"

"It means a licking."

"Let it!"

"What the thump was the man doin' here?" said Mornington, in wonder. "He can't have a taste for exploring the vaults, surely?"

"He was shut up here once, when he was a kid at Rookwood, according to old Kettle," said Jimmy. "That might make him let us alone. I should think. I suppose the place was out of bounds in his time."

Lovell gave a snort.

"Oh, he spotted us coming here, and came after us to bowl us out!" he exclaimed contemptuously. "He's no right to report us to the Head; it's not his business. It's sneaking, just the same as if one of the fellows did it!"

"Better get out," said Erroll. "We don't want to be here if the Head sends a prefect to look for us."

Jimmy Silver nodded, and the explorers, in rather an uneasy frame of mind, returned to the upper regions.

Captain Lagden was not in sight when they emerged from the vaults, and they surmised that he had gone directly to the Head.

As they came away from the abbey they met Bulkeley of the Sixth, evidently looking for them.

"Oh, here you are!" said Bulkeley. "Here we are, dear boy!" answered Mornington.

"You're all to go to the Head at once," said Bulkeley. "You've been reported for going down into the abbey vaults!"

"That rotter Lagden—what?" "Don't speak of Captain Lagden like that, Lovell. Give me the key."

"Havent' any key," answered Jimmy Silver. "The door was open, Bulkeley."

"I'll speak to Mack about it, then," said Bulkeley. "He ought to keep that key in a safe place."

The captain of Rookwood turned off in the direction of the porter's lodge, while Jimmy Silver & Co. headed for the School House.

"That means that old Mack is goin' to have a wiggin' for not lookin' after the key!" grinned Mornington. "He'll look after it in future, and there won't be any more explorin' for us."

Lovell clenched his hands.

"If we get into a row with the Head I'll make that man Lagden sit up for it somehow!" he said, between his teeth. "He's no right to interfere with us!"

In rather cheerless spirits, the seven juniors presented themselves in the Head's study.

Dr. Chisholm looked at them sternly as they came in. A cane lay near at hand upon his writing-table.

The juniors could guess that it was placed there ready for use, and they prepared for the ordeal.

"It appears that you have been exploring the vaults under the abbey!" said the Head severely.

Silence!

"Captain Lagden has reported to me that he found you there," said the Head.

"It wasn't his business!" muttered Lovell resentfully.

"What! You know very well that boys are prohibited from entering the vaults, for their safety's sake; and Captain Lagden was alarmed for your safety when he saw you enter," said the Head. "He acted very properly in reporting the matter to me. You, Lovell, it appears, were guilty of personal rudeness and impertinence to Captain Lagden."

"I told him to mind his own business!" "That is enough. All of you," said the Head, "will be detained on Saturday afternoon, as a punishment. You, Lovell, I shall punish more severely, as a warning to be

more careful in what you say to a distinguished and gallant gentleman, who has brought honour upon his old school."

He picked up the cane.

"Hold out your hand, Lovell!"

Swish, swish!

The Head made a gesture of dismissal, and the juniors filed from the study.

In the corridor without, Arthur Edward Lovell squeezed his aching hands in silent fury.

"I'll make the cad sorry for it!" he muttered.

"No good being ratty, Lovell," said Erroll, in his quiet way. "I dare say the captain thought he was doing his duty as he looked at it."

"Rot! He's an interfering cad!"

Lovell strode away to the end study, his chums following him.

The Pistical Four were not feeling happy. Detention on Saturday afternoon was rather serious, especially for Jimmy Silver, who was junior football captain.

As Jimmy remarked, it would play the dickens with the trial match he had arranged for that afternoon.

It could not be helped, however, and the unhappy victims had to make the best of it.

"Keep smiling!" said Jimmy Silver, at last. "Let's have tea. Feel very bad now, Lovell, old chap?"

Lovell's eyes gleamed.

"I don't mind the licking," he said. "I can stand a licking. I'm not made of putty, I suppose. But that cad—that sneak—"

Lovell choked.

"Oh, let him rip!" said Jimmy Silver. "He don't get on with us. He don't seem to remember Rookwood ways, in fact, but he's a good sort in his own way. He had a splendid record in the war, from what we've heard."

"I don't believe it!" said Lovell.

"What?"

"A man who'd been a good soldier wouldn't be such a cad," said Arthur Edward obstinately. "I've never spoken to a soldier, officer or private, who wasn't a decent chap. This man isn't a decent chap, or he wouldn't act as he's done. I don't believe a word about his record in the war. It's spook, somehow. That man never was a good soldier."

"Oh, rot!" said Jimmy Silver uneasily.

Somehow Lovell's words found an echo in his breast in spite of his reply.

Strange as it was, considering Basil Lagden's reputation, he did not impress the Rookwood fellows exactly as a soldier should have done.

If they had known nothing about him, the juniors certainly would not have taken him for a man who had been bravely through the Great War.

"You're a bit excited, Lovell, old chap," said Raby soothingly. "Everybody knows that he did well in the war."

"He got the credit of it," said Lovell. "There's some spook about it somewhere. I don't like him!"

"Well, the fact that you don't like a chap isn't evidence enough to hang him," suggested Newcome.

"Rot! Wasn't I prepared to like him and admire him no end?" said Lovell. "He simply insulted me when I mentioned our relationship. A decent man wouldn't have done that! He's a cad, and he's acted like a sneak, and got me a licking, and I'm going to get even with him!"

Lovell's chums prepared tea, and let the subject drop, feeling that it was not judicious to argue with Arthur Edward in his present state of mind.

Lovell said nothing further on the topic, but his grim look that evening showed that he had not forgotten.

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

Missing!

JIMMY SILVER awoke suddenly.

It was a late hour, and the Classical Fourth had long been in their dormitory.

Jimmy had slept rather uneasily, for he was aware that Lovell had some scheme in his head for "getting even" with the interfering captain.

Jimmy resented Lagden's interference and officiousness keenly enough, but he wanted the matter to drop. He felt that no good could come of carrying on a feud with the man.

Perhaps his view was partly dictated by the fact that it was Lovell who had had the licking, Arthur Edward, naturally, was not in such a placable mood.

Jimmy Silver sat up in bed, blinking round him in the darkness.

Someone was moving in the dormitory, and the sound had awakened Jimmy Silver from his uneasy slumber.

"Is that you, Lovell?" he called out in a low voice.

There was a grunt.

"Yes."

"What are you up to?"

"Nothing for you to worry about," came Lovell's voice from the darkness. "I'm going down, that's all. I'm going to call on the captain, if you want to know."

"He'll be gone to bed by this time, old chap."

"I know that; that's why I'm going," said Lovell coolly. "I'm jolly well going to swamp his napper with ink!"

"Lovell!" exclaimed Jimmy Silver, utterly aghast. "You ass! You'll get a flogging!"

"Bosh!"

"Look here, Lovell—"

There was no reply, but there was a sound of the door closing softly.

Arthur Edward Lovell was gone.

Jimmy Silver sat in bed, troubled and uneasy.

With Lovell in that reckless and obstinate mood he knew that it was useless to attempt to reason with him, even if he followed him to the captain's room.

He waited in great anxiety for his chum to return.

He heard two strokes from the clock-tower, and realised how late it was.

It was cold sitting up in bed, and Jimmy laid down at last and pulled the bedclothes over him.

Lovell had not returned when Jimmy fell into a doze, from which he glided into slumber.

He awoke again as the clock was striking three.

"You there, Lovell?" he asked drowsily.

There was no reply, and Jimmy concluded that Lovell had returned while he dozed, and was in bed and asleep.

He soon fell asleep himself again, and did not reopen his eyes till the rising-bell was clanging out over Rookwood School.

Clang, clang!

Jimmy Silver sat up in bed, and yawned.

He remembered at once Lovell's expedition of the night, and glanced towards his chum's bed.

"Lovell—" he began, and then he stooped in sheer astonishment.

Lovell was not there!

Jimmy Silver gazed in blank amazement at the empty bed, of which the blankets were thrown back, evidently as Lovell had left them the previous night.

"My only hat!" he ejaculated.

"Hallo! Where's Lovell?" exclaimed Raby.

"Gone down already?"

"He's not come back!" stuttered Jimmy Silver.

"What?"

"The utter ass went down in the night about two o'clock!" said Jimmy Silver. "He can't have come back!"

"Great pip!"

"Spotted out of the dorm by a merry prefect," said Mornington. "That's queer, though. They ought to have brought him back."

"Locked in the punishment-room, perhaps," said Oswald.

"It's jolly odd!" said Jimmy.

Jimmy Silver dressed himself very quickly to go down.

In the hall downstairs he found Mr. Bootles in conversation with Mr. Bohun, both the masters looking grave.

Mr. Bootles signed to the junior to approach.

"Silver, is any boy absent from your dormitory?" he asked.

"Wha-at, sir?"

"The hall window was found open this morning by the housemaid," said Mr. Bootles. "It appears clear that it was opened from the inside, and left so. Someone has gone out, and apparently has not returned, as the window remained open. It is extraordinary!"

"Good heavens!" muttered Jimmy.

He almost staggered.

Lovell had told him that he was going to Captain Lagden's room to punish the captain for his interference.

Apparently he had changed his intentions, and had left the School House.

It was a mystery.

"Do you know anything of this, Silver?" exclaimed Mr. Bootles, noting the disturbance in Jimmy's face. "Has any member of the Fourth Form gone out?"

Jimmy hesitated.

But Lovell's absence could not fail to be discovered ere long, as he realised.

"Lovell isn't in the dorm, sir," he said at last.

"Lovell is missing?"

"Ye-es, sir."

"Very well. I shall inform the Head at once!"

At the Fourth-Form table that morning one place was empty.

Arthur Edward Lovell had not returned, and all Rookwood, from the captain of the school to the smallest fag, was wondering and perplexed.

Where was Lovell?

The Fourth Form went into lessons that morning without Lovell.

After lessons it became known that the Head had telephoned to Lovell's home, supposing that the boy had run away from school, and that he had been informed that nothing was known of Lovell at his home.

Jimmy Silver was feeling stunned.

Why should Lovell run away from Rookwood? And if he had, where could he go but home? What did it mean?

Rookwood School throbbed with excitement.

The disappearance of Lovell of the Fourth was the one topic.

And when in the afternoon Lovell's father was seen to arrive at Rookwood the excitement increased.

Where was Lovell?

From the moment he had left the Classical Fourth dormitory the junior had vanished from human ken, without leaving a trace behind.

Jimmy Silver & Co., with pale and troubled faces, tried to think it out, till their heads whirled. The mystery staggered them.

Lovell of the Fourth had vanished from all who knew him as if he had disappeared into thin air. Rookwood School, from end to end, buzzed with the question, to which no answer could be found: "Where was Lovell?"

THE END.

NEXT TUESDAY'S ROOKWOOD STORY.

"MISSING!"

BY OWEN CONQUEST.

Even whilst the whole of Rookwood is buzzing with news of the amazing disappearance of Lovell, Raby vanishes!

DON'T MISS THIS EXCEPTIONALLY POWERFUL SCHOOL STORY!

"IT WAS THE FIRST DECENT THING THAT EVER CAME INTO MY MIND TO DO. BETTER MAKE AN END OF IT NOW THAN TO LIVE TO BE A BURDEN AND DISGRACE TO YOU!"

Saved from Himself!



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.

The Last Day at School.

"CHEER-HO, Franky!" Bob Lawless clapped Frank Richards on the shoulder as he spoke, riding close to him on the trail through the timber, and Frank nearly pitched on to his horse's mane.

The chums of Cedar Creek were on their way to school, in the bright, sunny morning, and Frank Richards had sunk into a deep reverie.

That hearty clap on the shoulder effectually roused him from it.

"Oh!" he ejaculated.

Bob laughed.

"Twenty-five cents for them, old chap!" he said.

"Eh? For what?"

"Your thoughts, of course. They must be worth it, to judge by the way you've been scowling for the last ten minutes."

"Have I been scowling?" asked Frank mildly.

"Well, perhaps you'd call it a thoughtful frown," grinned Bob. "I know you've been staring at your geegee's ears, with a face tied up in a knot. You don't seem to notice what a gorgeous morning it is. Can't you smell the scent from the pine-woods?"

"Ye-es. But I was thinking of old Beau," said Frank.

Bob's cheery face became grave at once.

"Well, I've been thinking about him, too," he said. "It's pretty rotten, old Beau clearing off, and leaving us in the lurch, Franky. I guess I shall miss the Cherub. We began our acquaintance by punching each other's noses, but—"

"I suppose it's better for him to go, Bob," said Frank, with a sigh. "His father's right, I suppose. But we shall miss him. He will miss us, too."

"I guess so. Can't be helped," said Bob. "There's a few days yet."

"I—I wish—"

Bob Lawless gave his English cousin a quick look.

"You wish you were going back to the Old Country with him?" he asked.

"I wasn't thinking of that. I wish he could stay here."

"But it was a change for you, coming out

here, Frank. You were at a public school in England before you came to Canada. I should think it was ripping!"

"So it was," said Frank. "But I should not like to leave Cedar Creek now. Beau doesn't want to leave, either, though he's going to what would be called a much finer sort of life."

"Fancy the Cherub being the nephew of an English earl!" said Bob. "Some fellows would swank on that. It doesn't count for anything out here, but I suppose in the Old Country it means an awful lot. The Cherub will grow into a terrific dude, and he will wonder that he ever managed to put up with Cedar Creek and the backwoods."

Frank Richards shook his head.

"You don't think that, Bob. Hallo! Here he is!"

Vere Beauclerc, on his handsome black horse, was waiting at the fork of the trail. He smiled faintly as his chums joined him, and they rode on together.

Beauclerc's handsome face was very grave. It was evident that the coming departure did not make him happy, though he was little accustomed to betraying his feelings.

Wealth and distinction awaited him in England, but it meant a break with all he had known, and, above all, with his two loyal chums, and with his father, the remittance-man of Cedar Creek.

Lascelles Beauclerc, the wastrel of the family, was not wanted at home.

His brother was willing to provide for Vere, but it was upon the understanding that the wastrel remained where he was.

Vere felt the slight to his father, and he had passionately refused to accept his uncle's offer; but Mr. Beauclerc had accepted it for him.

The die was cast now, and in a couple of days more Vere Beauclerc was to take the post-wagon to Kamloops, the nearest railroad town, to start on his long journey.

"Looking forward to it, Cherub?" asked Bob Lawless, breaking a long and grim silence, only broken hitherto by the tattoo of hoofs on the hard trail.

Beauclerc started.

"To what? Going home, do you mean?"

No.

"Not to the baronial halls?" asked Bob, with a smile.

Beauclerc smiled, too, but very faintly.

"I'd rather stay here," he said. "I was brought up here—this is my home. And—and I don't want to leave my father. I—I can't help thinking—" He broke off.

"Your pater's all right?" asked Frank.

"Oh, yes; better in health, I think, than he has been for a long time," said Vere. "But—but there's something I don't quite understand about him. I know it will be a blow to him when I go, but he thinks it his duty to send me. But—but he will miss me; he will be all alone at the shack, and—and—"

He broke off again, his brow clouding.

His chums were silent.

All three of them felt keenly the shadow of the coming change.

Bob and Frank, too, could not help wondering that the remittance-man, the hopeless wastrel, had found firmness enough to do his duty in that respect, for they could guess what a loss his son's departure would be to him.

Vere was all he had.

Of late, the wastrel had seemed to change his ways.

He had not been seen at the camp saloons or in the poker-parties at Gunten's store in Thompson.

It was as if the unfortunate wastrel wished his son to take away with him the best recollection possible of his father.

But after Vere was gone, would the change last?

The boy would have been glad to think so, but— There was a "but."

He could not think so.

When Lascelles Beauclerc was left quite alone, was it not only too likely that he would sink deeper than ever into the mire he had lately emerged from?

That thought haunted Vere, and embittered the parting, shadowing whatever anticipations he might have had of his new life.

With a clatter of hoofs, the three chums rode up to the lumber-school.

They were early for lessons, and a good many of the Cedar Creek fellows gathered round them in the playground.

The news about Beauclerc was known at

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

NEXT TUESDAY!

"THE NEW MASTER!"

the lumber-school, and it excited a great deal of interest there.

At one time Beauclerc had not been popular in the school.

The cheery, hearty young Canadians hardly understood his quiet reserve, and were inclined to attribute it to snobbishness, on account of his great connections at home.

They understood him better now, and Beauclerc was very well liked.

"So you're going home, Beauclerc?" said Chunky Todgers. "Gunten says you've got a place in the post-wagon for Wednesday." Beauclerc nodded.

"Yes, Chunky."

"I say, is your uncle really a nobleman?" asked Chunky inquisitively.

"Yes."

"Does he wear a crown?" inquired Chunky.

"A what?" ejaculated Beauclerc.

"Don't they wear crowns?" asked Chunky innocently.

"Coronets," said Eben Hacke, with an air of superior wisdom. "Coronets, you young jay! How much did your uncle give for his coronet, Beauclerc?"

"Ha, ha! I don't know!"

"Ever seen the old sport?"

"Yes, when I was a little kid," said Beauclerc.

"Was he wearing his coronet then?" asked Chunky.

"Coronet!" yelled Hacke. "Not a coronet—a coronet!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"No; he was wearing a bowler-hat when I saw him last," said Beauclerc, laughing.

"Oh, my!" said Chunky, evidently disappointed. A nobleman in a bowler-hat did not fit in with Chunky's previous ideas of peers of the realm.

"What's his title?" asked Hacke.

"Lord St. Austell."

"My! That sounds tiptop!" said Hacke admiringly. "I suppose you're feeling simply glorious at going?"

"Not at all," said Beauclerc quietly. "I'd rather stay here, if I had my choice."

"Well, carry me home to die!" ejaculated Eben Hacke. "Look here, I guess I'll do a trade with you, if you like. Let me go instead of you. I dare say your uncle will be just as pleased—more, very likely."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"We're all sorry you're going, Beauclerc," said Tom Lawrence.

"Me sorry, too!" said little Yen Chin. "Me miss nicey o.e. Chelub. Pool ill! Chinese cly."

"We'll come and see you off in the wagon, if Miss Meadows will let us off," said Dick Dawson.

"And I've got a box of maple-sugar for you to take with you," said Chunky Todgers. "I don't believe you can get it in England."

"You've got it, Chunky?" asked Bob Lawless.

"Yep."

"Then I'll bet you ten to one that it doesn't last till Cherub goes!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The bell rang, and Cedar Creek went in to lessons.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

Father and Son.

IT was Beauclerc's last day at Cedar Creek.

The next day was to be spent in the final preparations for his journey.

After lessons he walked about the school grounds with his chums, taking his last look at Cedar Creek.

His face was clouded.

He was surprised himself to find how attached he had grown to the school in the backwoods.

When the chums left at last Miss Meadows and Mr. Slimmy bade a kind farewell to Beauclerc, and gave him their good wishes.

In the setting sun the three chums rode on the homeward trail.

All three were silent.

At the fork of the trail they halted.

"We shall see you to-morrow, Beau," said Frank.

"For the last time," said Beauclerc, his lips trembling a little.

"No fear!" said Bob. "We're going to see you off on Wednesday morning when the wagon goes. I believe some of the fellows are coming, too."

"It's jolly good of them!" said Beauclerc. "I—I never thought anybody at the school

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would care if I went, excepting you fellows, of course."

Frank and Bob trotted onwards towards the ranch, and Beauclerc followed the branch trail towards Cedar Camp.

The black horse proceeded at a walk in the gathering dusk, the rider remaining plunged in thought.

He came in sight of the shack, and saw his father at work in the field close by the little home.

Lascelles Beauclerc was delving industriously, and Vere watched him curiously as he rode up.

In former days he had not often seen his father work.

Lascelles Beauclerc looked up, and stood leaning on his spade as he heard the clatter of hoofs.

Vere jumped down.

His father gave him a kind word of greeting, and then, leaving the spade jammed in the earth, went into the shack.

Vere put up his horse in the shed and followed him in.

Since the decision that Vere was to go he had received nothing but kindness from his father, and it went strangely to the boy's heart.

They sat down to the evening meal.

Vere could eat little.

His heart was heavy, and his attempt to keep up a cheerful appearance was not very successful.

After the meal Lascelles Beauclerc lighted his pipe.

Father and son sat silent for a long time.

It was Vere who broke the silence.

"Father!"

"Yes, lad?"

"I—I don't want to oppose your wishes," faltered Vere; "but—but if you would let me stay—"

"That is all settled, Vere."

"I—I know. But—"

"I suppose you feel it a little parting from what you have been accustomed to, my boy," said Mr. Beauclerc. "But you can trust your father's judgment that it is for the best."

"I do, father. Put—"

"You will miss Richards and Lawless at first, but you will make other friends in England, Vere."

"I wasn't thinking of that just then. But—"

"But what?"

"You'll miss me, dad?"

"Naturally."

"But—but do you want to be left alone, father?"

A strange smile flickered over the remittance-man's face for a moment.

Vere hadly knew why, but it gave him a vague alarm.

Mr. Beauclerc smoked in silence for some minutes.

He spoke at last.

"Now that you are going to leave me, Vere, I will speak plainly. Your uncle is quite right in thinking that you will be better away from me. What am I? A waster, a loafer, a man at whom the finger of scorn is pointed even in this rough country?"

"Father!" murmured the boy.

"You are going to a new life—a life suitable for one of your name and family," went on the remittance-man. "You will feel a wrench at first, but that will pass. You will have every chance, and you will make more of life than I can make of mine. You are differently built. I was doomed from the beginning—a bad training, early self-indulgence. So long as my father lived I was denied nothing, and I denied myself nothing, and the end of it you see."

He made a restless movement.

"I've been a waster all my life, Vere. I've fought against it sometimes—never for long, and never effectually. I have to drag it out to the end. Drink and gambling have been my bane, but I cannot give them up."

"But—"

"As I have lived, I must live. I am too old to change. Vere, if you remained with me you would see me sinking lower and lower."

"Don't!" muttered the boy miserably.

"This is the truth, Vere. You are young now, and you do not fully understand. And you are an affectionate son, and you make allowances that others will not make. But as you grow older you will grow to despise your father."

"Never!"

"Even now, Vere, you have felt the stigma of my reputation," said the remittance-man

coldly. "You have never told me so, but I am well aware that, even at the backwoods school, you have had to listen to sneers and hints on the subject of the remittance-man, the loafer—"

Vere Beauclerc crimsoned.

"All that must end," said Mr. Beauclerc. "Now it is ending, Vere."

"But—but, father, since the flood you—you have been different!" faltered Vere timidly. "Why not—"

"The leopard cannot change his spots, nor the Ethiopian his skin," said the remittance-man moodily. "I have made an effort, for your sake, Vere, but that effort will not last."

"Then—then, after I am gone—"

"There is no need to speak of that, my boy. The best thing you can do, when you get to the Old Country, is to forget that you ever had a father."

"You know that couldn't be, father! But—but I will not go!" exclaimed Vere. "If it is as you say, you need me, and I shall stay."

The remittance-man rose to his feet.

"No more of that, Vere. You must go; that is settled and irrevocable! And I have my own plans, after you are gone, and your presence here would seriously interfere with them."

Vere compressed his lips, bitterly wounded.

"Then you do not want me, father?"

"No," said the remittance-man steadily. "My plans could not be carried out if you remained, and, therefore, you must go."

"I shall not speak of it again, father!" said the boy bitterly.

He went to his room, with a leaden heart.

His father did not want him; that was the beginning and the end of it.

What plans were they which could not be carried out in his presence at the shack? Well he knew that once his father's shady associates had nearly succeeded in drawing him into crime.

Was it that—was it that when his son was gone, Lascelles Beauclerc would throw aside the last restraint that had hitherto held him in check?

Vere Beauclerc slept little that night.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

The Parting.

"HALLO, Cherub!" There was a clatter of hoofs outside the shack in the sunny morning, and Bob Lawless shouted cheerily as he rode up.

Beauclerc came out to meet his chums.

The remittance-man was not to be seen.

"We've come to help you, Beau," said Frank Richards.

"My packing's done," said Beauclerc. "There wasn't much of it—only a bag." He smiled faintly. "If you fellows like, I'd rather have a ride round to-day—a last look round the valley."

"Jolly good idea!" said Bob Lawless. "We'll make a day of it, and have a ripping ride for the last time."

Beauclerc brought out his horse, and the three schoolboys rode away together.

Frank and Bob had leave from school for that day.

"My father's gone out," Vere explained, perhaps feeling that some explanation was required why his father did not want him at home, on the last day in the section. "He will be out all day on business."

"Business" with the remittance-man generally meant poker or euchre at the Red Dog or Gunten's store, but the chums learned later in the day that this time Mr. Beauclerc's business was of a very different sort.

The chums enjoyed their last ride in the valley, though their hearts were not light.

The sun was sinking when they turned their horses homeward at last.

Frank Richards and Bob left Beauclerc at the shack, promising to be there again in time to meet the post-wagon in the morning, and rode away to the ranch.

On the dusty trail they fell in with Billy Cook, the foreman, jogging home from Cedar Camp, with purchases slung on both sides of his horse.

The ranchman glanced round as the schoolboys trotted up and joined him on the trail.

"Any news from the camp, Billy?" Bob Lawless inquired.

Billy Cook grinned.

"Yep! Old Man Beauclerc has been opening their eyes."

"Not painting the town red again, surely?" exclaimed Bob.

"Nix! He's been paying his debts."

"Oh!"

"Honest Injun!" said the ranchman. "The boys are all talking about it. You bet your sweet life! Old Man Beauclerc has been round the town paying his bills! Must have used up his last remittance to the last Continental red cent, if you ask me! Not only in Cedar Camp—over in Thompson, too!" The ranchman chuckled. "I calculate he must have taken a hull gripsack full of receipts home with him to the shack."

"Oh!" said Frank Richards, quite taken aback by that odd information.

"The boys say Old Man Beauclerc is a reformed character!" grinned Billy Cook. "He passed Poker Pete in the street without speaking to him, and declined to take a hand in a game at the Red Dog. He stood out when it was drinks all round at the Continental. I guess it's time the skies were falling, arter that!"

"That's all good news!" said Bob.

"Too good!" said the ranchman sagely. "I've seed these hyer tremenjus reforms before—they break out worse arter. Slow and sure is the thing, my sonnies! You don't go the whole hog at one jump. Next week I reckon Old Man Beauclerc will be keeping it up with the boys from Oshkosh, I reckon!"

Frank Richards could not help feeling that the ranchman was probably right, though he hoped for the best.

The next morning the chums mounted their ponies early to ride to the shack.

The post-wagon from Thompson passed on the trail at an early hour, and Vere Beauclerc was to board it near his home.

The post-trail ran a quarter of a mile from the shack, and at the nearest point Vere Beauclerc was waiting with his father when the chums rode up.

Mr. Beauclerc looked unusually trim and well dressed.

Vere was pale and quiet.

His bag lay at his feet in the grass.

Bob and Frank dismounted, and hitched their horses to a tree.

Mr. Beauclerc was going with his son on the post-wagon to Kamloops, but here the boy was to say farewell to his friends.

The remittance-man nodded civilly to the

Beauclerc smiled at them a little tremulously.

"You're early!" he said.

"The early bird catches the worm!" said Bob dismally. "I don't feel very spry this morning, somehow."

"You'll write when you get home, Beau?" said Frank.

"I shall write from Quebec," said Beauclerc. "I'm staying one day there, it seems. And—and I'll write as soon as I land in England. I—I wish you fellows were coming with me!"

"Don't I, just!" said Frank.

"P'r'aps we'll run over and see you in the summer holidays, Cherub," said Bob. "I guess I'll try to work it with the popper."

Beauclerc's face brightened.

"You might!" he said.

"That is, if you want to see a Canadian backwoods chap in the stately halls of the Beauclercs!" grinned Bob.

"Bob!"

"Excuse me, old chap! I'm only chewing the rag because—because I feel down in the dumps," said Bob. "I guess it won't feel the same place without you, Cherub. Just to think that we'll never meet you again at the fork of the trail, going to school!"

Bob's hearty voice trembled a little, and he broke off abruptly.

"I was thinking of that," said Beauclerc in a low voice.

"The post-wagon is coming," said Mr. Beauclerc.

There was a clatter of hoofs, and a rumble of wheels in the rough trail.

The post-wagon from Thompson, drawn by three horses, clattered up, and stopped as the driver spotted the passengers standing beside the trail.

But behind the wagon there was a loud clatter of more hoofs and a bunch of boyish riders came in sight.

Chunky Todgers, Eben Hacke, Tom Lawrence, Dick Dawson, and Harold Hopkins, and two or three more Cedar Creek fellows dashed up, and jumped from their saddles.

"I guess we were bound to see you off, Cherub!" grinned Eben. "Perhaps in England, too!"

"Thank you—thank you all!" said Beauclerc in a deeply moved voice.

He was strangely touched by that last act of attention from his schoolfellows.

"Sorry you're goin', and 'ope you'll 'ave a good time," said Hopkins. "And, I tell you what, Cherub, if you ever find yourself down

Old Kent Road way, you give my uncle a look-in. He keeps a fried-fish shop—"

"Haw, haw, haw!" roared Eben Hacke.

"Look 'ere, Acke—" began the Cockney schoolboy warmly

"I'll remember, Hopkins," said Beauclerc, with a smile. "Hallo, Chunky!"

Chunky Todgers was nudging his arm.

Chunky's fat face wore a weebegone expression.

"I—I say, Beauclerc—" he murmured.

"Yes, kid?"

"You remember I—I was bringing you a bag of maple-sugar to take home?"

Beauclerc had, as a matter of fact, forgotten that important circumstance, but he nodded with a smile.

"It was awfully kind of you, Chunky!"

"I—I put it on my hoss when I started this morning—"

"Yes."

"I—I tasted it as I came along," said Chunky. "The—the air's so fresh in the morning, it makes you awfully hungry. It was jolly good! And—and—"

Beauclerc laughed; he could guess what was coming.

"And—and somehow it all went!" said Chunky dolorously. "There—there isn't any left."

"Never mind, old chap. I'll take the will for the deed," said Beauclerc.

"But—but, I say, you know, I'm going to send you some by post," said Chunky.

"I guess you'd better get some other galoot to take it to the post-office, then," said Bob Lawless.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"All aboard, gents!" sang out the driver, cracking his whip.

Mr. Beauclerc and the bag were already in the wagon.

Vere stepped in, and then there was a last handshaking all round, the Cedar Creek fellows crowding round.

Frank Richards and Bob gripped their chum's hand in turn at last, and the wagon started.

"Good-bye, Beau, old chap!"

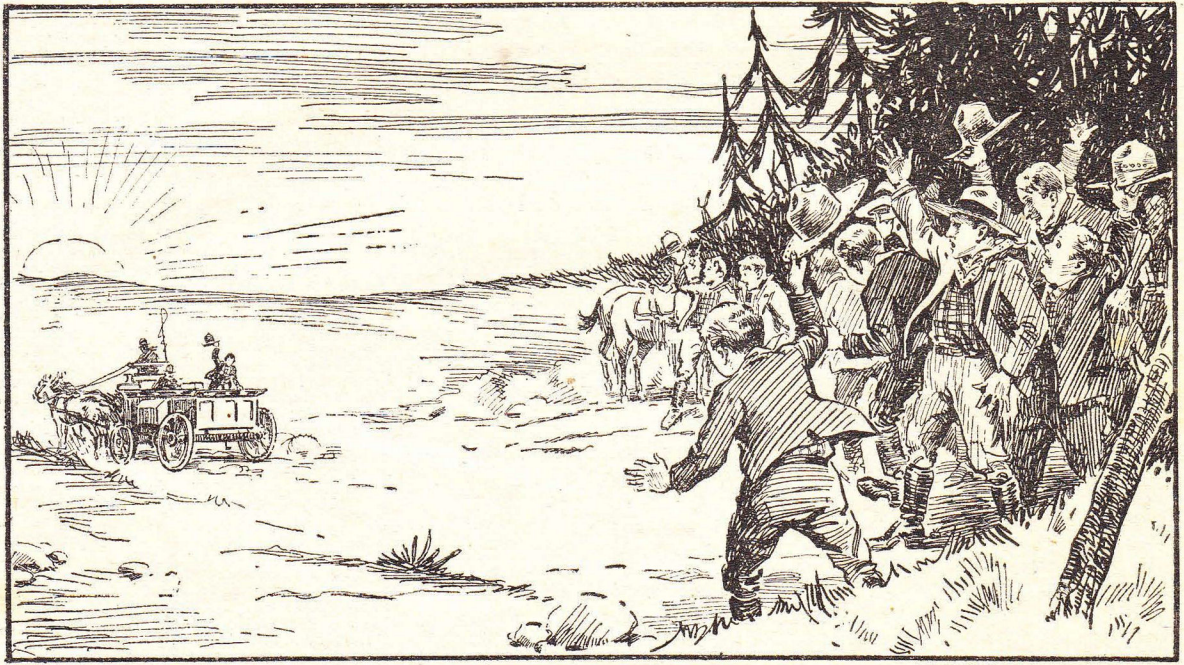
"Good-bye, Cherub!"

The wagon rumbled down the trail.

The Cedar Creek fellows waved their hats after it, and Beauclerc waved his hand back till it was out of sight in a dip of the prairie.

The waving group disappeared from the sight of the boy in the wagon.

He sat down with a pale and clouded face. His father did not speak.



OFF TO THE OLD COUNTRY!—"Good-bye, Beau, old chap!" Frank Richards and Bob gripped their chum's hand in turn, and the wagon started. The Cedar Creek fellows waved their hats after it, as the wagon rumbled down the trail and out of sight. (See Chapter 3.)

The horses clattered on, to the accompaniment of a cracking whip.

Vere Beauclerc sat in silence, looking back from the rolling wagon, back at the scene he was leaving for ever.

But he did not see clearly now; the wide plain, the distant pine woods, the soaring mountain-top, were all in a blur.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

The Shadow of Fear.

"KAMLOOPS!"

Little had been said during the long drive.

The post-wagon drove at last into the railway town, and Mr. Beauclerc and his son descended.

There were two hours to wait at the station and a meal was taken, and then father and son waited for the train.

They paced the station for some time in silence.

Vere glanced occasionally at his father's grave face.

There was a deep unrest in his heart.

He could not understand his father now. For days past there had been something in the remittance-man's manner that perplexed and alarmed him.

What was his father's intention after he was gone?

What were the "plans" he had spoken of? In his new life of sobriety and self-restraint during the last few weeks Lascelles Beauclerc was undoubtedly looking upon things in a different light. A change had taken place in him which Vere could not comprehend.

He had shown that he felt the shame of his degradation, yet in the same breath he had said that he could not mend his ways, that the effort was beyond him.

Was he content to sink back into what he had been—and worse?

The boy could not think so. And yet what else did his father's words mean?

Vere was hopelessly perplexed and desolate. The train came at last.

Mr. Beauclerc placed his son in the train, and placed 'em rug round him with an almost womanly tenderness.

"Good-bye my boy!" he said in a fatherly voice. "Think as kindly of your father as you can in the years to come. I have not been a good man, and I've not been a good father to you but I've always cared for you, my boy. Good-bye—good-bye!"

"Oh, father!" said Vere, his voice choking. "Even now it's not too late. Let me come home with you in the wagon."

Mr. Beauclerc smiled.

"Good-bye, Vere!"

He stepped from the train.

His tall figure stood motionless, watching, as the great train moved out; and Vere waved his hand, and his father waved back.

Then he vanished in the dark. Beauclerc sank back in his seat.

The train thundered on.

Vere's mind was full of troubled thoughts. When would he see his father again?

What did his strange looks and words mean?

Was it possible—his very heart seemed to chill at the thought—possible that death might prevent a meeting?

His father was not old, but his life had told upon him. Late hours and drink and unhealthy excitement would undermine the strongest constitution in the long run, and his father had never been strong.

Was it possible that Lascelles Beauclerc had felt a forewarning of such an end, and so had sent his son away to a new home and a new protector?

Vere started up in his seat, hardly able to repress a cry of fear and misery, as that black thought came to him.

Was it possible?

Was he leaving his father, not only to solitude, but to die in solitude?

In his excited, feverish state of mind the terrible thought grew upon him, till it seemed to the boy that it was clear—that it was so clear that it was a marvel he had not guessed it before.

That, and that alone, could account for all his father had said, and for what Vere had read in his face that had so puzzled him.

The train was roaring down an incline with a crash of brakes.

There was a buzz of talk in the boy's ears, THE POPULAR.—No. 192.

THE NEXT TUESDAY!

"THE NEW MASTER!"

A MAGNIFICENT TALE OF FRANK RICHARDS & CO.

By MARTIN CLIFFORD.

By MARTIN CLIFFORD.

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By MARTIN CLIFFORD.

but he hardly realised that he was not alone. The train was speeding on. Ere long it would be climbing the slopes of the Rocky Mountains; that giant barrier would rise between him and his father—his father whom he would never see again with his living eyes!

It was too much!

Beauclerc started to his feet.

The conductor was passing along the aisle, and Beauclerc caught him by the arm.

"When's the next stop?"

"Ten minutes, sonny," said the big Canadian, glancing curiously at the boy's white face. "No time to get down, though—only a stop for water."

"Thank you!"

Beauclerc gathered up his bag and his rug mechanically.

His mind was made up.

He had not thought it out; he was incapable at that moment of consecutive thought.

He was acting upon instinct—an instinct there was no denying.

His father might be angry at his return—he would be angry.

But he was going back—he must go back.

The great train thundered to a stop.

Without giving himself time for hesitation, Vere Beauclerc jumped out.

Lights twinkled in the darkness about him. He stumbled on.

"All aboard!" he heard a call in the distance.

Then the thunder of the moving train.

**ARE YOU A
MEMBER OF**

**THE
GREYFRIARS
PARLIAMENT?**

**If Not, Turn to Page 27 and
find out all about the
"Magnet's" Wonderful
New Feature.**

He stood with beating heart, and watched the lights disappear along the line.

The train was gone!

It was too late for repentance now, if he had repented.

But there was no change in his thoughts; his only thought was to get to his father.

He stumbled along in the darkness.

"Hallo! Lost yourself, sonny?"

A big man in a Stetson hat, with an oil-can in his hand, looked down on him.

Vere stopped.

"Can I get a horse here?" he asked.

"I guess you can, if you've got the durocks," said the big man, staring at him.

"Lost you train?"

"I left the train. I've got to get back home," stammered Beauclerc.

"And where may your home happen to be, sonny?"

"Up the Thompson River."

"I guess you can't get there to-night, then. Perhaps I could manage a shakedown for you in the station-house—"

"I must get home. If you will let me leave my bag and rug here till I can send for them, and tell me where I can get a horse—"

"I guess—"

"I'm afraid my father's ill—very ill!" muttered Beauclerc. "I've got to go."

"Oh, that alters the case!" said the stationmaster kindly. "You sashay along with me and I'll see you through."

No time was lost.

Mr. Beauclerc had given his son ample money for the journey, and there was no difficulty in hiring a horse in the straggling village round the railway-sheds.

In a quarter of an hour, Vere Beauclerc

was in the saddle, riding away into the darkness, and the lights of the railway vanished behind him.

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

Saved From Himself.

CLATTER, clatter!

Incessantly the hoofs beat and beat in the silence of the night.

The moon came up over the Rockies at last, and found Vere Beauclerc still riding tirelessly.

Through the long, dark night he rode, unconscious of fatigue.

He did not know how many miles he covered.

But the horse showed fatigue at last, and his pace slackened.

Where was his father now?

The post-wagon home from Kamloops would be all night on the trail, jogging along with its sleepy driver.

It would be long past midnight when it drove into Thompson—perhaps near to dawn.

Mr. Beauclerc would be dropped at the shack—perhaps at three in the morning.

It was barely three now. He could tell that by the stars.

He would reach home, perhaps, an hour later than his father—not more than that.

What would the remittance-man say when he knocked at the cabin in the dead of night?

He would be angry. What did it matter? A terrible fear was growing in the boy's heart—a fear that he dared not put into words.

The fearful suspicion that had forced itself into his mind was too black and bitter to think upon clearly.

But he longed, with a wild longing, to be at the cabin, to see that his father was safe—safe!

Over the pine forests sailed the full, round moon.

He rode on, and on as fast as the slackening horse could stride.

Would he never reach the shack?

He was in familiar surroundings at last. He caught a glimpse in the far distance of the Lawless Ranch, where his chums were sleeping peacefully, all unconscious of his wild night-ride.

He glanced at it for a moment as the thought of Frank and Bob crossed his mind, and rode on.

His horse was showing signs of distress now, though the boy himself felt no fatigue.

Long, long hours had passed since he had ridden away from the railroad.

Even at that feverish moment it went to his heart to over-drive the animal he rode, but he could not spare it.

His father. He could only think of his father, and the terrible dread that was gnawing at his breast!

His steed stumbled at last, and whinnied piteously.

Beauclerc slid from the saddle.

He patted the horse's neck gently, kindly, and threw the rein over a low branch.

On foot, he ran on—along the creek till the trail left it, and then on to the shack.

In the glimmering moonlight his old home came into sight—the backwoods home he had thought never to see again.

Breathlessly, beginning to feel at last the weariness of his long effort, the boy ran up to the shack.

It was dark within, but the door opened to his touch.

Panting, he stepped into the shack.

"Father!"

He called softly.

"Father!"

There was no reply.

He threw open the door wide, and the moonlight streamed in.

The bunk in the corner was empty; the door of the inner room was open, and that room was empty also.

The shack was untenanted.

Where was his father?

In Cedar Camp, perhaps, at the Red Dog, or playing poker with the sports at Thompson.

The hour was too late even for that. It wanted but half an hour to dawn.

Where was his father?

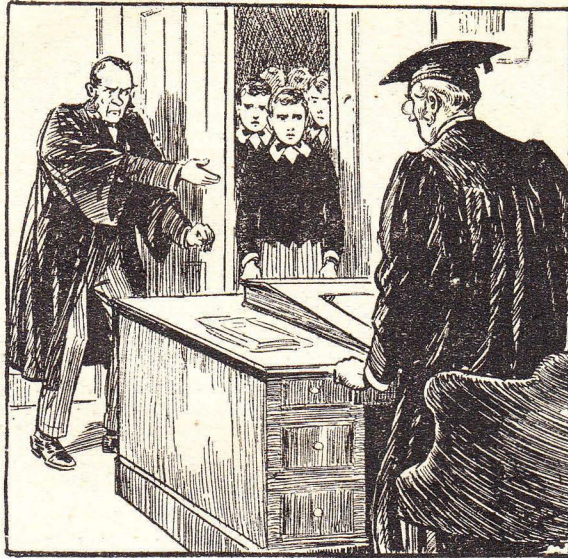
"Father!"

There was a note of terror in the boy's voice as he called again.

It was no longer a fear that oppressed him; it was a terrible certainty.

(Continued on page 26.)

MR. RATCLIFF, THE TYRANNICAL MASTER OF THE NEW HOUSE, DOES NOT CATCH HIS PUPILS NAPPING!



RATTY ON THE WARPATH!



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. Visitors for Mr. Ratcliff!

TOM MERRY & Co. came dashing out of Mr. Railton's study in high spirits. They were in clover. It was Friday, the day of the great match between Wayland Warriors and the famous Corinthians. Kildare of St. Jim's had lent his services to the Wayland team; and this invested the match with special interest.

There was no half-holiday on Friday, as a rule. And there wasn't one to-day. But Tom Merry & Co., who were desperately eager to see the match, had asked their Housemaster for the afternoon off—and got it.

Six juniors in all had received permission to go over to Wayland. They were the Terrible Three and Talbot, Blake and D'Arcy.

"I considah old Wailton's a bwick!" exclaimed Arthur Augustus.

"Hear, hear!" said Jack Blake heartily. "Not every master would have gone out of his way to give us an afternoon off. Won't it be ripping to see Kildare playing at centre-forward for Wayland Warriors?"

"Yes—especially if he scores a goal," said Tom Merry. "But he's hardly likely to do that against the Corinthians. They've got a defence like a brick wall!"

Monty Lowther glanced at the watch on his wrist.

"Match starts in an hour," he remarked. "Let's get our merry jiggers out and make a start."

With radiant faces the six juniors trooped out into the autumn sunshine. It was a perfect afternoon—ideal for football.

Tom Merry & Co. looked as if they hadn't a care in the world.

But there were other fellows in the quad who looked as if they carried all the cares of the universe on their shoulders.

Six New House juniors were standing outside the bicycle-shed; and their faces were studies in gloom.

Figgins and Kerr and Wynn, usually a cheerful trio, looked moody and dis-

consolate. Redfern and Lawrence and Owen were looking as if they found the world anything but a pleasant place to live in.

"What's wrong with you fellows?" inquired Tom Merry, in passing.

"Everything!" grunted Figgins.

"Hasn't Ratty given you the afternoon off?" asked Manners.

"We've not asked him yet."

"Well, cheer up! You never know your luck! Ratty's a fearful old tyrant, we know, but he might open his heart this afternoon."

"You don't understand," said Figgins. "Even if Ratty does give us the afternoon off we sha'n't be able to see the footer match."

"Why?" demanded Tom Merry.

"Oh, I can't explain now! It's a long story. A giddy avalanche of trouble has descended on us. We're fairly up against it."

"Sorry to hear that, Figgy," said Tom Merry, sincerely enough. "I hope matters will turn out better than you seem to think. Dashed if I know what all the trouble is about, but I hope you come through it all right."

"Thanks!" said Figgins.

The School House juniors fetched their bicycles and pedalled gaily off to Wayland.

Figgins & Co. remained standing in a melancholy group outside the bicycle-shed.

"You'd better tackle Ratty first, Figgy," said Kerr.

"All serene!"

With a heavy tread, Figgins made his way to Mr. Ratcliff's study.

The Housemaster was within. His sour face was even sourer than usual, owing to the fact that he was suffering from an attack of indigestion. Mr. Ratcliff had lunched not wisely, but too well.

"Well, Figgins?" he snapped as the junior entered.

"I want to know if you'll give me the afternoon off, sir?"

Mr. Ratcliff frowned.

"For what reason, Figgins?"

"My grandmother is very ill, sir."

Mr. Ratcliff's frown deepened. He had heard that tale before. It was the old, old story of the expiring grandmother—the excuse which office-boys invariably made on the day of a big sporting event.

The Housemaster knew of the match that was being played at Wayland. And he felt confident that Figgins wanted to go to see it, and that the tale of an ailing grandmother was a pure fiction.

"I am sorry to learn that your grandmother is indisposed, Figgins," said Mr. Ratcliff, with crushing sarcasm. "Where does your grandmother live, by the way?"

"At Burchester, sir."

"And you wish to go over and spend the afternoon with her?"

Figgins nodded.

"Very well," said Mr. Ratcliff. "You have my full permission."

"Thanks awfully, sir!" said Figgins.

Mr. Ratcliff smiled grimly as the junior withdrew.

"That wretched boy has tried to deceive me," he murmured. "He intends to go to Wayland to see the football match. But he was afraid to tell me so, in case I should refuse him. So he concocted an excuse to the effect that his grandmother was ill. I will pay a visit to the Wayland football ground in the course of the afternoon, and if I find Figgins there, as I fully expect to do, things will go hard with him."

Within a minute of Figgins' departure there was another tap on the door.

Mr. Ratcliff gave a snort of annoyance.

"Come in!" he snarled.

Kerr and Fatty Wynn came into the study. The Housemaster glared at them. "Well?" he rapped out.

"Will you give us the afternoon off, please, sir?" asked Kerr.

"In order that you may attend the bed-sides of your stricken grandmothers?" sneered Mr. Ratcliff.

"No, sir," said Kerr quietly. "The fact is, there's a St. Jim's old boy—Captain Dick Mason—lying in the

THE POPULAR.—No. 192.

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

NEXT
TUESDAY!

"HARRY HAMMOND—HERO!"



TROUBLE FOR FATTY!—The linesman came racing along the touch-line. Biff! There was a violent collision. Mr. Ratcliff, who had been standing in the linesman's path, recoiled as if he had been hit by an earthquake. He measured his length on the ground. (See Chapter 3.)

Cottage Hospital. He met with a motor accident, and we feel that it would buck him up if a couple of St. Jim's fellows went over to see him."

"Another cock-and-bull story!" thought Mr. Ratcliff. But he did not utter his thoughts aloud.

"We want to take Captain Mason some fruit and flowers and books, sir," explained Fatty Wynn.

"A very noble impulse!" sneered Mr. Ratcliff. "You may go, with pleasure."

Kerr and Fatty noticed the sneer, but they did not know what was passing through Mr. Ratcliff's mind. They thanked the Housemaster for his permission to take the afternoon off, then they went.

Just as there is no rest for the wicked, so there was no rest for Mr. Horace Ratcliff that afternoon.

Scarcely had the door closed behind Kerr and Fatty Wynn, when further visitors came.

This time it was the famous trio, Redfern, Lawrence, and Owen, who entered the study.

Dick Redfern acted as spokesman.

"Would you be good enough to give us the afternoon off, sir?" he asked.

"So that you may go and see Captain Mason in hospital?" asked Mr. Ratcliff.

"No, sir," said Redfern. "I happen to have a cousin over at Wayland. He's been out of work for some time. He's given up all hope of finding a job in this district, so he's going to try his luck in Australia. He's leaving Wayland this afternoon, and we'd very much like to see him off. He knows Lawrence and Owen very well, and they'd like to have a chance of saying good-bye to him."

Mr. Ratcliff looked grim.

This story of Redfern's, he reflected, was even more elaborate than those of Figgins, Kerr, and Wynn.

Figgins had merely said that his grandmother was ailing. Kerr and Wynn had THE POPULAR.—No. 192.

NEXT
TUESDAY!

"HARRY HAMMOND—HERO!"

gone one better, and told a plausible story of an old boy lying in hospital. But Redfern's tale of an out-of-work cousin, about to embark for Australia, was the most ingenious of all.

"Your request is granted, Redfern," said Mr. Ratcliff.

"Thank you, sir!"

Dick Redfern and his chums took their departure; and Mr. Ratcliff sat drumming the table with his fingers.

"They are all going to see this football match—all of them!" he exclaimed. "They little think that I can see through their lies and misrepresentations. They will have quite a shock when I arrive on the football ground this afternoon and catch them red-handed!"

Mr. Ratcliff fairly gloated at the prospect of making things warm for the six New House juniors who had come to him with such plausible tales. He determined to catch them at the football match, and haul them up before the Head.

"I will see that they are severely punished for practising this deception!" muttered the Housemaster. "To think that they should have lied to me in such a barefaced manner! When it becomes known that they have succeeded in getting the afternoon off, I expect others will come to me with cock-and-bull tales."

But Mr. Ratcliff's expectations were not realised.

There were no further visitors that afternoon for the sour, ill-tempered Housemaster of the New House.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

A Stormy Scene!

"SIX seats in the grand-stand, deah boys!" exclaimed Arthur Augustus D'Arcy! "What could be bettah?"

"We can certainly get a topping view of the match from here," said Tom

Merry. "Hallo, the Corinthians are coming out! Give 'em a cheer!"

The School House juniors cheered heartily as the famous Corinthians sprinted on to the field.

But that cheer was nothing to the cheer which greeted the appearance of the Wayland Warriors. For Kildare of St. Jim's was with the Wayland team. Their secretary had invited him to play, and he had readily consented.

When they caught sight of the St. Jim's skipper, Tom Merry & Co. cheered boisterously.

"Hurrah!"

"Good old Kildare!"

"Pile up the merry goals!"

Kildare glanced towards the grand-stand, and smiled. He was pleased to think that some of his own schoolfellows would be watching the match.

Although it was not early closing day in Wayland, there was a goodly crowd of spectators.

"It's a marvel where they all come from," said Jack Blake. "You wouldn't think many people would be able to get off on a Friday afternoon."

"I expect a good many grandmothers have expired this afternoon!" chuckled Monty Lowther.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"They've started, bai Jove!" exclaimed Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, craning his head forward as the referee's whistle rang out.

The opening play was well worth watching.

It was a duel between the Corinthian forwards and the Wayland defence.

The Corinthians' front line moved like a well-ordered piece of machinery. Their combination was perfect.

But Wayland had a couple of hefty backs who did not stand on ceremony. Time and again they punted the ball clear when the Corinthians threatened danger.

It was rather a one-sided affair, for the Corinthians were doing all the attacking. Yet, try as they would, they could not get the ball past the backs.

Kildare was not in the picture, so far. The Wayland forwards scarcely had a sniff of the ball, so to speak. The Corinthians seemed far too clever for the local team.

For nearly half an hour a grim duel was waged between the visitors' attack and the home defence. But not a goal was scored.

Then came a sudden breakaway on the part of the Wayland forwards.

Kildare was away like the wind, with the ball at his toes.

Tom Merry & Co. shouted for all they were worth.

"Go it, Kildare!"

"Take it through!"

"Shoot! Shoot!"

It was at this breathless instant that Mr. Ratcliff made his unwelcome appearance.

The Housemaster had no eye for the drama that was being enacted on the field of play. He came striding towards the grand-stand, his coat-tails flapping in the breeze.

"Bai Jove!" ejaculated Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, in astonishment. "Here's Watty!"

"He seems to be fairly on the warpath, too!" muttered Monty Lowther.

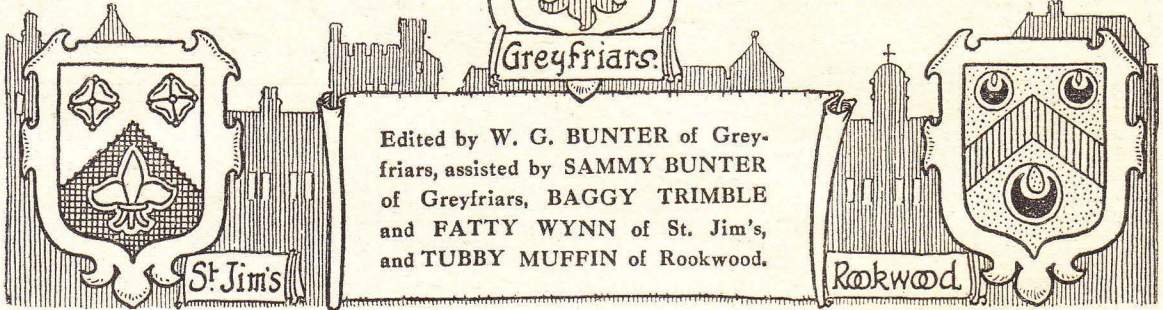
Mr. Ratcliff halted in front of the stand. His eagle eyes scrutinised the seats.

Greatly to his chagrin, he could see nothing of Figgins & Co. But he soon

(Continued on page 17.)

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

BILLY BUNTER'S WEEKLY



Supplement No. 89.

Week Ending September 23rd, 1922.

THE TEAM THAT COULDN'T BE KONKERED!

A Reely Gripping Story of the Football Feeld, Written by that Talented Young Orther
DICKY NUGENT.

SAMMY SHUTER, skipper of the New Croosaders, was in a dilemmer. He sat with his hands berried in his head. There was a puzzled frown on his hansom face.

Why did our hero sit like this? Ah! Why didn't he smile as if he was facing the kamera? Two Ahs!

Dizzaster had overtaken that brilliynt team, the New Croosaders. Their goal-keeper, Sidney Stopham, was down with the flew, and would not be able to play in the grate cuptie against Wopham Wanderers.

No wonder Sammy the skipper looked sad. No wonder he berried his hands in his head. For Sidney Stopham was one of the finest goalkeepers who had ever donned a swetter.

And he was down with the flew!

The New Croosaders had not had a single goal scored against them for six sezoons in suxcession. This wonderful record was due entirely to the magnificent work of Sidney Stopham.

And he was down with the flew!

There wasn't a goalie in all England, from John's End to Land o' Groats, to kompare with Sidney Stopham. Sidney was an absolute masterpeace. He stood alone. He was the backbone of the New Croosaders.

And he was down with the flew!

Sammy Shuter was on the point of shedding tears.

"What shall we do without Stopham?" he groaned. "Shots will come pouring in on our goal, and there will be no one to Stopham! We shall be licked by Wopham Wanderers. They'll pulverise us! Who could Stopham? Only Stopham. And he's down with the flew!"

The outlook was very black.

So far this sezoon the New Croosaders

Supplement 1.]



Wopham Wanderers attacked viciously. Their blood was up. Shot after shot reigned in upon Sammy Shuter and at last he was beaten. Crash! The ball whizzed into the net. "Goal!" roared the delited crowd.

had played six matches, with the following rezult:

Beat Blue Rovers	9-0
Beat Red Rovers	12-0
Beat Green Rovers	14-0
Beat Pink Rovers	10-0
Beat Yellow Rovers	8-0
Beat Rainbow Rovers	20-0

And now it looked as if their fine record would be tarnished.

"Alas! Alack!" groaned Sammy Shuter. There was a tap on the door of the dressing room.

"Come in!" said Sammy.

Enter Bill Butcher, the right-back of the Croosaders. His leg was in a sling.

THE POPULAR.—No. 192.

NEXT WEEK—ANOTHER SPECIAL NUMBER! YOU'LL ENJOY IT!

"Sammy, old chap," he said, "I'm awfully sorry, but I sha'n't be able to turn out this afternoon. I've met with an axcident."

"Oh crumbs!"

There was another tap on the door.

"Come in!" said Sammy.

Eater Bill Butcher, the right-back of the Crossaders. His head was in splints.

"I'm beestly sorry, Sammy," he said, "but I sha'n't be able to turn out this afternoon. I've met with a fatal axcident."

"Oh crumbs!"

There was another tap on the door.

"Come in!" said Sammy.

Eater Bill Bustler, the centre-half of the Crossaders. He was on crutches.

"I'm despritley sorry, Sammy," he said, "but I sha'n't be able to turn out this afternoon. I've got a splitting headache."

Sammy nearly kollapsed.

"That's four of our best players down and out!" he groaned. "We shall be beaten to a frazzle! Wopham Wanderers will simply make shavings of us! And there are no reserves that I can play in your places. This is indeed a tragedy!"

There were further taps on the door.

The right half-back, the left half-back, and a couple of forwards came in to appoligerise for not being able to turn out for the Crossaders. Three of them were suffering from mumps, and one had an attack of blue funk, for he had heard that Wopham Wanderers were a tuff side.

There were now only three Crossaders left. And these three were compelled to take the field against Wopham, who were at foot strength.

"We shall be hopelessly licked," said Sammy Shuter, "but we will fight to the last ditch!"

"Yes, rather!"

"You, Smith, will be the forward line. You, Brown, will be the half-back line. And I will be right-back, left-back, and goalkeeper."

There was a yell of derision from the crowd when the New Crossaders lined up with only three men. Everybody thought it was screamingly funny.

Wopham Wanderers won the toss, and they kicked off with the wind in their favor.

Sammy Shuter took up his position in the Crossaders' goal. Just as the Wopham centre-forward was in the act of shooting, Sammy ran out and gave the ball a mity swipe, sending it nearly down to the other end of the field.

Wopham attacked again and again, but they could not get through.

Sammy Shuter was the grate stumbling-block. He was a team in himself. Gallantly he held the fort until half-time, when there was no score.

There was a grin of triumph on Sammy's mud-stained face when he came off at the interval.

Would he be able to hold the fort for the remaining forty-five minnits?

Would he? Could he? Should he?

The referee blew his whistle, and the two teams lined up for the second stage of that stern struggle.

Wopham Wanderers attacked viciously. Their blood was up.

Shot after shot reigned in upon Sammy Shuter, and at last he was beaten.

Crash!

The ball went wizzing into the net.

"Goal!" roared the delited crowd.

Sammy's boots sank into his heart. He was almost in despare. And his fellow players, Smith and Brown, were in a sorry plite. They could not hold out much longer.

Suddenly Sammy Shuter's face lighted up.

A fammiliar figger came rushing on to the field. It was Sidney Stopham, the Crossaders' goalie!

"I've recovered from the flew!" he cried. "Last night I had a very high temperament—it was a hundred and three. But it's dropped back to normal now, and I'm fit to play!"

"Hooray!" cried Sammy.

Before the word was out of his mouth, other figgers came rushing on to the field.

Bill Butcher, the right-back, had recovered from the injury to his leg. He was frisking about like a lamb on the hillside.

THE POPULAR.—No. 192.

Larry Lout, the left-back, no longer had his head in splints. He was once more in the pink of condition. He had completely recovered from his fatal axcident.

Bill Bustler, the centre-half, had thrown away his crutches because his headache was better. And all the other members of the team had made wonderful recoveries.

Sammy Shuter wept with joy. His tears splashed on to the goal-posts.

"We shall win!" he cried. "I feel it in my boans!"

Need I describe the remainder of that grate match in detail, dear readers? No!

I won't tell you that Sammy Shuter scored a duzen goals, because he didn't. But he bagged six. And every other member of the team, with the eggception of the goalkeeper, scored two goals apeace.

If you are any good at mathematicks, you will enjoy working out this little problem, and you will discover that the New Crossaders defeeted Wopham Wanderers by twenty-four goals to one.

"It was a famus victory," as the poet Shakespeare said after the Battle of Waterloo.

We will now bid farewell to our heroes. May they go from strength to strength, piling up the merry goals, and winning millions of matches!

IN YOUR EDITOR'S DEN!

By BILLY BUNTER.

My Dear Readers,—It is now ripe (as the orchard-raider said when he picked a plum) for a Special Football Number to be published. I want to get ahead of Harry Wharton in this respect. Wharton's asleep. I don't believe he's aware that the cricket seazon is over, and that football has started in real Ernest.

The histery of football is a very fascinating one. The first match on record was played between the Ancient Britons and the Romans. I believe I am right in saying that the Romans put all their opponents out of action, and won hansomly.

Football kontinewed to be popular right through the generations. It was certainly played in the time of the poet Longfellow, for he writes, in "Excelsior":

"Try not the pass!" the old man said.

The standard of football at Greyfriars was very poor—until I came on the seen. It is not an eggsageration to say that I taught Greyfriars how football should be played.

Far be it from me to blow my own trumpet, but I rely am a most verse-atile player. (Verse-atility has nothing to do with poetry, by the way.) I am equally at home in goal or at centre-forward. I can do wonders in the half-back line. And at fool-back I am simply splendid. "One of these days," I heard a krittick remark, "Billy Bunter will play for the Fat Boys of Brittain." That krittick was also a profit!

This special football number of mine is packed with good things from beginning to end. I don't care what the editor of the "Popular" has said about it on his Chat page. He mite have praised it, or he mite have held it up to riddikule. But I myself am satisfied that it's a topping number. 'Nuff said!

In another kolumn I am replying to a number of korrespondents who have written to me on the subject of football. I ought to charge them half-a-crown each for my replies, but, being a jenuerus-harted fellow, they can have my advice free, graytis, and for nicks!—Yours sincerely,

Billy Bunter
Editor

A FAMBLY TREE OF FAMOUS FOOTBALLERS! By BAGGY TRIMBLE.

Everybody knows what a brilliyunt footballer I am. My fame has eggstended far beyond the presinks of St. Jim's.

Very few people, however, are aware that my footballing talent is hereditary; so I am publishing this fambly tree for the first time.

I am a bit hazy about the names of some of my ansestors, but I have filled them in to the best of my wreck-collection.

THEOPHILUS TRIMBLE.

(Known as "The Father of English Football.") Played for the Ancient Britons versus the Gauls, many generations ago. Scored the winning goal, and was presented with a flint medal by his delighted comrades.)

TOBY TRIMBLE.

(The greatest goalkeeper the world has ever seen. Came over specially with William the Konkeror to keep goal for England. In those days, when a football consisted of a huge boulder of stone, a shot took a grate deal of stopping. Toby Trimble was disfiggered for life in his first game, but histery tells us that he went on playing regularly till his death.)

TACKLER TRIMBLE.

(A half-back who flurished in the rain of King John, or thereabouts. He was a real terror. It was nothing for him to put half a duzen opponents out of their mizzery in the corse of a single match!)

THOMAS TROTTER TRIMBLE.

(One of the finest centre-forwards who ever donned a jersey. Played for Cromwell's Ironsides, and scored goals at Marston Moor, Flodden Field, and other famous football-grounds.)

TUBBY TRIMBLE.

(My grandfather, who was one of the giants of the game. He could kick a ball a mile and a half without any undegger-assertion. He was berried in Footballers' Corner, Westminster Abbey, with other grate men of his time.)

TEDDY TRIPLITE TRIMBLE.

(My esteemed pater, who used to be a regular dab at football before he made his millions.)

BAGLEY TRIMBLE.

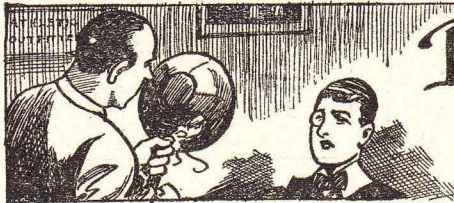
(My worthy and illustrious self. As a footballer, I am yew-neck. I stand sooprem. True, my slimness handicaps me a little. But I possess a certain amount of weight, and I never hezzitate to throw it about. At the moment of writing the Spurs and Chelsea and Sunderland are in keen competition for my servises. I have not yet decided who to play for, but I've no doubt you'll see me turning out for England before much water has flowed under the bridges! You know, it's only personal jellussy that keeps me out of the St. Jim's junior team. Tom Merry is afraid that if I appeared on the football field I should put him absolutely in the shade, and that would never do—for him. I was thinking of offering my servises to Kildare for the first eleven, but, on sekond thoughts, I don't think I will just at present; he's got a new asplant, and I don't want to be the first to feel it.)

Baggy Trimble

[Supplement II.]

EXTRACTS FROM THE DIARY OF A FOOTBALL!

Contributed by FATTY WYNN.
(Sub-Editor.)



Buying a Football!

By VAL MORNINGTON.
(Of Rookwood School.)

MONDAY.

I had an uncomfortable journey from the leather factory to the sports outfitters in Wayland. On arrival, I was "blown up" for being late, and then placed in a conspicuous position in the shop window. Along came a youth named Wally D'Arcy. He looked admiringly at my plump, rotund form. "How much is that football?" he inquired of the shop assistant. "Twelve-and-sixpence, sir," was the reply. "Good! Hand it over!"

Master D'Arcy seemed immensely pleased with his purchase, for he punted me all the way to St. Jim's. On one occasion I nearly went under a steam-roller, but managed to roll out of the way in the nick of time. Had I not done so, I should have felt very "crushed" and humiliated!

TUESDAY.

It pelted with rain, and my owner was unable to take me out. However, he punted me along the corridors, and on reaching the Sixth Form passage he kicked me full into the face of Gerald Knox! I left a muddy stain on Knox's dial. He gave Master D'Arcy a hundred lines, and threatened to confiscate me. But I rolled away before he could execute his threat.

WEDNESDAY.

I took part in a real match for the first time. It was a terrible experience! Lusty kicks were bestowed on all parts of my anatomy. The Third Form were playing the Second, and I was determined that the Third—Master D'Arcy's team—should win. So every time a Second Form forward kicked me, I either sailed over the cross-bar or went wide of the goal, much to their annoyance. But when Master D'Arcy booted me, I went whizzing into the net like a pip from an orange. The Third won by five goals to nil.

THURSDAY.

I received a "blowing up" with Master D'Arcy's bicycle-pump. He told me I had got rather flabby. I became sulky, and refused to be properly blown up. When I was taken down to the football-field, I resembled a stodgy pudding. Every time a kid tried to kick me, he hurt his toes and danced with agony.

FRIDAY.

Master D'Arcy became short of cash, and it was necessary for him to raise the wind. So he sold me to Grundy of the Shell for ten bob. I didn't relish the change of ownership. Grundy is such a big-booted beast!

SATURDAY.

I met with a cruel fate at the hands—or, rather, feet—of George Alfred Grundy. He kicked me with brutal force, and I went sailing over the hedge of the football-field, and landed in the roadway beyond. A steam-lorry came along, and I was too exhausted to get out of its way. It passed over me, and I am now as flat as a pancake, and quite unfit for active service in the field!

Darrel Wynn.

On Saturday last I was seized with a sudden impulse.

I would buy a football! It was jolly handy for a fellow to have a ball of his own, I reflected. Such a beastly nuisance having to keep borrowing footballs from other people.

I chatted with my pal Erroll on the subject.

"Kit," I said, "I'm thinkin' of buyin' a football. How much will it cost?"

"A decent match ball would cost you a quid. But if you want just an ordinary ball to punt about in the quad, you ought to get one for half a guinea."

"That will suit me all right," I said. "I'm not prepared to spend a penny more than half a guinea."

I cycled over to Latcham, and called at the sports outfitters. They trotted out a

"And how will you lace the ball up, with-out a proper lacer?"

"Sure I can't tell you, dear man."

"Look here, sir," said the shop assistant, "take my advice, and buy one of these pumps for blowing up footballs. They're only thirty bob. You'll also need one of these shoe-horn contraptions, for tucking the tube of the bladder inside the ball. Then there will be the lacer—"

"Anythin' else?" I gasped faintly.

"Yes. A ball of twine and a pair of pliers. You possess a pair of football boots, I take it?"

"I do; but they're worn out."

"Then I'll tell you where you can get a pair of real beauties. Messrs. Driöbell & Pass, the bootmakers next door, will be proud to serve a young gentleman from Rookwood."

By the time I had made my purchases I had a heavy heart and a correspondingly light purse.

I had set out with the intention of spending half a guinea, and not a penny more.

But buying a football is an expensive game. This is what it cost me:

Football	£	s.	d.
Steel pump for blowing up	0	10	6
same	1	10	0
Pair of boots for kicking same	1	5	0
Lacer for lacing same	0	2	6
Shoe-horn, for coaxing the bladder tube to go inside the ball and lay down	0	1	6
Pair of pliers, for tightening the lacer	0	2	0
Ball of twine	0	0	3
	£	3	11
	0	11	9

Pretty expensive for a football—what? I staggered wearily back to Rookwood with my hefty parcel of purchases.

"What have you got there, Morny?" asked Jimmy Silver, who was standing in the school gateway with his chums.

"A football, complete with all accessories," I said.

"Oh, good! Let's have a game." I untied the brown-paper parcel, and produced the football. I tossed it to Jimmy Silver, who, before the ball could touch the ground, took a flying kick at it.

The ball went whizzing through the air. And it was as if a cannon-ball had been discharged.

Crash!

The flying football found a billet on one of the spikes which surmounted the school gates.

There was a sudden rush of air.

Sizz-z-z-z-z!

"The beastly thing's punctured!" I exclaimed, in horror-stricken tones.

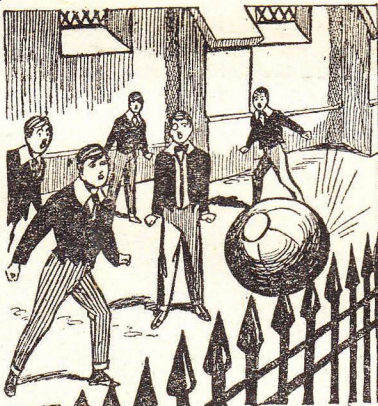
It certainly was. The spike had gone clean through its hide!

Somebody suggested that I went down to the town and bought another football. But not this child! I've had enough of buying footballs!

As for the pump, and the pliers, and the lacer, and other impedimenta, I'm going to put 'em up for auction!

If you are a believer in economy, take my advice, and never buy a football!

THE POPULAR.—No. 192.



The flying football found a billet on one of the spikes surmounting the school gates. Sizz-z-z-z-z!

number of footballs for my inspection, and I selected one that was labelled half a guinea.

"Shall I blow it up for you, sir?" inquired the shop assistant.

"Of course! D'you think I'm going to play with a ball that's like a stodgy lump of pudding?"

The assistant produced a steel pump, and started to blow the football into a state of rotundity.

It was a long and tedious task, and I noticed that the man found it extremely difficult to lace up the ball and to keep the air in.

At last the operation was completed.

"There you are, sir!" said the assistant, handing me the ball. "By the way, how are you going to manage about getting it blown up in future?"

"Oh, I shall use a bicycle-pump," I said carelessly.

"Then I don't envy you your task. It'll take hours and hours!"

"My hat!"

Supplement III.]

—FAT, FUNNY, AND FULL OF GOOD THINGS!— WHAT DO YOU SAY?

FOOTBALL FACTS AND FANCIES!

By Monty Lowther.
(The Humorist of St. Jim's.)

The New House are boasting that they have won three football matches in succession. This is not surprising, considering they are never without a Wynn!

* * *

George Alfred Grundy is raising a team to challenge St. Jim's. Grundy declares that there will only be one team in it. Quite so; and that team won't be Grundy's!

* * *

If Fatty Wynn gets much stouter, the goalposts will have to be widened. Opponents are already complaining that Fatty fills the whole goalmouth!

* * *

Baggy Trimble has expressed a desire to play for St. Jim's. All we can say is that if fellows like Baggy are given a place in the team, we soon sha'n't have a team in the place!

* * *

"Talbot scored with a hurricane shot," says a recent report. We presume the opposing goalie had the "breeze up"!

* * *

"Tom Merry helped himself to a nice pass," says the same report. If it was a late pass, we expect Kildare of the Sixth will have something to say about it!

* * *

"Rookwood Forwards Very Weak," runs a headline. We didn't notice that they came on to the field on crutches, or in bathchairs!

* * *

"Figins dribbled well," we are told. We always did think Figgy was a bit of a baby at times!

* * *

"Wynn saves splendidly," says a report. Evidently his Scottish chum, Kerr, is teaching him to be thrifty!

* * *

"Jack Blake hit the post," we are informed. We knew Blake was a bit of a pugilist. But what had the poor post done?

* * *

"Harry Noble struck the crossbar." A further case of assault and battery!

* * *

"Fatty Wynn received rounds of applause." Being a trifle peckish, Fatty would rather have received a few rounds of toast!

* * *

"Whilst racing down the touch-line Tom Merry threw a glance to his right—" The spectators were quick to dodge out of the way, and so no one was hurt.

* * *

Someone asked me why Figgy was such a "fast" winger. I was too shocked to reply—I always thought Figgy was modest and quiet!

THE POPULAR.—No. 192.

THE JOYS OF FOOTBALL!

A Poem Introducing the names of
Several Greyfriars Celebrities.

By Dick Penfold.

I love to POTTER on the GREENE,
In footer togs arrayed;
I love to TODD-le to the FIELD
Where the great game is played.

I charge just like an angry BULL
Into the smaller FRY;
I love to s-QUELCH through mud and
slush—
A champion player, I!

I never HACKER fellow's shins,
Nor make opponents blub;
And when the match is fought and won
I have a nice cold TUBB.

The Head comes RUSSELL-ing on the field,
He much ad-MYERS my form;
And my opponents are done BROWN,
I make the pace too warm!

One day a BULSTRODE on the pitch,
And so we failed to win;
But though he tossed me in the air
I still contrived to GWYNNE!

My TEMPLE once was badly bruised
When dashing down the wing;
But even then I didn't HOWELL,
I just began to SINGH!

I am a stunning player—TWIGG?
I've won a CAPPER two;
And now I must my PENFOLD up
And bid you all adieu!

ANSWERS TO KORRESPONDENTS!

By Billy Bunter.

(Future Kapitā of Tottenham Hot-
spur, F.C.)

R. H. (Manchester).—"I believe you are a good forward, Billy?"—"Not 'half"! Madge K. (Marlborough).—"Why don't you keep goal for Greyfriars, Billy, like Fatty Wynn does for St. Jim's?"—"Personal jellusy on Wharton's part prevents me, dear lady!

"Curious" (Chester).—"How many fellows of average build could get inside your footer jersey?"—"Oh, about a duzzen!

Jack R. (Colchester).—"Why don't you make a bid for the footer captaincy?"—"Unfortunately, it's not being put up for auction!

"Tommy" (Tipton).—"I missed a penalty the other day."—"Same here. Quelchy was going to give me a fearful licking, but he was called away at the crosshal moment. So I missed a penalty, as well!

"Ardent Reader" (Cardiff).—"Have you ever played in the Remove eleven?"—"Would a Bunter soil his hands—or, rather, his feet—to that eggstent?"

A. M. H. (Accrington).—"How many goals have you scored in the course of your career, Billy?"—"The number runs into billyuns!

R. A. Dudd (Dewsbury).—"If I came down to Greyfriars, would you give me a place in your football eleven, Billy?"—"No, sir! I don't want any Dudds in my team!

"Slim and Graceful" (Salisbury).—"What a fat barrel you must look in your football jersey!"—"What a scraggy scarecrow you must look in yours!

Archie H. (Hereford).—"Is there a football team at Greyfriars called the Bunter Bashers?"—"Archiebald, certainly not!

"Ambitious" (Canterbury).—"Have you got room in your eleven for an outside-left?"—"No. Konderder yourself left outside!

B. H. R. (Reading).—"I wish you'd buck up and give us a Special Football Number."—"I am delievering the goods hearwith!

"Half-Back" (Eltham).—"One of these days I hope to be skipper of Aston Villa."—"Impossible. I've got designs on the kaptaincy of that team myself.

A CALL TO ARMS!

By Tubby Muffin.

(The Fat Footballer of Rookwood
School.)

I'm getting up a footer team,
Of tallent 'twill contain the cream.
Muffin's eleven will rain soopream.

Rally Round!

We'll challenge Jimmy Silver's side,
And fairly whack 'em to the wide.
We'll deal a deathblow to their pride.

Rally Round!

We'll make the other chaps eggscclaim:
"See how those fellows play the game!"
We will win onner, praise, and fame.

Rally Round!

I want no duffers in my crowd,
But chaps of whom I can be proud.
Slacking will never be aloud!

Rally Round!

We'll practiss every afternoon,
We'll practiss underneath the moon.
We'll practiss always, late or soon.

Rally Round!

We'll kick for goal with mite and mane.
When beaten—why, we'll try again.
We'll use our mussel, brawn, and brain.

Rally Round!

This Rookwood team of mine will be
The finest one could wish to see.
Our motto will be "Unity!"

Rally Round!

Hand in your names without delay.
I must have fellows who can play
In the real hustling, bustling way.

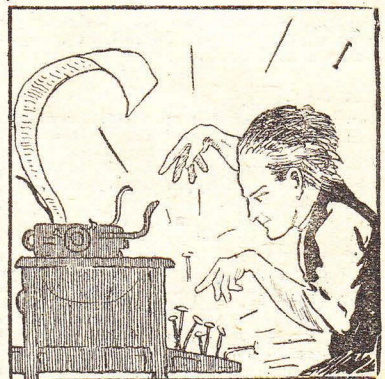
Rally Round!

So join the Muffin Rovers now!
In football spheres we'll make a row!
We'll win each match we play (bow-wow!)
Rally Round!

PEEPS INTO THE FUTURE!

By George Kerr.

(St. Jim's Cartoonist.)



EDGAR LAWRENCE.

(Famous Author.)

[Supplement IV.]

THE FINEST TONIC FOR THE "BLUES" IS "BILLY BUNTER'S WEEKLY"!

RATTY ON THE WARPATH!

(Continued from page 12.)

caught sight of the party of School House juniors.

"Merry!" he thundered. Tom Merry did not answer. His eyes were fixed upon Kildare, dashing towards the Corinthians' goal.

"Merry!" shouted Mr. Ratcliff, quivering with rage.

"Oh, good try!" cried Tom, clapping his hands. "Did you see that, you fellows? Kildare hit the cross-bar! If that shot had been half an inch lower it would have scored!"

"Merry!" Mr. Ratcliff's voice rose to a shrill crescendo.

Tom Merry came back to earth with a start.

"Did you call me, sir?" he murmured.

"I have addressed you no less than three times!" hooted Mr. Ratcliff.

"What are you doing here?"

"Watching the match, sir."

"Yes, I can see that!" said Mr. Ratcliff impatiently. "But have you obtained permission to come here?"

"Yes, sir. Mr. Railton very kindly gave us the afternoon off."

Mr. Ratcliff bit his lip with vexation. Having been unable to find Figgins & Co. up to the present, he would have been only too pleased to "drop on" the School House juniors, and take them back to St. Jim's in custody, for attending a football match without permission. But Tom Merry & Co. had been granted leave of absence by Mr. Railton. So Mr. Ratcliff had no case.

"Mr. Railton is rather too liberal in granting privileges," he said sourly.

"Have you seen Figgins, Merry?"

"Yes, sir."

"Ah!" Mr. Ratcliff's eyes gleamed vindictively. "Where is he?"

"I couldn't say where he is at the moment, sir. It was at St. Jim's that I saw him—directly after dinner."

Mr. Ratcliff nearly choked. He had imagined that he was on the verge of a discovery.

"This is downright impertinence, Merry!" he spluttered.

"Not at all, sir."

"Is Figgins present on this ground?"

Tom Merry shrugged his shoulders.

"Not to my knowledge, sir," he said.

"I believe you are shielding him!" thundered Mr. Ratcliff.

"Nothing of the sort, sir!" replied Tom Merry indignantly.

Mr. Ratcliff stamped up and down in front of the stand, in a state of great wrath. He was convinced that Figgins & Co. were on the ground. They were not in the grand-stand, or he would have seen them. But it was more than likely that they were wedged in among the dense crowd that stood round the touchline.

There was a portly constable stationed a few yards away. Mr. Ratcliff strode up to him.

"Officer!" he shouted.

"Speak a bit louder, can't yer?" grunted the policeman. "I'm deaf in both ears."

"Six boys from St. James' School are here without permission!" fumed Mr. Ratcliff.

"That ain't no business of mine," said the constable.

"Then you must make it your business!" said Mr. Ratcliff sharply. "I command you to make a tour of inspec-

tion, and as soon as you have located the six young rascals, send them here to me!"

The policeman did not budge. He remained as impassive as a carved statue.

"Do you hear me?" roared Mr. Ratcliff.

"Yes, I 'ears yer!"

"Then carry out my commands at once!"

"No fear!" was the reply. "I'm a police-constable, I am—not a blinkin' errand-boy!"

Mr. Ratcliff fairly danced with rage.

"If you refuse to obey me, I will report you to your inspector!" he exclaimed.

The constable was unmoved by this terrible threat.

"Report, an' be 'anged to yer!" he said.

Tom Merry & Co., who had overheard this far from friendly dialogue, were chuckling gleefully.

"It's a treat to see old Ratty defied," said Manners. "He's so used to getting his own way at St. Jim's that he expects everybody to run about for him."

"The bobby isn't having any," said Talbot. "And I don't blame him."

Mr. Ratcliff became so excited that he shook his fist at the policeman.

"You will hear more of this!" he cried. "Since you will make no attempt to find those wretched boys, I will search for them myself!"

So saying, the irate Housemaster set off along the touchline.

He made a complete circuit of the ground, scanning the faces of the spectators as he went. But there was no sign of Figgins & Co. Their St. Jim's caps ought to have been easily discernible. But there was not a St. Jim's cap to be seen.

"The young rascals!" muttered Mr. Ratcliff, pausing on the touchline. "They have evidently had the effrontery to disguise themselves!"

At that moment the Wayland forwards swooped down the field.

The linesman came racing along the touchline, in order to keep up with the ball. It so happened that Mr. Ratcliff was standing right in his path.

Biff!

There was a violent collision. Mr. Ratcliff recoiled as if he had been hit by

an earthquake. He measured his length on the ground, and there was a roar of laughter from the spectators.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The linesman had also come a cropper. He picked himself up, and hurled a number of choice epithets at Mr. Ratcliff.

"What d'you think you're doin' for?" he demanded. "Get out of the bloom'n' light, can't yer?"

Mr. Ratcliff not only got out of the light, but out of the ground. He was feeling badly shaken up. Moreover, he was annoyed beyond measure. He had paid a shilling for admission to the ground, and he had failed to find Figgins & Co. Mr. Ratcliff was a very mercenary man, and the loss of that shilling worried him.

Some people in Mr. Ratcliff's position would have stayed and had a shillings-worth of football. But Mr. Ratcliff didn't understand football, and he had no patience with those who played it.

Snorting with annoyance, the Housemaster quitted the ground.

Tom Merry & Co. saw him depart, and they chuckled.

"Ratty's drawn blank," said Jack Blake. "He seemed to think that Figgy & Co. had come to the match without permission."

"It's a good job they weren't here, or they'd have got it in the neck good and proper!" said Monty Lowther.

The whistle sounded shortly afterwards for half-time.

The Corinthians had done all the pressing, but they had not been able to get through. And the score-sheet was blank.

The second half of the game saw one goal scored. And that goal came from the foot of Kildare.

During one of their rare bursts, Wayland Warriors attacked hotly. Kildare snapped up a pass from the wing, and sent the ball crashing into the net, to the accompaniment of loud cheers.

The Corinthians played heroically for an equaliser, but it never came, and Wayland Warriors proved victorious by the only goal scored.

Kildare got a great reception when he came off the field. Tom Merry & Co. cheered him to the echo. And the Wayland folk were equally delighted.

"The best match we've seen this season, deah boys!" was Arthur Augustus D'Arcy's verdict.

And Gussy's chums were heartily in agreement.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

A Shock for Ratty!

MR. RATCLIFF paced to and fro in the school gateway in the gathering dusk.

To say that Mr. Ratcliff was angry was to put it mildly. He was almost beside himself with rage and disappointment.

But he was convinced that Figgins & Co. had been present at the match in some sort of disguise. And it was Figgins & Co. that Mr. Ratcliff was now waiting for.

He had to wait a long time. Tom Merry & Co. came in, but there was no sign of the New House juniors.


Heavy drops of rain began to fall, but Mr. Ratcliff did not desert his post. If a thunderstorm or a blizzard had been suddenly let loose, Mr. Ratcliff would have remained in the school gateway, watching and waiting.

At last his long vigil was rewarded. Six forms loomed up in the school gateway. Mr. Ratcliff pounced upon them at once.

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NEXT TUESDAY!

"HARRY HAMMOND—HERO!"

"Figgins!" he ejaculated.

"Yes, sir?"

"Kerr!"

"Adsum!" murmured Kerr.

"Wynn! Redfern! Lawrence! Owen!"

"All present, sir!" said Redfern.

"You will accompany me to the headmaster's study at once!" thundered Mr. Ratcliff.

The juniors looked astonished. This was the very last thing they had expected.

"What's wrong, sir?" asked Figgins in wonder. "We're not late for locking-up."

"You will soon discover what is wrong, wretched boy!" rasped Mr. Ratcliff. "Follow me!"

The procession made its way over the slippery flagstones of the quadrangle. Mr. Ratcliff strode ahead, with frowning brows and tightly clenched hands. Straight to the Head's study he went, with the juniors in tow.

Dr. Holmes was seated in his armchair, deep in his beloved Horace. And now another Horace, not nearly so beloved, burst in upon the Head's privacy. It was Mr. Horace Ratcliff.

The Housemaster held open the door and motioned to Figgins & Co. to enter the apartment.

The Head rose to his feet in surprise. "Mr. Ratcliff," he ejaculated, "what does this mean?"

"I have brought these young rascals to you, sir, for condign punishment!" said the Housemaster.

"Before I punish them," said the Head, "it would be as well to know what they have done to deserve it."

"They have grossly deceived me, sir!" exclaimed Mr. Ratcliff.

"In what way?"

"I will explain. First of all, Figgins came to me this afternoon and told me that his grandmother was lying ill at Burchester, and that he wished to go and see her. It was a trump-up story, which Figgins invented for the purpose of going to see the football match at Wayland!"

"Bless my soul! What have you to say, Figgins?" asked the Head.

"Mr. Ratcliff's wrong, sir—quite wrong. I didn't tell him a trumped-up story; I told him the truth. My grandmother was seriously ill, but this afternoon she took a turn for the better, thank goodness!"

"Can you prove your statement, Figgins?"

"You can have proof, sir, by telephoning to Dr. Barton, of Burchester. He was attending my grandmother when I arrived there this afternoon."

The Head nodded.

"I do not doubt your word, Figgins," he said. "But it will be as well to obtain proof, in order to satisfy Mr. Ratcliff."

Dr. Holmes stepped to the telephone. He put through a call to the doctor Figgins had mentioned.

Mr. Ratcliff stood by, looking rather uneasy. He considered that this was a bit of bluff on Figgins' part. Yet he could not be certain.

The telephone call was promptly answered. The Head spoke with Dr. Barton for some moments. Then he replaced the receiver on its hooks and turned to Mr. Ratcliff.

"Figgins has told the truth, Mr. Ratcliff," he said coldly. "He has spent the afternoon at his grandmother's house. Dr. Barton saw him there. He could not possibly have gone to the football match."

"Oh!"

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NEXT
TUESDAY!

Mr. Ratcliff's jaw dropped. The news came as a bombshell to him. He had quite thought that the story of the ailing grandmother was merely an excuse on Figgins' part.

"In the circumstances, sir," he muttered, "I suppose Figgins must be exonerated. But that does not alter the fact that these other boys have been guilty of base deception. Kerr and Wynn informed me that they were going to visit an Old Boy—a Captain Mason—at the Cottage Hospital. They said they were going to take him fruit, and so forth. In reality they went to Wayland to watch this absurd game of ball."

"Pardon me, sir," said Fatty Wynn, "but we went to the Cottage Hospital. If the Head would care to ring up the matron, she will bear out what I say."

Again the Head stepped to the telephone. And there was a further bombshell for Mr. Ratcliff.

The matron at the Cottage Hospital confirmed the fact that Captain Mason was lying there as the result of a motor accident, and that Kerr and Wynn had spent the afternoon there.

The Head turned impatiently to Mr. Ratcliff.

"Your charges against these boys appear to be entirely without foundation," he said. "I consider you owe them an apology."

"W-w-what!" gasped the Housemaster, wondering if he had heard aright.

"You have accused them of lying, and it is only right that you should express regret for making such an accusation."

Mr. Ratcliff turned to Figgins, Kerr, and Wynn.

"I—I am sorry!" he stuttered. But there was no contrition in his tone. If looks could have killed, the New House trio would have expired forthwith.

"I agree, sir," said Mr. Ratcliff, facing the Head, "that Figgins, Kerr, and Wynn are blameless in this matter. But these three boys remain to be dealt with."

The Housemaster indicated Redfern, Lawrence, and Owen.

"Redfern told me a cock-and-bull story of an unemployed cousin who was about to emigrate to Australia," said Mr. Ratcliff. "He asked permission for himself, and for Lawrence and Owen, to go to Wayland to see this cousin off. I do not believe for one moment that such a cousin exists. He is pure fiction."

Dr. Holmes turned to Dick Redfern. "What have you to say, Redfern?" he asked quietly.

"We saw my cousin off by the fourth-thirty train from Wayland, sir," was the

reply. "We stayed on the station with him for over an hour, chatting to him and wishing him luck. The station-master will bear out what I say, if you care to telephone him, sir."

Once again the Head stepped to the telephone. But Mr. Ratcliff, realising that he was beaten, intervened.

"Pray do not trouble, sir," he said. "I accept Redfern's explanation."

The Head frowned.

"It is a great pity you did not accept it in the first place, Mr. Ratcliff," he said. "You have done these boys a grave injustice. You have accused them of deceit and lying, when all the time they have acted honourably."

Mr. Ratcliff looked thoroughly chastened.

"I—I am afraid I was a trifle hasty, sir!" he stammered. "I—I thought these boys were keen on going to the football match."

"So we were, sir," chimed in Redfern. "But it wasn't possible, in the circumstances. If we had wanted your permission to go to the football match we should have asked you frankly, and not invented a lot of excuses."

"Quite right, my boy," said the Head. "I trust Mr. Ratcliff will have the grace to apologise to you, and to Lawrence and Owen."

It went sorely against the grain for Mr. Ratcliff to have to make a further apology. But he managed it somehow.

The Head waved his hand to the door.

"You may go, my boys," he said kindly. "I am sorry you have been brought before me without just cause."

The New House juniors trooped out of the study. Mr. Ratcliff, with the wind completely taken out of his sails, followed them. And those who caught a glimpse of Mr. Ratcliff's face declared that he looked positively homicidal.

The sour, ill-tempered Housemaster had had the humiliating experience of being "told off" by the Head in the presence of six New House juniors. He had taken it for granted that Figgins & Co. had deceived him, and it had transpired that they had been perfectly honest with him.

Mr. Ratcliff stamped away to his study, and he was not seen again that evening. He remained in his study, like Achilles of old sulking in his tent. And he will not be so ready to doubt the statements of his scholars in future!

THE END.

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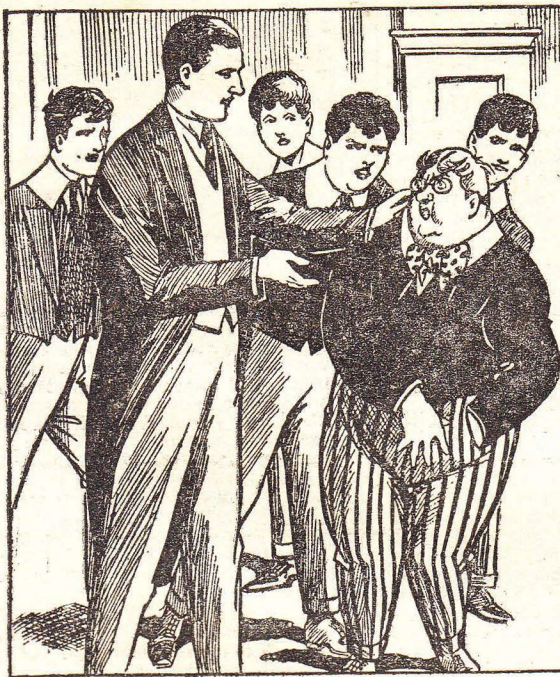
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THE FIRST CHAPTER.

Rolling in Money!

"HALLO, hallo, hallo! There he is!"

Billy Bunter, the fat junior of the Remove Form at Greyfriars, started, and looked wildly round. Harry Wharton & Co. were making for him at a terrific rate, and there was no escape.

"Oh crumbs!"

Billy Bunter was always in the wars. The fact that it was entirely his fault never occurred to the fat junior. Billy had a little habit of helping himself to other people's foods, and on this occasion it was the Famous Five's food he had appropriated.

Tom Brown, who had been "crocked" and unable to play in the recent Red-cyffe match, had volunteered to get the food ready for the return of the footballers. Billy had found that out, and, making quite certain that Tom Brown was unable to run, Billy had collared the food and made himself scarce by hiding in the old tower.

There, much to his amazement, he had discovered Vernon-Smith, the Bounder of Greyfriars, who had disappeared after being sentenced to expulsion for defying Mr. Quelch, the Remove master!

That unfortunate happening was costing Vernon-Smith quite a lot. Billy found that, unless he was given cash in advance for postal-orders to come, he would most certainly forget to keep quiet the fact that Vernon-Smith was in hiding in the tower whilst all the school were on the look-out for him, especially Dr. Locke, the Head.

So, with ten shillings in his pocket, Billy Bunter came out of the old tower and hurried off towards the School House—right into the arms of the Famous Five,

who were seeking vengeance for the stolen food.

"Collar the fat burglar!" howled Wharton.

"Scalp him!" hooted Bob Cherry, brandishing a pair of fists as hard as steel.

The Famous Five were waiting inside the School House. They collared the Owl of the Remove promptly as he came in. Bunter yelped.

"I—I say, you fellows, you know—"

"Bring him up to the study to be slaughtered," said Nugent. "We can't slaughter him here. Slaughtering-porpoises is against the rules in the passage."

"Ow! Leggo! I won't go! Look here, I'll pay you for your rotten grub!" howled Bunter. "It was simply a loan. I intended to pay for it, of course."

"What, with postal-orders that will come the year after next?" asked Bob Cherry.

"Oh, really, Cherry! As it happens, I've had a remittance—an unexpected remittance. One of my titled relations have—"

"Rats!"

"Leggo! I tell you I'll pay for the grub!" roared Bunter, struggling as the Removites rushed him towards the staircase.

"Hallo! What's the row?" exclaimed Wingate, the captain of Greyfriars, coming down the passage. "Now, then—"

"Yow! Make 'em leggo! Yow! Yah!"

"The fat beast has raided our grub!" explained Harry Wharton. "We're only

going to boil him in oil, and larrup him with a cricket-stump. It's all right!"

"The all-rightfulness is terrific, my esteemed Wingate."

"I'm going to pay for the rotten grub!" howled Bunter. "Yow! I'll pay for it! Yah!"

"Well, if he pays for it, that will make it right, won't it?" said Wingate, laughing.

Bob Cherry snorted.

"That's only his gas. He hasn't any money!"

"How are you going to pay for it if you haven't any money, Bunter?" asked the captain of Greyfriars.

"Ow! I've got lots of money! All my people are rich," said Bunter. "They simply roll in money. I've had a remittance from a titled relation."

"Rats!" said Wharton. "If the fat beast can produce any money, we'll let him off. He collared eight shillings' worth of tuck, and I suppose he's bolted it all. We'll make it a bargain. If he can show up eight shillings, we'll let him off. If he can't, we'll take him up to the study and lather him."

"It's a go!" said all the Co. at once. They were quite assured that Billy Bunter could not produce the cash necessary to pay for the plundered tuck.

"That's fair!" said Wingate. "Now, Bunter—"

"Leggo, then! How can I get the money out of my pocket while these beasts are holding me?" demanded Bunter.

"The fat rotter wants a chance to bolt!"

"You won't bolt, Bunter?" demanded Wingate.

"No; honour bright!"

"Oh, don't be funny!" said Bob Cherry. "You hold the fat beast's collar,

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Wingate, while he produces the money. He will have to do a conjuring trick."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Wingate held Bunter's collar, and the juniors released him. Then the Owl of the Remove fumbled in his pockets.

"Of course, I meant to pay for the tuck all along," he remarked. "Eight shillings is a mere nothing to me. Mind, you've agreed that if I've got the money, I'm not to pay! I'll leave it over till my postal-order comes."

"Don't jaw so much," said Johnny Bull. "Show up before we slaughter you!"

Bunter's fat hand came out of his pocket, with a little heap of shillings in the palm.

There was a chorus of surprised exclamations:

"Cash!"

"Hard cash!"

"Rolling in money, by Jove!"

"Whom have you been robbing, Bunter?"

"Whose esteemed pocket did you discoverfully find that excellent cash in, my worthy and dishonest Bunter?"

"Oh, draw it mild!" said Bunter. "I've had several remittances lately from my titled relations—my rich uncles—"

"Which uncle?" asked Bob Cherry. "The one who keeps the pawnshop in the Old Kent Road, or the one who keeps the fried-fish shop in the New Cut?"

"You—you—you beast! My uncle doesn't keep a fried-fish shop!" yelled Bunter.

"Sorry, my mistake!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Well, he's produced the money," said Wingate, laughing heartily. "According to your own terms, he's not to pay now. Ha, ha, ha!"

And Wingate walked away, greatly amused, leaving the juniors glaring at Bunter. The fat Removite grinned triumphantly. He had fairly done the chums of the Remove this time. They had felt so certain that he was, as usual, stony, that they had felt quite safe in making those conditions—and now Bunter was neither to pay for the plundered tuck, nor to be slaughtered for having raided it.

Harry Wharton burst into a laugh.

"Well, he's done us!" he said. "You can keep the money, Bunter. We didn't want you to pay for it, anyway. But you were stony to-day. I hope you've come by that cash honestly? If you haven't, you'd better take it back to the owner."

"Oh, really, Wharton, if you mean to insult me—"

"Ass! You found a fiver once, and kept it, and made out that it was yours because you wanted it, and you might have got the sack over it. If it's the same with this tin—"

"It isn't," said Bunter. "I didn't find this. The fact is, I've got rich friends, and I expect to have plenty of money in the future. I've got a standing order at Uncle Clegg's in the village for half-a-crown's worth of tuck every day."

To which the juniors replied, with one voice:

"Gammon!"

"I'll jolly well show you, if you like to walk down to the village with me to-morrow!" said Bunter loftily. "I've got no more time to waste on you now. I've got my prep to do."

And Bunter rolled away, with his little fat nose in the air.

The Co. could not help regarding one another with astonishment. For Bunter to be in possession of money was a remarkable circumstance. It was true that he was always just expecting the arrival

of a postal-order; but it was equally true that the postal-order seldom or never arrived. No one doubted that his rich relations existed only in his fertile imagination.

"He didn't get that cash by post," said Bob Cherry, after a pause. "I heard him inquiring for a letter the last time the postman came, and there wasn't one for him."

"It belongs to somebody else, I suppose," said Harry Wharton uneasily. "Bunter's too silly to be honest. I hope he's not getting himself into trouble. Well, I suppose it's no business of ours."

And the Co. went to their studies to do their prep.

But they were reminded of Bunter and his newly-acquired wealth when they came down later into the junior Common-room.

Bunter never could resist talking, and he would boast even when he had nothing but "gas" to offer in the way of proof. Now that he really had some money, he was apparently on the point of bursting with self-importance. All the Remove soon knew that Bunter was in funds, and several fellows who had lent him money, and who never expected to see it again, reminded Bunter that they had not really intended to make those little loans on the ninety-nine years' system.

"Now you're in funds, you can pay up," Ogilvy remarked. "You owe me a bob, Bunter." He had cornered the fat junior in the Common-room, cutting off his way to the door.

"You owe me a tanner!" said Skinner.

"And me half-a-crown!" said Bolsover major.

"And me two bob!" chimed in Elliott.

"And me eightpence!" said Trevor.

And quite a number of claimants appeared as soon as the suggestion was mooted that Billy Bunter might "square up" now that he was rolling in money.

Billy Bunter blinked at the juniors through his big spectacles in dismay. He liked to be regarded as rolling in wealth, but to part with the wealth in settlement of little debts that he had quite forgotten—that was quite another matter. And the fellows meant business, too. If Bunter had plenty of money, and was going to have plenty more, as he declared, there was no reason why he should not square up.

Harry Wharton & Co., as they came in, saw the dismayed Owl of the Remove surrounded by creditors demanding instant payment, and they looked on, grinning. It was a just punishment for the "swank" of William George Bunter.

"Pay up!" chuckled, Bob Cherry.

"You owe me four bob!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Pay up, Bunter!"

"Shell out!"

"Hand it over!"

"Sure, and it's waitin' I am for my ninenpence!" chortled Micky Desmond.

"I—I say, you fellows," stammered Bunter, "I—I—you see—under the circumstances—"

"Pay up!"

"You see, I—I've only got ten bob, and—and—"

"Lots more coming from your titled relations!" chuckled Bolsover major. "You've said so yourself. If you're expecting handsome remittances to-morrow, it won't hurt you to pay out the ten bob now."

"Pay up, Bunter!"

"Sure, I'm waitin' for me ninenpence—"

"I can't pay you all!" howled Bunter. "Then pay each chap a bob or a tanner off his debt," suggested Ogilvy—"same as they do in the Bankruptcy Court."

"Good egg! Sixpence in the pound!" said Bob Cherry.

"Look here, I'm not going to pay anybody just now. When I receive some more remittances from my people—"

"No time like the present," said Bolsover major. "You've got plenty of money, and you say there's plenty more coming. You'll pay up, or we'll bump you and make you."

"Bump him! Bump the blessed swindler!" said Ogilvy.

There was a general movement upon Bunter. He made an attempt to bolt, but several hands grasped him and yanked him back. And there was a roar:

"Shell out!"

There was no help for it. Bunter had to shell out. Ten shillings were divided among his many creditors, leaving a good many claims still unsatisfied. Then the juniors trooped away, laughing. Bunter had had a lesson on the subject of swanking, though it was doubtful if it would have any effect on him.

"Stony?" asked Harry Wharton, as Bunter grunted disconsolately.

"Yes," growled Bunter. "Never mind, I shall have more to-morrow."

"Where are you going to get it?" asked Frank Nugent.

"My titled relations—"

"Oh rats!"

"Well, you'll see," said Bunter.

"What will you bet me that I don't have ten shillings to-morrow morning?"

"I won't bet you anything," said Harry, "because betting is no class. But if you have ten shillings to-morrow morning, Bunter, we'll take you into the tuckshop and stand you a feed to the same amount."

And Bunter replied instantly:

"Done!"

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

The Horn of Plenty!

BILLY BUNTER was usually the last fellow to leave his bed in the morning, and so often the rising-bell failed to wake him, and it sometimes fell to Bob Cherry to roll him out of bed or squeeze a sponge over him. But on Sunday morning, when the rising-bell went, and the Remove turned out, they met with the surprise of their lives.

Bunter's bed was empty! The Owl of the Remove had risen early—before rising-bell. The juniors could scarcely believe their eyes as they gazed at the empty bed.

"My hat! Bunter's turning over a new leaf!" ejaculated Bob Cherry. "Up before us—and before rising-bell! Is he sleep-walking again, I wonder?"

"Blessed if I understand it!" said Nugent.

Nobody in the Remove understood it. When they went down they looked for Bunter. They found him in the lower hall, seated on a bench, and nodding to sleep. Bob Cherry roused him from his doze with a slap on the shoulder.

"Ow!" gasped Bunter. "Beast! Yow! Wharrer marer?"

"What do you mean by getting up early?" demanded Bob. "Have you been walking in your barmy slumber?"

"Ow! No. I had to get up early to—to walk out and meet the postman, you know."

"What! The postman doesn't come along till ten o'clock on Sunday morning!" Wharton exclaimed.

"I—I mean I walked out to meet the special messenger."

"The special messenger," exclaimed all

the juniors together, staring blankly at Bunter.

"Off your silly rocker?" demanded Johnny Bull.

"I don't see why my rich uncle shouldn't send me a tip by special messenger, if he knows I'm hard up," said Bunter loftily. "He can afford it. He's practically a millionaire. He has all the estates of the family of Bunter de Bunter, descended from Sir Bertram de Bunter, who came over with the Conqueror."

"To say nothing of the commercial establishments of Bunter de Pop-Shop, and Bunter de Fish-Shop," said Bob Cherry, "who came over in the third-class steerage before the Aliens' Act was passed."

"So your uncle has been sending you money by special messenger, has he, early on Sunday morning?" said Wharton, with a laugh.

"I decline to give particulars to chaps who doubt my word," said Bunter. "But I hold you to your agreement. When the tuckshop opens, you've got to stand me a feed up to ten shillings, as per agreement."

"Yes; if you can show up the ten bob this morning," grinned Wharton. "I don't think you're likely to get that feed."

"The don't-think-fulness is terrific." "That's where you make a mistake," said Bunter. "What price that?"

He extracted a ten-shilling note from his waistcoat-pocket, and held it out for inspection.

There was a howl of amazement from the juniors. It was a real ten-shilling note—quite evidently genuine. Wharton's face became very grave.

"Look here, Bunter, tell us where you got that ten-shilling note."

"It's mine," said Bunter, with a sniff. "I suppose you don't think I've pinched it?"

"I don't see how else you could have got it. It's no good expecting us to believe that your old uncle sent you a half-quad by special messenger. Where did you get it?"

"I decline to discuss my private affairs, especially with fellows who don't rely on my word," said Bunter, with a great deal of dignity. "I consider you a very inquisitive chap, Wharton—very inquisitive indeed. I don't approve of inquisitiveness!"

Wharton reddened. "You silly ass!" he exclaimed. "I'm not inquisitive—but it's jolly clear to me that you're getting yourself into trouble. That ten shillings can't be yours."

"Of course it can't!" said Bob Cherry. "You'd better take it back to its owner, Bunter, before it's inquired after."

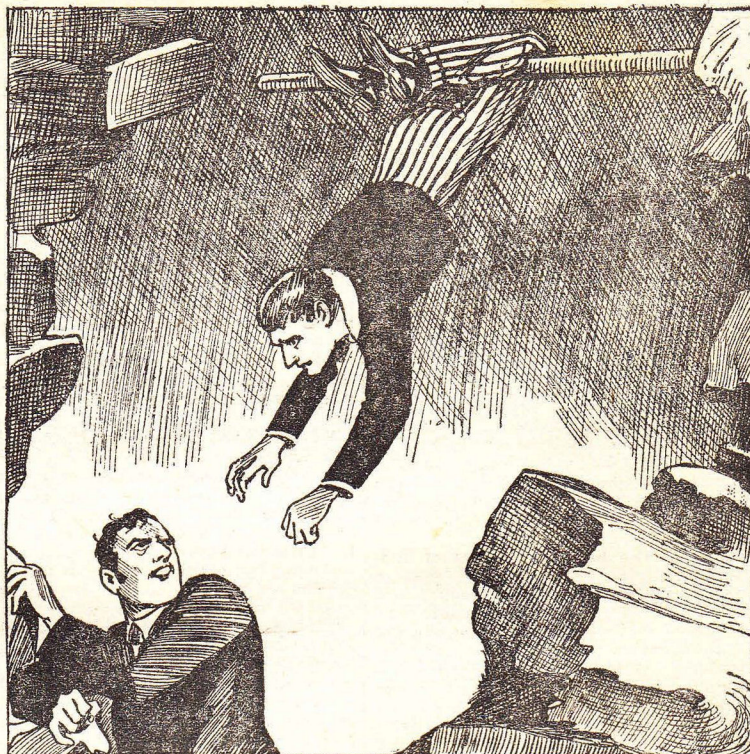
Bunter snorted.

"You can go round asking whether anybody's missed a half-quad, if you like," he said. "Look here, you're not going to sneak out of the agreement, Wharton. Lots of fellows heard you say that if I could show you ten bob this morning, you'd stand me a feed to the same amount. Here's the ten bob."

"Yes—if it's your own!" said Harry. "It's mine! My rich relations——"

"Oh, rats!"

As a matter of fact, the juniors did a considerable amount of inquiring that morning, to discover whence the ten shillings had proceeded. Lord Maul-ever was questioned, but he had lent Bunter nothing that day. Nobody had missed any money. There was simply no explaining how Bunter had come into possession of the money, unless he had indeed received it by special messenger from a rich relation—and that, as all the juniors agreed, was absurd.



THE COURAGE OF THE BOUNDER!—In the centre of the cross-bar Vernon-Smith swung up his legs and crossed them over the bar, hanging on with his knees. His head came swinging down and his outstretched hands reached Mr. Quelch below. "Quick, sir, clutch me, and climb!" He panted out the words. (See Chapter 6.)

But Wharton held to his agreement—and after morning church, Billy Bunter was taken into the tuckshop and fed by the Co.—to the tune of ten shillings. It was rather a serious matter for Wharton—as it used up the whole remainder of the generous remittance he had received from his uncle the previous day. But he had agreed to do it, and he did not think of backing out. But he was puzzled—he felt certain that Bunter could not possibly have come by the money honestly—and he felt that he had been done by the astute Owl of the Remove.

Bunter's airs of consequence that day were quite amusing. In spite of the big feed he had had in the morning, he expended the ten-shilling note in the afternoon upon another. Before evening he was in his usual state of impecuniosity once more.

"I say, Wharton, you might lend a chap a few bob," he remarked in the evening. "I'm expecting a remittance to-morrow morning——"

"A postal-order?" grinned Wharton.

"Ahem, no—hard cash!" said Bunter.

"Oh! You get it in hard cash now, instead of postal-orders—eh?" said Harry.

"Look here, Bunter, what does it mean? Have you found the key of the Head's cash-box?"

"Oh, really, Wharton——"

"Where have you been getting money?" demanded the captain of the Remove.

"When a fellow has rich relations——" began Bunter.

"Oh, cheese it!"

And Wharton walked away angrily. He was really concerned about the fat junior. Billy Bunter was quite fool enough to be dishonest, without realising

how it was—the fact that he wanted money was sufficient to make him think that he was entitled to it. And it was impossible that the money was really sent to him, Wharton thought. It was a mystery—and it looked as if there was trouble in store for the Owl of the Remove.

Bunter's sudden and amazing prosperity furnished the Removites with a new and interesting topic of conversation, which somewhat excluded interest in the fate of the Bounder. Of Vernon-Smith, nothing more had been heard. The Head had heard nothing—Mr. Quelch had heard nothing. Bolsover major, who had been Smithy's closest pal, took it upon himself to telegraph to Mr. Vernon-Smith in London to ask him if Smithy had come home; but he received a reply in the negative. Where was Smithy? Some of the fellows were still wondering—but they never dreamed of seeing the Bounder at Greyfriars again.

But Harry Wharton, once or twice, looked up at the old tower—from the distance, without going near it. Was the Bounder there—in hiding? There was no sign of his presence—he had not been reckless enough to burn a light again at night. Wharton did not go near the place, for he had promised to keep the Bounder's secret—and he would not risk betraying him by action any more than by words. But was he there? And if he was, how was it to end? What hope could he still cherish of being permitted to resume his place in the school? He had sworn that he would not leave Greyfriars—in spite of the Head himself—but sooner or later he must be found—

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and then he would be taken away by force.

The game was up for the Bounder—Wharton felt that it was so. But apparently his view was not shared by Vernon-Smith.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

The Secret Out!

ON Monday, Billy Bunter furnished his Form-fellows with a fresh surprise—and interest in the Owl of the Remove was now decidedly keen. He announced in the Common-room that he had a standing order at the village tuckshop for half-a-crown's worth of tuck every day—and the statement was greeted with a general laugh. But two or three fellows walked down to Friar-dale with him, and they found that the statement was strictly correct. Uncle Clegg corroborated it in the most convincing manner, by handing out tuck to the value of two shillings and sixpence. And in response to inquiries, Uncle Clegg admitted that he had been paid in advance for tuck on the same terms for the whole of the week.

Billy Bunter had the pleasure of finding himself the cynosure of all eyes in the Lower Fourth that afternoon. And his fame was spreading outside the Remove. Fellows in the Fourth and the Shell discussed the matter, in wonder. Bunter began to find himself treated with new civility. Potter of the Fifth asked him to tea in his study—the tea being stood by Coker. Loder of the Sixth, who was a prefect and a tremendously great man, gave Bunter a friendly nod in the passage. The influence of wealth is always great—and Billy Bunter's riches were exaggerated by report. Some of the fellows surmised that his father had had a stroke of luck in business—Snoop suggested that perhaps "Old Bunter" had brought off some successful swindle on the Stock Exchange; but whatever was the explanation, Bunter seemed to have discovered a horn of plenty.

On Monday evening he was again in possession of a ten-shilling note, and he expended it in the tuckshop in the midst of a crowd. He spent it to the last penny, but on Tuesday he had another.

Where did he get it from?

It was a mystery—but the most probable explanation was that his people sent it to him after all. Yet how was it he always had it in hard cash—never in the form of a postal-order? Hard cash might come, of course, in registered letters—but it was known that Bunter did not receive any registered letters. When, on Tuesday, Bunter carelessly pulled ten shillings out of his pocket in the Common-room, there was a buzz.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo—more money, hey?" exclaimed Bob Cherry.

"Eh?" said Bunter carelessly. "Oh, this isn't much—only half a quid!"

"From your rich uncle again—what?"

"I expect a good many remittances now," said Bunter. "I always told you fellows my people were rich, and you'd never believe me. Perhaps you will now!"

"It's all rot!" said Harry Wharton quietly. "You cannot come by all that money honestly, Bunter, and you'll get yourself into trouble. We know perfectly well that you don't receive it by post—and your rot about a special messenger is all gammon. You'll be sacked from the school when it comes out."

"Ahem!"

The juniors looked round quickly; Mr. Quelch was standing in the doorway.

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Wharton bit his lip. He had not expected Mr. Quelch to come to the Common-room, of course, and he had no intention of giving Bunter away. Still, if the fat junior came by the money honestly, there was no reason why the Form-master should not know.

Mr. Quelch fixed his eyes upon Bunter. The fat junior seemed uneasy under his gaze, and he tried to make himself invisible behind the burly form of Bolsover major.

"Bunter!"

"Ye-e-es, sir!" stammered Bunter.

"I came here to speak to you, Bunter," said the Remove master. "You appear to be trying to keep out of my sight. Come here!"

"Oh, no, sir! Not at all, sir!" said Bunter, coming reluctantly forward. "It's always a great pleasure to see you, sir!"

"Thank you! It appears, Bunter, that you have been in possession lately of a great deal of money. The whole of the Lower School is discussing it, and the matter has reached my ears. I do not suggest for one moment, Bunter, that the money is not honestly yours. But as the amount of your pocket-money is known to me—as in the case of all boys in my Form—I think you had better explain to me whence you receive this money."

There was a breathless hush in the Common-room now.

It had been certain, of course, that Bunter's new-found wealth would sooner or later become known to the masters, and equally certain that he would be called upon to explain how he obtained it. Mr. Quelch would have failed in his duty if he had not inquired into it.

But that had never occurred to Billy Bunter. His desire to swank had brought him up against trouble at last.

"Well, Bunter?" said Mr. Quelch, kindly enough. "I am waiting. Pray do not suppose that I suggest that the money is not yours. I simply desire you to tell me who sends it to you, that is all."

"You—you see, sir—" stammered Bunter.

"I do not see at present, but doubtless I shall do so when you have explained, Bunter. Is this money sent you by your father?"

"Yes, sir," said Bunter with great relief; "that's it, sir!"

"Then you do not object to your father being communicated with on the subject?"

"I—I—I— The fact is, sir, it—it doesn't come from my father," he stammered.

Mr. Quelch's brow grew very stern.

"You have just stated that it did, Bunter."

"I—I— No, sir. You—you stated that, sir," said Bunter feebly. "I call the fellows to witness, sir, you said so yourself. I didn't say so. I—"

"You replied in the affirmative. However, if the money does not come from your father, from whom does it come?" the Remove master demanded sharply.

"I—I've got some rich relations, sir, and—"

"And they have sent you this money?"

"That's it, sir!"

"I am not satisfied, Bunter. Kindly give me the names and addresses of the relations who have sent you money this week, so that I can write to them."

Bunter gasped. His fat face was as red now as a freshly boiled beetroot. All eyes were upon him; but the eyes he dreaded most were the piercing orbs of the Form-master. Never had Mr. Quelch's eyes seemed so like gimlets.

They seemed to be piercing holes in the unfortunate Owl of the Remove.

"I am waiting, Bunter," said Mr. Quelch ominously.

"The—the fact is, sir, I—I've got a lot of rich relations, but—but I—I've forgotten where they live!" groaned Bunter.

Some of the juniors chuckled. Bunter was always ready with a terminological inexactitude, but he never succeeded in telling one in a convincing manner. His ridiculous statement caused Mr. Quelch's frown to grow darker.

"Bunter! Unless you explain immediately how you came into possession of this money I shall conclude that you have obtained it dishonestly!"

"Oh, sir! I—I— It was given to me."

"By your relations?"

"Yes—I mean, no—no, sir," gasped Bunter. "The fact is, sir, it—it's a loan, sir—just a loan from a friend, sir."

"Very well. Who is your friend who makes these loans, and where is he to be found?"

"I—I don't know, sir."

"I warn you not to tell me any more falsehoods, Bunter! Do you prefer to explain to me, or shall I take you to the headmaster? You may choose."

"Ow!"

"For the last time, Bunter, where did you get that money?" thundered Mr. Quelch, and his voice made Bunter jump almost clear of the floor.

"It—it was a loan, sir, from—from an old pal," he stammered.

"His name?"

"It—it—it was Smithy, sir," groaned Bunter. It was out at last!

There was a buzz of amazement from all the juniors. Harry Wharton uttered a sharp exclamation. He understood now. But the other fellows did not understand, and they were astounded.

"Smithy!" howled Bob Cherry.

"The Bounder!" ejaculated Nugent.

"Gammon!"

"So Vernon-Smith has been giving you money, Bunter?" said Mr. Quelch, making a gesture for silence.

"Ye-e-e-es, sir."

"You have seen him lately, then—since he has left the school—and more than once?"

"Yes, sir."

"He is, then, remaining in the neighbourhood of the school!" said Mr. Quelch, his eyes gleaming. "Very well! But why is he giving you money, Bunter?"

"I'm his old pal, sir," muttered Bunter feebly.

"Nonsense! Where is Vernon-Smith? Is he within the precincts of Greyfriars?"

Mr. Quelch demanded. "Has he been giving you money to keep his secret? Is that the explanation, Bunter?"

"Oh, no, sir! I—I found him quite by accident, sir, and—and I've kept it dark because—because—his my old pal. He—he made me some little loans because he's got plenty of money, sir."

"Have you demanded money of him?"

"Oh, no, sir! When—when I was hard up I—I just called up to him, and he chucked me down a half-quid or so, sir. Perhaps he was afraid my voice would be heard if I called too loud. But—"

"You called up to him?" said Mr. Quelch. "Is he in this building?"

"Oh, no, sir! He—I—that is—"

Mr. Quelch grasped the fat junior by the collar and shook him angrily.

"You young rascal! Where is Vernon-Smith?" he thundered.

"Ow! Ow! He's in the old tower, sir! Ow! The padlock's broken—"

greogh!—and—yah! Don't shake me like that, sir! Ow!"

"Go to my study, Bunter! I shall cane you severely for your wicked conduct! What you have done practically amounts to blackmail. You are an unscrupulous young rascal, sir! Go to my study, and await me there! With Vernon-Smith I shall deal immediately!"

And Mr. Quelch, with a brow like a thundercloud, strode away. In the Common-room there was a buzz of amazed and excited voices.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

In the Shadow of Death!

MR. QUELCH strode through the darkness of the old Close with knitted brows and his eyes glinting underneath them.

Seldom had the Remove master been so angry.

After all that had happened, the expelled junior had come back to the spite of the Head, he had returned there, school. In spite of his Form-master, in defying all authority.

To find the audacious junior in his hiding-place, and drag him away by force if necessary, and send him to his home in charge of a couple of prefects, that was Mr. Quelch's intention. He reached the old tower, silent and gloomy in the autumn evening. He felt the padlock with his hands. It came open at the first jerk. Mr. Quelch opened the door and strode into the gloomy tower.

"Vernon-Smith!"
He called out the name in loud, sharp tones. Only the echo of his voice answered him.

Mr. Quelch compressed his lips and began to ascend the spiral stair. He knew that it was perilous in the darkness, and he felt his way very cautiously.

"Vernon-Smith! Will you descend, or shall I come and take you away by force?" called the Form-master.

"I will not come down," the Bouncer replied at last, "and I will not be taken away by force! I shall defend myself!"

"What—what!" the Form-master stuttered with rage. "How dare you, Smith! You—you abandoned young ruffian!"

"I shall not come down!" The Bouncer's voice rang defiance. "Do as you like! I won't surrender!"

Mr. Quelch did not waste more time in words. He scrambled up the remaining steps, a little less cautiously than was wise.

"Better take care, sir," came the Bouncer's mocking voice from above. "Those stairs are rocky. You might—Good heavens!"

Crash!
Crash!

The Bouncer's words trailed off in a gasp of horror.

There was a sharp cry from Mr. Quelch, a crashing of falling stone, a blinding dust of old mortar.

Then a fearful silence.

From above the Bouncer peered down in the darkness, and his face was as white as a sheet. Where was Mr. Quelch? The old stairs had given way under his hasty, heavy tread at a height of forty feet from the ground.

"Mr. Quelch! Answer me!" The Bouncer's voice was very different now. "Good heavens! What has happened?"

There was a stifled cry from the darkness.

"Help!"

The Bouncer gasped with relief. His first terrible thought was that the Form-master had been killed by the fall. He hurried back to the round room at the top of the tower and came back with

the electric-lamp in his hand. He descended cautiously, flashing the light before him.

Three or four of the rickety old stone steps had crashed through, and the Form-master had fallen. But he had caught hold of a broken beam that had supported the staircase, and was hanging on desperately. He swung in space—forty feet of space—and masses of jagged brickwork below him—around him no hold but the beam across the gulf. And the beam itself, under his weight, was sagging.

His face looked up, white and tense. In spite of his terrible position, he had not lost his presence of mind. Above him on the insecure steps, the Bouncer crouched, looking down. He could not reach the Form-master—there was an empty space a couple of yards wide between them.

"Hold on, sir!" panted the Bouncer. "I am holding on, Vernon-Smith, but I cannot hold on for many minutes. Can you get help? Shout from the tower!"

"They can't reach you—the steps are broken away below as well as above!" The Bouncer groaned. It seemed that, unless a miracle happened, he must see the Form-master dashed to death before his very eyes. "Oh, sir!"

Mr. Quelch set his teeth hard. "Heaven forgive you for the harm you have done, Smith!" he said steadily. "Keep back! The steps you are standing on may give way at any moment!"

"Let them!" said the Bouncer recklessly. "I don't care! I—I'll save you, sir, or we'll go down there together!"

"Vernon-Smith, I forbid you—"

"That beam is going, sir," said the Bouncer quietly. "Your weight is pulling it out of the wall." He set the electric-lamp on the stairs. "Listen to me, sir. There's one chance, and we're both going to take it!"

"Smith—"

"It's the only chance, sir."

Three feet above Mr. Quelch's head was the iron cross-bar which had helped to support the spiral stair. It was firm and strong, embedded at the ends in the solid walls of the tower. Mr. Quelch could no more have reached it than he could have flown, but with a helping hand from above it was barely possible. The Bouncer laid a strong, firm grasp upon the cross-bar, and worked his way out upon it with his chest resting on the bar, his legs swinging in space.

"I'm going to help you, sir!"
"My boy, I forgive you for all you have done. I will not allow you to throw away your life! Go back!"

The Bouncer did not reply again. He needed all his breath for the fearful exertion he was making. He swung along the bar till he was in the centre, over the head of the Form-master clinging to the beam below. Well was it then for the Bouncer that he excelled in all the exercises of the gymnasium. The Form-master's upturned face and starting eyes watched him in silent tenseness. In the centre of the cross-bar the Bouncer swung up his legs and crossed them over the bar, hanging on with his knees. His head came swinging down, and his outstretched hands reached the man below.

"Quick, sir! Clutch me, and climb!" He panted out the words.

And Mr. Quelch wasted no time in speech. Life was dear to him, and he could not now prevent the peril of the Bouncer.

And the risk was terrible. Mr. Quelch grasped him, drew himself up, and contrived to rest a knee upon the narrow, sagging beam. His strength was almost

spent, and his senses were swimming; but, with his firm grasp upon the hanging junior, he drew himself up, the Bouncer's hands grasping his clothes and helping him. His feet were on the beam at last, and then he reached the bar above with his hands, and grasped it. And as he did so the loosened beam fell with a crash, and a blinding cloud of mortar-dust filled the air.

But the Form-master was grasping the iron bar now.

He was an active man. He swung himself along the bar, and reached the steps, and drew himself to safety. Vernon-Smith tried to draw himself upon the bar again, to work along it, resting on his chest; but his strength was gone, and he could not. But his courage did not fail. With hands and bent knees fastened on the cross-bar, he worked his way slowly along above the dizzy abyss.

Mr. Quelch, almost fainting with exhaustion himself, watched him in terror. It was the Bouncer who was in peril now.

He came along the bar with terrible slowness, but he was within reach of Mr. Quelch's grasp at last. With the Remove master's aid, he was dragged upon the upper steps. There he sank down, his face white and still. He had fainted.

Mr. Quelch grasped him, and drew him to the top room in the tower. It was impossible to descend. He laid the Bouncer upon the blankets that had served him as a bed in his hiding-place, and then shouted for help.

All Greyfriars gathered round the old tower, with lamps and bike-lanterns, as Mr. Quelch's calls for help rang out. And when help came it was necessary to obtain Gosling's two longest ladders, and bind them together, and rear them to the tower-top. And the Form-master descended, followed by the Bouncer, who had recovered himself, and was as cool and unconcerned as ever.

A hundred voices demanded to know what had happened. Mr. Quelch raised his hand for silence.

"My boys, this is what has happened. Vernon-Smith has risked his life in the most devoted way to save me from certain death. He was the cause of my falling into peril, but that does not detract from the bravery of his action. I have forgiven him the wrong he has done, and I shall beg the Head to allow him to resume his old place at Greyfriars. I think Dr. Locke will consent when he knows all."

There was a roar.
"Bravo, Bouncer!"

"And three cheers for Mr. Quelch!" shouted Harry Wharton.

And the cheers were given with a will. Mr. Quelch was right. The Head had only to hear what had happened, to grant his earnest request that the Bouncer of Greyfriars should be pardoned. It was hardly possible to send away in disgrace the fellow who was the hero of the whole school, and to whom the Remove master owed his life.

And in the Remove that evening there were great rejoicings. Even Billy Bunter was forgiven, in the happy turn events had taken. And the hero of the hour was the boy who had once been the most unpopular fellow in the Lower School—Vernon-Smith, the Bouncer of Greyfriars.

• THE END.

(There will be another grand, long complete story of Harry Wharton & Co., of Greyfriars, entitled "The Remove in Luck!" in next week's issue.)

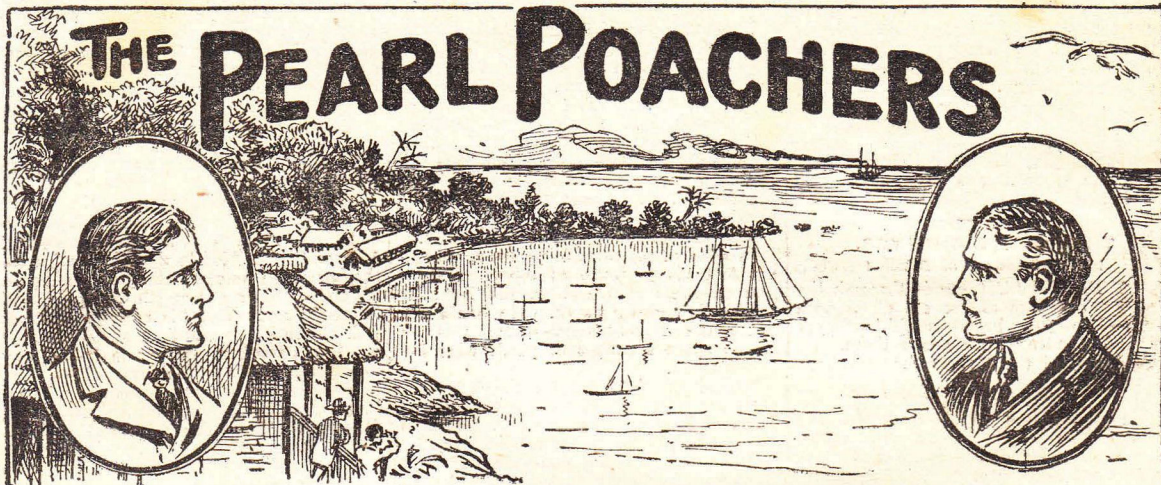
THE POPULAR.—No. 192.

A GRAND STORY OF THE JUNIORS OF GREY-FRIARS. BY FRANK RICHARDS.

NEXT TUESDAY!

"THE REMOVE IN LUCK!"

GRAND NEW FOOTBALL AND SPORTING SERIAL COMING SHORTLY!



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 torpedoes them. Unable to protect themselves against the fire of Sharkfin Billy's vessel, they run ashore on the islands 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 ship, and with the help of the filibusters the yacht is refloated. Then Donelan and Sharkfin Billy are taken aboard from their island prison, and preparations are made for the departure.

(Now read on.)

Face to Face!

FERRERS LORD went to his cabin, and ten minutes or so later, when Ching Lung returned to the saloon, he found the millionaire there, dressed in his new suit of plain blue serge and wearing a yachting cap. In his black tie one of the prince's diamond pins sparkled, on his finger was a gold signet-ring, made by Hal Honour, a replica of the one stolen from him by Harper Blaise, and on the dining-table lay his gloves and slender, gold-topped cane.

"I am relying on your judgment here, my friend," he said; "but I intend to take two of my prisoners with me, although that may not seem very complimentary to you. I am sure you will not be offended, but I place a ridiculously high value upon that egregious rascal, Sharkfin Billy."

"You are afraid my men will cut Billy's throat the moment we are out of the way?" said the prince. "Well, they might, for they know he was the cause of all the trouble. Take him, by all means, and Donelan, too, for they might take it into their heads to lynch one of them—and that would be Billy."

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NEXT
TUESDAY!

In spite of the disgraceful way in which my men behaved, they have come to their senses now, Chief, and your other prisoners will be as safe as if we were guarding them ourselves. I wouldn't answer for Billy, the leader of the gang; but you need not trouble about the others. My Chinks believe in quick justice, and they have long memories."

"Then we'll get aboard," said the millionaire. "Bring along Donelan and the one-eyed rogue, Ching, and make it a personally-conducted tour, for it would be a pity to have a knife stuck into Billy by one of your fellows as a parting gift. I want a good many years of useful work out of Billy, so look after him."

The raider had come alongside when Ching Lung brought up the two prisoners and ordered them down the ladder, where Barry O'Rooney took charge of them. The half-dozen Chinamen the prince had selected followed, and the yacht and the raider slowly drifted apart. Then Hal Honour showed Ferrers Lord the wireless message he had decoded. It was brief enough, and merely said: "All is well. Come.—H. B." Except for the two initials, it might have been intended for anyone; but it was quite plain by the "H. B." that the message had

been sent by Harper Blaise from the Lord of the Deep, and that, so far, his scheme had prospered.

"I must have a few words with our one-eyed friend, so kindly bring him here, O'Rooney," said Ferrers Lord.

Sharkfin Billy had not improved in appearance. He had grown a shaggy red beard, and his hair straggled over his forehead and fell well over his shoulders.

"We've heard from your captain," said Ferrers Lord. "Just to refresh my memory, tell me again what your instructions were."

"Pretty simple, boss. I was to wait till I heard he was coming, and then go out and meet him. As he allowed to steer dead for your pearling-station, it wouldn't be very easy to miss him. He reckoned to give me six hours' notice, and to work it so as to come along in the dark, so your men wouldn't see us, get suspicious, and want to use the gun on us. Not that they could use the gun, for I'll lay money Blaise has attended to that, and put her out of action, for he's a cunning one, and don't sling many chances away. I was to watch for her lights, and lie behind my smoke screen till she came up."

The millionaire smiled.

"And the subsequent proceedings?" he asked.

"I dunno, boss. That was up to Blaise. I think he gambled that your men would do anything you told 'em, however queer and suspicious it might look."

"You were not to threaten violence, then?"

"Nothing of the sort, boss. It was all to be nice and friendly until we got Blaise and the gold aboard. If the weather was too rough for that, Blaise settled to anchor off the pearling-station until it calmed down, and then we had to do the trick when he came out again. That's about all the instructions I got from him."

"Monstrous!" said Ching Lung. "And afterwards you intended to torpedo the yacht and drown all her crew?"

"Well, I suppose that was on the bill, guv'nor," said Sharkfin Billy. "It's an old and true remark that dead men don't tell tales. I'm not upholding it as a clean or decent sort of stunt, but money's money! Besides a feller who won't look after his own neck is a crazy fool. Dead men tell no tales, that's a fact, and a pocketful of dollars is a cheerful thing to walk about with, but not so cheerful if you're expecting the police to nab you and dance you on the end of a rope with your feet off the ground! By thunder, looked at in cold blood, it does seem a low trick, boss; but gold gets a grip on you, and I'm thundering fond of the stuff!"

"You'll hate the very sight of it and loathe the very touch of it before long!" said the millionaire, with one of his grim, quiet smiles.

"MISSING!"

A SPLENDID STORY OF ROOKWOOD SCHOOL.
By OWEN CONQUEST.

"As you are so fond of it, you'll wear golden fetters till the very clank of them sickens you. Take him away, O'Rooney. Now, Honour, we'll go ahead!"

The thunder of the engines made any further conversation impossible. For two hours the raider raced through the water, with a milky wake streaming out behind her. At a signal from the millionaire, the engineer stopped his engine, and then the deafening clamour subsided, and Gan Waga's voice rang through the welcome silence.

"Lights ahead, Chingy!" he cried. "Hurroo! I bet that the merry old Lord of the Deeps. We see all our pals soonful, Chingy, and I jolly gladness!"

Ferrers Lord and Ching Lung watched the distant lights through their glasses. The vessel, whatever she was, was coming up rapidly.

"Throw up your screen, Honour," said the millionaire. "Let us follow out the instructions to some extent."

From the bridge of the yacht—the vessel was the Lord of the Deep—Thomas Prout merely noticed a faint patch of mist on the water. Harper Blaise, the impostor, who was standing on the bridge beside him, also saw it, and smiled. He had triumphed. Rupert Thurston, taking the doctor's advice, had kept to his cabin during the return voyage, and Blaise had avoided him as much as possible. The gold had been surrendered without a query or a doubt, and as the crushings had been unusually heavy and rich, Blaise saw a life of luxury and ease before him. They had left the wireless operator behind in hospital, for the drug had affected him more seriously than it had affected Thurston, and he was seriously ill.

"We ought to be off the reef at dawn, Prout," said the impostor, with the thought in his mind that Prout would never see another dawn.

"Before that, sir," answered the steersman. "By honey, it's queer that mist should lie out there! I wonder—Gosh, it's that poisonous old raider!"

As Prout spoke there was a roar and a clatter, and the raider broke through her smoke-screen. Benjamin Maddock yelled an order, and the gun-crew rushed forward.

Harper Blaise raised the megaphone to his lips.

"Stand back, there!" he shouted. "Don't touch the gun, for there is nothing to fear. Signal the reverse, and stop, Prout."

The bo'sun turned in amazement and stared at the bridge.

"Well, souse me, if this ain't the limit!" he muttered. "What next! I wonder if the chief knows what he's doing?"

The impostor shouted another order through the megaphone:

"Forward here, bo'sun, and take the key of the strong-room! Bring up the chests to be transhipped! Get your men together, and be smart!"

The raider had come quite close. Blaise searched his pockets in vain for the key. He had left it in a drawer in his cabin, and as none but himself could find it, he ran down for it. Prout was almost stupefied as Maddock marched his men below to carry up the chests. He could not understand it; he could only obey. The raider dropped her dinghy. There appeared to be only one man in her—a long-haired, bearded scarecrow of a man, dressed, or, rather, half-dressed, in rags. While the steersman and crew of the Lord of the Deep gazed at him in mute wonder, he pulled to the yacht, made fast, and came up the ladder.

"Name of Ferrers Lord," said Sharkfin Billy. "Also Lord of the Deep. Instructions by wireless to pick up some luggage and take it ashore. Where's the boss?"

"Here I am," said Harper Blaise. Sharkfin Billy saluted the sham millionaire. Both were acting, but Blaise did not dream that his second-in-command was acting a part also.

"So you're Mr. Ferrers Lord, and the owner of this yacht, arc you, boss?" asked the one-eyed man.

"I am Ferrers Lord, and the owner of this yacht," answered Harper Blaise.

"Then it seems to me there must be a slight mistake somewhere," said a deep, quiet voice. "If you are Ferrers Lord, and the owner of this yacht, who am I?"

A second man, who had been crouching in the dinghy, had come aboard unseen, and the true Ferrers Lord and the false one were face to face. There was a hush as the millionaire stood with folded arms confronting the impostor. Blaise made a queer

sound in his throat, and turned white as death. The next moment one of Ferrers Lord's gloved hands was at his throat, and he was shaking Blaise as a terrier shakes a rat. No one stirred as the true millionaire raised his little gold-topped cane and brought it down again and again with a hiss and a clack on the writhing body of the half-strangled impostor. Then he flung Blaise away from him, and the man toppled backwards, and lay prone on the deck, gasping for breath after that grip of iron, while Ferrers Lord gazed down at him with flashing eyes.

Then Prout understood. He almost fell from the bridge. He was so overcome with joy and relief that his sturdy knees shook under him; but he pulled himself together and stood stiffly at salute.

"I beg your pardon, sir, but I knew there was something wrong," he said huskily. "Me and Maddock guessed it almost from the start, but we couldn't make it out, and thought you must be ill, sir. There was a difference about you, and you seemed to have forgotten things; but, by honey, we never dreamed it wasn't you, never once. Like as two peas, and your voice and everything, only sometimes it wasn't your voice. By honey, I never saw better acting or a better bluff. The rogue bluffed the whole lot of us."

"It is his last bluff," said the millionaire. "Take the two of them below and lock them up. Lower a boat, there. Where's Mr. Thurston, by the way, Prout?"

"In his cabin, sir," answered the steersman. "He's been ill, sir, and, by honey, now I know the truth, I believe that brute must have doped him, and the wireless operator, too."

The millionaire nodded curtly, and went down to Thurston. There was a cheer, and Gan Waga, dripping like a sea-monster, scrambled over the rail. Mr. Benjamin Maddock could do nothing but rub his head with a horny hand and mutter "Souse me, if this ain't the limit!" And the raider was made fast astern as Hal Honour, the prince, and Barry O'Rooney came aboard. Barry gazed sadly at his two old shipmates, Prout and the bo'sun, and shook his head.

"Bedad, Oi wouldn't have belaved ut' of you," he said. "A nice brace of crazy-headed spalpeens you must be to let that chap pull your legs and never rumble ut. So this is the kind of mess you make of things when Oi'm not wid you—phwat? Faith, Oi'm ashamed of you, and Oi wondher you dare look me in the face."

"By honey, it does need a bit of pluck to do that," said Prout, shaking a couple of pennies in his hand. "You see them two coins, don't you, my lad?"

"Sure thing," admitted O'Rooney. "Both tails, twelve to the shilling, and dated 1914. Phwat's that got to do wid ut, my gay gossoon?"

"Could you tell them apart without marking them, by honey? You couldn't; and that's how it was with us. He's as like the Chief as this penny is like that one, his twin brother. I almost feel I could go and jump overboard for being hoodwinked like that, but you'd have been the same. If he gulled Mr. Thurston as he did, and the people on the island, too, as he did, how could you expect us to see through the fake? He'd have caught you just the same, so not so much of your crazy-headed spalpeens, sonny."

Prout went back to his post on the bridge, and Maddock and O'Rooney adjourned to the glue-pot to swap yarns. The most astonished person of all was Rupert Thurston.

"I hadn't the remotest suspicion that anything was wrong," he said. "If ever a man acted the part to the life, Chief, he did."

"But sooner or later he must have made a slip that would set you wondering," said the millionaire. "He was afraid of that, and drugged you to keep you away from him. The wireless operator was another danger, for Blaise could never tell what might be coming through. An amazing affair altogether. By the look on his face, I don't think he believes us yet, Ching. Prout tells me that he and Maddock were anxious about me, and thought I was losing my memory."

"Rupert must have caught him out, and the blackguard knew it well enough," said Ching Lung.

"I don't think so," said Thurston, shaking his head. "Whatever had happened, I couldn't have imagined him to be anybody but the Chief. You'll agree with me when you see him, old lad. I could only have thought what Maddock thought that he was

unwell and losing his memory. Knowing that a clever doctor you are, Chief, one thing did puzzle me, and that is why I didn't get better, and I got a bit rattled because you stayed away from me so much. That wasn't at all like you."

"We'll soon have you fit again now," said the millionaire, smiling. "Blaise seems to be a man of many parts—actor, forger, pearl-stealer, pirate, and chemist. I know the drug he used on you, for he borrowed it from my medicine-chest. It is cruel stuff for it remains in the system so long; but I have a certain antidote for it. I'll get you a dose at once, and in the morning you'll feel a different man. I must wireless the doctor on the island to treat the operator with the same antidote. And you might tell O'Rooney, Ching, to put a hole through the raider and send the abominable thing to the bottom."

Barry O'Rooney made a discovery when he unlashed the canvas cover of the gun, and that was that the breech-lock was missing. Perhaps Harper Blaise was not quite sure that the men would obey his order not to fire on the raider, and so, to make certain, he had removed the breech-lock and dropped it overboard.

"The ould thafe and imposthor, Oi'd loike to wring the head of his neck!" growled Barry O'Rooney; "but there are ways of doing ut whin a gun refuses to shoot."

He soon had a bomb with a time-fuse ready, and boarded the raider with the dinghy.

"Now, leg ut, Tom!" he shouted, as he scrambled back to the yacht. "We don't want any of her scrapiron when she goes up, so shove your propeller round and clear out."

The Lord of the Deep drew away from the danger zone, and Barry O'Rooney chuckled when he saw the gush of red flame and heard the roar that sounded the death knell of Harper Blaise's speedy motor-boat. The explosion split her wide open, and she sank like a stone just as the lights of Ching Lung's yacht showed up.

It was not supper-time and it was not breakfast-time, but such a great occasion had to be celebrated, and the cook, who was in a generous mood, supplied cold meat, pickles, tomatoes, and a loaf of bread to the gentlemen who took their ease in the glue-pot. It was a cold leg of mutton, and Barry O'Rooney quickly converted it into hot mutton by warming up well-peppered slices in the frying-pan. Prout joined them, for it was his watch below.

For once nobody objected to the presence of Gan Waga, though as a rule the plump Eskimo had only to come in to be thrown out again immediately. Gan wanted to introduce Jimmy, the black, but Barry O'Rooney fired up at the suggestion. While not denying that Jimmy was a good sort or that he had done good service, Barry declared that he had had enough of Jimmy's jabber and Jimmy's eyes to last him several lifetimes, and good long ones at that.

"By honey, leave it at that, and don't jaw so much," said Prout. "The poor beggar looks thin enough to make a bootlace of, so let him sit on the mat outside and shove him along a plate of grub. And don't start scrapping, you two. When you and Gan get together, Barry, you're worse than a cat and dog fight. Let's be quiet for once in a way."

"Wanting to bring that yellow-eyed, jabbering lump of black licorice in here!" said Barry. "Whoy, you fat fossil, for about half of nothing at all, Oi'd—"

"You be carefals, my pricelessness old bean, or you get a nasty, hard biff under the ear," said Gan Waga sweetly.

Maddock groaned.

"Cut it out, souse me—do cut it out!" he pleaded. "Me and Tommy ain't seen you for ages, and we want to be glad to see you, but you won't let us. I'm already beginning to wish you'd stopped away for keeps. If you want a fight, get outside and finish it there!"

(In next week's issue there will be the closing chapters of our grand serial of adventure. Now turn to the Chat page, and read all about our splendid new serial of football, sport, and adventure, entitled "The Rival Sportsmen!" which will be appearing shortly.)

THE POPULAR.—No. 192.

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

NEXT
TUESDAY!

"HARRY HAMMOND—HERO!"

SAVED FROM HIMSELF!

(Continued from page 10.)

He ran blindly from the shack, and looked towards the creek.

Silver in the moonlight, black under the trees, the creek ran murmuring through the night.

The bark canoe was gone from its place. His father had taken the canoe—at that hour! Why?

"Father! Father!"

The words were strangled in his throat. He stood panting on the bank, searching the creek with his eyes.

A shadow moved under the overhanging trees.

Splash!

It came faintly to his ears across the water. From the shadows a canoe floated into sight—empty!

"Father!" shrieked Beauclerc.

He plunged madly into the water.

His face was like marble, his eyes wild; but he swam with strong strokes towards the circling bubbles in the shadows.

His groping-hand caught at something that floated. With feverish, almost mad energy he dragged his burden shoreward, and Lascelles Beauclerc, white and almost unconscious, was laid in the long grass, the moon glimmering on his face, his son kneeling by his side, shaken with sobs.

"Father! Father!"

The remittance-man's eyes opened, fixing strangely upon his son.

It was his son's hand that had dragged him back from the valley of the shadow of death—from the last crime of a misspent life.

"Vere!" The man's voice was hoarse and broken. "I am dreaming! Have I gone mad? My son!"

"Father!"

The remittance-man dragged himself into a sitting posture, leaning weakly against a gnarled trunk.

Vere was sobbing without restraint.

Understanding came to the man at last.

"Vere! What are you doing here?" he muttered huskily.

"I—I came back—"

"How did you know?"

"I did not know—unless it was Providence that warned me. I only feared—" His voice broke. "Oh, father how could you?"

"It was the only way," he muttered—"the only way! It was the first decent thing it ever came into my mind to do. Better make an end of it, once and for all, than live to be a burden and disgrace to you!"

"And that—that was what you meant when you sent me away? Father! I shall not leave you again!"

"You don't understand, boy!" muttered the remittance-man. "I tell you, you don't know me. I tell you I shall live to disgrace you, till you grow to hate me!"

"Never that! Only—only promise me that you will never—never think of that again!" He made a shuddering gesture towards the creek. "I can bear anything else—anything but that!"

"And you came back!" said the remittance-man, in a tone of wonder. "A few minutes more, and— You must have ridden all night!"

"Promise me, father!"

The remittance-man made a weary gesture. "Well, it shall be as you like; I promise. Do you know you are throwing your life away, Vere, for a man who is not worth a single thought?"

"You have promised!" said Beauclerc, unheeding. "I know you will keep your promise. Thank Heaven, I came in time!"

When the dawn came it found Vere Beauclerc sleepless and worn; but it found him calm, almost happy.

His father was saved to him, and whatever wild ways Lascelles Beauclerc's feet might tread in future days, his promise was sacred, and the most dreaded blow of all would never fall upon the remittance-man's son.

THE END.

(Another grand long complete story of the Backwoods next Tuesday, entitled "The New Master!" Order early.)

THE POPULAR.—No. 192.

NEXT TUESDAY!

"HARRY HAMMOND—HERO!"

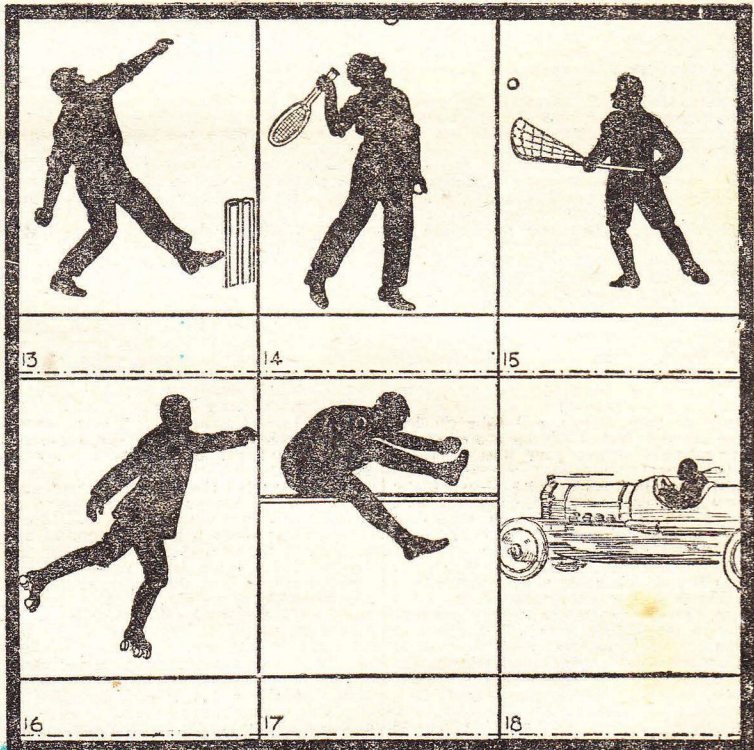
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On this page you will find six silhouettes, each showing a person doing something, and what you have to do is to write in the space under the picture the exact action portrayed. All the actions can be described in one or two words, but not more than two words.

When you have solved this week's picture puzzles, keep them by you in some safe place. There will be six sets in all, and when the final set appears you will be told where, and when, to send your efforts.

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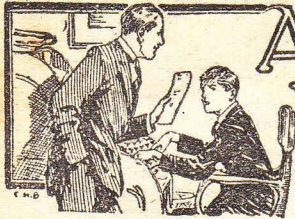
awarded to the reader who succeeds in submitting a set of solutions exactly the same as, or nearest to, the set of solutions in the possession of the Editor. In the event of ties the prize will be divided. The other prizes will be awarded in order of merit. No competitor will be awarded more than one share of the prizes.

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 NEW LONG STORY OF ST. JIM'S.
By MARTIN CLIFFORD.



A WORD WITH YOUR EDITOR

YOUR EDITOR IS ALWAYS PLEASSED TO HEAR FROM HIS READERS. Address: EDITOR, THE "POPULAR," THE FLEETWAY HOUSE, FARRINGTON STREET, LONDON, E.C.4.

OUR COMPANION PAPERS.

- "THE BOYS' FRIEND" Every Monday
- "THE MAGNET" Every Monday
- "THE POPULAR" Every Tuesday
- "CHUCKLES" Every Thursday
- "THE HOLIDAY ANNUAL" Published Yearly

NEXT WEEK'S NUMBER.

Next week's issue, I can honestly say, will be the finest number I and my staff have compiled. The programme of stories in preparation, I am sure, will be received very cordially at the hands of my many reader-chums. There is no doubt of the greatly increasing popularity of the old Pop in this country and in many other countries. The highest standard of stories, the best school story-paper on the market—that's the Pop!

Of course, there will be the usual four long, complete school tales, which are the outstanding features of this paper. The first story will be about Harry Wharton & Co., the famous chums of Greyfriars, and is entitled:

"THE REMOVE IN LUCK!" By Frank Richards.

During the temporary absence of Mr. Quelch, the Remove Form is taken under the wing of a new master—but what a Form-master he turns out to be! Never in all their careers have they met with such an extraordinary master as Mr. Knutt. "The knut," as the new master is called, makes a very dramatic entrance to Greyfriars by saving the life of Billy Bunter, the fat junior of the Remove. From that moment his popularity with his Form is assured. The juniors welcome him with open arms, so to speak. But a master who uses such modern and expressive phrases as "Going down like paving-stones!" "Old Bean!" and the like, is very rare indeed, and the Remove foresee exciting and amusing things ahead—and they are not denied those things.

The second story will deal with the adventures of Frank Richards & Co., the chums of Cedar Creek School. The story is entitled:

"THE NEW MASTER!" By Martin Clifford.

Following Vere Beauclerc's return to Cedar Creek comes a new master from the Old Country, who gives the name of Philip Trevelyan, and who is, to the chums, a bit of a mystery. The new master has trouble with the rustlers of the Thompson Valley district, and there is a thrilling fight before the eyes of Beauclerc. The Cherub pluckily tries to intervene, but the rustlers carry off Trevelyan. Later, Trevelyan arrives at the school, but to Beauclerc there is something radically wrong. He seems changed somehow, and his explanation of

the trouble with the rustlers is not satisfactory—to the Cherub.

There will be another splendid long, complete story of Jimmy Silver & Co., of Rookwood School, under the title of:

"MISSING!" By Owen Conquest.

The mystery surrounding the strange disappearance of Arthur Lovell is still unsolved. Although extensive searches are organised, no clue to the missing junior is discovered. General opinion is that Lovell has run away from the school; but Jimmy Silver & Co. are sure that their chum has been detained somewhere by force by some person or persons unknown—in other words, that he has been kidnapped. During their searches, Raby, in the same uncanny way, disappears. What has happened to the two juniors? Who is the mysterious kidnapper?

The fourth story will be about Tom Merry & Co., the chums of St. Jim's. The story is entitled:

"HARRY HAMMOND—HERO!" By Martin Clifford.

The little Cockney of the Fourth plays a very prominent part in this splendid story, and the part of a hero. The Wayland Juniors, a local football team, with rather a good record, enlist the aid of Hammond during the absence of their own goalie, and in the next match Hammond plays the game of his life, a dauntless, dashing game.

OUR SUPPLEMENT.

There will be another grand issue of "Billy Bunter's Weekly," which will be found in the centre of the pages, and

which will be as funny as ever. Billy Bunter is very proud of his "Weekly," and we congratulate him on the issues he has given us, and there is no doubt that, as Billy himself says, his "Weekly" is the finest cure for "blues."

In next week's issue there will be the last chapters of our grand serial "The Pearl Poachers!" by Sidney Drew, and it is with much regret that we have to bid farewell to our old friends, Ferrers Lord & Co. and Can Waga. Mr. Drew has very cleverly woven round these famous characters a wonderful adventure story that will be remembered for many a long day. Although we have to leave these friends, new chums are waiting to receive us in a GRAND NEW SERIAL OF FOOTBALL, SPORT, AND ADVENTURE, the opening chapters of which will very shortly appear in this paper. Victor Nelson, the author of our new serial, is very well known to the readers of the Companion Papers, to which he has been contributing for many years. As writer of the great stories, "By Nero's Command!" "The Boy With Fifty Millions!" and many other tales, Mr. Nelson has won great admiration, and his latest piece of work is going to surpass all others.

"The Rival Sportsmen!" is the title of our grand new serial, and it will appear the week after next, and none of those readers who are keen admirers of Mr. Nelson's stories should miss reading the opening chapters of this amazing serial.

THE GREYFRIARS PARLIAMENT.

Greyfriars has had its debating clubs ere now, but it has never until the present time boasted an official Parliament. The new Greyfriars Parliament—see the "Magnet" for full details—has got itself going, and it is proving a vastly interesting and entertaining business. Schools, like nations, cannot make headway without an assembly. King Alfred, famed for cake and candles, had his, only he dubbed it a Witanagemote, which is an awkward sort of name. Anyway, Alfred set the fashion. In these new days we want Parliaments just as much. Readers of the Companion Papers are cordially invited to roll up with suggestions, written in the form of speeches. State your views

(Continued on next page.)

BEST Boys' Books on the Market!

THE BOYS' FRIEND LIBRARY. Fourpence Per Volume.

- No. 630.—THE BLACK BUCCANEERS. A splendid long complete yarn of the footer field. By J. W. Wheway.
- No. 631.—RAILWAY AND RING. A grand long complete story of the boxing ring. By Reginald Wray, author of "The Hidden World," etc., etc.
- No. 632.—THE SCHOOLBOY MULTI-MILLIONAIRE. A topping tale of schoolboy fun and adventure. By Victor Nelson, author of "The Boy With Fifty Millions," etc.
- No. 633.—THE IDOL OF ST. FRANK'S. A magnificent school yarn, introducing Nelson Lee, Nipper & Co., Handforth & Co., Timothy Tucker, and the other juniors of St. Frank's.
- No. 634.—THE IMPOSSIBLE CHANCE. A superb long complete story of life and adventure on the racecourse. By John Hunter, author of "The Smasher," etc., etc.

THE SEXTON BLAKE LIBRARY. Fourpence Per Volume.

- No. 248.—THE GOLDEN GODDESS. A magnificent story of London and the East, introducing GUNGA DASS.
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- No. 252.—THE MYSTERY OF THE CLOCK. A tale of thrilling adventure, featuring SEXTON BLAKE, PROFESSOR KEW, COUNT IVOR CARLAC, and ADRIAN STEELE, Newspaper Correspondent.

NOW ON SALE! GET A COPY TO-DAY.

THE POPULAR.—No. 192.

NEXT TUESDAY!

"THE REMOVE IN LUCK!"

A GRAND STORY OF THE JUNIORS OF GREY-FRIARS. By FRANK RICHARDS.

A WORD WITH YOUR EDITOR!

(Continued from previous page.)

about sports and hobbies; offer useful advice. The Speaker of the Greyfriars Parliament—this dignified functionary is Harry Wharton in private life—tells me that the best speeches will be printed in the "Magnet" and paid for handsomely. Now is your chance—only consult the "Magnet" first, and you will see what's what and who's who.

A BRIGHT NOTION.

G. F. Pullinger, Beverley, 36, Norman-ton Road, S. Croydon, Surrey, sends me an interesting letter about camping, with photos of his school corps at Tidworth. He wants to know why I do not have a Grown-ups' Page in the Companion Papers. He thinks such a feature would go like wildfire. His mother takes an immense interest in Tom Merry and Harry Wharton, and it would come to this. "Mrs. Smith would show Mr. Jones an article in the Grown-ups' Page, and Mr. Jones would be so tickled that he would start getting the paper for his boy at home, but he would read it first himself as he went to business." I

must think over this brainy suggestion. My chum lives at Beverley, where there must have been beavers once upon a time—hence the name. It looks as if he has been sharpening up his wits by playing the new beaver game. Anyhow, his letter is as smart as it could be. He and his friends are about to give "Billy Bunter's Treasure" on the stage. This yarn figured in last year's "Holiday Annual," as you will remember.

READERS' NOTICES.

David J. Lacey, 254, Barking Road, East Ham, E.6, wishes to correspond with readers anywhere. All letters answered.

F. Bottomley, 48, Downhills Park Road, Tottenham, N.15, would like to hear from readers interested in camping-out, and willing to help with his pass-around magazine, "The Pathfinder."

S. G. Guy, Argyle, 22, Castle Avenue, Higham's Park, E.4, wishes to correspond with readers, up to 15 years, interested in model railways of any description. All letters answered.

Miss F. Coston, 79-81, Prince's Street, Port Elizabeth, South Africa, wishes to correspond with readers. Ages 20 upwards.

Harold Keast, 378, Beaconsfield Avenue, Notre Dame de Grace, Montreal, Canada, wishes to correspond with readers anywhere; general subjects, stamps, and rabbit-breeding; all letters answered. Ages, 13-17.

Miss Norah Thompson, Park View, Shaftesbury Avenue, Bedford, wishes to correspond with readers anywhere; sports, amateur magazines, etc. All letters promptly answered.

James Smith, 4, Shore Street, Gourrock, Scotland, would be glad to have any copies of the Companion Papers or books, if readers can oblige. He has suffered a bad accident, and is laid up.

George Oehlers, 30, St. Michael's Road, Singapore, Straits Settlements, wishes to hear from readers willing to join his correspondence club.

George Walter Tatham, c.o. John Dickinson & Co., P.O. Box 362, East London, South Africa, wishes to correspond with readers of the Companion Papers. Ages, 20 upwards.

Cyril K. Hall, 123, Glenroy Street, Cardiff, wishes to hear from readers in Torquay, as he is visiting there in August.

Your Editor.

12⁹ Monthly

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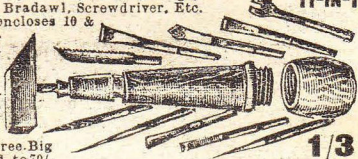


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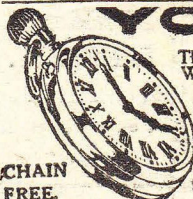
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