

FREE INSIDE! A GRAND REAL PHOTO OF A FAMOUS SPORTSMAN.

Week Ending—
November 4 h.
1922.

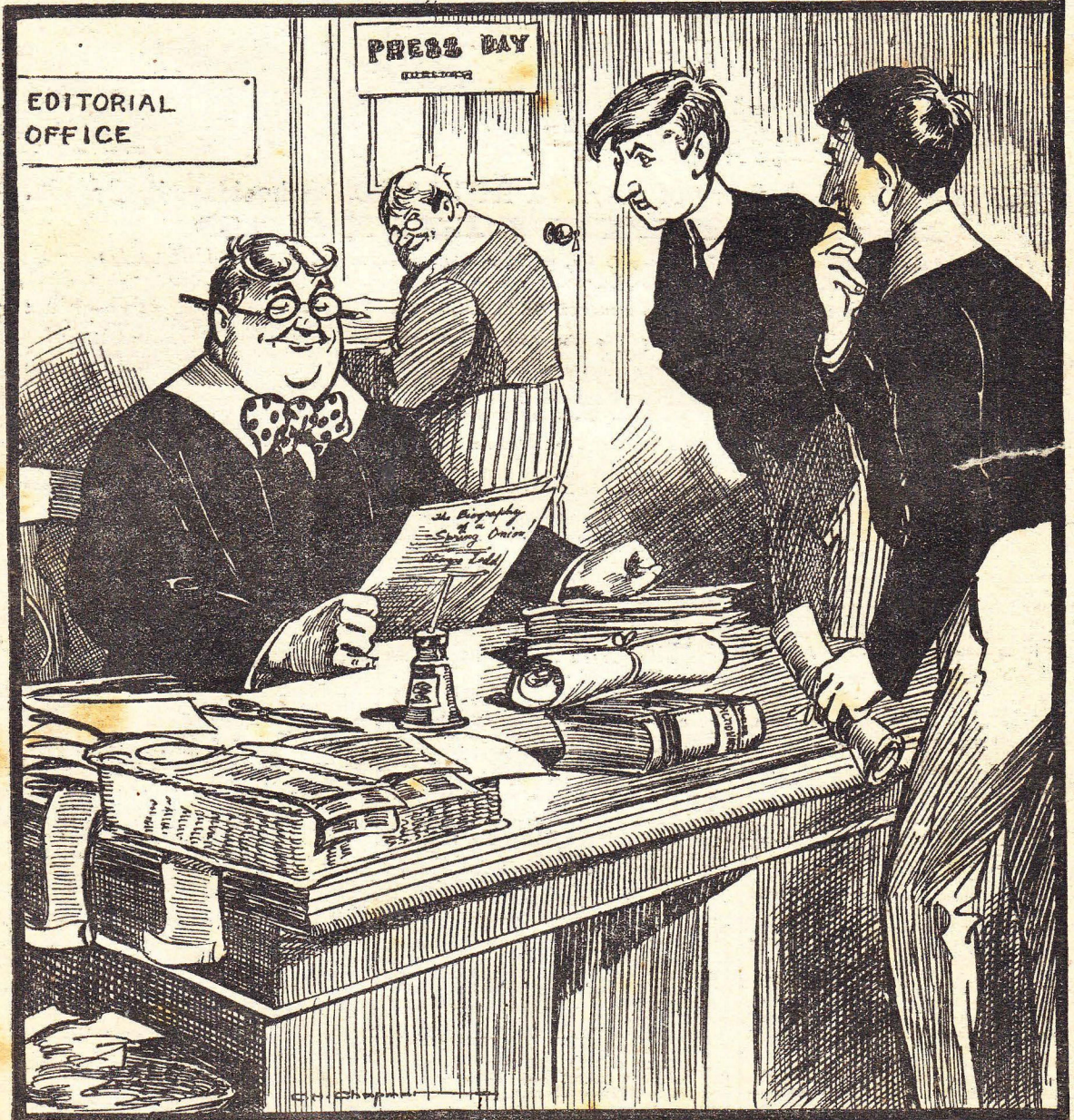
New
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The POPULAR 2d

SPECIAL
SUPPLEMENT
INSIDE.



A VERY IMPORTANT PERSON! PRESS DAY IN THE OFFICES OF "BILLY BUNTER'S WEEKLY."

(Extra-Special Number of our Wonderful Supplement in this Issue.)

TELLING OF FRANK RICHARDS & CO'S, THRILLING ADVENTURES IN A DRIFTING BALLOON.



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

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

THE FIRST CHAPTER.
Carried Away.

YOU fellows seen it?" Chunky Todgers asked that question eagerly as Frank Richards & Co. jumped off their horses at the gate of Cedar Creek School.

"Seen what?" asked Frank.
 "It, of course."
 "But what is it?" asked Bob Lawless.
 "Then you haven't seen it," said Chunky.
 "I haven't, either. But Lawrence has, and Hopkins. They say it's coming this way."
 "What is it? What's coming this way?" asked Vere Beauclerc.

"The balloon."
 "The what?" exclaimed Frank Richards, in astonishment.
 "The balloon," answered Chunky. "Tom and Molly Lawrence saw it when they started for school this morning. A man from the Thompson Ranch saw it last evening—he was saying so in Gunten's store. Jolly queer, ain't it?"

Frank Richards glanced up at the sky. Fleecy clouds dotted the wide expanse of blue in the bright spring sunshine. But there was nothing else to be seen, save a distant eagle winging its flight towards the mountains.

In the Cedar Creek playground a good many of the fellows were standing with their heads thrown back, looking up at the sky.
 "But it's rot!" said Bob Lawless. "Where could a balloon come from in this section? No gas for it, I guess, if there was a balloon. You've been eating too much maple-sugar, and dreaming, Chunky."

"Must have come from somewhere," said Todgers. "Over the line, perhaps."

"That's a jolly long way!" said Frank.
 "Well, Lawrence has seen it," said Chunky Todgers. "I say, Molly, you've seen the balloon, haven't you?"

Molly Lawrence nodded.
 "We saw it over the timber, as we came up the trail," she answered. "It was just drifting with the wind. About a hundred yards up, I guess."

"Who was in it?" asked Bob.
 "I couldn't see anyone."

There was a sudden shout from Dick Dawson, who had climbed to the top of Mr. Slimmey's cabin to obtain a better view.

"Here she comes!"
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There was a rush for Mr. Slimmey's cabin at once.
 Dawson, astride the ridge at the top, pointed excitedly.

"There she comes—over the timber by the creek! Nobody in it, that I can see!"
 "Look!" exclaimed Frank.

All the Cedar Creek fellows could see it now.
 It was the first time a balloon had been seen in the Thompson Valley.

It was the first time, in fact, that most of the Cedar Creek fellows had seen such a thing at all.

The balloon was drifting low over the timber, and a rope, dangling from the car, brushed the tree-tops.

There was a large hook at the end of the rope, which caught occasionally in a bough, and gave the balloon a jerk; but it broke loose again.

It was catching only in the twigs at the summit of the trees, which gave little hold.

The great gas envelope, drifting on the wind, loomed larger and clearer.

It was coming directly towards Cedar Creek School, over the trees.

There were exclamations on all sides.
 Miss Meadows, the schoolmistress, came out of the schoolhouse to gaze upward. Mr. Slimmey stepped from his cabin.

Even the black stableman came out, his eyes rolling white at the strange spectacle above.

"It must be adrift," said Frank Richards. "Can you see anybody in the car, Bob?"
 "Nix!" answered Bob.

"May be somebody down in the car, out of sight," said Vere Beauclerc. "It's jolly odd! That grapnel must have been thrown out to catch, if possible; the man wants to descend."

"The galoot may be ill, if there's anybody in the car at all," said Eben Hacke. "And I guess there must be. The balloon can't have started on its travels all on its lonesome."

Every eye was fixed on the oncoming balloon.

It was drifting lower now, but it still kept clear of the trees.

It was so strange and novel a sight at the Backwoods school that nobody at Cedar Creek was thinking of marning lessons just then.

Even Miss Meadows forgot that it was the hour for the school-bell to ring.

"It's going to pass right over us," said

Kern Gunten, the Swiss. "I guess if that balloon's astray, it's worth roping in!"

"Findings keepings!" remarked Keller.
 "If it's astray, a galoot would have a claim to salvage for roping it in," remarked Eben Hacke thoughtfully. "It's a bit too high up for a lasso, though, I reckon."

"Just a trifle!" said Mr. Slimmey. "This is very remarkable! Lawless, you have very good eyes. Cannot you see anyone in the car?"

"Not a sign, sir."
 "It is very odd! Perhaps the voyagers have landed, and the balloon has broken away," remarked Mr. Slimmey thoughtfully.

"I guess that's it!" said Bob, with a nod.
 Clatter, clatter, clatter!

"Hallo! Here comes somebody in a hurry!" exclaimed Lawrence.
 A horseman came dashing up the trail past the school gates.

He rode with his eyes glancing upward, evidently watching the floating balloon.

Somewhat to the surprise of the schoolboys, he turned in at the gateway, and jumped off his horse.

The man was a stranger at Cedar Creek. He was a tall, thin man, with a goatee beard, a sharp nose, and gold-rimmed glasses.

It was easy to see that he belonged to the other side of the "line"—that is to say, the border between Canada and the United States.

He stood with his head thrown back, watching the balloon as it came slowly on, drifting on the soft breeze of spring.

"Oh thunder!" the schoolboys heard him exclaim. "Hyer she is, and out of reach! I guess this is no cinch!"

"Looks like the owner!" grinned Bob Lawless.

"Is that your balloon, sir?" asked Frank Richards.

The big American looked at him.
 "Yep!" he answered tersely.
 "Anybody in it?"

"Nope!"
 "Left you stranded?" asked Kern Gunten.
 "Correct!"

The American gentleman was evidently a man of few words.

He looked up at the balloon again, and then looked at the lumber schoolhouse. He seemed to be calculating.

"She'll pass over the shebang," he was heard to mutter. "There's the hook hanging loose, and a good hand with a riata might rope it in. There's a chance, by gum!" He

looked at the schoolboys again. "Youngsters, is there a boy here who knows how to manage a lasso?"

"You bet!" answered Bob Lawless.

"Lots," said Frank Richards, with a smile.

"Boys, I reckon there's a chance of roping in that balloon, if a younker here has the nerve to get on the roof yonder, and try for it as it passes over! I calculate I'll stand a hundred dollars, spot cash, to the fellow that does it!" said the big American. "Who's the best man with a lasso here?"

"Bob's the man!" said Frank, at once. "There's a chance, Bob! Go in, and win!" "I guess I'll try, if Miss Meadows will let me!" said Bob Lawless. "I don't want any dollars, though. I'll do it to oblige you."

"So long as you do it, never mind the rest!"

"I'll ask Miss Meadows."

"Schoolmistress—hay?" asked the American gentleman, looking round. "I guess I'll ask that lady!"

He strode across to the porch of the lumber schoolhouse, where Miss Meadows was standing, and raised his hat.

"Madam," he said, in his brisk way, "Hiram K. Chowder, at your service. You see that balloon yonder? That is my property. I guess I've been chasing that balloon, madam, for twenty-four hours!"

"Indeed!" said Miss Meadows, with a smile. "I hope you will succeed in catching it!"

"I guess I hope so, madam! That balloon's worth well over a thousand dollars!" said Mr. Chowder impressively. "I've had bad luck with that balloon. I've made twenty ascents, more or less, in that balloon, and never had such bad luck! But what can a galoot do when he's caught in a sudden gale of wind? I calculate I got off cheap in being blown northward to this hyar section, instead of being smashed up, as I might have been!"

"You were fortunate!" said Miss Meadows. "In a way, yep!" said Mr. Chowder ruefully. "When I got the hook to hold on to a tree yesterday morning I reckoned it was all O.K., and I clumb out to ask where I was, and whether there was anything in the grub line going. And, hang my boots, madam, if that rope didn't drag loose, and the contraption float away before my eyes! I guess I was mad. It was hours before I could get hold of a hoss and follow that balloon; and a dozen times I've lost the track of it when the blessed wind changed, and up and down this hyer valley I've been inquiring after it."

Mr. Chowder paused for breath. Miss Meadows was sympathetic.

She understood that Mr. Chowder had some request to make, and that this explanation was a preliminary to it.

Mr. Chowder pointed at the approaching balloon with a long, thin finger.

"You watch it, madam," he said. "That balloon is goin' to pass right over your schoolhouse hyer!"

"It seems so," assented Miss Meadows. "A good hand with a lasso might rope it in; you see the big hook's floating," said Mr. Chowder. "I don't say it's easy; I say it's possible. Will you let that young galoot get on the roof and try, madam?"

Miss Meadows hesitated.

Bob Lawless had already got hold of his trail-rope, and was forming a noose to turn it into a lariat.

Bob was evidently quite ready for the venture, risky as it was.

"I guess, madam, that kid looks hefty, and he won't break his peck," said Mr. Chowder persuasively. "That balloon's worth a lot to me, madam. I earn my bread, I guess, with making balloon ascents in the States, and if that shebang goes off on her car, and I don't get her back, I calculate I'm a busted man!"

"Lawless!"

"Yes, Miss Meadows?"

"Do you wish to try to oblige this gentleman?"

"Yes, Miss Meadows," said Bob eagerly. "I think I might be able to do it, too."

"Very well," said the schoolmistress. "You may try, Lawless; but take every care, and do not run too much risk."

"I'll be careful, ma'am," said Bob.

"I guess I'm much obliged to you, madam," said Mr. Chowder. "Youngster, if you rope in that balloon for me I'm your debtor for life!"

Black Sam brought a ladder from the stable, and Bob, with his lasso over his arm, clambered up to the high ridge of the schoolhouse roof.

All eyes were on him as he stood perched there, lasso in hand.

The balloon, drifting low, was past the timber now, and rolling on towards the school.

In a few minutes it would be over the playground, and then, from its direction, it would evidently pass over the schoolhouse roof.

The iron hook would dangle a few yards above Bob's head.

A clear eye and a skillful hand were required for such a "catch"; and, even so, the chances were ten to one against success.

But there was a chance, at least; and a chance was worth trying for the sake of the stranded American gentleman.

Bob Lawless intended to do his best. There was a breathless silence in the crowd as the balloon drifted closer and closer.

The great gas envelope towered above the upturned faces, the car swaying under it, and the loose rope dangling to and fro.

Bob, astride the roof ridge, had his clear eyes fixed on the floating hook as it swung nearer and nearer.

Mr. Hiram K. Chowder stood motionless, scarcely breathing, so keen was his anxiety that this faint chance of catching the truant should materialise.

Closer and closer. Bob's arm moved at last, with an elastic swing, and the rope flew.

There was a gasp of anxious eagerness in the crowd below as the noose of the lasso smote the floating iron hook in the air.

"Caught!" yelled Frank Richards. "Hurrah!"

"Well done, Lawless!"

The balloon was floating on, and it could be seen that the lasso noose was looped on the iron hook.

The noose closed up at once as the hook dragged.

Bob, on the ridge, paid out the rope, or he would have been dragged away.

He threw the loose end of his lasso downward to his chums.

"Catch hold!" he shouted. Frank Richards and Beaulerc rushed to catch the rope, Mr. Chowder with them.

For Bob alone could never have dragged the great monster downward.

But almost as they reached the rope it was suddenly whisked away under their eyes, and vanished into the air.

A strong gust of wind had caught the balloon, and it shot suddenly upward.

The trailing lasso vanished above their heads.

And then, as they looked up, Frank Richards & Co. uttered a cry of horror.

For Bob Lawless was holding on to the rope, with both hands in a strong grip, and as the balloon shot up in the windy gust, Bob was dragged bodily from the roof and swept away into space.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

Captured!

"BOB!" shouted Frank Richards. "Good heavens!" panted Beaulerc.

Miss Meadows' face was white. "Oh, Jerusalem crickets!" gasped Mr. Chowder.

Up and up went the balloon, with horrified eyes watching it from the playground. Below, on the lasso attached to the iron hook, swung Bob Lawless.

So sudden had been the ascent that Bob had been snatched, as it were, from the schoolhouse roof, as if by a giant hand.

He had only time to close his grasp tighter on the rope as he was whirled away, swinging to and fro in the air.

In a few seconds the earth was a hundred yards below him.

It was rather by instinct than by thought that he tightened his grasp on the rope as he swung into space.

Now his teeth were set, and his face, though white, was cool and steady.

He was holding on to the lasso for his life!

"Bob!" groaned Frank. Vere Beaulerc caught his chum's arm.

"Frank! After him! The balloon must come down again! It's only the wind that drove it up! It was floating low before. After him! Get to the horses!"

Frank nodded. They ran together to the corral, and led out their horses without another word.

It was not time to think of school, or even to ask leave of Miss Meadows.

They mounted in the gateway, and dashed away in pursuit of the floating balloon.

Three or four more of the Cedar Creek fellows followed them.

Past the buildings, the chums rode across country in pursuit of the balloon.

"He's holding on!" breathed Frank. "Thank Heaven for that!" muttered Beaulerc. "Bob's got plenty of nerve, and if he holds on he's safe!"

"It must come down!" muttered Frank. They rode hard after the balloon, keeping pace with the floating monster.

Cedar Creek School was left far behind them.

It was certain that the balloon must descend again to its former level, and then the lasso would trail on the ground.

But if it descended farther or too suddenly, what would happen to Bob then? And if he lost his hold—

But Bob Lawless was keeping his hold. Both his hands were strong in their grasp on the rope, and he had succeeded in twisting it round one arm to make his hold more secure.

The earth was fifty yards below him, and a fall meant death, sudden and terrible. But Bob Lawless' nerve was good.

So long as he held on he was safe; and he was holding on.

His arms were beginning to ache, but he was by no means at the end of his strength.

Below him the rope trailed among the treetops as the balloon drifted on. It was settling downward again.

"Hold on, Bob!" Frank Richards' shout floated up to him from below, and he knew that his chums were following him.

The balloon was floating now over a thick belt of timber, and Frank and Beaulerc had been compelled to come to a halt.

The timber was too thick for the horses. There was nothing for it but to dismount. The horses were sent trotting back to the school alone, and the two chums plunged into the timber.

Here and there, through openings in the trees, they caught sight of the balloon again, drifting slowly on the gentle breeze, and settling lower and lower.

Bob Lawless, hanging between earth and sky, felt his boots brush against high branches in the timber.

The wind was so light now that the balloon drifted more and more slowly, and once or twice came almost to a stop over the trees.

Bob Lawless looked downward as he swung over an open glade.

"Bob!" came in a shout from below. Frank and Beaulerc were running across the glade beneath him.

It was easy to keep pace with the scarcely-moving balloon.

Lower and lower it settled, and the end of the long trail-rope was almost within reach of the schoolboys.

Bob Lawless, setting his teeth hard, began to slide down the rope, hand below hand.

Frank and Beau kept pace below, watching for a chance to catch the end of the lasso.

It came within reach at last. Frank made a spring upward, and caught it in both hands, and held on.

The jerk tautened the rope, and the balloon surged down a little.

Vere Beaulerc seized the rope the next moment.

"Come on, Bob!"

It was safe enough for Bob to slide down now, with the end of the rope on the earth.

He came down fast, and Frank Richards grasped him, and helped him to the ground.

He did not let go the rope. Bob Lawless stood panting, his cheeks white.

In spite of his nerve, he had been through an experience that had told heavily on him.

"Bob, old chap!" gasped Frank. Bob smiled feebly.

"That was a close call!" he muttered. "I thought I was a gone coon when I was whisked off the roof."

"I—I thought so, too, Bob. You're not hurt?"

"Only a bit dizzy."

"Take a turn of the rope round a stump," said Beaulerc. "The wind may catch the balloon again, and all three of us might be dragged up."

"Oh, by gum! Yes, get a move on!" exclaimed Bob.

The rope was hastily passed round a tree twice, and tied.

The balloon settled lower, and the iron hook was almost within reach now.

"There! The dashed thing can't float away again!" exclaimed Beauclerc. "We've caught it for Mr. Chowder; you're entitled to the hundred dollars, after all, Bob."

The rancher's son laughed.

"Old Chowder can keep his dollars," he said. "But I'm glad we've bagged his blessed contraption for him. How far are we from the school, kids?"

"Six miles at least," said Frank.

"Oh, Jerusalem!"

"And we had to send our gees back at the timber," said Beauclerc. "Still, we've got the balloon. Hallo, here comes Gunten!"

Kern Gunten, the Swiss, came hurrying across the glade.

Half a dozen of the Cedar Creek fellows had followed in pursuit, but they had turned back at the timber, losing sight of the balloon there.

Gunten had kept on, however—not because he wished to be of any service to Mr. Hiram Chowder, but for less unselfish reasons.

His eyes glistened as he came up, and found the balloon secured.

"We've got it!" he exclaimed.

"We!" repeated Bob.

"Well, you've got it," said Gunten. "I reckoned you were done for when you were carried off, Lawless. You had a nerve to hang on to that rope as you did."

"It was that or a broken neck," said Bob.

"Old Chowder was nearly weeping when I came away," grinned Gunten. "His horse was spent, and we left him miles behind. I say, this looks like being a good thing, you fellows. Chowder offered a hundred dollars for bagging his balloon."

"I don't want his dollars," said Bob curtly.

"Look here, that's rot," said Gunten. "We can stick him for three hundred at least; it's worth that for salvage. You fellows follow my lead in this; I've got a business head."

Frank Richards & Co. looked at Gunten. The eyes of the Swiss were glistening with eager greed.

Evidently he thought he saw the opportunity of a profitable transaction at the expense of the unlucky American aeronaut.

"It's a regular cinch," went on Gunten.

"The man himself said the balloon was worth over a thousand dollars. We're entitled to something per cent, for saving it for him."

"You had no hand in it, Gunten."

"I'll stand in with you, and get you more than you could get for yourselves," said the Swiss. "Look here, we make a claim—a legal claim, before the sheriff. If Chowder don't agree to pay, the balloon can be detained until the matter's settled in court."

"Do you think we want to screw money out of a stranger in distress?" roared Bob Lawless.

"Oh, don't be a fool, Lawless! I tell you, it's a regular cinch!"

"Not good enough," said Frank Richards, laughing. "We are going to hand Mr. Chowder his balloon free of charge, Gunten."

"What do you get out of the business, then?" demanded Gunten.

"Nothing."

Gunten gave a snort of disgust.

"You can't fool me!" he answered. "You want to stick the pilgrim for the dollars, and leave me out. That's your game."

"Oh, shut up!" said Bob Lawless roughly.

"You're a worm, Gunten, and you don't understand a decent chap!"

"I think we can pull it in now," said Frank. "It seems to be settling down."

"Good! All together," said Bob.

The three chums pulled on the rope, Gunten watching them with a savage scowl.

The balloon settled lower in the glade, clear of the trees, and the grapnel came in reach.

Lower it came, and lower.

"Stand clear!" shouted Bob.

And the chums of Cedar Creek jumped back, as the great wicker basket bumped into the grass.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

Sent Adrift!

FRANK RICHARDS drew the rope in, and wound it about the tree. Then he jumped into the car, to be followed by his chums.

The great gas envelope bumped on the THE POPULAR.—No. 193.

NEXT TUESDAY!

"THE AERIAL ADVENTURERS!"

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

branches of the tree, and the wicker basket hopped on the ground; but the balloon was a captive now.

"Listen to me, you fellows," urged Gunten. "There's no need to say a word to Chowder till he agrees to our terms. He'd never find the balloon in this timber; it can't be seen over the trees."

"Will you stop chewing the rag, Gunten?" exclaimed Bob Lawless impatiently. "I tell you, we don't want to make anything out of this galoot."

"And I tell you you're a liar!" said Gunten angrily. "Don't tell me silly yarns like that!"

Bob's eyes gleamed.

"You cringin' foreign worm!" he exclaimed. "You think everybody's as big a rotter as you are yourself. But you can't call me a liar, Gunten."

"You're lying, and you know it!" said Gunten savagely. "You want to make a bargain with Chowder, and leave me out—Hands off, you fool!"

Bob Lawless, with gleaming eyes, grasped the Swiss.

Gunten struck at him savagely, and Bob uttered a sharp cry, as Gunten's knuckles crashed into his face.

"By gum!" panted Bob.

He grasped the Swiss by the back of the collar, and swung him over the rim of the car.

Gunten hung there, his heels kicking against the wicker-work, yelling.

"You rotter!" shouted Bob wrathfully. "Get out! If you don't vamoose instanter, I guess I'll come after you, and lay the trail-rope about your carcass!"

With a swing of his arm, he tossed the yelling Swiss into the grass.

Gunten sprawled at full length.

He sat up dazedly.

Bob Lawless shook his fist at him over the edge of the car.

"Vamoose!" he rapped out.

"You rotter!" hissed Gunten. "You—you—"

"Vamoose, I tell you!"

Gunten staggered to his feet.

His face was white with rage and hatred as he glared at the three schoolboys in the car.

Bob Lawless picked up an empty meat-tin from the bottom of the car, and it whizzed through the air, as Gunten stood panting and shaking a furious fist at him.

The Swiss yelled as the missile caught him on the chest.

He dodged back into the thickets.

"Good riddance!" said Bob, rubbing his nose, where Gunten's knuckles had landed.

"By the great gophers, I've a jolly good mind to give him a taste of the trail-rope. I will if he comes back!"

"He won't come back!" said Frank, laughing.

But Frank Richards was mistaken on that point.

The Swiss had not gone far.

The three chums sat on the inside seat of the car, resting before they started on the long tramp back to Cedar Creek, and chatting carelessly.

They did not guess for a moment that Kern Gunten was still close at hand.

The Swiss, with a savage gleam in his eyes, had crept back through the thicket on his hands and knees, and was now close behind the tree round which the rope was secured.

Keeping well out of sight behind the tree, he opened his clasp-knife, and sawed through the rope.

In a minute, or less, it was cut through.

Gunten tied the loose ends together with a length of twine, to keep the rope in position.

The balloon was no longer secured.

At the first motion the twine would snap like thread, and the rope would whisk away from the trunk.

But, with the weight of the three schoolboys, the car was planted firmly on the grass now, and the great gas-envelope towered over them, almost motionless.

Gunten was not finished yet.

He put away his knife, and came round the tree. Frank Richards & Co. did not see him till he caught the rim of the car and clambered in again.

Bob Lawless started to his feet angrily as the Swiss jumped into the car.

"You've come back, you coyote!" he shouted. "By gum, I'll give you something that will keep you away!"

Gunten did not even look at him.

He grasped one of the sacks of sand, and before Bob could seize him, or even understand what he was at, he raised it over the rim of the car with a great effort.

The sack went over the rim, and crashed on the ground, and Gunten leaped after it, just escaping Bob's fist.

He rolled in the grass beside the sack.

"What on earth—" ejaculated Beauclerc. "Is he mad?" exclaimed Frank Richards, in wonder.

Gunten's action astounded all three.

Why the Swiss should leap into the car and pitch out a bag of sand and himself was a mystery.

But the next minute they understood.

"Great Scott! She's going up!" shouted Bob Lawless, as the car rocked under their feet.

Frank rushed to the side.

To his amazement and horror, the grass, and Gunten sprawling in it, were six or seven yards below.

The rope, whisking away from the tree, dangled loose.

It had been cut short, and the iron hook and the lasso lay on the ground, only a few yards of rope hanging from the car.

"It's going up!" gasped Beauclerc.

"He's cut the rope!" yelled Bob.

Below, Kern Gunten scrambled to his feet.

He looked up after the rising car, with savage exultation in his face, and shook his fist at the three schoolboys peering over the rim in utter dismay.

"Hold on!" gasped Frank.

The car rocked wildly.

Bob had given a wild glance down, wondering whether the distance could be jumped, but the rise was too sudden.

Already the loose rope was brushing the highest branches of the tree.

And the balloon was rising higher.

The heavy sack of sand had made all the difference.

As it rose above the timber a gust of wind caught it, and the great balloon went spinning away across the forest.

Kern Gunten watched it go till the tree-tops hid it from his sight.

His mocking laugh died away.

As the balloon vanished a change came over the face of the Swiss.

He had intended to give the chums of Cedar Creek a fright and a shock, and he did not care much if they were hurt.

But it was borne in upon his mind now that the matter was probably more serious than he had thought.

It was quite possible that a serious accident might be the result of his rascally trick, and that he might have serious consequences to answer for.

At that thought the rogue of the lumber school changed colour.

"Mein Gott!" he muttered uneasily. "Suppose—suppose they were killed!"

He glanced round quickly.

He was alone in the wood. No eyes had seen him, save those of the schoolboys carried away in the balloon, and if they did not return alive—

He shuddered at the thought, but his thoughts were all for himself.

He turned quickly and strode away through the timber.

It was a long tramp back to the plain.

As he came out of the timber he caught sight of a horseman on the trail.

It was Hiram K. Chowder.

Mr. Chowder spotted him, and rode up, hailing him.

"Seen the balloon?" he called out. "Seen that younker? Is he safe?"

"Yes, I've seen him," said Gunten calmly. "The balloon's come down in a glade."

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"Oh, good!" exclaimed Mr. Chowder, in great relief.

"Lawless landed all right," said Gunten calmly. "Richards and Beauclerc joined him there. I think they're going up in the balloon."

"What!" yelled Mr. Chowder.

"Well, I saw them pitch out a sack of sand, and the balloon went up," said Gunten. "Only a lark, I guess, Mr. Chowder."

"Only a lark!" gasped Mr. Chowder. "The young idiots! They may all break their necks! Oh, the pesky young jays!" He put his head back, and stared at the sky over the trees. "Oh, Jerusalem crickets! There she goes!"

Afar in the distance, high over the trees, the balloon rose into sight from the plain. Gunten glanced at it, and tramped on towards the lumber school.

Mr. Chowder sat his horse, motionless, watching the balloon, growing now to a speck in the distance over the timber.

He was still gazing after it hopefully when Gunten looked back again.

The Swiss shrugged his shoulders, and tramped on to Cedar Creek.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

Between Earth and Sky!

"I SAY, this is no cinch!" groaned Bob Lawless.

Frank Richards was a little pale. The balloon, so far, was clearing the tree-tops, but now and again the car rocked against a very high branch, and it spun and oscillated, and the schoolboys were hung down.

How to make the balloon descend was beyond their knowledge; they had never been in one before, and knew nothing of such things.

They held on desperately as the car rocked and bumped.

Ahead of them the ground was rising towards the Thompson hills, and the thick tree-tops were at a higher level.

Frank pointed in front of him.

"We've got to go higher, Bob!" he gasped. "If we crash into that, the whole thing may be smashed up, and then—"

Bob Lawless understood.

"I guess that's so, Franky! Pitch out a sack, and we shall float clear, at any rate."

Frank Richards grasped one of the sand-bags, and Bob lent him a hand.

It was heaved over the side, and disappeared, crashing through the tree-tops.

The result was startling.

Relieved of the weight, the balloon shot up almost like a rocket.

The three chums held on tenaciously, dazed and giddy.

The balloon, heeling over a little before the wind, floated on; but the car was steady now.

Frank Richards ventured to look over the side again.

There was no danger now from the tree-tops.

For the highest of the trees on the acclivity was more than three hundred yards below the car.

The woods looked one shapeless dark blur. "Well, this is a go!" said Frank Richards at last.

"It is, and no mistake!" said Bob Lawless. He clenched his fists. "I guess I wish I had that villain Gunten here!"

"No lessons this morning, anyway," remarked Vere Beauclerc, with a faint attempt at humour.

"I guess I'd rather be doing Canadian history at Cedar Creek!" said Bob. "How are we going to get out of this scrape?"

Frank Richards wrinkled his brows in thought.

He could guess that the cord above his head worked the valve, by which gas could be allowed to escape, to make the balloon descend.

But the mechanism was quite unknown to him, and if too much was allowed to escape at once it meant a sudden rush down to death.

He hesitated. "Better try, Frank," said Vere Beauclerc quietly. "If we keep up much longer, goodness knows how we shall get home, if we land at all. We're a good twenty miles from the school now."

"All that," said Bob Lawless. "Twenty miles on Shanks' pony isn't like the same



CARRIED AWAY! Up and up went the balloon, with horrified eyes watching it from the playing-ground. Below, on the lasso, attached to the iron hook, swung Bob Lawless. "Bon!" shouted Frank Richards. "Good heavens!" panted Beauclerc. (See Chapter 2.)

distance on horseback. If we get stranded in the hills—"

"Better try it," agreed Frank.

He grasped the cord, and the three school-boys breathed hard as he pulled it.

What the result would be they could not tell, but they had to take the risk.

But there was no result. Frank pulled the cord, and pulled again, but nothing came of it.

"Let me try!" said Bob.

Bob Lawless tried, with the same result.

"I—I suppose there's a valve, or something, isn't there?" muttered the rancher's son, a little pale now.

"There must be. But—"

"It's jammed, I guess."

Frank Richards drew a deep breath.

"Either it's jammed or it's fastened, and—and we don't know how to open it," he said. "We—we can't go down."

Cool and courageous as they were, Frank Richards & Co. were dismayed by the strange position in which they found themselves, and as the balloon sailed on, driven by the wind, they could not help wondering whether they would ever see Cedar Creek again and the kind faces at home.

Miss Meadows came out of the lumber schoolhouse, after lessons that day, with a troubled face.

Cedar Creek School dispersed in unusual silence and gravity.

Kern Gunten had told his tale at the school, and, naturally, he had been believed.

That the rascally Swiss had deliberately sent his schoolfellows into terrible danger was not a suspicion that was likely to occur to Miss Meadows.

She believed that Frank Richards & Co. had recklessly attempted an ascent in the

balloon, and she was too alarmed for their safety to feel angry with them.

News of what had happened had to be sent to the Lawless ranch and to the remittance-man's shack, where Vere Beauclerc was expected home.

Mr. Slimmey, the assistant master, mounted his horse, and rode away to take the news; there was nothing else to be done.

Soon after Mr. Slimmey had departed Hiram K. Chowder rode up to the lumber school in the gathering dusk.

The big American was tired, and his horse was spent.

Miss Meadows called to him hastily.

"Have you any news, Mr. Chowder?"

Mr. Chowder shook his head.

"Nope!"

"Those unhappy boys—"

"Pesky young varmints!" said Mr. Chowder wrathfully. "Why couldn't they let my balloon alone? But I'm going after that balloon, Miss Meadows. Hiram K. Chowder never says die—not Hiram K.! I guess I'm after my property, if I have to trail it down as far as the Pacific Ocean, madam! Can you lend me a horse? I'll leave my critter here."

"Certainly," said Miss Meadows. "I only hope you may get some news of those unfortunate boys."

Hiram K. Chowder nearly snorted; but he suppressed it, from consideration of Miss Meadows' feelings.

Mounted upon a fresh horse, the big American took the trail in a chase that even Hiram K., sanguine as he was, could hardly avoid looking upon as hopeless.

THE END.

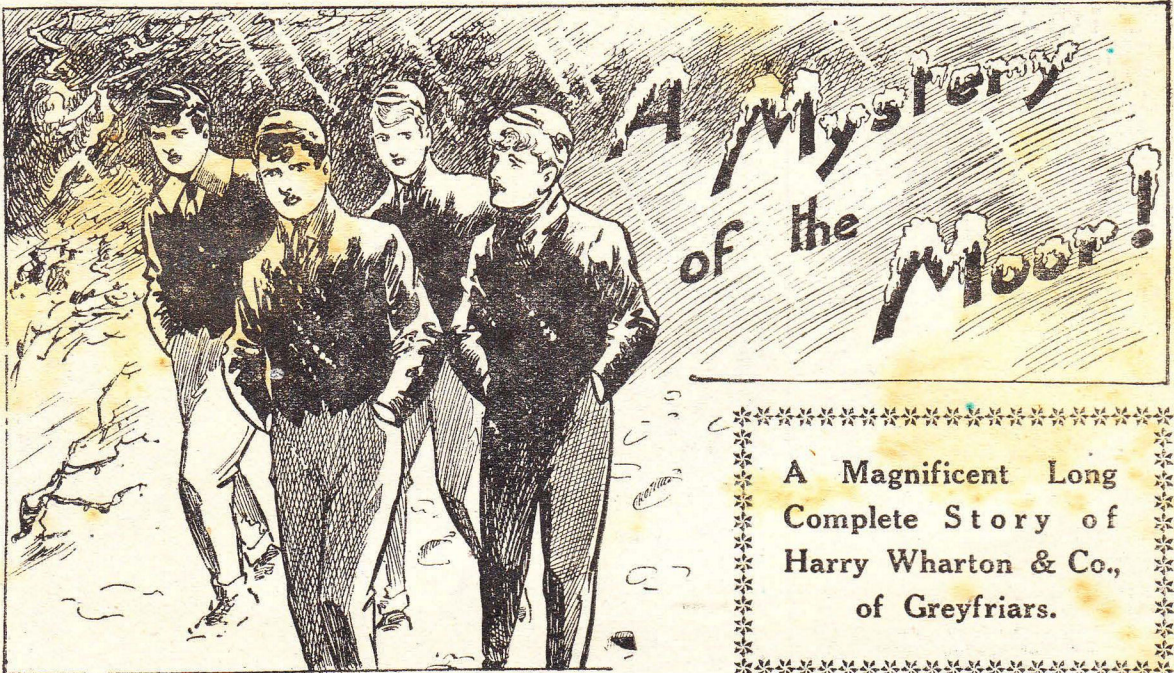
(You must not miss the stirring story of "The Aerial Adventurers," in next Tuesday's POPULAR. See page 27.)

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

NEXT TUESDAY! "THE AERIAL ADVENTURERS!"

WHO IS THE MYSTERIOUS TENANT OF SPINDRIFT COTTAGE? THE CHUMS OF GREYFRIARS ARE CONFRONTED WITH A BAFFLING PROBLEM!



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

By FRANK RICHARDS.

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

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

Spanked!

"PIP-PIP-LEASE, don't!"
"Ha, ha, ha!"
"Pip-pip-please, Bolsover!"
"And that!" said Bolsover major of the Remove, in tones of profound and intense disgust. "That's in the Sixth Form!"

Harry Wharton looked out of the Common-room at Greyfriars as he heard the quavering tones of Coker minor, and the loud, bullying voice of Bolsover.

There was a crowd of juniors in the passage, and Bolsover, the bully of the Remove, towered head and shoulders over most of them. In the midst of the grinning crowd stood Reggie Coker—Coker minor of the Sixth!

Reggie Coker was very little older than the juniors round him, and he was smaller in size than most of them. It really wasn't his fault that he was in the Sixth Form at an age when other fellows were in the Fourth or the Shell. He couldn't help being an abnormally clever youth, any more than his big brother Horace could help being several sorts of a duffer. But a good many of the juniors didn't like it. They thought it was like Coker minor's cheek to be in the Sixth. There were fellows—fags in the Third Form—who could have licked him with one hand. And yet he was in the Sixth—the top Form in the school—a kid who couldn't hold his own at games, or in the gym, or with the gloves on. And the fact that Coker minor was a good-tempered and inoffensive fellow made some of the juniors only the more ready to rag him.

"That," said Bolsover, pointing derisively at Reggie Coker—"that's in the Sixth! Listen to him! 'Pip-pip-please, don't!' Ha, ha, ha!"

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"I wish you'd let me alone, Bolsover," said Reggie Coker plaintively. "I haven't done anything to you, have I?"

"The Sixth ought to be proud of him, I don't think!" grinned Skinner of the Remove. "He's a credit to them!"

Reggie Coker looked round helplessly at the circle of grinning faces, and wished devoutly that his big brother Horace would come along the passage. Horace Coker—Coker major—wasn't blessed with brains like his young brother. He was only in the Fifth, and it was whispered at Greyfriars that he would still have been in the Shell if his Aunt Judy had not come down to the school and fairly bullied the Head into giving him his remove. But Coker major, though he wasn't a genius like Reggie, was big and burly and powerful, and always ready for a fight, qualities that conduced more to comfort at Greyfriars than any amount of intellect.

Reggie Coker made an effort to push through the ring. But Skinner pushed him back, and Coker minor did not even have resolution enough to hit Skinner.

"P-p-please let me pass!" he murmured.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, we're not done with you yet!" chuckled Bolsover major. "Don't blub, my darling; we're not going to hurt you!"

"I wasn't going to blub, you cad!" exclaimed Coker fiercely.

"Hallo! The little beast's got a temper, has he?" exclaimed Bolsover, in surprise. "What did you call me?"

"I called you a cad, and so you are!" said Coker minor. "And if I were big enough I'd give you a jolly good hiding!"

"Hear, hear!" sang out Bob Cherry. "Good for you, Reggie!"

Bolsover frowned.

"Well, you can't give me a hiding; but I'm going to give you a licking!" he said.

Harry Wharton pushed his way forward. Wharton was captain of the Remove, and this was not the first time he had interfered to stop Bolsover's bullying.

"Cheese it, Bolsover!" he said quietly. "You don't want to hit a kid like that."

Bolsover glared at him.

"You mind your own business!" he said. "The little cad has cheeked me, and I'm going to spank him!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The juniors roared at the idea. Spanking a member of the Sixth was a new amusement. And Sixth-Former as Coker was, it was certainly quite easy for Bolsover to spank him if he chose.

"Let him alone," said Harry Wharton. "What do you want to be such a beastly bully for, Bolsover?"

"Rats!" said Bolsover. "I'm not going to hurt him. I'm going to spank him. I've never spanked a Sixth-Former before—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"It will be one up against the Sixth, too!" grinned Bolsover. "Now, Reggie, come on—come to your uncle!"

"I—I— Let me alone!" howled Reggie Coker, as Bolsover seized him in his powerful grasp. "I—I— Please, don't, Bolsover!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Harry Wharton hesitated, undecided whether to interfere or not. That he would chip in if Bolsover hurt the little Sixth-Former he was determined. But so long as it was only a harmless ragging he was not called upon to do so. Coker minor was slung across Bolsover's knee, amid the roars of laughter from the juniors. Bolsover sat on the oaken bench in the passage. Reggie kicked up his

NEXT
TUESDAY!

"TROUBLE FOR COKER!"

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

legs wildly, and squirmed in the powerful grasp of the Remove bully. He was not so much afraid of being hurt as of the terrible indignity of being spanked in public by a junior boy. A Sixth-Former spanked by a boy in the Lower Fourth! It was too awful; but there did not seem to be any help for it.

"Go it, Bolsover!"

"Spank him!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

A big, burly fellow came down the passage from the other end, as Coker minor wriggled on Bolsover's knees, and the Remove bully raised his large, heavy hand to administer the first spank.

"Hallo, you kids! What are you making all this row about?" he exclaimed.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" yelled Bob Cherry. "Here's Coker of the Fifth!"

"Yes, here I am!" said Horace Coker. "And you kids had better make a bit less row, or— Why—what—Reggie!"

Coker seemed turned to stone for a moment as he caught sight of his young brother squirming and wriggling on Bolsover's knees. Bolsover's heavy hand came down—smack!

There was a yell of anguish from Reggie.

Then Horace Coker gave a roar like a bull, and rushed forward. His grasp was on Bolsover in a moment. Reggie rolled on the floor, gasping, and Bolsover whirled round in the herculean grasp of Horace Coker.

Biff, biff, biff, biff!

Coker major was hitting out terrifically.

Bolsover roared and struggled.

It was so seldom that the bully of the Remove was licked that he was badly in need of it, and now he was getting it.

"Ow! Rescue!" roared Bolsover at last. "Pile in, Remove!"

Coker had quite licked him. Now Coker had sat down on the oaken bench, and dragged Bolsover across his knees, just as the little Sixth-Former had been dragged over Bolsover's knees. And Coker's heavy hand rose and fell.

Smack, smack, smack!

Bolsover was getting the spanking now.

"Rescue! Ow, ow, ow! Rescue!" yelled Bolsover.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

And Reggie Coker chirruped:

"Go it, Horace! Thump him, Horace! Ha, ha, ha!"

Smack, smack, smack!

"There!" gasped Coker major, pitching Bolsover off his knees at last. "That's a lesson for you. You'll learn in time to leave my minor alone! Come on, Reggie!"

And Coker of the Fifth walked away with his minor.

Bolsover sat up on the floor.

"You rotters!" he roared. "Why didn't you help me? Why didn't you pile on Coker, you beasts? Harry Wharton, you rotten funk, why didn't you chip in?"

"You only got what you deserved," Wharton replied curtly. "It's jolly decent of old Coker to stand up for his minor. If he hadn't stopped you I was going to. Go and eat coke!"

And Wharton went back into the Common-room.

Bolsover limped away, scowling, followed by loud chuckles from the juniors. The ragging of Coker minor had turned out somewhat unfortunate for the ragger, owing to the powerful intervention of Coker major, and it was quite a long time before Bolsover of the Remove was able to sit down with any degree of comfort.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

A Lesson for Reggie!

COKER MAJOR marched his minor into his study in the Fifth Form passage.

Potter and Greene, Coker's study-mates, were there.

"Hallo!" said Potter, as the two Cokers came in. "What about that feed, Horace, old man?"

Coker of the Fifth shook his head.

"Haven't had Aunt Judy's letter yet," he replied.

"Rather inconsiderate of the old lady to keep you waiting," remarked Greene.

"Oh, it will come along," said Coker.

"It's going to be a tenner, too. Aunt Judy always gives me a tenner on her birthday, and I give her a present. We'll have the feed to-morrow. The funds will run up to something for tea, anyway."

"Good! Your minor can tag at getting tea for us," said Potter.

Coker glared at him.

"My minor fag?"

"Yes. He's only a kid, you know."

"He's in the Sixth!"

"Yes. That's a little joke of the Head's on us," yawned Potter.

Coker frowned.

"If you are going to be funny, Potter,

I—"

"I don't mind getting tea, Horace,

please," said Reggie timidly.

Coker snorted.

"Sixth-Formers don't fag!" he said.

"My minor's going to be treated with as much respect as any other Sixth-Former, or I'll know the reason why! And we're not going to have tea yet. I'm going to give you a boxing lesson, Reggie."

"Oh!"

"I say—" began Potter and Greene together. They were by no means disposed to have their tea put off while Coker minor received instruction in boxing. They had been waiting for Horace Coker to come in to tea, too. Coker was going to stand the tea.

"You chaps buzz off for a bit, will you?" said Coker offhandedly. "You'll be in the way here while I'm giving my minor a boxing lesson."

"Look here—"

"Clear off, will you?"

And Potter and Greene, giving Reggie Coker glances that indicated feelings inexpressible in words, cleared off. Coker dragged two pairs of boxing-gloves out of a drawer.

"Take off your jacket!" he said.

"I say, Horace—"

"You've got to learn to stand up for yourself, Reggie!" said Coker of the Fifth sternly. "You can't be in the Sixth Form and let fags in the Lower Fourth spank you."

"I—I almost wish I wasn't in the Sixth!" murmured Reggie.

"Stuff! It's an honour to the family!" said Coker. "You've got all the brains of the family, and I've got all the muscle. But you've got to learn to keep your end up. Get those gloves on, and I'll knock you about a bit. You mustn't mind if it hurts you. It's all for your own good, you know."

"Oh dear!" murmured Reggie.

Reggie Coker donned the gloves in rather a gingerly manner. He squared up to his powerful major, feeling very much as he might have felt if he had been tackling a particularly large and dangerous bull. Coker of the Fifth sailed in and hit out, and his minor collapsed on the floor with a gasp.

Coker of the Fifth stared at him.

"What did you fall down for?" he demanded.

"Oh dear! You knocked me down!"

"You oughtn't to fall down for a tap like that. It was only a tap. I'll hit you

really hard next time, and you'll see the difference," said Coker.

"Oh dear! Please don't!" gasped Reggie. "I—I'll take your word for it, Horace. I will, really!"

"Jump up!" said Coker encouragingly.

"If you're hurt a bit, you know, it will teach you to take your gruel without whining."

Reggie rose reluctantly to his feet. There was a tap at the door of the study, and it opened, and a fat face adorned with a big pair of spectacles looked in. It was the face of Billy Bunter, the Owl of the Remove, and the fattest junior at Greyfriars.

"I say, you fellows!" said Bunter, blinking round the study. "Can I help you?"

"Good idea!" exclaimed Coker heartily. "This fat idiot can stand up to you, Reggie, and you can knock him down just as easily as I can knock you down. It will be splendid practice for you. Come right in, Bunter!"

"Ahem! I—I say—I didn't know you were boxing!" stammered Bunter.

"I—I thought you were going to have a feed, and I was willing to help in the cooking, and—and—"

"And in the eating, I suppose?" grinned Coker. "Well, we're not having a feed. We're having a boxing lesson. Come in!"

"Ahem! Excuse me, Coker! I—I'm rather pressed for time— Yar-o-o-oh!"

Bunter roared as Coker of the Fifth caught him by the collar and swung him bodily into the study.

"Get those gloves on!" said Coker.

"Oh, really, Coker—"

"Don't hit at his face, Reggie, in case you burst his barnicles," said Horace Coker. "But hit as hard as you can at his chest."

"Right-ho!" said Reggie, much encouraged. "I think I could lick Bunter, Horace."

"I—I say, you fellows!" gasped Bunter, in dismay. "I—I don't want to box, you know. I—I came here for a feed. I—I—"

"Get those gloves on!" roared Coker.

Bunter hastily put the boxing-gloves on. Coker of the Fifth was not a fellow to be argued with.

"Now toe the line!" said Coker. "If you can lick my minor I'll stand you a bob."

"Oh, I can lick him easily enough!" said Bunter. "I'm rather a dab at boxing, you know, and I'm an athletic chap, too. But I don't want to hurt him. On the whole, Coker, I'd rather not. I'm rather pressed for time—"

"Pile in, Reggie! Put your hands up, Bunter, or you'll get my boot!"

"Oh, really, you know—"

Biff! Biff!

Reggie Coker's boxing-gloves came thumping on Bunter's chest, and the fat junior staggered back with a roar. Then he piled in himself, rushing at Coker minor, his arms going like a windmill.

"Stand up to him, Reggie!" encouraged Horace Coker. "You'll lick him! It's splendid practice for you! Hard as you can! Never mind if you hurt him! It will do him good!"

Biff! biff! biff! biff!

"Yar-o-oh!" roared Bunter. "Look here, I've had enough!"

"Rot!" said Coker. "You're not licked yet!"

"Ow—ow—ow!"

"I'll make it half-a-crown if you lick my minor!" said Coker generously.

"Oh, I say, Horace!" murmured Reggie.

"Now, pile in, Bunter!"

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

NEXT TUESDAY!

"TROUBLE FOR COKER!"

Billy Bunter made a desperate effort. He would have liked to win that half-a-crown, and he would have liked to lick Coker minor—indeed, he would have been greatly pleased if, by some miracle, he could have licked Coker major too.

But Reggie, though so helpless in the hands of Bolsover, was too much for the fat and unwieldy Owl of the Remove.

Billy Bunter was boxed all round the study, and at last he sat down violently on the floor, and refused to rise again.

"Licked!" said Horace Coker, with great satisfaction. "Now, you've made a beginning, Reggie! That is ripping! Later on I'll make you tackle Bob Cherry, or Nugent, or Bull, and see you lick them."

"Oh, dear!" gasped Reggie.

"You can get out, Bunter. I'm done with you," said Coker.

Billy Bunter retreated to the door, and blinked back with a furious glare at the two Cokers ere he departed. He had come there for a feed, and he had received a thumping, and he was not pleased.

"You—you rotters!" he stuttered. "Coker, you're a rotten beast! Your minor is a snivelling cad! Yah!"

"What!" roared Horace Coker.

He made a jump towards the door, and Billy Bunter slammed it and fled. Coker rushed out into the passage. But Bunter, if he could not fight, could run when occasion demanded. He disappeared round the nearest corner at terrific speed, and Horace Coker came back to his study with a snort.

"Reggie—"

But Reggie was gone. He had slipped out in the opposite direction when Coker rushed after Bunter. And Coker snorted again. Reggie was grateful to his big brother for his care of him, but he was evidently fed up with boxing instruction.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

Caught in the Storm!

"**S**NOW!" exclaimed Bob Cherry.

"Oh, rotten!"

"What beastly luck! We're in for it!"

The chums of the Remove evidently were in for it. They had been for a long ramble on the cliffs, looking down on the wide waters of Pegg Bay. It had been a clear, sharp winter afternoon when they left Greyfriars, and they had enjoyed their scramble among the great cliffs. They had stopped upon a high point of the cliffs, far above the waters of the bay, to discuss the sandwiches they had brought with them. Far below them rolled the sea, with the black trail of a steamer's smoke crawling across the choppy water. But the fishing village of Pegg was hidden by the great rocks from their gaze. There were four fellows in the party—Harry Wharton, Nugent, Bob Cherry, and Johnny Bull—Hurree Jamset Ram Singh, the fifth member of the famous Co., not having cared for a ramble among the cliffs, where ridges of snow were thick, and where the keen wind from the North Sea was like the edge of a knife. Hurree Singh felt the keen English winter, and he did not like snow.

The four chums had finished their sandwiches, and were preparing for their descent, to take the homeward path to Greyfriars, when the snow recommenced.

Thick, dark clouds had rolled over the sky, and the top of the great Shoulder was lost in the mists. Mist swallowed up the sea, and the crawling smoke of the steamer. The snow came down in light, feathery flakes at first, but they grew thicker and thicker every moment.

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"TROUBLE FOR COKER!"

And the chums of the Remove, with one accord, pronounced that it was rotten.

For ease in climbing they had come out without coats, and they were far too lightly clad to walk three or four miles through a heavy snowstorm; and there was no shelter to be had nearer than the fishing village.

"Beastly!" said Johnny Bull. "There's sleet as well as snow, too! It's going to be a thoroughly rotten evening!"

"Looks like it!"

"Well, the sooner we're off the quicker," said Harry Wharton. "No good grumbling. Let's get a move on. We've got to get down from here before the path gets too thick with snow, or we may take a tumble and break our giddy necks!"

And the juniors started the descent.

The keen wind from the sea lashed in their faces, laden with snowflakes, as they clambered down the steep cliff paths.

The paths were steep and narrow, and as the snow grew thicker upon them they became more perilous, and the chums of Greyfriars held to one another to avoid slipping.

They reached the lower level at last, but the descent had taken more than an hour, and by that time they were covered with snow, and their clothes were very wet.

To tramp through the blinding storm to Greyfriars was impossible, and it did not seem much more feasible to try to get to Pegg or to Cliff House. Both were at a considerable distance, over very rough ground.

"We shall have to get into shelter and wait for it to pass, now we're off the cliffs," said Harry Wharton.

"Where is there any shelter?" asked Johnny Bull.

Wharton reflected.

It was a lonely spot, with a wild beach lashed by the sea, backed by great, frowning cliffs. On the other side of Pegg were bungalows, where summer visitors dwelt in the holiday months, now locked up and deserted. But on this side of the fishing village the coast was too wild and bleak for residence. But Wharton, as he cudgelled his brains to think of a possible shelter, suddenly remembered.

"There's the Spindrift Cottage!" he exclaimed. "You fellows have seen it. Old Captain Spindrift used to live there, and it's never been lived in since. We can get shelter there!"

"Blest if I know just where it is!" said Nugent.

"Well, it's along the beach somewhere, and it faces the sea," said Harry.

Bob Cherry uttered a sudden exclamation.

"Look! There's a light!"

"Thank goodness!"

"It's the cottage!" said Harry Wharton. "There's someone there! All the better! Buck up, you chaps! We'll be out of this in a minute or two now!"

The juniors hurried on, their heads bent in the falling snow. Standing back to the almost perpendicular cliff, and surrounded on three sides with a small garden—now obliterated under snow—was the cottage.

It was a little, four-roomed building, raised on a wooden platform a foot above the sandy beach, with a covered veranda in front. An eccentric old sea captain had built it many years ago, and had lived his last days there and died. But no one had been found to succeed him in inhabiting the lonely little building. It was more than a mile from any other

habitation, lost in a wilderness of rock and shingle.

Wharton forced open the garden gate with some difficulty, for the snow was a foot thick on the path. The "To Let" board, which had been in the garden ever since the death of Captain Spindrift half a dozen years before, had been removed, as the juniors noticed at once. The cottage was let at last!

From one of the windows a light gleamed through the chinks of the wooden shutters, which were closed.

"Somebody there," said Bob Cherry, through his chattering teeth. "Grooh! I shall be glad to get near a fire!"

"Same here!" shuddered Nugent. "We shall be jolly lucky if we don't have beastly colds after this! Grooh!"

Harry Wharton raised the heavy, old-fashioned knocker on the door, and brought it down with a loud knock.

Knock!

The sharp, sudden sound rang through the little building.

Silence followed.

There was no sound of anyone coming to open the door; but almost before the echo of the knock had died away, the light that gleamed from the window suddenly went out, and the building was plunged into darkness.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

A Mystery!

"**G**REAT Scott!"

"What the dickens—"

The four juniors uttered exclamations of amazement.

They were standing under the shelter of the veranda now, and as the glimmer of light from the window died away, the darkness fell thick around them, and they could hardly see one another.

The sudden extinguishing of the light astounded them.

That it had been purposely turned out as soon as the knock at the door had been heard they were certain. The sudden darkness had immediately followed the knock. What did it mean?

Wharton raised his hand to the knocker again.

Knock!

The sound echoed through the house. But, save for the echo, there was no answering sound from within.

What did it mean?

That the house was occupied they knew; but why had the occupant extinguished the light, and why did he refuse to come to the door? A strange feeling crept over the juniors as they stood there, with the snowflake-laden wind beating upon them.

"Somebody's there!" growled Bob Cherry. "Why don't he open the door?"

"Must be dotty, I should think, or an inhospitable beast!" said Harry Wharton.

"Anyway, we're going to have shelter! We've a right to ask for it!"

"I should jolly well say so!"

"We can't stay here," said Nugent. "We shall be frozen to death in this wind!"

Knock! Knock! Knock!

Harry Wharton plied the knocker angrily.

The wind was lashing right at the house from the sea, dashing the snow in masses upon them as it fell. The keen blast seemed to penetrate to their very bones. To be shut out of shelter, for no reason at all that they could think of, was bitterly exasperating to the juniors, after they had tramped through the storm to the cottage. They felt their anger rising as Wharton pounded at the knocker.

Knock! Knock! Knock! Knock!

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: : By FRANK RICHARDS.

And still no reply came from within the dark and silent house.

"We're not going to stand this!" growled Johnny Bull. "Look here, very likely the house isn't let at all. Some rotten tramp has taken up his quarters in it, and he doesn't want to be found. That's more likely!"

Harry Wharton nodded. "Jolly likely!" he said. "No decent man would refuse strangers shelter in a storm like this. Quite likely the rotter hasn't any right there at all. Are you fellows game to make him let us in?"

"Yes, rather!"
"Then here goes!"
Wharton left the door, and stepped to the window, through the shutters of which the light had gleamed before their arrival. He rapped sharply on the shutters.

"Will you open the door?" he shouted. "We want shelter from the snow."

No answer. Wharton's shout must have been audible inside the house, but whoever was there did not choose to reply to it.

Wharton rapped again angrily. "Will you let us in. If you don't, we shall force a way in. You can take your choice. We're not going to stay out here."

Still no reply.
Wharton returned to the door. He tried it, but it was bolted within. "Look round at the back!" said Bob Cherry.

The juniors, bending their heads to the storm, tramped round the cottage, knee-deep in the drifted snow. Behind the cottage, between the building and the cliff, was a small yard, banked up with snow. The kitchen door looked as if it had not been opened since the snow fell. Nowhere near the cottage was a single trace of a footprint. The mysterious occupant of the cottage seemed to be shut up in his lonely residence like a hermit in his cave of old. The snow behind the cottage was banked up so deep that it was almost impossible to reach the kitchen door. There was no ingress that way.

"Great Scott!" exclaimed Nugent, gasping as the wind lashed in his face. "Let's get back. It's a bit better under the veranda."

And they tramped back, panting, to the front of the cottage.

But for the light that had gleamed in the window, and had been so strangely and suddenly extinguished, the juniors would have believed that the cottage was unoccupied, and locked up, as the house-agent had left it.

But the light had proved that there was someone there—and their belief strengthened that it was some tramp, who had taken possession of the lonely place as a shelter from the inclement weather.

"We're going in!" said Harry Wharton grimly. "There are plenty of rocks close by. We'll batter in the door if the rotter doesn't open it!"

"Good egg!"
The juniors hurried out of the garden. On the beach there were masses of loose boulders, thick with snow. They dragged up a jagged rock, large and heavy, and bore it back into the garden. Wharton and Bob Cherry held it between them, and crashed it upon the lock of the door.

Crash!
The door shook, and the whole house rattled with the shock.

"One or two more like that, and we'll be in!" said Johnny Bull. "Go it!"
Crash!

The door groaned and shook, and the lock creaked ominously.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! That's fetched him!" exclaimed Bob Cherry.

There was a sound of sudden footsteps in the little hall inside. The violent attack on the door, which would soon have burst it open, had brought the mysterious occupant of the house out of his grim silence.

A sharp, angry voice called out from the interior. "Stop that! Do you hear? How dare you attack my house in this way?"

"Well, we've woke him up, at all events," said Bob Cherry, with a grin.

"We want shelter from the storm," said Harry Wharton quietly, in reply to the angry voice. "Will you let us in?"

"This is not a shelter for tramps!"
Wharton's eyes gleamed.

"We're not tramps—we're school-boys!" he replied. "We want shelter till the snow stops. It won't hurt you to let us in."

"I shall do nothing of the kind."
"Only for an hour or two."

"I repeat that I shall not admit you. I order you to get off my premises at once!"

The four juniors breathed hard.

"You rotten hound!" shouted Bob Cherry. "Haven't you any decency? Ain't you a Christian, you beast? Let us in! We're three-quarters frozen!"

"That is no business of mine. I am an invalid, and I refuse to be troubled. Go your way!"

And the sound of receding footsteps was heard. The unseen man had gone back to his room, apparently considering that the matter was at an end.

The juniors looked at one another dubiously.

If the man was really the tenant of the cottage, he had a right to refuse them admission, cruel and brutal as the refusal

was, and they could not force an entrance without an infraction of the law. But it was incredible that any householder should be so unfeeling for no apparent cause.

"It's some scoundrel who's planted himself here!" said Wharton, with conviction. "I dare say a lonely place like this is often used by tramps. It stands to reason that no decent man would refuse us shelter."

"Yes, rather!"
"The rotter hasn't any right here. We're going in. Heave that blessed rock at the door again."

Crash!
It was a more terrific shock than before, and under the force of it the lock burst, and the door flew open.

The heavy rock fell from the juniors' hands and bumped into the house as the door flew back violently against the wall.

Wharton and Nugent, almost losing their balance, staggered in after the rock.

There was an exclamation of fury from someone unseen in the darkness.

"You scoundrels! You have broken into my house!"

"Your house be blowed!" said Bob Cherry. "You're only some rotten tramp, and you know you are! You haven't as much right here as we have."

"Leave my house!"
"Rats!"
"I order you—"

"You can order till you're black in the face!" said Harry Wharton grimly. "But unless you can prove that you're the legal tenant of this house we don't go! Why can't you show yourself if you're an honest man? A decent man



AN ANSWER AT LAST! There was a sound of sudden footsteps in the little hall inside. The violent attack on the door had brought the mysterious tenant out of his grim silence. A sharp voice called out. "Stop that! How dare you attack my house?" "We want shelter from the storm!" said Harry Wharton. (See Chapter 4.)

THE POPULAR.—No. 198.

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

NEXT
TUESDAY!

"TROUBLE FOR COKER!"

needn't be afraid for his face to be seen."

Bob Cherry had been feeling in his pocket. He had an electric pocket-lamp there, which the juniors had used while exploring a cave in the cliffs. He drew it out and pressed the button, and a sudden flood of light shot through the little hall.

The gleam of the electric lamp fell upon the hitherto unseen man standing in the open doorway of the room adjoining the hall.

All the juniors saw him at that moment, clearly shown up by the sudden blaze of the electric light.

He was a short, slim man, with a long, thin, cadaverous face, clean-shaven, a beaky nose, and little, sharp, brown eyes under heavy brows. He was almost entirely bald, though he did not seem to be forty years of age. His jaw was heavy and square, and his face, never handsome, had at the present moment an expression of mingled fear and savage rage that made it startling to behold.

For a moment or two the man stood blinking in the light, apparently too taken by surprise to move.

Then he sprang back into the room and closed the door, and the juniors heard the key turn in the lock.

The man had vanished; the light of the electric lamp gleamed upon the panels of a locked door where he had been standing.

And from all the juniors came an exclamation of bewildered astonishment.

"My hat!"

"This beats the giddy band!"

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

The Tenant of Spindrift Cottage!

HARRY WHARTON & CO. stood in blank amazement.

Why had the man sprung into the room and locked the door behind him?

A suspicion flashed into their minds that they had to do with a lunatic. Was it possible that the lonely cottage had been taken possession of by some escaped madman?

The juniors looked at one another with startled eyes, the same thought in every mind.

Bob Cherry flashed the electric lamp about the hall and into the three rooms to which the juniors had access. One was a kitchen, and one a bed-room, and the other a store-room. And the rooms were furnished for habitation. In the bed-room the bed was unmade; in the kitchen there were traces of late cooking. The store-room was well provided. The juniors saw, with amazement, stacks of tinned meats and fruits and other provisions. The occupant of the lonely cottage was well provided in case the bad weather should interrupt communication with the village.

The juniors glanced round hastily, and then they gathered in the hall again, and looked at one another very uneasily.

The fact was clear that the cottage, so long deserted, was occupied at last—not by a wandering tramp, but by some regular tenant. And it was equally clear that the tenant was the man who had locked himself in the front room.

It followed that the Greyfriars juniors were in the extremely disagreeable position of having forced their way into an occupied house, an action which not the most inclement weather could justify in the eyes of the law.

"My hat!" muttered Bob Cherry, breaking a painful silence at last.

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"We've fairly put both feet in it this time. That chap is really the tenant, and the house is let, and we—ahem!—we're giddy burglars!"

"Housebreakers, at any rate!" said Frank Nugent.

Harry Wharton nodded, with a glum look.

"It's right enough," he said. "We didn't know, but it's pretty clear now. That chap is the tenant, and he had a right to refuse us shelter if he liked, though he was an utter beast to do it!"

"We can't go," said Johnny Bull.

"I'll speak to the beast, and put it to him as nicely as I can," said Harry Wharton.

He tapped on the locked door of the room. He heard a sound of a glass being set down on the table.

"I want to speak to you!" he called out.

"What do you want?"

"Are you the tenant of this house?"

"Yes. My name is Smith—Joseph Smith!" came back the voice.

"Blow your name!" murmured Wharton. "I don't care twopence whether you're Smith, Jones, or Robinson!"

"What did you say?"

The man's voice was calmer now.

"Ahem! We want shelter from the storm. We're sorry we've busted your door, and we're willing to pay for the damage. We've got money with us."

"I do not want your money!"

"May we stay an hour or two till the worst of the storm is over?"

28 PAGES FOR 2^d

GRAND

COLOURED COVER

AND FREE PHOTOS IN THE GREATLY ENLARGED

"MAGNET"

(See Page 27.)

There was a short silence. The unseen tenant of Spindrift Cottage was evidently thinking. Probably he came to the conclusion that since the juniors were in the house, no further harm could be done by their remaining there. Certainly he could not have turned them out if they had chosen to remain against his will.

"You may stay," he said at last. "But on condition that you keep quiet. I am an invalid, and you have already terribly upset me."

"Thank you! We'll be as quiet as lambs, and we'll clear off the minute the weather clears."

"Very well."

Wharton turned back to his chums. "May as well get into the kitchen," he said. "There's a fire there, and we can make it up a bit."

"Right-ho!"

The four juniors entered the little kitchen. There was a stove in the room, in which were the remains of a fire. There was coal in a scuttle, and the juniors took the liberty of mending the fire, and soon they had a cheerful blaze going. They gathered round it to dry their clothes.

Outside, the storm was still howling, but the fury of the wind had abated a

little. The snow was still falling, but less thickly.

From the adjoining room, where the mysterious tenant of Spindrift Cottage was keeping to himself, there came no sound.

The juniors might have been alone in the house, for any sound of life to indicate the contrary.

They sat and steamed round the fire, and talked in low tones.

The strange adventure puzzled them utterly. Unless the man had been in a dangerous state of drunkenness, something approaching delirium tremens, in fact, it was hardly possible to account for his conduct. And how came such a man to be living in that lonely cottage, without companion or servant of any kind, shut in solitude in the waste of rock and shingle?

"Must be a bit off his rocker, I should think," Bob Cherry remarked. "I shall be rather glad to get out of this place!"

And the other juniors agreed. The neighbourhood of that decidedly curious tenant of the cottage was not agreeable.

But it was a good two hours before the storm abated sufficiently for the Greyfriars juniors to leave the shelter of the cottage. By that time they were rested, and their clothes had dried before the blaze of the fire.

"Better get off now," said Wharton at last.

He knocked at the locked door before going.

"We're going, Mr. Smith!" he called out.

There was no reply, and Wharton did not speak again. The juniors left the cottage, and tramped away through the snow towards the village of Pegg.

It was an hour's long tramp before they reached the village, and there they stopped at the Anchor Inn, where they were able to get a trap to drive them over to Greyfriars School.

Hurree Janset Ram Singh met them as they came in, and he grinned with relief at the sight of his chums safe and sound, his dusky face full of joy.

"I was afraid that some mischance had happened to my esteemed chums in the storm!" he exclaimed. "The afraidfulness was terrific!"

"You young sweeps!" said Coker of the Fifth. "Been getting into trouble, as usual—what? Your Form master's been asking for you."

And the juniors presented themselves in Mr. Quelch's study to explain the cause of their late return, and as the storm was evidently not a fault of theirs, they were forgiven.

"I was very anxious about you," said Mr. Quelch. "Coker of the Fifth suggested that he should go out and look for you, and was, in fact, about to go. I am very glad that you have returned safely."

"Jolly decent of Coker!" Bob Cherry remarked, as they left the Form master's study. "Coker isn't such a beast as he makes himself out to be!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

And thus ended that curious adventure in the lonely cottage, which was destined, however, to have results that the chums of the Remove did not dream of as yet.

THE END.

(You must not miss next week's magnificent long complete story of Harry Wharton & Co., the Chums of Greyfriars.)

A SPLENDID STORY OF THE JUNIORS OF GREY-FRIARS. BY FRANK RICHARDS.

NEXT TUESDAY!

"TROUBLE FOR COKER!"

A TALE OF GUNPOWDER TREASON AND PLOT BUT WITH MODERN SURROUNDINGS
THIS TIME!



GUY FAWKES NIGHT

AT ST. JIM'S!

A Splendid Long Complete School
Tale of TOM MERRY & CO.
of St. Jim's, and the New House
Chums.

By

MARTIN CLIFFORD.

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

The Conspiracy.

NOW'S our chance!" It was Aubrey Racke of the Shell who spoke.

The Guy Fawkes festivities were in full swing at St. Jim's. On the football-ground a huge bonfire had been lighted, and crowds of fellows danced around it, like strange will-o'-the-wisps. And as they danced and capered they chanted the time-honoured ditty:

"Remember, remember,
The Fifth of November—
Gunpowder treason and plot.
I see no reason
Why gunpowder treason
Should ever be forgot!"

The fun was fast and furious. Sky-rockets went screaming through the air, jumping crackers went off with a noise like a machine-gun, and squibs and star-lights and golden rains were set in action to complete the pyrotechnic display.

For three juniors, however, the proceedings seemed to have but little interest.

Racke and Crooke and Mellish were strolling along arm-in-arm beyond the circle of light formed by the bonfire. It was quite dark where they were walking—which was as well, for they had dark deeds to discuss.

"Now's our chance!" repeated Racke. "Of scoring over Tom Merry & Co., d'you mean?" asked Crooke.

"Yes. I've thought of a toppin' wheeze!"

"Get it off your chest!" said Mellish. Racke stumbled against something in the gloom.

"It's a packin'-case," he remarked. "Contained sky-rockets, I expect; but it's empty now. Let's squat down on it and talk this thing over. We've got to make matters warm for the firm of Merry, Manners, & Lowther."

"Yes, rather!"

"Well, I've got the plans all cut an' dried in my noddle," said Racke, as the trio seated themselves on the packing-

case. "Now, first of all, we're goin' to put on masks to prevent recognition; I've got three hideous things in my pocket with long, red noses and grinning like gargoyles. Then we're goin' to kidnap Kildare—"

"What!"
Crooke and Mellish gave a simultaneous shout. They wondered if they had heard aright. Was Racke out of his senses? Or was he genuinely proposing to lay hands on the sacred person of the captain of St. Jim's?

Racke soon showed them that he was in earnest.

"We're goin' to kidnap Kildare," he repeated, "an' make him a prisoner in the pavilion, trussin' him up so that he won't be able to get away."

"But—"
"Give me no buts!" said Racke. "It will be quite easy for us to kidnap Kildare without bein' recognised. Mind you, he won't take it lyin' down. I dare say he'll put up a fight, but the three of us can manage him all right."

"I don't know so much," said Mellish uneasily. "Kildare's a hefty beast."

"But we shall have the advantage of takin' him by surprise," said Racke. "We shall spring on him from behind. See?"

Crooke looked frankly puzzled. "Dashed if I can see what you're driving at, Racke!" he said. "We've no grudge against old Kildare. What we've got to do is to make Tom Merry and his pals sit up."

"Quite!" said Racke. "An' this is how we're goin' to do it. When we've overpowered Kildare, an' are cartin' him off to the pavilion, we'll mutter among ourselves, an' call each other Tommy an' Harry an' Monty. Kildare will then jump to the conclusion that we're Merry, Manners, an' Lowther."

"My hat!"

"We'll leave him a giddy prisoner in the pavilion for the whole of the evenin'," Racke went on. "An' when he comes out he'll, be thirstin' for somebody's gore. Merry an' his pals will get into a fearful row. Most likely they'll be publicly flogged."

"But they'd deny having kidnapped Kildare—" said Mellish.

"Of course they would. But the denial would cut no ice. Kildare would say he heard their voices. Besides," said Racke, "I happen to know that Kildare gave Merry, Manners, an' Lowther a lickin' this mornin' for playin' footer in the Sixth Form passage. He'll think that this is Merry & Co.'s revenge. I tell you, this is a great wheeze of mine, an' it will work like a charm."

Crooke and Mellish were not quite so confident as Aubrey Racke. Schemes of this sort had so often "gone phut" in the past. Racke's plans sounded all right in theory, but in practice they had a habit of coming unstuck.

Still, Crooke and Mellish felt that they ought to stand in with Racke over this. He could make things mightily unpleasant for them if they refused. Racke was rolling in money, and he was quite willing to expend some of it on his cronies, provided they were loyal to him. But if they backed out of anything that Racke proposed they would be prevented from sharing his prosperity.

Besides, Crooke and Mellish were just as eager as Racke to make things unpleasant for Tom Merry & Co. And any scheme for getting the Terrible Three into disgrace was worth a trial.

"Well," said Aubrey Racke, after a long pause, "are you fellows game?"

"Yes, rather!" said Crooke.

"Absolutely, old chap!" said Mellish. "Then we'd better get busy."

Racke produced the three grotesque masks from his pocket, and the rascally trio put them on.

"Now, I'm goin' to be Tom Merry," said Racke. "You are Manners, Crooke; an' Mellish is Lowther. The next item on the programme is to find Kildare. Come along!"

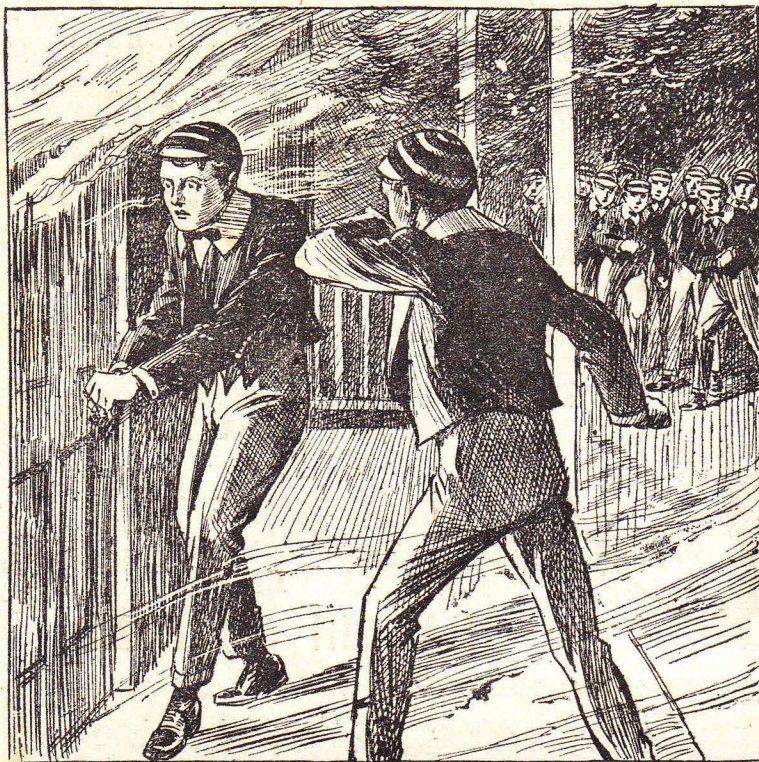
The conspirators rose up from the packing-case. They moved towards the bonfire and threaded their way through the merry-making throng. Their hideous masks excited no attention, for nearly everybody was masked that evening.

THE POPULAR.—No. 198.

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

NEXT
TUESDAY!

"THE FIGHT OF HIS LIFE!"



TO RESCUE THEIR CAPTAIN! Talbot and Harry Noble, moved by the same impulse, dashed towards the blazing pavilion. "Come back, you fools!" shouted Monteith. "It's useless—useless, I tell you!" But the juniors did not turn away. Kildare must be brought out of the burning building. (See Chapter 2.)

Presently Racke & Co. caught sight of Kildare. He was standing on the outskirts of the crowd chatting to Mr. Railton.

After a few minutes' conversation the Housemaster withdrew, leaving the captain of St. Jim's standing alone, watching the firework display and the burning of the guys, with a good-humoured smile.

"Now for it!" muttered Racke. "Creep up behind him an' take him unawares!"

That was typical of Aubrey Racke. He was never afraid to strike a blow in the dark. His were snake-in-the-grass methods. He didn't know the meaning of the term "fair play."

Stealthily the masked conspirators advanced upon the unsuspecting Kildare. They tiptoed towards his broad back and suddenly they sprang.

"Hellup!" gasped the astonished Kildare. "What the thump—"

The next instant he was borne to the ground, with the three juniors clinging to him tenaciously.

"Got the rope, Tommy?" panted Crooke.

Racke grinned in the darkness.

"Yes, Harry!" he replied. "Pin him down while I'm getting it out of my pocket. Sit on his chest, Monty!"

Kildare struggled fiercely to free himself.

"Merry, you young rascal! Manners! Lowther! How dare you!" he spluttered.

"How dare we!" murmured Mellish, imitating Monty Lowther's well-known chuckle.

Kildare's arms and legs were furiously thrashing the air, and if Racke had been less quick with the rope the captain of

St. Jim's would have secured his freedom.

As it was Racke deftly bound the captive's arms and then his legs. And Kildare was helpless.

"Help!" he shouted at the top of his voice.

But the pandemonium which prevailed on the football-ground quite drowned the cry.

"Bring him along!" muttered Racke. He was careful not to raise his voice, lest Kildare should recognise it as not being the voice of Tom Merry.

A temporary gag was stuffed into Kildare's mouth to prevent further shouting. And he was then picked up and carried away in the direction of the pavilion.

Three figures loomed up in the gloom. They were Talbot and Dick Brooke and Harry Noble. They grinned as they saw the procession go by. Little did they dream that anything was amiss. They imagined that the three juniors in the grotesque masks were carrying an effigy.

Racke & Co. were quite breathless by the time they reached the pavilion. They dumped their human burden inside and removed the gag from Kildare's mouth. Shouts for help would be of no avail now, for the pavilion was a long way away from the bonfire and the revellers.

"We managed the job very neatly, Tommy!" said Crooke.

"Yes, rather, Harry!" said Racke.

"Kildare will be jolly sorry he licked us this morning," murmured Mellish. "Next time he catches us playing footer in the Sixth Form passage he'll think twice before he starts lamming us!"

Kildare writhed and struggled in his bonds.

"You shall pay dearly for this outrage, you young rascals!" he exclaimed.

"Rats!"

"Do you realise the seriousness of what you've done? This will mean a public flogging—perhaps expulsion—for the three of you!"

"Bow-wow!"

"Let me loose at once, and I'll deal with the matter myself," said Kildare. "But if you leave me here all the evening I shall have no alternative but to report you to the Head. Don't be mad young fools! Possibly this is your idea of a lark, and you consider that larks of this sort are permissible on Bonfire Night. But I warn you that this is a very serious matter. Don't let it go any farther, for your own sakes. Release me at once!"

A mocking laugh was the only response.

The kidnapers withdrew from the pavilion, shutting and bolting the door after them.

And Eric Kildare, captain of St. Jim's, lay bound and helpless in his dark prison.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.
Through Fire and Flame!

BUILD up the merry bonfire!" exclaimed Monty Lowther. "Keep it going till midnight!"

The Terrible Three, with their arms full of fuel, staggered towards the blazing fire. They hurled their logs upon it, and it cracked and sizzled anew. Showers of sparks and tongues of flame leapt upwards from the blazing mass.

By this time most of the guys had been fed to the flames.

Tom Merry & Co. had exhausted their stock of fireworks, and they now turned their attention to the task of building up the bonfire. The longer the fire burned the longer the festivities would last. And the Terrible Three didn't mean to go to bed before midnight if they could help it.

The juniors continued to heap fuel upon the fire until it was one of the biggest bonfires in the long, exciting history of Bonfire Nights.

Tom Merry paused and mopped his perspiring brow.

"I'm jolly nearly roasted!" he exclaimed.

Manners stood watching the conflagration with a critical eye.

"There's a strong cross-wind springing up," he remarked. "Jolly lucky thing that the bonfire's well away from the school building! Look! The wind's taking the sparks clean across the ground!"

Mr. Railton, the Housemaster, pushed his way through the hilarious throng of revellers and approached the Terrible Three.

"Put no more fuel on the fire, my boys," he said. "There is a very powerful wind getting up. I have fears for the safety of the pavilion."

Tom Merry looked incredulous.

"You surely don't think the sparks would carry so far as that, sir?"

"There is no knowing what may happen," said the Housemaster. "If this wind becomes much stronger I shall suggest to Dr. Holmes the advisability of extinguishing the bonfire."

"Oh crumbs!"

"We don't want that to happen, sir," said Monty Lowther. "It's only ten o'clock, and we were hoping to keep up the fun until midnight."

Mr. Railton smiled.

"You shall not be disappointed unless

(Continued on page 17.)

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

BILLY BUNTER'S WEEKLY

Greyfriars

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

St. Jim's

Rookwood

Supplement No. 95.

Week Ending November 4th, 1922.

BUNTER PULLS THE STRINGS!

By Tom Brown.

"GROO! I'm frozen stiff!" announced Billy Bunter with a shudder. Peter Todd looked up from his seat in the armchair. "You certainly look it, porpoise!" he said with a grin. "Your nose is blue, and your lips are blue—in fact, you look pretty blue altogether!"

"I can sympathise with Bunter, my dear Peter," murmured Alonzo Todd, who was reading a newspaper which had found its way into Study No. 7. "It is bitterly, cruelly cold. Although I am wearing two vests, a shirt, a cardigan, and a waistcoat, I am shivering as if with the ague."

"Oh, you want mollycoddling, Lonzy!" said Peter contemptuously. "What about you, Dutton? Do you feel the cold?"

"Old?" echoed the deaf junior. "Of course I'm not old! Do you take me for a merry Methuselah? I'm only fifteen."

"Ass!" snorted Peter. "I wasn't talking about your age. I was asking you if you felt chilly."

"Eh? Why should I pelt Billy?" asked Dutton, misunderstanding, as usual. "What has he done to deserve pelting?"

"A megaphone—my kingdom for a megaphone!" groaned Peter Todd. "I might as well talk to a doorpost as keep on bawling in your ear! Wish you hadn't started this conversation, Bunter, by saying it was cold. I was on the point of dropping off to sleep."

"Blest if I know how you can sleep in weather like this!" growled Billy Bunter. It was certainly a cold evening. The window of Study No. 7 had been fastened, and the curtains drawn. And the fire had been banked up with coal. But for all this it was still cold.

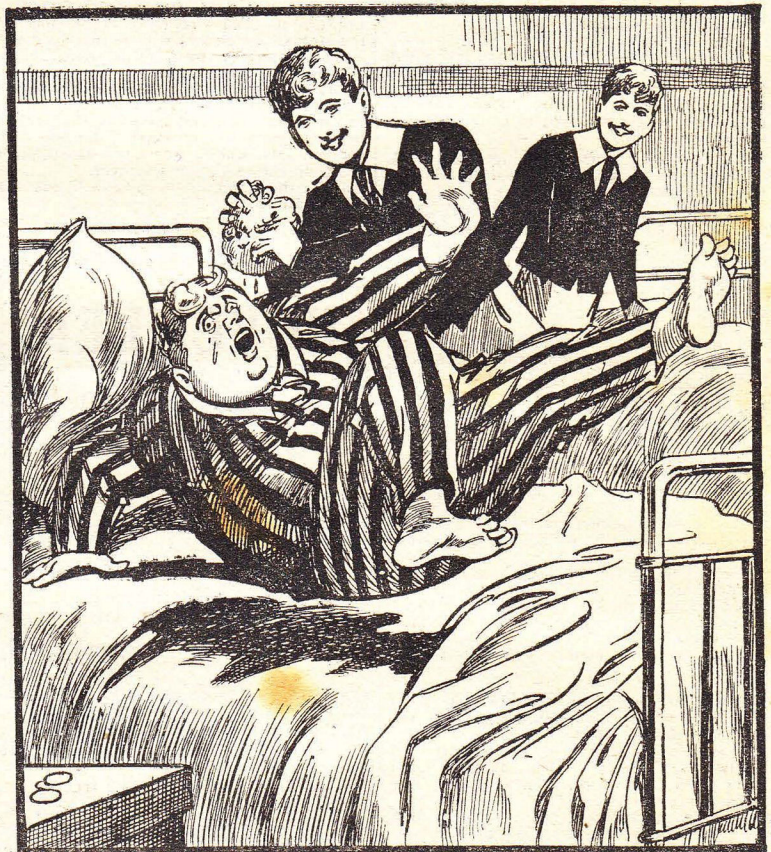
Peter Todd, who was nearest the fire, felt no inconvenience. And Tom Dutton, who was a hardy youth, was not at all cold. But Bunter and Alonzo Todd seemed to be taking part in a shivering contest.

For a few moments silence reigned in the study. It was broken at length by Alonzo Todd.

"I have just come across a very interesting paragraph in the paper," he announced. "Listen! I will declaim it to you."

Peter Todd grunted. Billy Bunter looked interested. And Tom Dutton, who had not heard Alonzo's remark, maintained a blank expression.

Supplement I.]



CURING BUNTER! Bob Cherry squeezed the sponge, and a deluge of icy water descended on Billy Bunter's face. The fat junior recovered the use of his limbs like magic. With a wild yell, he leapt out of bed.

Alonzo gave a preliminary cough, and recited the paragraph.

"A new form of illness has recently broken out in several parts of the country. It is a variation of influenza, and the medical profession has christened it 'Shudderan-shiverophobia.' The malady is caused by extreme cold, and the victim's limbs suddenly become numbed and lifeless, so that he is quite incapable of activity. He remains in this condition for a period of from two to

three days. The treatment is as follows: The patient should be put to bed, with a plentiful supply of hot-water bottles and ample bed-clothes. He must be given a substantial and nourishing meal every two hours, or oftener if his vitality becomes very low. Unless any unforeseen complications arise, a cure will thus be effected."

"Absolute piffle!" growled Peter Todd. And he closed his eyes in disgust.

THE POPULAR.—No. 193.

NEXT WEEK—BAGGY TRIMBLE'S SPECIAL LITERARY NUMBER!

"Yes, it's utter rot, of course!" said Billy Bunter.

But even as he spoke a gleam came into the fat junior's eyes. That paragraph in the paper had interested him profoundly. And it had given him an inspiration.

At that moment Wingate of the Sixth glanced into the study.

"Bed-time, you kids!" he said briefly.

Peter Todd rose and stretched himself. He extinguished the light, and hurried along the cold and draughty corridor in the direction of the staircase. Peter's study-mates followed suit.

If Study No. 7 had been chilly, the Remove dormitory was like a refrigerator.

On all sides fellows were shivering and shuddering and beating their arms across their chests.

"Oh, to be in England now that winter's here!" said Bob Cherry, misquoting Browning.

"It's the nippest night I've ever known," said Harry Wharton. "But it'll be nice and warm in bed, that's one consolation."

"I say, you fellows," wailed Billy Bunter, "I've only got two blankets on my bed. You might lend me one of yours, Squiff, there's a good fellow!"

"Go and eat coke!" growled Sampson Quincey Idleby Field.

"Beast!" said Bunter, with chattering teeth. "I say, Cherry, old chap, I'll borrow your eiderdown, if you don't mind!"

"Not this evening!" said Bob Cherry. "Some other evening!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Billy Bunter continued to moan and groan and shiver and shudder. And at last, unable to borrow any extra bed-clothes, he gave it up as a bad job, and undressed and got into bed. He was still shivering as he lay between the sheets.

When Wingate came in to see lights out, he found the Removites curled up like so many dormice.

"It's a beastly cold night!" remarked the captain of Greyfriars, as he put out the lights. "I shall be jolly glad to turn in myself. Good-night, you kids!"

"Good-night, Wingate!"

And within a few moments the whole of the juniors, including Billy Bunter, were in the arms of Morpheus.

It seemed as if they had only slept an hour or two when they were rudely awakened from their slumbers by the harsh clanging of the rising-bell.

It was a piercingly cold morning, but Gosling, the porter, who had fortified himself against the cold by a glass of hot rum and milk, was able to perform the duties of bell-ringer as usual.

Very reluctantly the Removites turned out.

Billy Bunter, however, remained where he was. He laid heavily in his bed, like a stout log.

"Out you get, porpoise!" commanded Vernon-Smith.

"Oh, really, Smithy, I can't!"

"Eh?"

"I—I can't move!"

"Wet sponge wanted!" said Bob Cherry with a grin.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Billy Bunter made no effort to rise. Even when Bob Cherry approached him with the sponge he did not stir.

"It's no use, Cherry," he said faintly. "I simply can't budge. I'm numbed and cramped in every limb. I'm suffering from shudderanshivverophobia."

"Great jumping crackers!" ejaculated Bob Cherry. "Which dictionary did you dig that word out of? It sounds a horrible complaint, but I fancy this sponge will cure it!"

It did!

Bob Cherry squeezed the sponge, and a deluge of icy water descended on Billy Bunter's face.

The fat junior recovered the use of his limbs like magic. With a wild yell, he leapt out of bed.

"I knew it would cure him!" chuckled Bob Cherry.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

But apparently the cure was not complete. For in the midst of morning lessons, when Billy Bunter was called out in front of the class for inattention, he did not budge.

"Bunter!" Mr. Quelch's voice resembled THE POPULAR.—No. 198.

the detonation of a bomb. "Did you not hear me?"

"Ow! Yessir!"

"Then obey me instantly!"

"I—I can't, sir!" moaned Bunter. "I've lost all the power of my limbs!"

"Boy!"

"I knew it was coming, sir. I had an attack of it first thing this morning, and managed to shake it off. But it's got me fairly in its grip now."

Mr. Quelch frowned.

"What has got you in its grip, Bunter?"

"The new complaint, sir—shudderanshivverophobia."

"Bless my soul!"

"It's a form of influenza, sir, only a thousand times worse. It completely paralyses the arms and legs, and it's caused by extreme cold."

Mr. Quelch made no reply.

"I'll tell you what the treatment is, sir, and then you'll know how to act." Bunter went on. "You must put me to bed right away, with plenty of hot-water bottles, and I must have a substantial and nourishing meal every two hours."

The class sat spellbound after Bunter had spoken. They were too scared to laugh.

There was one dreadful moment of suspense. And then Mr. Quelch moved—and spoke.

"Bunter," he rumbled, "this is a gross and clumsy attempt to deceive me! But I am not to be deceived! I am satisfied that you are not ill, and that you are merely trying to pull the strings with a view to obtaining food and rest by false pretences. I will chastise you severely!"

Mr. Quelch strode towards Billy Bunter, cane in hand. The cane fell about the fat junior's shoulders, and instantly the paralysis left his limbs, and he started dancing like a dervish. Mr. Quelch was quite breathless by the time the execution was over.

The "shudderanshivverophobia" was completely cured!

NOVEMBER!

 By DICK PENFOLD.

No cheer or comfort in the dorm,
 No blazing fire to keep you warm,
 No happy face in all the Form—
 NO-VEMBER!

No extra "forty winks" in bed,
 No chance of being overfed,
 No brekker—"You are late," Quelch said.
 NO-VEMBER!

No streaming sunshine, warm and bright,
 No light at all, save candlelight,
 No fun by day, no larks by night—
 NO-VEMBER!

No word of comfort if you freeze,
 No rest, no luxury, no ease,
 No warmth—you simply sneeze and wheeze—
 NO-VEMBER!

No chance of footer in the fog,
 No sport; you sit indoors and slog,
 No peace—you're treated like a dog—
 NO-VEMBER!

No roads are firm enough for biking,
 No exercise is to your liking,
 No sense in anything but "striking"—
 NO-VEMBER!

No bliss, no joy, no fun, no leisure,
 No jest, no merriment, no pleasure,
 No happy memories to treasure—
 NO-VEMBER!

IN YOUR EDITOR'S DEN!

 By BILLY BUNTER.

MY DEAR READERS,—The season of winter has been ushered in, without any flourish of trumpitts.

I don't know what you think about winter, but, to my mind, it's a sloshy, slushy, shivery season. It freezes the very marro in your boans. Groo!

The poet Shakespeare writes:

"Blow, blow, thou Winter wind,
 Thou art not so kind
 As man's ingratty-chewed."

I'm not so sure about that. I consider the winter wind is the unkindest thing ever invented. How dreadful it is to get out of bed on a roar cold morning, with the wind wissling through the windows!

Of course, even winter has its kompensations. Skating and snowballing are fine things for keeping you warm. They increase the circulation, too, so I shall have to get them to join the staff of my WEEKLY (Joak)!

This, dear readers, is our Special Winter Number, devised for your eggspress bennyfit. I can picture you all sitting on your blazing harths, with this number spread out on your neeze, enjoying yourselves to the fool.

Winter is hear. But BILLY BUNTER'S WEEKLY is hear, too. So let us sing and dance and shout, until another number's out (Rime)!

For the next few weeks I shall vacate the editorial chair in favour of Baggy Trimble, who will take up the post of temporary Editor. As you know, in a day or so's time, I shall be on my way to Africa with the Famous Five and Captain Corkran. Read all about our adventures in the "Magnet."

YOUR EDITOR.

PEEPS INTO THE FUTURE!

 By George Kerr.



FRANK SMITH.

 (Famous Scientist and Authority on Blackbeetles.)

[Supplement II.]

ESSAY ON WINTER!

(Reproduced from the copy-book of George Tubb of the Third Form.)

Winter is the sixth and last seazon of the year.

These are the seazons in their proper order: Spring, Easter, Summer, Mickle-mass, Autumn, and Winter.

Winter is a cold and tretcherus seazon, but Christmas comes in winter, so I suppose we ought not to grumbel.

Winter is the seazon when all the women put on their furze.

There are plenty of sports to be had in winter, such as skating, sliding, football, tobogganing, ski-ing, and other forms of aviation.

One grate drawback to winter is that there are only about 'four hours' daylight, and for the other twenty hours we are plunged into darkness.

Winter is a terrible time for a frail and dellikate fellow like me. I have to get up early in the morning, and wash in cold water. Groo! My eggstremities—that is to say, my fingers and toes—are one mass of chillblanes.

The whether, in winter, is the absolute limmit! When it isn't reigning it's snowing, and when it's neither reigning nor snowing it's blowing a gale. It is hardly serprizing, therefore, that crowds of fellows should be down with flue, koffs, colds, room-attics, and simmler ailments.

Sometimes the whether is so awful that it is impossible to play footer, and you have to stay indoors and play loodo, snakes and ladders, drafts, and other card games.

As I said before, however, we ought not to grumbel, bekwaise, in the words of the poet: "If Winter comes, can Christmas be far behind?" Christmas is the time when we hang up our stockings, and when Santer Claws comes down the chimbley, laden with good things.

If it wasn't for Christmas, winter would be an absolute wash-out! But Christmas saves it from being that.

Although the whether in England is very severer during winter, it is quite warm in the South of France, Italy, and other tropical countries.

Personally, I like winter the leest of all the seazons. Summer beats it every time. The other day, at a meeting of the Fags' Debating Sossiety, we debated the question, "Is Summer preferable to Winter?" And the answer was in the infirmative. Everybody voted in favor of summer, eggsept Sammy Bunter, and he only prefers winter bekwaise they allow him to wear a chest protector!

I wish I could spend this winter in the tropicks. But alas! I've got to stay at Greyfriars and stand the racket.

If you should happen to come across an iceberg in the Close during the winter months, you'll know that it's merely the frozen remains of George Tubb!

Since I started to write this essay, I have become blue in the nose, and cramped in every limb. I must have some eggstersise on the skating-rink, so I think I'll just pop down to the fish-monger's for a pair of skates!

Supplement III.

THE TRAVELS OF A TOASTING FORK!



MONDAY.

I belong to Mr. Ratcliff of the New House. And—believe it or not, as you like—I am over a hundred years old. Ratty's ancestors used me to make toast for them. Of course, I am somewhat battered and bent by now, but I still render trusty service. To-day I fell into the hands of that cunning study-raider, Baggy Trimble. You see, Knox of the Sixth ordered Baggy to beg, borrow, or steal a toasting-fork. "If you'll do this for me," said Knox, "you shall have a piece of cake." So Baggy came into Ratty's study while Ratty was out, and calmly annexed me from my nail by the fireside.

TUESDAY.

I am having a beastly time in Knox's study. Knox's fag used me this afternoon to make toast. He thrust me into the flames with a piece of bread on the end of me, and then promptly forgot all about me. Result—I became red-hot with indignation. And eventually I got into a state of white heat. The life of a toasting-fork isn't all honey, I can tell you.

WEDNESDAY.

Knox happened to pick me up by my prong-end instead of the handle-end. My prongs were red-hot, and I scorched the prefect's hand and made him dance with rage. He hurled me out of his study window, and I fell at the feet of Mr. Selby, who was passing Selby stooped and picked me up with an exclamation of pleasure. "A toasting-fork!" he ejaculated. "The very thing I have been looking for!" And he carted me off to his study.

THURSDAY.

Mr. Selby invited several of the masters to tea in his study. Ratty was one of the guests, and, on catching sight of me, he fairly exploded. "That is my toasting-fork!" he cried. "I am surprised that you, Selby, should stoop to commit an act of petty larceny!" "Sir," shouted Selby, "how dare you impugn my honesty? I found this toasting-fork yesterday in the quadrangle." "Then you should have advertised the fact, so that I could have come forward and claimed it!" snapped Ratty. "I will not stay to tea, sir, with a man who acts on the principle that 'findings are keepings.' I will go—and take my toasting-fork with me!" And Ratty went.

FRIDAY.

A stray dog came into Mr. Ratcliff's study, and Ratty used me to drive the brute off. He brought me down with terrific force on the poor beast's back. Then he tried another shot, and missed, and I crumpled up against the wall. I am now bent double, and all efforts to straighten me out satisfactorily have proved futile.

SATURDAY.

My owner has got rid of me. I have been consigned to the scrap-heap with lots of other odds and ends. And here I shall lay, reflecting on my past life, until some fag who happens to be hard-up for a toasting-fork comes along and rescues me. Woe is me! This is what I get after serving my country faithfully all these years!

FOOTBALL FACTS AND FANCIES.

By JACK BLAKE.

(Of St. Jim's.)

The football season is now well advanced, and it will be interesting to take a survey of what has happened at St. Jim's. Of course, there are only two elevens that really matter—the famous First Eleven, skippered by Kildare, and the Junior Eleven, captained by Tom Merry. There are several other teams at St. Jim's, but they don't count for much. George Alfred Grundy, who recently got up a team, will be annoyed with me for saying this; and I can imagine there will be some heartburning in the Third, which has an eleven captained by Wally D'Arcy.

The record of the First Eleven to date is as follows:

GOALS				
Played	Won	Drawn	Lost	For Against
11	6	3	2	30 17

The "away" matches with Greyfriars and Rookwood were the two which were lost. The "away" matches with Highcliffe and Redclyffe were drawn. The remainder of the games resulted in victories for Kildare and his merry men. By the way, Kildare tops the list of goal-scorers so far, having found the net fifteen times. Darrel and Monteith come next in order.

The record of the Junior Eleven is even better than that of the seniors. This is how we stand at present:

GOALS				
Played	Won	Drawn	Lost	For Against
12	8	2	2	34 15

We lost our away match with Greyfriars, as was only to be expected, for the Friars are invincible on their native heath. We also lost to Gordon Gay & Co. at Rylcombe Grammar School; but we took ample revenge in the return fixture at St. Jim's, winning 5-2. Talbot at present heads the list of goal-scorers, but his proud position is being closely challenged by Tom Merry and Arthur Augustus D'Arcy.

Our defence this season is proving very sound. This is owing to the fine work in goal of that wonderful Welsh wizard, Fatty Wynn. Figgins and Kerr, a clever and resolute pair of backs, rarely make a mistake. And when they do, Fatty Wynn nearly always retrieves the situation. I am not trying to be funny when I say that Fatty will be an International one of these days. We shall see him holding the fort for Wales against England.

Barring bad luck and injuries to players, we shall have a very successful season. And even if anybody gets crooked, we have some fine reserves to draw upon in an emergency. Our next match is with Highcliffe on Wednesday. It is an "away" fixture, and Frank Courtenay, skipper of the Highcliffe team, tells us we shall be sent home with our tails between our legs. We shall see!

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WINTER OR SUMMER!

Some of the St. Jim's Celebrities
state which season they prefer.

ARTHUR AUGUSTUS D'ARCY:

I much prefer the summer, because a fellow can make himself look ever so much smarter than in winter. White flannel bags and a brilliant cricket blazer look far nicer than a bulging overcoat. Besides, in summer a fellow can go about in a hatless state, and display his nicely-waved hair. Apart from all this, we play cricket in summer, and cricket strikes me as being a more gentlemanly game than footer—though I'm fond of both.

MONTY LOWTHER:

Our English climate has been so topsyturvy of late years that it has been impossible to tell winter from summer. Judging by the fact that during our last so-called summer a dozen cricket matches had to be abandoned owing to rain, I think I prefer winter. Sometimes we get some ripping July weather in December.

WALLY D'ARCY:

I don't like summer and I don't like winter, either, the only season when it feels good to be alive is spring. Ortum isn't bad either, because we go orchard-raiding in ortum, I don't like summer because my nose is red with heat, and I don't like winter because my nose is blue with cold. So that's that!

ERIC KILDARE:

This is a very open question, but as an outdoor man, I am inclined to give my vote in favour of summer. Cricket and swimming appeal to me just a shade more than football and paper-chasing.

GEORGE FIGGINS:

Summer is all right while it lasts, but the pity is that we only get about two months of it, while winter lasts about eight. On the whole, I think I should award the palm to summer, but I wish it wouldn't come and go like a flash of lightning!

EPHRAIM TAGGLES:

Which I don't like summer, I don't like winter, I don't like autumn, and I don't like spring. In the autumn I have to sweep up the leaves which collect in the quad, and in winter I have to sweep the quad clear of snow. In spring and summer I am kept so busy with my duties that I haven't got time to breathe! What I says is this here—drat the seasons! They ought to be drowned at birth!

FATTY WYNN:

Winter for this child, please! I'm never happier than when keeping goal for St. Jim's. Summer's all very well, but the hot weather makes me feel fat and lazy!

ADOLPHUS SMYTHE:

Summer, most emphatically, for the same reason as Arthur Augustus D'Arcy. I consider a chap looks his best in flannels and coloured blazer, and not in an overcoat of some dull hue.

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LOST IN THE SNOW!

A Very Touching Ballad.
By TUBBY MUFFIN.
The Wordsworth of Rookwood.

Tim was a little orphan lad,
He had no roof above him;
He had no mother, and no dad,
And no kind friends to love him.

Tim used to have a sister Jane,
A really charming sister;
She tried to stop a railway train,
Since when, young Tim has missed her!

Then he was left a-loan, you see,
(No, not a loan of munny!);
A-loan in all the world was he,
He thought it far from funny.

With heavy pack upon his back,
He braved the wintry weather;
The wind was cutting through his back,
He clenched his hands together.

(Call this poetry, Tubby? You can't
rime "back" with "back," any more
than you can rime "Bunter" with
"tuckshop"!—Ed.)

"I'm done!" he whimpered, with a sniff,
"The snowstorm ferceely rages.
My hands and feet are frozen stiff,
I've had no food for ages!"

Yet on he staggered for a mile,
Though cold and cramped and chilly;
He envied those who lived in style
In flats in Piccadilly.

Tim sank into the snow at last,
His energy diminished,
He could not brave the wintry blast,
He felt that he was finished!

Now I will leave him to his fate,
Deep in the snow he lingers;
And I must pause to eat a plate
Of tarts and chocolate fingers!
(Callus beast!—Ed.)

Are You Chaps
Collecting Our
GRAND FREE
REAL PHOTOS
OF FAMOUS
SPORTSMEN?

More Next Week!

WHAT TO WEAR IN WINTER.

By Adolphus Smythe.
(*The Dandy of Rookwood.*)

I HAVE been asked by our portly and pompous editor to write an article dealing with winter attire.

Writing articles is a fearful fag. That's why my name so seldom figures in "Billy Bunter's Weekly." Having an idle hour, however, I have decided to air my views.

Now, any change in the climatic conditions should be accompanied by a change of clothing. That's logic. When winter comes, it is madness to continue to go about in grey flannel bags and a cricket shirt. If you do, you will be asking for pneumonia, pleurisy, rheumatism, and all the ills that flesh is heir to.

Winter clothing must be warm, and there must be plenty of it. But mind it's the right sort.

Tubby Muffin confided to me the other day that he was wearing two vests and two shirts, as well as a cardigan. "Yet I feel frozen to death!" he added.

I don't wonder. You see, the vests were made of some flimsy material, and the shirts were common cotton ones. The cardigan was woefully thin, and I could imagine a keen east wind cutting clean through it!

Woollens! That's what everybody wants! A woollen vest and a woollen cardigan, and a nice silk shirt!

It's all very well for fellows like Jimmy Silver to say that they don't believe in mollycoddling. Better to mollycoddle and keep fit than go to the sanny with a bad chill.

Some Rookwood fellows go in for sweaters in the cold weather. Personally, I don't approve of sweaters. They keep the cold out all right, but they don't look nearly so smart as a woollen cardigan worked in bright colours. Of course, if you can get a sweater with a lot of coloured designs on it, go ahead. But a plain white sweater is too tame.

So far as socks are concerned, they should be woollen; but not plain black or plain blue. Oh dear, no! Let the colours be as numerous and as varied as possible. If you wear striking socks it conveys the impression that you are a striking sort of fellow. (I don't mean a pugilist. He's a "striking" fellow in quite another sense!)

Spats should always be worn in muddy weather. And fur-lined overcoats, stylishly cut, are very smart. I saw Tubby Muffin going about in a thing that looked like a sack. It was a positive eyesore.

Wear warm togs in winter, by all means; but see that they are smart and stylish as well.

The apparel often proclaims the man; and you don't want anyone to take you for a down-at-heel tramp or a professional burglar, do you? Very well, then. Take me as your model, and you'll soon win the reputation of being a dashing young k-nut.

I have a few more words to say before I close—(Then you can say them to yourself! My readers are just about fed-up with your tommy-rot!—Ed.)

[Supplement IV.]

Guy Fawkes' Night at St. Jim's

(Continued from page 12.)

it becomes absolutely necessary," he said.

Unfortunately, the wind, instead of abating, became more and more boisterous. Sparks and flaming fragments of wood were being swept across the ground. And Mr. Railton grew more and more anxious for the safety of the pavilion, until finally he decided to go and consult the Head.

Dr. Holmes could not easily be found. And while Mr. Railton was looking for him the mischief was done.

A stray spark found its way to a heap of dry straw which stood just outside the pavilion.

The straw was fired, and the flames were sobn hungrily licking their way up the wooden walls of the pavilion.

So intent were the majority of the fellows on watching the firework display that the danger was not noticed until the pavilion was actually in flames.

Suddenly a shout arose:

"The pavilion's on fire!"

"Good!" chuckled Cardew of the Fourth. "They'll have to erect a new one now in place of that rickety, jerry-built affair!"

Cardew would not have spoken so lightly had he known that a human being was trapped in the blazing pavilion.

There was a rush of feet to the spot.

"No use buzzing up to the school for the fire extinguishers," said Tom Merry. "The flames have fairly caught the place and it will be gutted in next to no time."

Manners nodded.

"Too late to save it," he said. "What a blessing it isn't a dwelling-house with somebody inside!"

"Listen!" said Lowther suddenly.

From the interior of the blazing building came a muffled cry for help. The juniors heard it distinctly, and horrified exclamations broke from their lips.

"Great Scott!"

"There's somebody inside!"

Only three fellows knew who that "somebody" happened to be.

Racke and Crooke and Mellish stood looking on. They were white to the lips.

Had they arrived on the scene earlier, before the flames had gathered strength, they would have rushed to Kildare's rescue. But they had no thought of doing so now, for the pavilion resembled a fiery furnace.

Aubrey Racke wrung his hands. The pallor of his face was deathly.

"Kildare's inside!" he muttered hoarsely. "And—and we can do nothing!"

"Oughtn't we to tell the other fellows that Kildare's in there?" said Mellish, with a shiver.

"They know. They can hear him callin' for help!"

"But it's too late to save him!" muttered Crooke.

Aubrey Racke glanced at the flames, which were growing in intensity, and nodded. Cold beads of perspiration broke out on his forehead. He was panic-stricken.

But there were others who did not deem it too late to have a shot at rescuing the imprisoned captain of St. Jim's.

Talbot and Harry Noble, moved by the same impulse, dashed towards the blazing pavilion.

"Come back, you fools!" shouted Monteith of the Sixth. "It's useless—it's useless, I tell you!"

"They're throwing their lives away!" said Darrel, aghast. "Just look at those flames! The roof will cave in in a minute!"

But neither Talbot nor Kangaroo had any thought for his personal safety just then.

Kildare of the Sixth was in that burning building. And Kildare must be brought out of it. That was the one thought in the minds of the would-be rescuers.

Talbot drew back the bolt of the door. Then he plunged into the pavilion, with Harry Noble hard at his heels.

The fumes caused the plucky juniors to reel. Smoke issued from the doorway in volumes. And the watching crowd saw Talbot and Noble swallowed up in those dense clouds of smoke.

Kildare had lost consciousness. But a sudden shaft of flame showed the juniors where he lay.

Swiftly they stooped and picked up the captain of St. Jim's. Then they battled their way to the doorway, which they could now scarcely distinguish owing to the dense smoke.

The clothing of both juniors was terribly scorched. Moreover, they were well-nigh asphyxiated by the fumes. Although they had only a few yards to struggle with their burden, the distance seemed a league.

Presently, to the vast relief of the crowd, they emerged from the burning building, swaying unsteadily as they came.

Willing hands took their human burden from them, and Kildare was laid down on the cool grass well away from the danger zone.

Scarcely had the thrilling rescue been accomplished when there was a crashing of timber, and the roof of the pavilion fell in.

"Just in time!" panted Monteith.

And, indeed, the rescue had not been effected a moment too soon. Kildare had been snatched from the very jaws of death.

Talbot and Harry Noble, once they were out in the cool night air, quickly recovered from their ordeal. But Kildare's recovery was a more tardy affair. For some time he lay in a state of unconsciousness.

When he came round he found Monteith and Darrel and Baker and Rushden bending over him.

A Million People

are reading the great new JOHN GOODWIN story which has just started in

ANSWERS

It is entitled "Helen of London" and is without doubt the greatest story "ANSWERS" has ever published.

YOU can begin it TO-DAY

"All right, old man?" muttered Darrel, who had released Kildare's bonds.

"I—I'm a bit shaky!" confessed Kildare. "It was like a ghastly nightmare, penned up in that place! I thought I was going to be roasted! Who fetched me out?"

"A couple of Shell fellows—Talbot and Noble," said Monteith. "They took their lives in their hands in going into that furnace. I thought it would be all up with the three of you!"

"Plucky kids!" murmured Kildare. "Are they all right?"

"Quite! They got over it much quicker than you did," said Baker. "But then you had a longer innings in that place."

And he indicated the wrecked pavilion, which was now a mass of smoking debris. "How on earth did you come to be in the pavilion, Kildare?" asked Rushden.

The captain of St. Jim's frowned. "I was kidnapped!" he said briefly.

"Kidnapped! By whom?"

Racke & Co., who had been standing near, edged up even closer in order to catch Kildare's reply.

"The kidnapers were Merry, Manners, and Lowther," said Kildare grimly.

"The young villains!" cried Monteith indignantly.

"Of course, they weren't to know that the place would be fired," said Kildare.

"Even so, it was an outrageous thing to do! They deserve to be expelled! You'll report them, of course?"

Kildare nodded.

"It is much too grave a matter for me to deal with myself," he said.

But before the Terrible Three could be reported to the authorities the story had spread through the crowd.

Fierce and angry murmurs arose.

"Kildare was kidnapped!"

"Tom Merry and his pals shut him up in the pavilion!"

"Shame!"

"Mob the rotters!"

The Terrible Three, on hearing those angry shouts, were naturally flabbergasted.

"What utter rot!" growled Manners. "We had no hand in this!"

"That's a lie!" exclaimed Grundy of the Shell. "Kildare himself said that you three kidnapped him!"

"Then Kildare must be potty!" said Tom Merry. "And if you insinuate that we're lying, Grundy—"

Tom Merry got no farther.

The Terrible Three found themselves hemmed in by an angry crowd.

Guy Fawkes' festivities were forgotten now. The bonfire still burned merrily, but nobody had any eyes for it.

A wave of indignation had spread through the ranks of St. Jim's fellows.

Kildare was immensely popular. Many of the fellows idolised him. And the knowledge that he had been kidnapped and left helpless in the pavilion roused the ire of the crowd as nothing else would have done.

The fellows were beside themselves with indignation and fury. Even the Terrible Three's chums eyed them askance.

Kildare himself had named Merry, Manners, and Lowther as his kidnapers, and there was no getting past that.

In vain Tom Merry & Co. protested their innocence. Nobody would give them a hearing.

"Make them run the gauntlet!" shouted somebody.

"Yes, rather!"

THE POPULAR.—No. 198.

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

NEXT
TUESDAY!

"THE FIGHT OF HIS LIFE!"

"Put the rotters through it!"

There was a heap of birch-twigs on the ground. They had been originally intended for the bonfire, but, owing to Mr. Railton's order that the fire was not to be made up any more, they had not been used.

The furious juniors armed themselves with these twigs, and lined up in two rows.

"Stow it, you mad idiots!" exclaimed Tom Merry. "You must be out of your senses!"

But the crowd paid no heed.

"Put the rotters through it!" came the cry.

Tom Merry turned to his chums.

"We're not going to submit to this without putting up a fight!" he muttered.

"No jolly fear!" said Monty Lowther. "Into the fray, Tommy! We're three against three-score, but no matter. We'll make some sort of a stand!"

And the Terrible Three stood together, shoulder to shoulder, and hit out fiercely, dashing their fists into the angry faces which surrounded them.

It was a hopeless fight against overwhelming odds, but the Terrible Three were resolved to fight tooth-and-nail to avoid the indignity of being made to run the gauntlet. They hit hard and often. They were bowled over, but they scrambled to their feet again and carried on. But for all their pluck and fortitude they were slowly but surely overpowered. And it seemed impossible that they would escape the punishment which the angry crowd had mapped out for them.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

Brought to Book!

"I SAY, Racke—"

The cad of the Shell gave a start as a voice hailed him through the gloom. It was the voice of Baggy Trimble.

"What do you want, porpoise?" growled Racke.

And Crooke and Mellish eyed the fat junior far from favourably.

"The fact is," said Baggy Trimble pleasantly, "I'm broke. I blued all my pocket-money on fireworks. And I want to borrow five bob."

"Nothin' doin'!" said Racke. "You'll borrow a thick ear if you come cadgin' to me!"

"Oh, very well!" said Trimble, turning on his heel. "As you're such a mean beast, I feel it my duty to inform Mr. Railton of the true facts concerning Kildare."

Racke gave a violent start. The colour ebbed from his cheeks.

"W-w-what do you mean?" he stammered.

Baggy Trimble chuckled.

"You remember when you sat down on that packing-case and hatched a plot against Tom Merry & Co.?" he said. "Well, I happened to be within ear-shot, and I heard every word you said. I was trying to light a jumping cracker at the time, but the beastly thing was damp, and wouldn't go off. While I was burrowing about on my hands and knees, I overheard your plot to kidnap Kildare."

"You fat spy!" hissed Racke. "And in a fit of fury he swung Baggy Trimble round and dashed his fist full into the fat junior's face."

"Yaroo!" yelled Baggy.

That was the very worst thing that Racke could have done. And he realised THE POPULAR.—No. 198.

it as soon as the blow was struck. But it was too late then, for Baggy Trimble, having recovered from the unexpected onslaught, scuttled away through the gloom.

"Call him back!" gasped Mellish, in alarm. "He'll give us away!"

Panic-stricken at the prospect of being reported to Mr. Railton, Racke rushed off in pursuit of Trimble. Owing to the darkness, however, it was impossible to tell which direction the fat junior had taken.

Baggy, smarting from the blow he had received, was eager for revenge. As he sped through the darkness, he looked this way and that way in the hope of seeing Mr. Railton. And presently he saw him.

The astonished Housemaster retreated a pace as Baggy Trimble cannoned into him in the gloom.

"Good gracious!" he ejaculated. "What is the matter, boy?"

Breathlessly Baggy told his story. He described in detail the plot against the Terrible Three, and Mr. Railton's expression grew very stern as he listened.

The Housemaster did not doubt the veracity of Trimble's story. He knew Aubrey Racke's little ways, and he knew, also, that the kidnapping of Kildare was a thing that Tom Merry & Co. would never dream of.

"I am obliged to you for your information, Trimble," he said. "But you are at fault in not reporting the matter long ago, when the plot was first hatched."

"Ahem! I—I couldn't find you, sir," said Trimble.

"Then you should have acquainted one of the other masters with what had happened," said Mr. Railton. "The conduct of Racke, Crooke, and Mellish has been positively disgraceful! But for the prompt action of Talbot and Noble, Kildare would have forfeited his life. And the most scandalous part of the whole business is that Tom Merry and his friends are being falsely accused."

Mr. Railton paused. A number of fierce shouts came to his ears.

"Put the rotters through it!"

"Make them run the gauntlet!"

The Housemaster hurried away in the direction of the shouting. He arrived just in the nick of time, so far as the Terrible Three were concerned.

Tom Merry & Co. had put up a game fight against overwhelming odds. And at last the inevitable happened, and they were overpowered. Their schoolfellows, armed with the birch-twigs, were about to compel them to run the gauntlet.

"Stop!" commanded Mr. Railton, in ringing tones.

The fellows were in such a reckless mood that they would probably have defied even the Housemaster, had not Mr. Railton added:

"These boys are innocent!"

There was a loud murmur of incredulity.

"Impossible!"

"Kildare himself said that these rotters kidnapped him!"

"He was mistaken," said Mr. Railton quietly. "Three other boys, wearing masks, gave Kildare the impression that they were Merry, Manners, and Lowther."

"Oh!"

"Great Scott!"

"It was a dastardly thing to do," said Mr. Railton, "and the culprits will be promptly called to account. If they are expelled from the school, it will not be too severe a punishment."

The Housemaster walked away.

Tom Merry & Co. were instantly released, and the crowd—a very subdued and sober crowd now—were profuse in their apologies.

"Sorry, you fellows!"

"We'd no idea that this was a plot to get you into trouble."

Tom Merry ruefully clasped his nose, which had swollen to nearly twice its normal size.

"You might have known that we'd never dream of laying hands on old Kildare," he said. "Still, Kildare himself says we were the giddy culprits, and that's what made things look so black against us."

"Jolly lucky old Railton came along when he did," said Monty Lowther, "or we should have been hospital cases."

"Absolutely!" groaned Manners, whose face looked as if it had come into contact with a battering ram.

Suddenly a shrill whistle rang out.

"What's that for, I wonder?" said Figgins.

The question was soon answered. The prefects rounded up all the fellows, and informed them that there was to be a general assembly in Big Hall.

A number of torch-bearers lighted the way up to the school, and seniors and juniors and fags filed into Big Hall.

Never in the history of St. Jim's had a general assembly been called at such a late hour.

The Head, mounted on the raised dais at the end of the hall, addressed the school.

"My boys," he began, "but for the bravery of two of your number, this evening's festivities might have culminated in tragedy. The captain of the school has suffered the indignity of being placed bound and helpless in the pavilion. Of course, his assailants had no idea that the building would catch fire. At the same time, their conduct was outrageous, especially so as, by a cunning ruse, they endeavoured to fix the blame on to others. I call upon Aubrey Racke, Gerald Crooke, and Percy Mellish to stand forward!"

Quaking in every limb, the wretched trio stumbled down the long gangway, and halted in front of the dais.

The Head eyed them sternly.

"Your base conduct warrants your immediate expulsion from this school!" he said. "Each of you has a bad record, and the school would be cleaner for your going. I am, however, disposed to give you one more chance. In lieu of expulsion, you will each be publicly flogged, here and now!"

The Head signed to Taggles the porter to come forward, and take the culprits on his broad back in turn.

Aubrey Racke was the first victim. Dr. Holmes picked up the formidable birch and brought it into play, and the screams of the unhappy plotter rang through the crowded hall.

Racke felt decidedly limp by the time the ordeal was over. Crooke came next, and then Mellish. And in each case the flogging was very severe, and the yells of anguish were shrill and piercing.

As a rule, nobody liked to witness a public flogging. But on this occasion there was scarcely a fellow in that great hall who was not pleased to see Racke & Co. get their just deserts.

At last the painful ordeal was over. And the St. Jim's fellows trooped up to their dormitories after one of the most exciting Bonfire Nights in the history of the old school.

THE END.
(There will be another grand complete story of St. Jim's next Tuesday!)

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

DON'T MISS THIS HIGHLY-AMUSING STORY OF JIMMY SILVER'S EFFORTS TO "RAISE THE WIND" FOR THE BENEFIT OF TUBBY MUFFIN!



RAISING the WIND!

A Grand Long Complete Story, dealing with the Adventures of Jimmy Silver & Co., the Chums of Rookwood.

By OWEN CONQUEST

(Stories of Rookwood appear every Monday in the "Boys' Friend.")

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

Tubby's Tale of Woe!

"CAN you lend me five pounds?"
 "Five which?"
 "Pounds!"
 "Make it five hundred!" suggested Jimmy Silver humorously. "You're too moderate, Tubby."
 "Ha, ha, ha!"
 The Fistical Four of Rookwood chortled in chorus.

Five pounds was a sum that the cheery Co. seldom found themselves in possession of all at once, and if any member of the Co. had been in possession of it he would have thought twice—if not thrice—before handing it over to Tubby Muffin.

Indeed, Tubby might as well have requested the loan of five hundred or five thousand pounds; he was just as likely to get it.

Half-a-crown was generally Tubby's limit when in quest of a loan, and if he could not bag half-a-crown he did not disdain twopence.

His request for five pounds tickled the Co., and rather surprised them, too.

Reginald Muffin was looking quite serious, however.

He gazed at the Fistical Four more in sorrow than in anger as they chortled.

"But what's the row, Tubby?" asked Jimmy Silver at last. "Has the sergeant let you run up a bill at the school shop?"
 Tubby shook his head.

"Have you been playing banker with Peele?" asked Lovell severely.

"No. I—I owe the money," confessed Tubby.

"You owe somebody five pounds?" asked Jimmy Silver in surprise.

"Two to one he's spoofing," said Lovell suspiciously. "Why should a stranger let him run up a bill of five quids?"

"It wasn't a stranger."
 "Don't pile it on, Tubby," urged Lovell. "Nobody who knew you would let you run up fivepence, let alone five pounds."

Another deep sigh from Tubby.
 "Tell us all about it, Tubby," said Jimmy Silver kindly. "We can't lend you five quids, but we can listen to the tale of woe, if you like."

"That's a good offer," agreed Lovell.
 "It's really your fault, Jimmy," said Tubby Muffin sadly.
 "Mine?" ejaculated Jimmy.
 "Yours," said Tubby. "Didn't you advise me to take up footer this season?"
 "I told you it would bring down your fat!" said Jimmy, laughing. "But what's footer got to do with it?"

"I took your advice," said Tubby. "I went down to Lamson's and ordered a new rig-out—new footer and all. And—and my pater won't foot the bill!"
 "Well, my hat!"
 "You've ordered five pounds' worth of

goods you can't pay for?" exclaimed Newcome.

"I took Jimmy's advice."
 "You young ass!" exclaimed the captain of the Fourth indignantly. "I never advised you to order footer toggery."

"It's all very well to round on me now," said Tubby sorrowfully. "But I'm in a scrape. Lamson's will send the bill in to the Head if I don't square. They want their money, of course."
 "And how much have you got towards it?" asked Raby.

"Fourpence."
 "Well, of all the silly idiots!" said Arthur Edward Lovell. "There will be a shine if Lamson's bill goes to the Head."

"And your pater will have to pay it, Tubby."
 "He won't!" moaned Tubby.
 Jimmy Silver wrinkled his brows.

"You see, you advised me—" recommended Tubby.
 "Fathead!"
 "Well, I took your advice—"

"Oh, dry up!" growled Jimmy.
 "Suppose you fellows get together, and whack it out!" suggested Tubby Muffin brightly. "After all, five pounds isn't such a thumping lot, is it?"

"Br-r-r-r!"
 "And I'm really going in for footer, hot and strong," said Tubby. "I may be a good bit of use this season, Jimmy—in the junior eleven, you know."
 "Ha, ha, ha!"

Tubby's suggestion restored the good-humour of the captain of the Fourth.

The fat Classical grunted; he could not see any grounds for merriment in his remark.

"Well, are you going to see me through?" he asked. "Of course, I'll settle up later. I'll save up my Christmas tips—"

"I've heard that yarn before."
 "If you don't trust me—" began Tubby, with a great deal of dignity.

"Oh, scat!"
 "Hallo, there's the dinner-bell!" exclaimed Lovell. "Come on!"

"I say, Jimmy—"

But the Fistical Four were heading for the School House, and Tubby Muffin snorted indignantly at this heartless disregard for his predicament.

Really, the Co. seemed to think dinner more important than Muffin's financial troubles.

However, Tubby rolled after the Fistical Four; he was not indifferent himself to the claims of dinner.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

Uncle James takes the matter in Hand.

JIMMY SILVER wore a thoughtful expression that afternoon.

Lovell & Co. noted it, and grinned as they noted it!

They knew what was in Jimmy's mind.

"Uncle James" of Rookwood was playing

kind uncle again, and he was thinking out Tubby Muffin's difficulties.

It was just like Jimmy.
 Tubby had acted like a reckless young ass, if not a young rascal; but there was no doubt that if he had ordered goods he could not pay for he was in a serious scrape.

Certainly he deserved to be left to face his troubles alone, as a warning for the future; but Jimmy Silver could not quite make up his mind to that.

Somehow or other Reginald Muffin was to be helped, and Jimmy Silver, probably, was the only fellow at Rookwood School likely to take much trouble about the fat junior.

As "Uncle James" he felt called upon to see Tubby through, if it could possibly be done.

But the matter was not easy.
 Five pounds was a large sum to a fellow in the Fourth Form, and the combined resources of the Fistical Four did not come to that amount, or near it.

And even if Jimmy Silver was willing to "play up" to the extent of subscribing all he had, it was pretty certain that the Co. would look upon the matter with a different eye.

In fact, Lovell's opinion, stated with much candour, was that Tubby Muffin could go and eat coke, an opinion that Raby and Newcome endorsed with great heartiness.

A "whip-round" was likely to produce as much as Jimmy could raise himself, and very little more.

The idea was not much used, and Jimmy had to think of something else, hence the thoughtful wrinkle in his brow that afternoon.

After lessons, when the Fistical Four went to the end study to tea, Jimmy was still looking deeply reflective.

"Well?" said Lovell at last.
 "Eh?"
 "What's the result?"
 "Result of what?" asked Jimmy.

Lovell chuckled.
 "You've been screwing up your chivvy like a gargyle, and you haven't jawed nineteen to the dozen," he answered. "That means that you've been thinking. What's the result—if any?"

"Well, about Tubby," said Jimmy, as he cracked his egg.
 "Oh, I knew it was about Tubby! Bother Tubby!"
 "Blow Tubby!" added Newcome. "Pass the bread!"

"After all, it's rather creditable for the fat little bouncer to take up footer," remarked Jimmy.

"Oh, lots! I haven't noticed his staggering humanity on the footer-ground, though."

"Well, it's a sign of grace, anyhow," argued Jimmy. "and he's rather a thoughtless young ass. I'd like to see him clear."

"Nothing doing!" said Lovell.

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very small beer, anyway; the Modern Players were "it."

The Classical Players, certainly, regarded them with high disdain, but that feeling was fully reciprocated by the Moderns.

"A benefit performance!" said Doyle. "Whose benefit, I wonder? It can't be for the benefit of the audience; they'll be the sufferers!"

"They won't get any audience at a tanner a time!" remarked Tommy Dodd. "Who'd pay to see them playing the ox? I should want paying, I know that, and more than a tanner."

"Sticking the notice up here, just as if we'd go!" said Cook. "Bless their Klassical Komedy! This is pure cheek!"

Tommy Dodd jerked the paper down from the board.

A Classical notice posted up on the Modern side was the last word in cheek, and it could not be allowed for a moment.

Tommy Dodd put the paper in his pocket, and strolled over to the School House.

He came over the Fistical Four outside. Tommy gave them a wary look, but the chums of the Classical Fourth were all smiles.

"Coming, old son?" asked Jimmy Silver genially. "You've seen the notice, of course?"

"I've seen it!" said Tommy gruffly.

"Moderns are admitted—if they pay, of course!" said Arthur Edward Lovell. "It will be rather rough on the rest of the audience, but Modern tanners are as good as any others. We'd really like you to come, Tommy; we're raising a fund to get that fathead Muffin out of a scrape. It's going to be a ripping comedy; it will make you laugh no end!"

"I'd do anything I could!" said Tommy Dodd gravely. "Ask me to face lions in their dens, or Huns on the war-path, or a great statesman making an epoch-making speech, and I'm your man. But to face the Classical Players on the stage—my dear man, there's a limit to human endurance! Can't be did!"

And Tommy scudded away when he had made that remark—none too soon, for the Fistical Four had quite lost their geniality, and he was in danger of getting bumped on the unsympathetic earth.

"Cheeky ass!" growled Lovell. "Blow their Modern tanners—we don't want 'em! I don't believe in admitting Moderns at all."

**THE FOURTH CHAPTER.
Tommy Dodd Thinks it Out.**

JIMMY SILVER & Co. were very busy during the next two or three days. The "classical comedy" was going strong.

Jimmy himself had written most of "Guying Guy Fawkes," but the other members of the cast put in a great deal, to their own satisfaction.

Many hands made light work, Lovell remarked when he was putting in improvements.

And he only sniffed when Jimmy retorted that too many cooks spoiled the broth.

Still, there was no doubt that it was a most excellent comedy—from the Fourth Form point of view, at least.

There was plenty of knock-about fun in it, and Guy Fawkes had a most terrific time.

The scene was laid in the cellars of the Houses of Parliament, and the action was chiefly a series of mishaps that happened to Guy Fawkes, the part being played by Higgs of the Fourth, who was selected as the ugliest fellow obtainable—though that was not explained to him.

The lecture-room was unobtainable, as Mr. Manders was using it on Wednesday for a lecture on some scientific subject to Modern seniors; "utter rot," in the opinion of the juniors.

It was, as all the Classical Players agreed, rotten that they could not have the lecture-room on account of such a trifling thing as a science lecture by Mr. Manders, but there it was, and they had to make the best of it.

They decided on the Form-room. As Wednesday was a half-holiday, the Form-room was at their disposal, and Mr. Bootles graciously gave permission for a dramatic performance to be enacted there.

There were a good many preparations to make, but the Players had most of the things they needed, and they were skilled in improvising a stage and curtains.

The stage was to be formed of boards laid upon boxes and trestles, and the amateur

actors had "been there before," so to speak, and they had the materials to hand.

That part of the preparations was, of course, left till after lessons on Wednesday. Meanwhile, the cast were mugging up the play.

Fellows could be discovered at all hours, in all sorts of places, reciting their lines, and striking attitudes, and trying on beards and whiskers.

The Modern juniors regarded it all with a lofty eye of disdain.

They sniffed at the whole thing. Moreover, they saw no particular reason why funds should be raised for Tubby Muffin; he wasn't a Modern, anyway.

Tommy Dodd's opinion was that the whole affair would be a frost, and he confided to

And the more the Moderns sniffed at Tubby Muffin's benefit, the more the Classics backed it up, from patriotic motives.

It became, in fact, a test of House patriotism, and fellows who hesitated to promise to come were asked scornfully if they were pro-Moderns.

"They'll have an audience!" Tommy Dodd told his chums, on Tuesday. "It seems extraordinary, but they'll have an audience. I believe every chap on the Classical side will go, excepting the seniors. I actually saw Smythe of the Shell ask Silver for a ticket!"

"Smythe always was a silly ass!" commented Cook.

"He was—and is; but audiences generally are silly asses!" said Tommy Dodd. "A silly



NOT ACCORDING TO PROGRAMME! The excited caste of the classical comedy were all on the stage now. Some of them were howling threats, and some were prising up a board to get at the hidden Moderns underneath. (See Chapter 6.)

his chums that it served Jimmy Silver right, for not having secured the services of really good actors—plenty of whom could have been found on the Modern side.

But as the date of the performance approached, Tommy Dodd had to modify his opinion.

To a Modern, it was amazing that anybody should be willing to pay sixpence to see the Classical Players play the goat, but Classics did not look at it in the same light.

They supported Jimmy Silver. There was quite a run on tickets, especially after it was known that the Co. weren't playing Shakespeare.

As Flynn remarked, a fellow couldn't be expected to stand that, but otherwise he was willing to come and see them.

Jimmy Silver was quite busy, for a time, in scribbling out little squares of paper, bearing the legend:

**"ADMIT ONE!
J. SILVER."**

These were the reserved seats, at a shilling each, and quite a number of the fellows put up a whole "bob" for the good of the cause.

There was a still larger number who had promised to come and pay admission at the doors.

ass's tanner is as good as anybody else's tanner. They're going to get a thumping big audience, and they'll raise the money, and make a success of the whole bizney. They feel that it's up to them."

"They won't get any Moderns, anyway."

"Well, you see," observed Tommy Dodd thoughtfully, "it ain't very dignified for us to be sulking in our tents like merry old Achilles. It's up to us to see that the Classical Players don't scofe a big hit with this silly rot. In fact, it ought to be downed, in the name of Art."

"Oh, my hat!" "Anyway, we're not going to let the Classics score if we can help it," said Tommy Dodd.

"Hear, hear!" said Doyle and Cook heartily. They were more interested in "dishing the Classics than in any question of Art, that was clear.

"In fact, we ought to muck it up!" continued Tommy.

"H'm! Rather rotten to spoil Tubby's benefit, if he's really in a scrape for money," remarked Cook.

"I don't mean that! Let 'em pay the money and go in. That makes it all right for the fund; we don't want to disappoint

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**NEXT
TUESDAY!**

"ACCUSED BY HIS FRIEND!"

**A GRAND STORY OF ROOKWOOD SCHOOL.
By OWEN CONQUEST.**

Muffin. But after they've paid and gone in—

"Oh, I see!"

"It's up to us!" said Tommy Dodd firmly. "We ought to muck up the performance. It will be a lesson to them, and they want one. If they'd asked us to take the thing in hand for them, we'd have run it through successfully. They haven't."

"Check!"

"But how are we going to muck it up, bedad?" asked Tommy Doyle.

"Listen," said Tommy Dodd. "I've got a wheeze!"

And, sinking his voice to a whisper, Tommy Dodd communicated the "wheeze," and there was a burst of chuckling from his comrades.

That evening the Classical Players were surprised by a big demand for tickets from the Modern side.

THE FIFTH CHAPTER. Great Preparations!

ON Wednesday a great deal of thought was given to the afternoon's performance, and Mr. Bootles was a little cross in class as a consequence. But lessons were over at last.

In the interval before dinner Jimmy Silver & Co. set to work turning the Form-room into an auditorium.

There were plenty of forms for the audience, and chairs and stools were added to them, until there was ample accommodation for all comers.

The stage was most successfully erected.

Somewhat to the surprise of the Classics, Tommy Dodd & Co. came over in a genial mood to lend a hand in the work.

There was plenty to be done, and the Modern assistance was welcome.

Indeed, Jimmy Silver & Co. had to admit that the Moderns were playing up in a really sportsmanlike manner.

Lovell was a little suspicious, but even Arthur Edward confessed that he could not see any sign of the cloven foot.

Tommy Dodd & Co., in fact, worked like Trojans, and helped to erect the stage and rig up the curtains in front.

All was finished at last in the most satisfactory manner.

The stage was, perhaps, a little loose for knockabout fun, and the big boards gave a little here and there when trodden on heavily; but the erection was safe enough, and it answered the purpose, and that was all that was wanted.

At the dinner-bell all was ready, the stage was finished, and draped round with coverings of various kinds, to hide its primitive construction from the eyes of the audience, and the effect was really good.

In a satisfied mood the Classics went off to dinner, Tommy Dodd & Co. making their way to Mr. Manders' house, where they dined, on the Modern side.

But the moment Tommy Dodd & Co. were at liberty to leave the dining-room they scudded back to the Classical side.

The three Tommies, and Towle, and several other Modern juniors hurried into the Form-room.

No Classics were there as yet.

The performance was timed to begin at three, and the cast were in their studies making-up.

Green-rooms were rather at a discount, as Lovell put it, and dressing-rooms "quite off."

After making up, the actors had to put on coats and cloaks and scuttle down to the Form-room, which they entered by the door at the end behind the scenes.

So far the Form-room was deserted, and likely to be for some time.

Everything that had to be done had been done under Jimmy Silver's personal supervision before he retired to the end study to get his war-paint on.

"Here we are!" grinned Tommy Dodd. "Now, don't make a row; and, mind, not a whisper till I give the word!"

The Modern juniors approached the draped stage at the end of the Form-room, and Tommy lifted up the coverings at the side.

One by one the merry Moderns crept under the stage.

It was raised nearly two feet from the floor, so there was plenty of room for them to lie down there at ease.

As soon as all his party were under the planking, Tommy Dodd followed them, and let the drapery fall.

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NEXT
TUESDAY!

"ACCUSED BY HIS FRIEND!"

on a gunpowder barrel as a most terrific-looking Guy Fawkes.

Enter Jimmy Silver, representing a Beef-eater.

Guy Fawkes had opened his lips to speak, when—

Boom! Buzz! Crash! Boom! Buzzzzzzzz! Jimmy Silver jumped.

Guy Fawkes fairly bounded off his barrel as that terrific commotion came from under his very feet.

He caught his feet in his long cloak, rolled over, and sprawled on the stage with a loud yell, amid a howl of laughter from the audience.

Boom! Crash! Bang! Buzz!

THE SIXTH CHAPTER. Not according to Programme.

JIMMY SILVER stared at the planking under his feet as if mesmerised.

Mouth-organs and tin-cans and saucepan-lids were buzzing and banging and rattling under the stage, and the chief of the Classical Players were too astounded to do anything but stare.

It was a most unexpected commencement to the Classical comedy.

Higgs sat up, roaring.

"Ow! Oh! What's the row? Oh, my napper! Ow!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Somebody's under the stage!" howled Jimmy Silver.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"It's those Modern cads!" roared Lovell from behind the scenes. "I knew they were up to something! Didn't I say so?"

"Ha, ha, ha!" came in a hysterical yell from the audience.

Boom! Crash! Bang! Buzz!

"Have 'em out!"

"Ring down the curtain!" yelled Jimmy Silver.

The assistants tried to obey, but in their haste they were too hasty with the curtain, which required tact.

It came down half-way, and slanted, and refused to move further, either up or down.

The delighted audience cheered.

"Have 'em out!" roared Lovell, rushing on the stage in all the panoply of a Hun general. "I'll smash 'em!"

The excited cast of the Classical comedy were all on the stage now, though not for the purpose of performing.

Some of them were howling threats, and some prising up a board to get at the hidden Moderns underneath.

Other fellows were creeping under the stage from behind the scenes to get to close quarters with Tommy Dodd & Co.; but in the dark and the confined space that was not an easy task.

They chiefly seemed to discover boots, and retreated from the contact with loud howls.

The audience were yelling with laughter, especially the Modern part, who evidently knew what to expect.

Some of the Classics, indeed, seemed to think that it was all part of the entertainment, and Adolphus Smythe was heard to express the opinion that if Jimmy Silver thought that dashed row was entertainin', Jimmy Silver was makin' a dashed mistake.

The climax came suddenly.

Under the stage Conroy had succeeded in reaching Tommy Dodd, and they closed in mortal combat.

There was a heaving of the planks, and two or three of them were shifted, and through the opening there rose into view Tommy Dodd and Conroy, fighting furiously.

Then came crash on crash, as the planks were shoved upward from below, with disastrous results to the actors standing on them.

From below Moderns rose into view, rather dusty and red, but in great spirits, and from above Classical actors rolled over as the floor heaved under them, and some of them disappeared under the stage.

It was not quite a comedy, but undoubtedly it was comic—at least, from the Modern point of view.

Amid the ruins of the stage Tommy Dodd & Co. were engaged in deadly conflict with the Classical Players, with disastrous results to make-up and costumes, to say nothing of noses.

Amid rolling planks and tumbling, the rivals of Rookwood punched and pommelled one another in great excitement, even the actors forgetting the play which was not coming off.

The signal for the raising of the curtain was given, and the Fourth-Formers entrusted with that task elevated it, with some difficulty, their efforts being cheered by the audience as if they were part of the show.

The Moderns were stamping as well as cheering, but that outbreak ceased as Bulkeley of the Sixth came in.

In the presence of the captain of Rookwood order had to be kept.

Tubby Muffin showed Bulkeley to his seat, bowing and grinning, and the Rookwood captain sat down with a smile.

With a final jerk the curtain went up; it remained a little awry when it was up, but that was merely a detail.

The stage was disclosed, with Higgs sitting

Under the stage the Moderns remained very quiet.

When a Classical fellow strolled on, later, to see whether everything was quite ready he had not the slightest suspicion that the Moderns were there, hidden from sight, but quite ready for action.

It was a long wait for the hidden juniors, but they were comforted by the prospect of what was to happen when the play began.

About half-past two fellows began to drift in, and Flynn and Jones minor, the door-keepers, began to take sixpences.

There was a continuous clinking of small silver in the teapot which stood on a chair near the door to receive the cash.

As three o'clock came nearer the audience came in more thickly.

Moderns as well as Classics arrived in force.

The three Tommies and some others certainly were conspicuous by their absence, but the greater number of the Modern Fourth and Shell came along.

For reasons best known to themselves, they had smiling faces.

Perhaps it was in anticipation of a very funny entertainment, though the fun they expected was not quite on the lines laid down by the Classical Players.

Close on three, Jimmy Silver & Co., made up and ready for business, arrived in the Form-room by the upper doors, and threw off their coats in the wings.

Jimmy looked through the stage curtain, and smiled with satisfaction as he saw the Form-room filling fast.

FREE

PHOTOS
PHOTOS
PHOTOS

EVERY

WEEK.

The "reserved seats" were beginning to arrive now, and Tubby Muffin, who had been told off for that task, was showing them to their seats with great empressment.

Adolphus Smythe of the Shell came in with Howard and Tracy, with a lofty smile of patronage.

Adolphus had kindly patronised the junior play, making it an occasion for considerable swank; but Jimmy Silver was a practical fellow, and he did not mind how much Adolphus swanked so long as he paid.

There was quite a crowd at last, and the Form-room was almost filled.

Some of the heroes of the Third, who had been let in at half-price, began to stamp on the floor, as a hint that it was time for the curtain to go up.

The signal for the raising of the curtain was given, and the Fourth-Formers entrusted with that task elevated it, with some difficulty, their efforts being cheered by the audience as if they were part of the show.

The Moderns were stamping as well as cheering, but that outbreak ceased as Bulkeley of the Sixth came in.

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A GRAND STORY OF ROOKWOOD SCHOOL.
:: BY OWEN CONQUEST. ::

Tommy Dodd & Co. were outnumbered, and they shouted for rescue—a call which the Moderns in the audience were not likely to leave unanswered.

Headless of Bulkeley, who was shouting for order, the Moderns invaded the stage, perhaps thinking that they might as well have their full money's worth, as they had paid for admission.

Naturally, the Classical audience piled in, too.

Bulkeley shouted and raved, but it was not till three or four other prefects had come to his assistance that the riot was quelled.

It was quelled by the simple process of driving the whole of the juniors out of the Form-room, actors and audience, Moderns and Classical alike.

They were driven out pell mell, with the prefects' assistants to help them go, and they dispersed with loud yells.

But Tommy Dodd & Co. marched back to the Modern side in great glee.

The Classical comedy had ended as soon as it had begun, and Tommy Dodd had triumphed.

Jimmy Silver & Co., with their beards round the backs of their necks, and their make-up one big smudge, and their costumes in sad disarray, gathered in a breathless state in the end study.

"Oh crumbs!" gasped Raby. "That finishes the comedy!"

"I knew those Modern rotters were up to something!" hooted Lovell. "Didn't I say so? Ow, my nose!"

"Wow! My eye!" gasped Jimmy Silver. "It's been a muck-up, and no mistake; but they'd all paid!"

And that was the only consolation of the the Classical Players. Flynn had brought the teapot of takings to the end study, and the cash was there.

And, after all, that was the chief thing to be considered.

From a financial point of view, at least, the benefit performance had been a success.

Tubby Muffin blinked into the study.

"I've been looking for you, Jimmy! I say, wasn't it a frost! But you've got the tin, haven't you?"

"Ow! Yes!"

"All right, then! Hand it over!"

"It's going to be counted, fathead! Buzz off!"

"Well, I'll go and use Bootles' phone, and—tell Lamson's I'm coming down this afternoon," said Tubby. "Have it ready when I come back, Jimmy."

And Tubby Muffin hurried off to use Mr. Bootles' telephone.

The Classical Players were mostly attending to their injuries, and they gave little heed to Tubby.

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

Spoo!

"READY, Jimmy?"
"Ow! My nose!"
"Never mind your nose, old son," said Tubby Muffin, coming into the study. "I'm ready for the money. Where is it?"

Jimmy Silver left off dabbing his nose, and took up the teapot containing the takings.

He poured out a stream of silver on the table, and Tubby's eyes glistened greedily.

He stretched out a podgy paw, which Lovell promptly rapped with a ruler, and Tubby withdrew it with a yell.

"Count it, Jimmy," said Lovell.

"Look here, there's no need to count it," said Tubby. "I'm taking charge of it, I suppose. It's mine."

Unheeding Tubby, Jimmy Silver proceeded to count up the takings.

"Two-pound-ten taken at the doors," he said.

"Oh, good!" said Tubby. "Hand it over!"

"Three quid for reserved seats in advance. Total, five-pounds-ten."

"Hurrah! Hand it over!"

"That's five-pounds-one-and-three to pay Tubby's bill at Lamson's, and the balance, eight-and-ninence, for the collecting-box at the Cottage Hospital," said Mornington.

"That's right."

Tubby Muffin grunted.

"Well, I—I'll let the balance go to the Cottage Hospital," he said. "I—I don't mind! I'm a generous chap! Hand over the five-pound-one-and-three."

Jimmy Silver separated the two sums, and placed one lot in one pocket, and the other in another pocket—a proceeding that was viewed with alarm by Reginald Muffin.

"Wha-a-at are you pocketing my money for, Jimmy Silver?" he gasped.

"Do you think we're asses enough to trust it in your hands, you fathead?" said Jimmy.

"I'm coming with you to see the bill paid, of course. You'd blow the money in the tuck-shop, otherwise."

Tubby Muffin's jaw fell.

"Look here, I suppose I can be trusted with my own money!" howled Tubby.

"Not with ours, though."

"It's mine! Look here—"

"You fellows coming for a waik?" asked Jimmy Silver. "May as well see it paid over, and see that all's square."

"Right-ho! We'll come!"

Headless of the excited Tubby, the juniors put on their coats for the walk to Coombe, Erroll and Mornington and Conroy accompanying the Fistical Four.

Tubby Muffin followed them to the gates and down the road, gasping out dismayed expostulations.

He was not heeded; the juniors walked on to Coombe, Tubby's consternation seeming to increase at every step.

"I—I say, Jimmy, I—I'll take half—" he gasped.

"What?"

"Halves!" stuttered Tubby. "That's fair."

"You potty porpoise!" shouted Lovell. "And what about paying your bill?"

"I—I—I—never mind that—I—I'll let it slide! I—"

"You fathead!" exclaimed Jimmy Silver, laughing. "Do you think we've taken all this trouble for nothing? Come on to Lamson's!"

"I—I won't! I don't want to! I—"

Lovell took Tubby's arm and walked him on. His reluctance to enter Lamson's shop was inexplicable, though evidently very real. But the juniors naturally did not intend to put the matter off. Tubby was marched into the outfitter's, gasping, and Mr. Lamson greeted the juniors with a smile, probably anticipating a considerable order from so many.

Muffin's called to pay his bill, Mr. Lamson," explained Jimmy Silver.

"Oh dear!" gasped Tubby.

Mr. Lamson looked surprised.

"Master Muffin does not owe us any account that I am aware of," he replied.

"Wha-a-at?"

"I understand that the order was countermanded by telephone this afternoon; in fact, not more than an hour ago."

The Rookwood juniors simply blinked.

Tubby Muffin made a wild effort to escape, but Lovell's grasp closed on his fat arm like a vice.

"Order—countermanded!" stuttered Jimmy Silver. "Did—didn't you—I mean—my hat! I understood that Muffin owed you five pounds-one-and-three for some footer things—a whole rig-out. I telephoned you the other day to ask about it."

"Quite so!" said the puzzled outfitter. "Master Muffin gave us the order, and the account was made out, but it was understood that the goods were not to be supplied till he called for them with the money. Instead of that, he telephoned this afternoon cancelling the order."

The juniors looked at Tubby.

They comprehended now.

The young rascal certainly "owed" the money at Lamson's, if he took delivery of the goods, which the juniors had supposed to be delivered already.

Instead of which he had telephoned and cancelled the order as soon as the money was raised to pay the bill, with the evident intention of bagging the cash for his own benefit.

"My hat!" gasped Jimmy at last.

They did not explain to the perplexed Mr. Lamson.

They left him very puzzled when they marched Tubby Muffin out of the shop. On the pavement they surrounded him, with grim looks.

"Spoof!"

"Swindler!"

"Hun!"

"Toad!"

"Oh, I—I say, you know!" mumbled Tubby feebly. "The—the money's mine, you know. It—it was my benefit, wasn't it? I—I—I'm willing to go halves! I can't say fairer than that, can I? Yarooooop!"

Bump, bump, bump, bump!

Tubby Muffin's fat person smote the pavement four times in succession, and he was left sitting there, struggling frantically to get his second wind, while Jimmy Silver & Co. walked down to the Cottage Hospital, where the whole sum was handed over.

That, it was agreed, was the best way of disposing of the fund, which did not belong to anybody in particular, and least of all to Tubby Muffin.

Tubby Muffin had a face of woe for days afterwards, evidently looking upon himself as a much-wronged individual. But the Cottage Hospital had scored, at least; so some good had come of Jimmy Silver's great scheme for Raising the Wind!

THE END.

(Next week's grand long complete story of Rookwood is entitled, "Accused By His Friend!" by Owen Conquest. This story deals with a sensational affair—Jimmy Silver and Tommy Dodd being the chief characters concerned. Do not miss it on any account! Now turn to page 27.)

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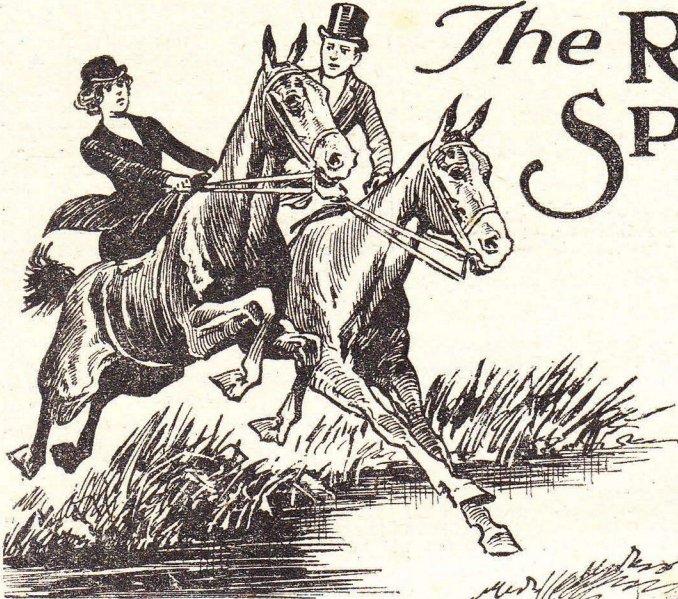
NEXT TUESDAY!

"ACCUSED BY HIS FRIEND!"

A GRAND STORY OF ROOKWOOD SCHOOL. By OWEN CONQUEST.

THE POPULAR.—No. 198.

AUSTIN COURTNEY PLOTS THE DOWNFALL OF HIS COUSIN AND OPPONENT IN THEIR STRANGE SPORTING STRUGGLE, BUT RECKONS WITHOUT THE FICKLE HAND OF FATE!



The RIVAL SPORTSMEN!

A Grand New Story, full of excitement and thrill, introducing HARRY LESTRADE and AUSTIN COURTNEY, and dealing with their extraordinary fight, on the field of sport, for the Lestrade Fortune.

By VICTOR NELSON.

(Author of "By Nero's Command!" and "The Boy With Fifty Millions!" etc.)

WHAT HAS GONE BEFORE.

By the terms of the late Sir Charles Lestrade's will, Harry Lestrade and his cousin, Austin Courtney, must fight for possession of the Lestrade fortune on the field of sport. The one who distinguishes himself most becomes owner of a vast amount of wealth. Harry Lestrade receives the first opportunity to distinguish himself in a local football match, for which club he is "signed on."

The next sporting event in which the cousins meet is a steeplechase at Kempton Park. Harry Lestrade rides his horse home after a stern contest. To better his chances in the strange sporting struggle, Courtney has Harry shanghied and imprisoned on board an Argentine-bound vessel. Harry returns to consciousness to find himself in the hold of the Mustapha.

(Now read on.)

A Lesson for Seth Jones!

THOUGH his capture might mean loss of half a million of money, Harry Lestrade was not the sort of lad to worry over that which could not be helped. Philosophically, he realised that he would have to remain where he was until someone opened the hatch above, and it was not long after he had stretched himself on the hard plank flooring that he was slumbering.

He was awakened some hours later by hearing a hoarse shout, and finding a light flashing in his face.

Sitting up, he found that he could glimpse the blue sky through a square aperture in the deck above him. It was now daylight. A flaxen-haired man, who looked as though he might be a Swede, was holding a lantern lowered through the hatchway by means of a cord, and himself staring down at Harry with feigned surprise.

He gabbled quickly in his own language, drew up his lantern, and disappeared. The next moment, Harry Lestrade heard heavy footfalls crossing the deck, and a foghorn-like voice roaring out lurid epithets.

"A damned stowaway, eh!" it boomed. "Where is the swab? I'll give him stow himself away on my vessel!"

Harry Lestrade rose to his feet, his boyish face setting in grim, angry lines, as a glimmering of what was to come flashed into his mind.

A face, framed in an unkempt red beard, was thrust over the hatchway, and glared down at him. Harry thought he had never looked into a more villainous or repulsive countenance, as he returned the aggressive glare of the man, who, by his peaked cap, the boy guessed to be the skipper.

"Fetch him up, some of you!" the red-

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bearded seaman ordered curtly, as he drew back from the opening. "We'll see what he has to say for himself."

The sailor, who looked like a Swede, lowered a rope ladder, which he fixed to the edge of the hatchway by means of the strong hooks with which it was fitted at one end. Shinning down it, he motioned to Harry to ascend.

The boy lost no time in doing so. Whatever was to happen above, the deck and the fresh air were to be preferred to the stuffy darkness of the hold.

The red-bearded skipper strode forward, and, with his arms akimbo, studied him aggressively. A mate, with a face and bearing almost as forbidding as that of the ship's master, and a little knot of seamen, stood in the background.

"Well, you swab, don't you think you had a darned check to stow yourself away on my vessel?" the captain suddenly roared, as he shot out a great hairy hand, and grabbed Harry by the shoulder. "What have you got to say, eh?"

Showing a strength that plainly surprised the skipper, Harry Lestrade twisted sharply out of his grip. The boy faced him with flashing eyes.

"You know well enough that I am no stowaway!" he said quietly. "It is a question of what you have to say—of what excuse you have for the outrage you or some of your sailors have committed in drugging and kidnapping me. I know well enough that you have been bribed by my cousin to bring me on this voyage, and I warn you that I will make trouble for you, unless you immediately put back and land me."

The skipper, who was, of course, the Captain Seth Jones, Austin Courtney's hireling, Jerry Murker, had spoken of, at first feigned anger, then he burst into a sneering guffaw.

"Oh, I'm to put my ship back, am I—put it back to land a swab of a stowaway who seems to have changed his mind about wanting a passage!" he roared. "I can see myself doin' it—I don't think. This boat is bound for Buenos Ayres, and I guess you'll stop on her, my young shaver, and work for your keep until she gets there."

Harry Lestrade drew his breath in sharply, unable to help feeling a little dismayed. So the vessel was bound for the Argentine, and the scoundrelly skipper intended to give him no chance of landing until her destination was reached.

Small wonder that the boy knew some anxiety! The boat was obviously a slow tramp, and it might be well over a month before she made the Argentine, which would mean that, at the lowest estimate, nearly two precious months—months in which Austin Courtney would be straining every

nerve to forge ahead in their contest, would be wasted ere he again set foot in England.

"Get for'ard!"

Captain Seth Jones accompanied the order with a violent push that caused the boy's blood to boil.

"Look slick, now!" he snarled. "We don't have no slacking on board the Mustapha. You've got ter work, and you'll start right now, or I'll know the reason why."

"I'll see you at the bottom of the sea first, you villain!" Harry Lestrade flashed back. "This is all a plot against me, and you know it, and I'll not be bullied by you."

The skipper leapt at him, taking him unawares. His huge fist crashed between Harry's eyes, and he went down with a thud on his back, and lay for several moments dazed.

But he was made of stout stuff, and as he recovered somewhat from the effects of the blow, he had his teeth set, and his hands clenched. And as he reeled to his feet he was determined to pay the bullying skipper back in his own coin, come what may.

It was his turn to spring forward, and the mate and the watching seamen were so surprised that, for the moment, they made no move to interfere.

Putting his head under the swinging right the captain aimed at him, Harry Lestrade countered like lightning, and his left struck the skipper full on the nose, sending him staggering back with a look of almost comical amazement on his bearded face.

As he got over the shock and steadied himself, he uttered a bellow of rage. He came at Harry like a mad bull, with his great arms whirling like the sails of a wind-mill.

The skipper was never quite able to realise what really happened. He knew that, somehow, his lunging hands missed the boy's white, set face. Then something that felt like the kick of a horse crashed into his mouth, and sent him to the deck, which the back of his head struck with stunning force.

The crew and the mate saw every phase of the lightning encounter, however. They saw Harry duck one blow with the skill of a professional boxer, then side-step the wicked left that followed it. With the skipper thrown off his balance and rocking on his toes, the boy had been swift to seize his opportunity.

Crouching, then leaping, he had driven both his clenched fists into the bully's face, and all Harry Lestrade's lissom and youthful strength, all his weight had been behind the attack.

Whilst the crew and the mate, who had no reason to love their chief, did their best to hide delighted grins, Captain Seth Jones sat up, with a bewildered expression in his eyes, and both his nose and lips bleeding.

ANOTHER INSTALLMENT OF VICTOR NELSON'S
BRILLIANT SERIAL.

NEXT
TUESDAY!

"THE RIVAL SPORTSMEN!"

With an effort he pulled himself together, and scrambled up, and he was momentarily incoherent with rage.

"Put him in irons!" he shouted furiously, when he found it possible to articulate. "Quick! Stop the swab!"

Harry Lestrade had spun about on his heels, and made a dash for the rails. The mate shot out his foot, however, and the boy tripped over it and measured his length on the deck. A couple of seamen flung themselves upon him, and, despite his struggles, they held him down whilst another hurried away for a pair of handcuffs.

These were snapped upon Harry's wrists when the sailor returned with them. He was hauled to his feet, and Captain Seth Jones strode up to him, with his face fiendish in its rage.

He raised his bunched fist, and drove it with all his strength into the boy's face.

"Take that as a sample of what you've got comin' to you!" he said savagely.

"I should have expected something like that from a cur like you," Harry Lestrade said, though he had reeled under the cowardly blow.

"Then you expected right," the skipper sneered, striking him again. "Put him back in the hold, and tell the cook that the only food and drink he's to have is bread and water—that's until he sees reason, and is ready to work in return for his passage. I'll teach lubbers like him to stow away on my vessel!"

The men who were gripping Harry's arms forced him to the open hatchway. He was unceremoniously dropped through it to the planks of the hold, upon which he fell in a huddled heap.

The hatch was replaced and battered down, and once again Harry Lestrade was a prisoner in the bowels of the ship.

For a while he lay where he had fallen, for, though he had not finched under the skipper's brutal blows, they had dazed him not a little. But as their effects began to decrease, Harry sat up, and jerked at the handcuffs encircling his wrists.

And, as he moved his hands, a fact became evident to him that sent a thrill of new hope through his breast.

The manacles were intended for the wrists of a grown man, and a well-developed man at that, and they were comparatively loose upon his.

Harry Lestrade compressed his right hand into the smallest possible capacity, and endeavoured to draw it through the fetter. At first it seemed that, after all, it was just too small to allow of his accomplishing his object. Then it occurred to him that if it were wet it might be eased through.

He raised his hand to his lips, and passed his tongue over it. Then he tried again.

To his joy he found his hand passing from out of the fetter, and, with a final wrench, he freed it.

"Now," he muttered, "I must wait until someone comes down. I hope they don't lower food and drink to me, or I shall not have much chance to get the better of them. But that's on the knees of the gods."

Harry's one misgiving proved to have foundation. When towards the evening the hatch was raised, the cook tossed down to him a piece of dry bread, then lowered a can of water on a cord, immediately afterwards slamming down the hatch once more.

Frugal though the fare, the boy ate the bread and drank some of the water, knowing that he must do his best to keep up his strength if the plans that were in his mind were to be carried out with success.

It seemed to him that an eternity elapsed before he saw the cook again. In reality it was mid-morning on the following day, the Monday, and the vessel was off the Irish coast. Again bread was dropped into the hold, but the man did not trouble about a further supply of water, apparently deeming that the boy would have some left.

He glanced down at Harry before he closed the hatch, and the prisoner was careful to lay so that his hands were invisible from above. Harry Lestrade gave a sigh of relief, as the hatch thudded down. The next time the cook paid him a visit, it would doubtless be dark, and, in spite of the man seeming inclined to keep his distance, he thought he had a means of getting the better of him.

When some time had elapsed, Harry Lestrade climbed to the top of the packing-case under the hatchway, and there he crouched, patiently waiting.

Once again there was a long lapse of hours before there came any signs of his being paid a visit. Then, at long last, he heard sounds of the hatch being prised up.

He raised his hands, every nerve in his body strung up to concert pitch in suppressed excitement. The hatch was removed, and Harry caught sight of a starlit sky above. The next moment the cook had put his head over the opening, much to his discomfort.

Harry Lestrade's hands shot up, and grabbed the man by his hair. He uttered a yell of alarm, and tried to save himself by clutching at the edge of the opening. But he was too late!

Harry was in no mood to show gentleness. With all his strength he tugged, toppling the cook over the open hatchway. Then, with a last quick heave, he dragged him through, and allowed him to fall headlong into the hold.

For a moment all was silent below, for the cook struck his head heavily in his fall. But it was only for a moment. As he shook off his dazedness, he commenced to yell for help at the top of his voice, and it was with feverish haste that Harry scrambled through the hatchway on to the deck.

He heard the rush of feet, and two seamen came racing towards him, with exclamations of surprise and dismay. Harry dodged between them as he might have eluded the converging shoulders of two backs on a footer field, and before the two sailors could stop themselves and wheel about, the boy was leaping for the vessel's side.

He encountered the mate, who had just come from the bridge. With a yell the man dashed after him, reaching the boy just as he was climbing on to the rails.

Harry Lestrade lashed out with his foot and caught the mate an unexpected kick in the chest. He staggered back, and, losing his balance, fell to the deck. As he picked himself up and again made to jump forward, Harry's boyish figure was poised upon the rails.

With a clean dive, he went shooting down towards the phosphorescent waves, the mate's outflung hands just missing his

clothing. Striking the water, he disappeared beneath the surface, and the mate and seamen failed to glimpse him, as they craned over the vessel's side.

Thinking he might be swimming under water, they scanned the sea in all directions. But they saw no sign of the boy, and when his escape was reported to Captain Seth Jones, he refused to stop the vessel and lower a boat.

"He'll most like drown—if he isn't drowning already," he said callously. "We're over a hundred miles from the nearest land, the Irish coast, and his number's up unless he can keep afloat until some vessel picks him up, which ain't likely. But what's the odds? He was a stowaway, after all, wasn't he?"

He winked significantly at the mate, who winked back.

"Of course, sir, he was a stowaway!" he agreed. "And stowaways don't count!"

Wessex Wanderers v. Romford Rovers.

DESPITE the fact of it being a Wednesday afternoon, Wessex Wanderers had obtained almost as good a "gate" as if this mid-week match they were about to play with Romford Rovers had been billed for a Saturday.

No matter in which direction one looked, it was to encounter a positive sea of faces. The two stands were packed, as were the banked-up terraces behind either goal and the space for spectators beyond the touch-lines.

The visitors were already on the field, as were the linesmen and referee.

The latter was frowning at his watch, and his eyes went questioningly to the tunnel-like opening under the chief stand, leading from the dressing-rooms. For the home team was behind in turning out, and it wanted but a minute to the half-hour after two, the advertised time for the kick-off.

To keep themselves warm, Romford, who looked smart in their red and white shirts, commenced taking practice shots at goal, one player, with a rather pale face and a small, dark moustache, showing an almost fierce energy.



TROUBLE ON THE MUSTAPHA! Harry Lestrade ducked a blow with the skill of a professional boxer, and the skipper was thrown off his balance. Then the boy seized his opportunity. He drove both his clenched fists into the bully's face and put all his weight behind the attack. (See page 24.)

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ANOTHER INSTALMENT OF VICTOR NELSON'S
BRILLIANT SERIAL.

NEXT
TUESDAY!

"THE RIVAL SPORTSMEN!"

This was Austin Courtney, who was turning out to-day for the first time for the professional club he had contrived to join.

"Here's the Wanderers! Bravo, the Wanderers! There's Codling—and Joynson—and old Wills! Let's hear from you, lads!"

These cries, accompanied by deafening clapping and the clanging of handbells, greeted the home team, as, with Codling, their captain, at their head, they sprinted on to the field.

But the signs of good will from the Wanderers' followers were quickly followed by exclamations of surprise.

"Why, they're a man short!" cried a man in the stand. "Who is it? It's Richards! No, it's young Lestrade!"

"Yes, it's Lestrade who's missing," agreed a companion. "His name's on the programme, too! I wonder what can have happened to him to make him miss the match? But perhaps he's only a bit behind."

Austin Courtney heard the hubbub that arose, as it was seen that so far the Wanderers had indeed only ten men on the field. Having placed a pile-driving shot into the net, Courtney turned and studied the ranks of the home team, though already he had been certain in his own mind that the missing player was his cousin Harry.

He hid a smile as he thought of the excitement and amazement that would be caused amongst the vast crowds who waited to

watch the match, if they could be told that their local idol was now on the High Seas, and on his way in a slow tramp steamer to the Argentine. The hundred pounds which had found its way out of his pocket, and into that of Captain Seth Jones had been well spent.

He tugged at his moustache, and ran his eyes over the Wanderers, as they lingered near the centre, and their skipper and the Romford captain met and gripped. It rather puzzled him that they had turned out with a man short. It was almost certain that the club had communicated by this time with the address in Kensington where Harry Lestrade had been thought to be staying. Its officials would surely know that his cousin had never reached there, and that he had mysteriously disappeared. Why, then, had a substitute not been drawn from the reserve team?

Austin Courtney shrugged his shoulders, as, his side having won the toss, his teammates made a move for the farther goal. After all, why puzzle his brain? It did not matter to him.

The boy who might have snatched from him half a million of money was out of the way, and likely to stay out of the way for weeks, even months to come. He had an opportunity to forge ahead and gain such a lead that his rival would never be able to catch up with him, and he would seize it with both hands.

Austin Courtney even began to speculate

as to how he would enjoy the great fortune when it came into his hands, as his team began to line up, and he took his place at right-half. Then, next moment, he received one of the greatest shocks of his life.

A cheer and a mighty clapping had suddenly rung out, and, glancing instinctively towards the passage-way leading from the dressing-rooms, Austin Courtney's jaw dropped, and he had to resist a desire to rub his eyes.

For, sprinting towards the centre of the pitch, to fill the position left vacant in his eleven, was the boy who, a few seconds before, he had thought to be hundreds of miles away—Harry Lestrade!

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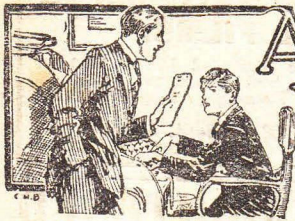
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THE POPULAR.—No. 198.

NEXT TUESDAY!

"THE RIVAL SPORTSMEN!"

ANOTHER INSTALMENT OF VICTOR NELSON'S BRILLIANT SERIAL.



A WORD WITH YOUR EDITOR

YOUR EDITOR IS ALWAYS PLEASED TO HEAR FROM HIS READERS. Address: EDITOR, THE "POPULAR," THE FLEETWAY HOUSE, FARRINGDON STREET, LONDON, E.C.4.

NEXT MONDAY—NEXT TUESDAY—AND NEXT WEDNESDAY!

Those are three very important days in next week, my chums. MONDAY will see the publication of the first of the

GREATLY ENLARGED "MAGNET,"

with its twenty-eight pages of fine stories, bound in a splendid coloured cover.

There is to be an extra long complete story of Harry Wharton & Co. and Billy Bunter, the chums of Greyfriars, who are at present in Africa with Captain Corkran. This story is without doubt the most thrilling and exciting adventure which has ever befallen the Greyfriars fellows. That is followed by a special complete story of FERRERS LOCKE and his assistant JACK DRAKE, who set to work to solve one of the greatest mysteries of the age. The story is entitled: "The Baker Street Mystery"—an adventure which commences with the finding of a dead man outside the detective's front door!

The "Greyfriars Herald," always extremely popular—and deservedly so—will occupy four pages. "The Greyfriars Parliament" offers readers money prizes for simple and short "speeches," there are big cash prizes offered in a simple competition, and with every copy will be a

SPLENDID LARGE REAL PHOTO OF A FAMOUS FOOTBALL TEAM GIVEN AWAY FREE!

Doesn't that programme make your heart beat more quickly? Isn't that something to look forward to? Be on the scene, then, when the "Magnet" Library appears next MONDAY.

TUESDAY will see the appearance of the POPULAR and in the POPULAR will be found

ANOTHER FREE PHOTO OF A FAMOUS SPORTSMAN!

Four long complete school stories will be found in our next issue. The first will concern the adventures of Harry Wharton & Co. at Greyfriars, and is entitled: "Trouble for Coker!" by Frank Richards. This story tells

of a great misfortune which befalls Horace Coker of the Fifth—and more particular his dotting Aunt Judy, for whom Horace has a very warm regard. Harry Wharton & Co. forget rags and everything else, and want to help old Coker.

The second grand complete story is an exceptionally thrilling adventure which happens to Frank Richards & Co. in the Backwoods of Canada. They find themselves in a balloon—and there's trouble—plenty of it. They come down at last, but they are heartily tired of balloons by then—but they are lucky to get out of their scrape alive.

"Accused by His Friend!" is the title of Owen Conquest's splendid story of Rookwood. Tommy Dodd is accused by Jimmy Silver of the Modern House of rather shady behaviour. There is a row, an argument, another row before the Head, and a great and bitter feud starts between the rival Houses. This is a brilliant story, my chums, and one that is likely to give you a great deal to think about.

The fourth complete story is provided in "The Fight of His Life!" which is one of Mr. Martin Clifford's special St. Jim's stories. Redfern of the New House wants some cash—I dare say that is nothing like a new experience for a schoolboy. But Reddy wants money urgently, and he means to get it. But he has "The Fight of His Life!" before he gets it!

"Billy Bunter's Weekly" is a special Literary Number, and when the great William George gets on literary work, there is fun—and plenty of fun. Fortunately, there are a number of fellows in the three schools who do know something about literature, and they provide you with a really splendid collection of stories, articles, and poems.

WEDNESDAY sees the first issue of the GREATLY ENLARGED "GEM" LIBRARY.

which will contain, amongst other things, an extra long complete story of TOM MERRY & CO. of St. Jim's. These stories are written by Mr. Martin Clifford, who contributes the splendid complete stories of St. Jim's for this paper. There is, too, a fine new serial in the "Gem" Library's greatly

enlarged number, a splendid sports story, a detective story, complete in one issue, an easy competition for money prizes, and

A MAGNIFICENT FREE REAL AUTOGRAPHED PHOTO OF A FAMOUS FOOTBALLER IN ACTION ON THE FIELD OF PLAY!

So the first three days of next week are red-letter days, and I strongly advise all my chums to order their copies of these three famous story-papers, for there is certain to be a great rush. Remember, the "Magnet" on Monday will give away a free real photo of a famous Football Team, the POPULAR will on Tuesday present you with another free real photo of a famous sportsman, and the "Gem" Library gives you a splendid free real photo of a footballer in action, on WEDNESDAY.

I can hear my chums asking—what about the "Boys' Friend"? All I can say about that at the moment, my dear chums, is—watch the "Boys' Friend." There is to be an extra special offer of TWO quite unique free real photos in that paper on Monday week. Full particulars will appear in these columns next Tuesday.

READERS' NOTICES.

Miss Grace Ford, 204, Coleraine Street, Montreal, Canada, wishes to hear from readers anywhere.

Ernest Cravins, 14, Pettle Street, Bendigo, Victoria, Australia, wishes to correspond with readers anywhere, ages 12-14.

Geo. Oehlers, 30, St. Michael's Road, Singapore, Straits Settlements, wishes to correspond with readers anywhere.

George Everett, 40, Thesiger Street, Lincoln, wishes to hear from readers who are keen collectors of coloured cards of railway engines.

Mademoiselle F. Chognard, 5, Rue Moraine, Le Havre, France, wishes to hear from readers in the British Colonies—St. Helena, Jamaica, Malta, etc.

Charles E. Field, c/o Townshend, Taylor, & Snashall, printers, 90, Loop Street, Cape Town, South Africa, wishes to correspond with readers in England, ages 20-25.

Miss Ethel E. Grey, Two Wells Road, Salisbury, South Australia, wishes to correspond with readers in England and America.

E. Barlow, 69, Northwood Street, West Leederville, Western Australia, wishes to correspond with readers, ages 15-17; all letters answered.

L. S. Brown, 16, Fulham Street, Beeston Hill, Leeds, wishes to correspond with readers in America and China.

Your Editor.



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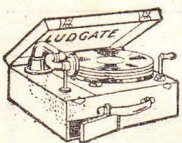
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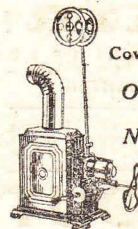
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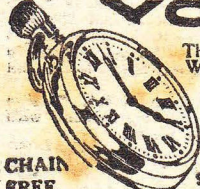
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