

ROBIN HOOD IN "THE OUTLAW KING!" GRAND NEW SERIAL IN THIS ISSUE!

Week Ending—  
May 12th  
1923.

New  
Series.

No.  
225.

Twenty-eight  
Pages.

# The POPULAR 2<sup>D</sup>

The Story Book for Boys.

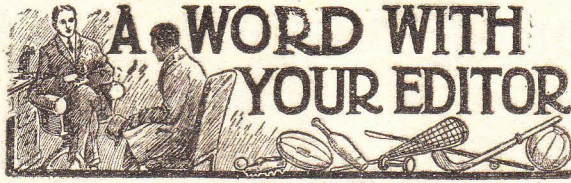
Money Prizes  
Every  
Week!



**THE DRAMATIC MEETING OF ROBIN HOOD AND PRINCE JOHN I**

*(One of the many breathless episodes from our Grand New Serial inside.)*

Next Week's Batch of Stories will take some beating!



A REAL HOLIDAY NUMBER.

In a few day's time everybody will be thinking about how best to spend a jolly holiday either in the country, on the patient jigger, or up the river, or at the sea. But wherever you happen to be going mind you don't forget to slip a copy of the POPULAR in your pocket. It may rain. I hope it will do nothing so un-called for; but, rain or shine, a POPULAR in the pocket is worth two at the newsagent's far away. And next week's issue of the famous Tuesday paper is a real slap up holiday treat. Make a note of the fact, and tell your pals.

"SIR 'ARRY OF GREYFRIARS!"

No, Harry Wharton has not been knighted. Sir 'Arry is a newcomer, and the day he blew in at Greyfriars will long be remembered, for the titled stranger is a really splendid chap, and he figures in a crowd of extremely exciting incidents which send a thrill through the school. The yarn recounts a deed of daring, performed in the most modest style. Whatever you do, keep your eye on the new junior. Tell you what happens, I will not, but I can promise you a really fine tale of the school on the River Sark.

"RUNNING THE GAUNTLET!"

This is the Backwoods School story for next week. The author has hit on a name for it which rings of the merry old days when knights faced narrow-curdling perils, and gauntlets were much worn. There were beleaguered castles in those times, way back in the limbo of the bygone. But Cedar Creek School runs any ancient stronghold close. It is beleaguered, and by a tough crowd. The Guntens caused the fracas. Frank Richards & Co. continue to keep the flag of fair play fluttering.

"THE WHEEZE THAT WON!"

The POPULAR has often dealt with wheezes, but none so fresh and animated as the little plot which figures in next week's Rookwood yarn. It is one up to the school, and Jimmy Silver

and Co. It is not necessary to draw attention to the why and wherefore of this particular wheeze. It was hatched for a good purpose, and proved a triumph.

"KENRICK FOR ST. JIM'S!"

When you have read this story, you will hear the rousing cheers which St. Jim's gave for Bob Kenrick as he went to the wicket for the old school. The tale is as vivid, and real as if you got the facts straight through by wireless. It all centres round a great match, which is described with pep. There is the strangest sort of secret revealed at the end.

A POVERTY NUMBER.

Bunter has hit it. The Owl scores a bull's-eye with his next week's supplement. Not exactly the kind of thing for a cheery Whitsuntide, you may say, but just what and see! The porpoise is talking of what he knows, which is something. You can forgive a chap a lot if he supplies first hand information, and William George, with his sumpence a week income (sometimes unpaid, like some cab fares, and hotel bills) is a sort of impecunious palladium. He has been there, and so have his fat subs. They have written stories and articles in the coming supplement which would make a crocodile order in a fresh relay of pocket-handkerchiefs, and cause a whale to weep.

"THE OUTLAW KING!"

This great serial is ripping along. It takes you into a jolly world of romance, and chivalry, and it has not a dull moment in it. Next week's instalment brings some amazing happenings.

CYCLISTS PLEASE NOTE!

Intending cycle buyers will be interested to know that the Mead Cycle Company Incorporated, of Balsall-Heath, Birmingham, has just issued the biggest and most beautiful cycle encyclopaedia in the world. The list is superbly printed in choice art colours and contains illustrations and descriptions of eighteen high grade Gentlemen's Roadster All-Weather and Racing machines, also particulars and photographic reproductions of de luxe cycles for Ladies, Girls, and Boys. Some of the cycle illustrations cover a space measuring 1723 square inches and clearly show every component part in detail, consequently the list is invaluable to those who wish to know all about the structure of modern bicycles. The catalogue also tells how you can obtain a Mead Cycle for your own riding direct from the factory at prices ranging from £5 15s. Cash or on credit terms. Readers who send a postcard and mention this paper will receive a free copy of this monster bicycle bulletin, which is brimful of useful information.

Your Editor.

ALL ABOUT THE FAMOUS SURREY CRICKET CLUB!

A Grand Simple Picture-puzzle competition! Just solve the puzzle below—you may win a handsome prize.

FIRST PRIZE £5 0 0: Second Prize £2 10 0: TEN PRIZES OF FIVE SHILLINGS EACH!



What You Have To Do.

Here is a splendid Cricket competition which I am sure will interest you. On this page you will find the history of the Surrey Cricket Club. What you are invited to do is to solve this picture, and when you have done so, write your solution on a sheet of paper. Then sign the coupon which appears below, pin it to your solution, and post it to "Surrey" Competition, POPULAR Office, Gough House, Gough Square, E.C. 4, so as to reach that address not later than THURSDAY, May 17, 1923.

The FIRST PRIZE of £5 will be awarded to the reader who submits a solution which is exactly the same as, or nearest to, the solution now in the possession of the Editor. In the event of ties the prize will be divided. The other prizes will be awarded in order of merit. The Editor reserves the right to add together and divide the value of all, or any, of the prizes, but the full amount will be awarded. It is a distinct condition of entry that the decision of the Editor must be regarded as final. Employees of the proprietors of this journal are not eligible to compete.

This competition is run in conjunction with the "Boys' Friend," "Magnet," and "Gem," and readers of those journals are invited to compete.

I enter the POPULAR "Surrey" Competition and agree to accept the Editor's decision as final.

Name .....

Address .....

P. ....

GUY FITZHUGH has joined the Great Band of Outlaws under the leadership of the famous ROBIN HOOD, and he finds adventure in plenty with his new friends of the forest! In this week's instalment you will read how Guy and his chums go to the monastery of Merly in search of secret documents, and how they meet the great usurper, KING JOHN of ENGLAND.



The Greatest and most Thrilling Romance of Olden Times Ever Written!

**Introduction.**

GUY FITZHUGH, the young ward of KING RICHARD CŒUR DE LION, who has been placed under the guardianship of SIR HUMPHREY DE BRIONNE, a tyrannical Norman baron.

ROBERT OF ROUEN, a gallant man-at-arms serving under the black banner of Sir Humphrey.

ISOBEL and SWEYNE THE HARPER, wandering minstrels, Guy's first friends.

ROBIN HOOD, the leader of the outlaws. FRIAR TUCK, a jolly monk, who is a member of the band of foresters.

The ABBOT OF MERLY, brother of Sir Humphrey, one of Guy's greatest enemies.

**The Road of Adventure.**

Guy FitzHugh, unable to tolerate the tyranny of his guardian, Sir Humphrey, makes his escape from the grim Norman castle, and, hotly pursued by the baron's retainers and men-at-arms, flies into the forest of Sherwood. He outwits the pursuers, and wanders forth alone for adventure. And an adventure comes sooner than he anticipates. Riding through the forest, he comes upon a small band of foresters whom, he discovers afterwards, are members of the famous outlaws under the leadership of the immortal ROBIN HOOD. Guy tells the foresters of his escape from the grim Norman Castle and of his great desire to become a member of Robin Hood's brave outlaw band. Knowing their master is one who will help the oppressed, they take FitzHugh before him. Robin Hood is impressed by Guy, and the boy joins his band.

News that the rich abbot of Merly is to travel through the forest the next day reaches the ears of Robin Hood, and with his band, he sets out and ambushes the cavalcade. But a little later a scout bursts through the trees and declares that Sir Humphrey de Brionne and his troop are coming along the road.

(Now Read On.)

**How the Baron Arrived Too Late, and Robin Planned a Pleasant Stratagem.**

AT these words a shout of triumph burst from the throats of the abbot's followers, and was answered by a faint "Hallo!" from the trees.

"Silence, dogs!" said Robin sternly; and at a signal from him the bows were bent again, and the abbot's retainers shrank instinctively behind each other as the terrible arrows menaced them once more.

The cloud did not lie long on Robin's face. Daring adventure was as the very breath of his nostrils to him, and, with a gay laugh, he gave a dozen quick orders, and, striding to one of the wattle-huts, beckoned to Maid Marian, who bounded out, light as a deer, to her husband's side.

In the meantime, three of the men, shouldering the lances they had taken from the abbot's men-at-arms, had run swiftly away down the glade, and as the distant "Hallo!" was repeated—this time much nearer—Robin placed a silver whistle to his lips, and blew one short, sharp note.

Many times Guy was to obey that call during the next few years of his existence. It was the signal for the band to scatter. And, taking him by the hand, Allan-a-Dale led Guy behind a thick growth of holly.

"Canst run, boy?" laughed the outlaw, who did not seem one whit dismayed at the near approach of their foe.

Guy's reply was a gay laugh.

"Then follow me," said Allan-a-Dale; and away he sped into the forest, shielding his face from the twigs whose emerald buds were just bursting into the glory of the young green leaf.

It happened as if by magic. A moment before the glade had been filled with the noisy revellers, and, hey, presto! they had all vanished like smoke, leaving the abbot and his company dumbfounded at the suddenness of their disappearance.

Nor could they tell where they had gone, for the friendly forest had swallowed them up in every direction, some even appearing to run towards the baron's party, whose trampling hoofs could now be heard.

With downcast eyes and sullen faces, the

abbot's retainers watched the approach of Humphrey de Brionne, who rode through the bushes into the glade, and waved his mailed fist in greeting to his brother.

He was a large and very powerful man, and there was a striking resemblance between the two brothers.

He was clad in chain-mail, over which he wore a surcoat of yellow silk, his device upon the breast—a black heart—fitting emblem indeed for Humphrey de Brionne! A steel mace dangled from his wrist, a huge cross-hilted sword was slung by a leather belt to his left thigh, and behind him rode as goodly a clump of spears as the boldest baron could wish for, headed by Robert of Rouen on his black horse.

Behind one of the men sat Tancred, the abbot's retainer, who, fortunately for his master, had met the baron a few miles along the road, and had guided him to the spot.

"By my hallidome, brother!" cried the baron, reigning in his powerful charger under the spreading branches of the oak, "thou hast gotten thyself into a pretty pickle! Where are these dogs that have dared to put affront upon the Holy Church?"

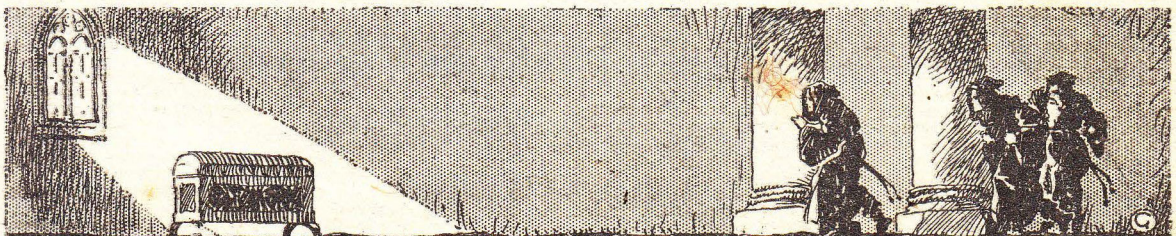
The abbot stretched out his long arm and made a sweeping gesture that embraced the surrounding forest.

"Gone, brother," he said, "like the morning mist from the meadows. We saw them one moment, and the next every man of them had vanished. But soft, that is not all!"

And he stepped up to the baron's stirrup. "You keep slack ward in your stronghold, Humphrey," he said, in a low voice, "else how came it that the young whelp FitzHugh should be with the outlaws, wearing their livery of Lincoln green, and already in high favour with that arch-rogue Robin Hood?"

The baron's face grew scarlet at these words, and, bending over the high pommel of his saddle, he raised his mace in the air, as if he were about to strike the abbot to the ground. His whole face quivered with passion, and the two brothers looked at each other for well-nigh a minute before the baron found his voice.

Then his rage exploded in a terrific oath, and his hand dropped on to his saddle-bow.



The mystery of the Abbot of Merly's locked chest!

## A HASTY RETREAT!

"By Heaven, this is the worst news of all!" he muttered. "'Tis of little account that your money-bags have suffered—'tis easy to fill them up again at the expense of these Saxon churls; but you and I go in great danger as long as that cub is free!"

"You speak truly, brother," replied the abbot. "But not so loud, unless you would have Robert of Rouen overhear you. I tell you I do not trust that man."

"You have said so a score of times!" snarled the baron. "But I have more faith in old Robert's lightest word than anything your shaveling crew might say, though they swore upon Holy Writ!"

The abbot shrugged his shoulders and bit his underlip.

"I fear me things are like to go evil with us, unless we can get the boy back into the nest," he said.

"And even then," said the baron, "he has his father's obstinacy, and we cannot make him sign the paper. Well, brother, get your belongings together and to horse. We can discuss matters by the way. As for pursuing Robin Hood and his merry men through yonder tangle, 'twere a useless task."

The silver dishes were again swathed in their leather wrappings, and deposited in the saddle-bags once more, and the cavalcade wended its way back to the road.

The noontide sun glistened on the polished mail, the hoofs died away, and when silence and sunlight had once more fallen upon the green turf—that silence which seared the squirrels, and a man who had lain full length along one of the boughs of a spreading oak-tree sat himself upright, grasping the stout limb with his legs, and stretching his arms with a sigh of relief.

"Ho, ho! So the rascals journey to York! Well, 'twill be news for Robin," said the man; and, dropping lightly to the ground, he made three paces to the back of the tree.

The trunk was hollow, and could be entered through a narrow crevice, through which the man now bent, and emerged with a bow and a quiver in his hand.

In the meantime, Allan-a-Dale had led Guy nearly half a mile away into the heart of the forest, and on the top of a hill, where the ground was full a foot deep with the red beach-leaves, the pair had laid themselves down, with their faces to the south.

"But where are the others?" said Guy. "We had more than fifty stout fellows, all clad in bright jerkins of Lincoln green, and before I had time to say 'Knife,' lo, they were all gone!"

Allan-a-Dale buried his elbows deep in the rustling carpet, and smiled as he took his chin in his hands.

"Thou art a sharp lad, friend Guy," said Allan-a-Dale, "but we foresters are sharper. Now I will show you something. Mark you one twisted beech on the left there—the one that the lightning has riven almost in twain?"

"I mark it well," said Guy.

"And see you yonder stout holly straight in front of us?"

"A man must be blind an' he did not see that!" said the lad.

"And again to the right, where the oak throws its shadow across the patches of sunshine. Look at all those trees one after another. Does aught move?"

Guy searched the ground with his blue eyes, scanned trunk and branch carefully, and then turned to his companion with a shake of his auburn curls.

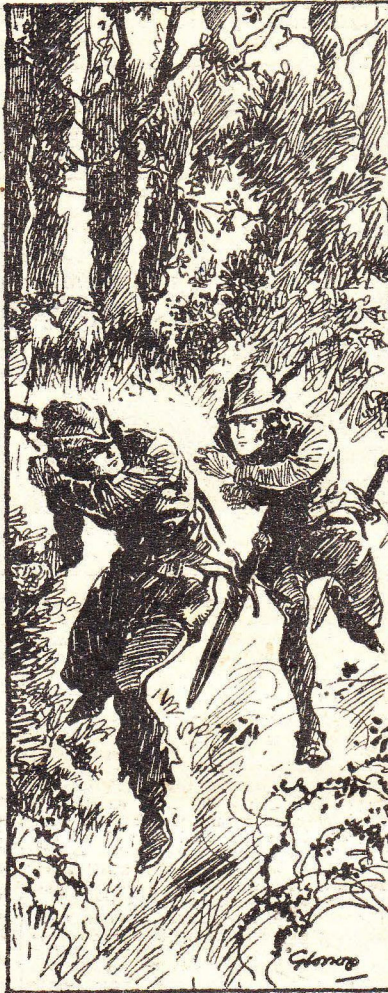
"I see naught but a squirrel chattering in the beech-tree," he said.

"Then look again," laughed Allan-a-Dale; "only look quickly." And he whistled a clear, double note that might have been the call of a wood-bird.

Instantly from behind the beech-tree three heads appeared, two men looked up from the holly-bush, and there was a movement in the branches of the oak-tree that betrayed the presence of men concealed among them. The next moment all had disappeared, and Guy looked at Allan-a-Dale with an expression of wonderment.

"You will not have been in our company a month," said the outlaw, patting him on the shoulder, "before you have learned to run like a hare, to hide yourself like a weasel in a hedge-bottom, and to imitate the cries of half a dozen wild creatures that we use as signals among ourselves. Oh, 'tis a right merry life, with the sky for a roof-tree and a pile of leaves for a pillow! Robin has

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"Canst run, boy?" asked Allan-a-Dale, leading Guy into the thickets. Guy nodded. "Then follow me!" replied the forester, and away he sped into the forest, shielding his face from the twigs. The enemy were very close on their heels. (See page 3.)

already taken great fancy to thee, and you are in high favour with the rest."

"Tell me," said Guy, his face flushing with pleasure, "you do not always live in this forest of Sherwood?"

"No; there are times when it is necessary to change our quarters," said Allan-a-Dale, "when the deer grow too shy, or the King's foresters too bold. Then we pass into Barnsdale Forest, or even as far north as Cumber-land. We have a hiding-place also in Lancashire, and another by the steep cliffs of the North Sea. But, hush! Someone is descending into the dell in front of us. Do you not see how all the birds come flying this way?"

Allan-a-Dale put his ear to the ground, and, staying his breathing, listened intently for a moment.

"'Tis one of our own men, and I think me, from the tread, it is Much, the miller's son."

In a few moments Much came striding up the hill, waving his hand to Allan-a-Dale, who now rose to his feet.

"The rogues have gone to York," said Much, when he came within ear-shot, "and Sir Humphrey has gone with them. I seek Robin at the White Oak."

"Where you will find him, of a surety," said Allan-a-Dale. "And we, too, will go with you."

They were joined by the other men, and

went along chatting, now knee-deep in the dead leaves, now scrambling through a thicket of young saplings, now turning aside to avoid some giant growth of ancient holly, every one of the rough, kindly fellows with a pleasant word for their new friend. One showed him his arrows; another gave him his bow to try, and clapped him heartily on the back when the boy drew the twanging string to the tip of his ear and loosed it with a great, humming note.

"Marry, that wilt do!" said Will Scarlet. "And when I have shown thee a trick or two thou shalt split a willow-wand with the best of us. Thou hast the true forester's eye, and, with that deep chest of thine, 'tis hard to believe that thou art only sixteen."

"I have to thank Sir Humphrey for that, Master Scarlet," said Guy, "for he put me early into the tilt-yard; and never was there better or kinder teacher than old Robert of Rouen, who is the leader of his men-at-arms."

By this time they had reached a magnificent and truly extraordinary tree. It was an oak of giant growth and immense antiquity. Scarcely in some storm ages before, the snows of winter and the winds of heaven had bleached it almost white. Its girth was great, and, like the tree from which Much had drawn his bow and quiver, it was hollow. A dozen men could conceal themselves within it, and, the entrance being fully five feet from the ground, and partly concealed by a stout bough, it formed a favourite place of refuge, and more than one outlaw had had reason to bless its security when pursued by the King's foresters.

"Ho, ho!" cried Robin Hood, who was sitting on one of the gnarled roots. "What news do you bring, my merry men?"

And Much, having told his tale, they flung themselves down on the turf and laughed loudly, as men do who have escaped scot-free from some sudden peril.

A bugle, ornamented with silver, hung from Robin's neck by a gold chain, and, raising it, he blew a blast that had barely ceased to echo among the forest trees when it was answered in a dozen different directions by similar bugle-calls; and soon the sound of running footsteps was heard, and the rest of the band came pattering up the slope, and grouped themselves about their leader.

One of the first to arrive was Friar Tuck, who had armed himself with a new quarter-staff.

"Now, friar," said Robin, "you saw with your own eyes that Abbot Anselm travelled with a goodly escort. Twenty-two stout fellows, I take it, to say nothing of some half-dozen varlets on foot. What force, think you, he has left behind him to keep ward at the abbey?"

Friar Tuck pursed up his broad-lipped mouth and looked thoughtful.

"'Tis nigh upon two years since I passed the abbey gate," he said, "and then, I mind me, I came out quicker than I went in, and had to crack the porter's skull for him, which I have ever regretted, for it is not seemly that members of the Church should quarrel one with another."

His eyes twinkled merrily, and the outlaws laughed, for surely the worthy friar was the strangest Churchman that ever muttered an Ave.

"I should think," he continued, "they cannot have more than a handful of armed retainers, and about thirty monks and lay-brothers."

"Then what say you, lads," cried Robin. "The abbot having gone to York to attend the chapter, let us to the Abbey. 'Tis, after all, a sin and a scandal that knaves like Abbot Anselm should revel in such wanton luxury while so many honest men are starving. Many a maimed and broken soldier have we relieved with an empty blessing and a crust of bread and an empty blessing at the abbot's gateway. The abbot has tasted of our hospitality, let us in turn taste of his. He will of a certainty send the Sheriff of Nottingham to chastise us here, and once within the stone walls of Merly Abbey we can snap our fingers at him and his following. 'Twill be turning the tables in very truth. Does the plan please you?"

"Ay, that it does!" cried the outlaws in chorus.

"So be it," said Robin, getting up from his seat. "What raiment have we in the

wardrobe Little John? 'Twere best that some of us should go disguised. If we put the best foot foremost, we shall reach the abbey at set of dusk, and once inside, 'twill be an easy matter to open the door for the rest."

**How Fitzhugh and Allan-a-Dale Did the Monks of Merly a Service and Earned Their Supper Right Well.**

**F**ROM one of the secret hiding-places in the interior of the White Oak Little John brought forth three huge leathern bags, and, untying their necks, tossed on to the ground a motley assortment of garments of every kind and colour.

There were gowns and mantles of fine cloth, some of them lined with rich fur; travelling cloaks, with hoods attached to them; the garb of a soldier; the dress of a peasant; even wigs, which came into fashion about the time of King Stephen. There was armour, too, and there were leather jerkins; in short, a very complete wardrobe to be used in cases of necessity, when, as in the present instance, the outlaws deemed it wise to disguise themselves.

"Now, friend Guy," said Robin Hood, "you know the abbey well. You and Allan-a-Dale shall dress yourselves like two simple peasants, and seek a night's shelter within its walls. There is a postern, surely?"

"There are two," said Guy; "one in the garden wall and a little secret door that opens towards the village."

"That is well," said Robin. "At sunrise we shall steal up and it must be your care that the way is unbarred for us."

In a very short time Guy and Allan-a-Dale were clad in kirtle and hose of hoddin grey with hoods falling upon their backs, and their legs bound with thongs from knee to ankle. To lessen the chance of Guy's being recognised, they stained his face and hands with walnut-juice, until he was almost as swarthy as a Saracen; and, this done, the whole band set gaily off in the direction of Merly Abbey.

Guy's heart bounded, and his blue eyes flashed merrily as he strode along beside Robin himself.

"Well, boy," said the outlaw, "our life may be uncouth, according to the gentler manners of castle and hall, but for those who love freedom and adventure, commend me to the greenwood tree."

"In truth, sir, you are right," said Guy. "And as for the gentler life of the castle, as you call it, I saw none of it, forsooth, in the household of Humphrey de Brionne, where there was nothing but hard drinking day and night, or the torturing of some poor sufferer who had incurred the baron's wrath."

"Ah, we live in stern times, Master Fitzhugh!" said Robin, frowning darkly. "And since Prince John has usurped his brother's throne, the poor man has no chance, but carries his life ever in his hands."

Before long the tramp of armed men fell upon their ears, and Robin bade the two be silent.

"They ride at a trot," said Allan-a-Dale, turning round. "If it be someone in high authority, we must not forget that we are of less value than the dogs with which they hunt the deer. Before now, I have seen the poor churl maimed for life by the slash of a sword, because my lord thought he did not doff his cap soon enough to his high-mightiness."

Riding along in a great cloud of dust of their own making came a party of mounted spearmen, in iron caps and coats of chain-mail, and Guy restrained a cry as he whispered:

"They are Sir Humphrey's men. Now I wish that I had taken shelter with the others."

"Have no fear," said Allan-a-Dale, smiling. "I promise you there are fifty arrows even now a-fitting. But though they be Sir Humphrey's men, they seem to be few in numbers. There are not more than twenty—see, you can count them as they come round the bend of the road!"

They drew back a few paces by the roadside—as was the custom in those days of the churls and serfs when their betters passed—and scarcely deigning to notice such insignificant beings as a brace of peasants, the mounted spearmen trotted by.

Robert of Rouen, however, rode a little way behind them, glancing right and left, as became a wary soldier, reined in, and, in a voice stern and commanding, though not unkindly, cried:

"Hast seen aught of that rogue and outlaw whom men call Robin Hood?"

"Nay, sir, we have seen nothing of him," replied Allan-a-Dale; "although a chapman we met a few leagues back had rumour that he and his band were somewhat hereabouts, and was in mighty trembling for the safety of his bales."

"Have a care that you fall not into their hands," said Robert of Rouen. "They have this morning robbed the Abbot of Merly of six hundred pounds." And he was just about to shake his bridle—for his followers were by this time well on their way along the road—when a strange thing happened. The powerful black charger slanted out his neck, and, looking at Guy, expanded his great nostrils and whinnied loudly.

Allan-a-Dale laid a hand on his companion's sleeve, but he was too late to check him. With a glad cry Guy sprang forward, and, to the soldier's great astonishment, threw his arm about the arched crest of the black warhorse, and kissed him on his velvet muzzle.

"Black Durham's eyes are sharper than those of his master," laughed Guy, as the soldier bent his keen glance on the boy. "You know me not, Robert of Rouen, and I am glad of it, for now I can go anywhere in safety."

"By the holy sepulchre," cried the soldier, shading the sun from his eyes and staring intently at the boy who had now come to his stirrup, "this is truly an age of miracles, and I am overjoyed to see thee!"

"Gladder, I trow, good Robert, than the abbot this morning. Nay, Allan-a-Dale, you need have no fear of Robert of Rouen when you travel in my company. Thou wilt never guess, Robert, whither my good fortune has led me. The Earl of Huntingdon is now my master. You may well start, but 'tis true, 't'faith, and I am now what Humphrey de

Brionne has made me—an outlawed forester in the band of Robin Hood."

"Gramercy!" said Robert of Rouen, his face growing mighty long. "'Tis a perilous step you have taken, boy, and I know not that I am glad to hear the news. And whither went ye now?"

"We go upon Robin's business," said the boy, who stood by the soldier's stirrup caressing the black horse, which rubbed his head against his shoulder, "though what that business is I must not say."

"Well, child," said the soldier, after a pause, "you have made your bed, and you must lie on it; and, my word, I think it may prove a safer couch than your pallet in our castle. I did not think to meet ye so soon, but, having met, I have a word for your own ear." And he looked at Allan-a-Dale, who, taking the hint, retired a few paces. "I must be brief," said Robert of Rouen, "else my men may come back in search of me. Riding this morning behind my lord and his brother, the abbot, I overheard some chance words of their conversation, and their speech concerned you. Marry, but it made my blood boil!"

Robert of Rouen's frown deepened, and he thought a moment before he continued:

"I see it even more clearly now than I did an hour since," he said. "I understand what was in the abbot's mind when he said, 'That were easy work—'tis but a matter of a dip of the pen—since the whelp will not do it himself. Then we have but to proclaim him an outlaw, and the money is ours!' 'Tis plain as yonder lark's song. The rogues will forge your name, you will be hunted down, and the fortune that will come to you in a short two years will be divided between the abbot and his brother."

"And where be these papers they were ever pressing me to sign, good Robert?" said Guy, becoming of a sudden very thoughtful.

"Where you can never come to them, poor lad," said the soldier. "Abbot Anselm has them safely in the carved coffer that stands in his own chamber, within the walls of that abbey whose gate you will never pass."

Guy's heart gave another leap; it was on



The two chums sprang out of the plantation and sped towards the scene of the fight. So light of foot were they, that they reached the gate of the abbey before the robbers knew of their approach, and the first intimation of it was Guy's staff descending on one of the steel caps with such a force that it stretched the wearer senseless on the ground. (See page 6.)

the tip of his tongue to tell the man-at-arms of his present mission, but something restrained him. And perhaps it was as well.

"I had not time to thank you for your gift of money," said Guy, stretching up his hand, which the soldier grasped in his great leathern glove. "Some day, if I am fortunate, there will come to the castle a messenger, who will return to you what you have lent me."

"Tush, child! I care not for gold. A long sword, a stout horse, a draught of wine, and a prayer said over me when I am dead, are all that Robert of Rouen wants in this world. And now I must be gone; I see my men have halted near to the wood yonder, and are looking back. Farewell, boy!" And, shaking Black Durham's bridle once more, the soldier of fortune continued his way.

They waited until the dust had settled in the road once more, and the horsemen were gone, and then Allan-a-Dale and Guy set out briskly, for they had yet three miles to travel before they reached their destination.

"Thou art but a poor travelling companion," said Allan, at length, after several ineffectual attempts to draw Guy into conversation.

"Forgive me, friend," said the lad, "but I have heard that on the road yonder which gives me food for thought."

And Allan-a-Dale was conscious of an unusual glitter in the blue eyes.

Presently, when the sun was setting, they came to the pleasant vale in which the Abbey of Merly stood.

Those old monks knew what they were doing, and always chose beautiful spots for their monastic houses. A river wound through the vale, spanned by a stone bridge, and as they crossed it the vesper bell began to toll on the evening air.

They trudged up the road, assuming the gait of tired and weary men, when, on a sudden, the call to vespers ceased, and was followed by the wild jangling of an alarm bell.

Allan-a-Dale and Guy looked at each other. For a moment they connected the alarm with their own approach, and came to a dead stop, but now the sound of shouting, even of blows, was distinctly heard on the still evening, and it was evident that some tumult was going forward outside the abbey itself.

A small plantation of young trees concealed the gateway from their gaze, and with one accord they sprang forward, and from its shelter peered out upon a strange scene.

A crowd of men, nine or ten in number, rough fellows in tattered garments, with here and there a rusty headpiece among them, were endeavouring to force their way through the open wicket in the large door, while a brawny monk of great stature, who had evidently snatched a spear from one of them, was fighting manfully to resist them.

"By my word," cried Guy, unmindful that he was armed only with a quarterstaff, "those are some of the robbers whom I encountered yesterday! I recognise that man in the blue kirtle, and that is Brother Gregory, the porter, who fights as bravely as Friar Tuck himself. Now is our opportunity, Allan; let us fall upon the knaves, and we shall not only get a night's shelter, but a hearty welcome. The rogues have chosen a good moment for their attempt, no doubt knowing that the abbot and his men-at-arms are away from home."

Allan-a-Dale, who was ever as eager for a fight as Guy, drew his grey hood over his head, and the pair, springing out of the plantation, sped towards the doorway. So light of foot were they that they reached the scene before the robbers knew of their approach, and the first intimation of it was Guy's staff descending on one of the steel caps with a force that made it ring like a bell, and brought its wearer senseless to the ground.

Allan-a-Dale felt another man, and, with a loud shout that made the robbers turn, and gave Brother Gregory opportunity to run a third man through the throat, the two outlaws plied their staffs as a thresher plies his flail, and so sudden was the onset, and so ably did Brother Gregory rise to the occasion, that in a few moments six of the rogues had measured their length upon the ground, with no power to rise from it, and the others, losing heart, turned tail and ran like the

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wind, yet not so fast but that Guy had time to dart after them and well-nigh brain the rearmost one with a terrific welt on the side of his bare head.

"By our Lady," cried Brother Gregory, the porter, "an' it had not been for thee, good churls, I had been slain, and these sacrilegious dogs would have had the run of our house! As for the rest of the brothers, such a craven crew did I never see, for they shut the gate and left me out here alone. There, I told you so! Now that the affray is over, out they come like rabbits from a warren!"

And as he spoke the wicket was opened gingerly, and a crowd of frightened faces, looking unusually white by reason of the black hoods that surrounded them, peered forth, and were met with a storm of scathing words from burly Brother Gregory.

"Craven curs!" he cried. "If only Father 'Abbot had been here, you would not have dared to skulk in that fashion! Fie upon you, Ambrose! I know not what would have happened but for these two stout lads!"

"We did naught else but our duty, brother," said Allan-a-Dale. "But in return we would crave a night's lodging and a crust."

"Thou shalt have it, my son," said a tall, portly monk, whose face bore unmistakable traces of good living. "Come within, and let us get the door bolted once more, lest there be more of these rogues lurking about."

Guy pulled his hood well over his face, and followed Allan-a-Dale, not without some trepidation. How familiar it all was to him—the chill of the stone walls, the black habits of the Benedictines!

He knew every face and every monk by name, and now that he had gone beyond the possibility of retreating, he trembled lest they should recognise him.

But they had other things to occupy their minds, and all fell a-chattering about the insult that had been put upon their house, and the daring of the robbers, whose insolence they vowed grew greater every day.

"Tis truly time King Richard came back again," said Brother Edmund.

"Best not let Abbot Anselm hear you say such a thing," said Brother Ambrose, the sacristan, with a chuckle. "But now let us to vespers, and when that is over our protectors shall eat until they can eat no more."

#### How They Searched the Oak Coffer, and Prince John Raided the Abbey.

WHEN, a little later, the disguised outlaws were conducted to the dining-hall, Guy could not help an exclamation of surprise and pleasure, for, seated upon a bench at one end of the room was the figure of old Swayne, the harper, and his companion, pretty Isabel.

The girl's eyes opened very wide; but Guy laid a warning finger upon his lips, and she sank back on to the seat from which she had half-risen, and whispered into the ear of her companion.

"Hush, good Swayne!" said Guy, taking his seat on the bench beside the harper. "Say not a word. We are on dangerous ground. Later on I will tell you why we are here. For the present it is best that the monks should not know we have met before."

A savoury smell pervaded the room from the buttery-hutch, and soon sundry of the brothers loaded the table with smoking dishes, and everyone set to work with a will.

The Abbey of Merly, even at that early period, was celebrated for its good living, and Guy was reminded of the royal repast which they had eaten under the greenwood tree.

They were merry fellows, those monks, and as the cups were filled and emptied, and the conversation became decidedly noisy, Guy whispered of the things that had happened to him since his meeting with the wandering minstrels.

Swayne listened with his head inclined to one side, his venerable beard falling in a silver shower over his chest.

"You have something on your mind, young sir," said the harper. "that you have not yet told me."

"You guess truly," said Guy; "though, unless you be a wizard, it puzzles me how you can know it. It is my purpose to-night when the abbey is sunk in slumber, to open the abbot's coffer in which he keeps his private papers, and to possess myself of

certain documents that concern me very closely."

The harper started, but, seeing the eyes of one of the monks bent upon him, he let his chin fall on his chest again. Later on, when the tables were being cleared, Swayne touched Guy upon the sleeve.

"I, too, should like to peep into that oaken coffer of the abbot's," said the old minstrel. "I will be honest with thee, lad. My calling gives me many opportunities, and Isabel and I are, in truth, secret agents of Archbishop Longchamp. The information we have gathered will make some proud heads tremble, if King Richard ever returns to merry England. Let me accompany you to-night. Two heads are even better than one. 'Twill be full moon, too, and that will serve our purpose well."

Guy readily consented, taking care to find out the whereabouts of Swayne's couch before Allan-a-Dale and himself were conducted to the little room where they were to sleep; and when the monk who conducted them thither had one, and the shuffle of his sandals on the stone pavement had died away, Guy seized Allan-a-Dale by the shoulders, sat him down on the pallet-bed, and told him what he had in his mind to do.

The sleeping-chamber of the abbot was on the south side of the church, and there was a little passage leading from it to the building itself.

"It will be safer to approach it by that way," said Guy, "for although Brother Peter, the sacristan, sleeps in the church to guard the vessels, he supped so well to-night that there will be little fear of our rousing him."

Shortly before midnight, when the bright full moon was sailing through a cloudless sky, three figures stole on tiptoe into the sacred building, and stood there listening.

The red sanctuary lamp burned before the altar, and the painted windows of the church were very beautiful against the moonlight. The sacristan was still snoring with monotonous regularity, and, turning the key that stood in the lock, they crept their way up a narrow stone staircase, passed through the abbot's pew, where he could sit unobserved and keep an eye on the monks beneath, and stole along a little passage built in the thickness of the wall until they came to another door, through which, as Guy opened it, the silver radiance of the moon poured with surprising brilliance. It was a square chamber, whose windows presented a magnificent view of the valley and the winding stream. Sweet-scented rushes strewed the floor, and a large fald-stool, or elbow-chair, filled with soft cushions, was placed before one of the windows.

The walls were bare, save for a crucifix at the head of the abbot's bed, and as Guy approached it he trembled a little.

"If he has taken the keys with him," he said, "we shall have to break the coffer open. That will mean delay and noise. No, they are here!"

And, passing his hand into a little secret receptacle, he drew forth a handful of keys, and selecting one with a bar about six inches long held it up triumphantly.

The carved coffer stood at one end of the chamber—a long, low piece of furniture, clamped and banded with ornamental iron-work. It had three locks, which the abbot evidently kept well oiled, for they yielded without noise to the first application of the master-key, and, raising the lid, the three conspirators looked in with very different feelings.

Allan-a-Dale had idle curiosity merely; Guy's sentiments we know already; but the harper's eyes glittered with a strange brilliancy.

The chest was full of parchment rolls and vellum, closely written in the curious, cramped character of the period, and all of them in Latin. Some of the rolls were tied with silk ribbon, and Swayne knew that State secrets of great importance lay before him.

He took one of the rolls, read some lines written upon it, and thrust it into the bosom of his gown with a murmur of satisfaction.

"How am I to find the documents that I seek?" said Guy.

"All in good time," replied the harper. "We have a good two hours before us ere the matin bell rings. Heaven bless that good moon that gives us so much light!"

Guy took one end of the coffer and Swayne the other, and, between them, they examined the rolls carefully. Swayne laying several aside, which he intended to carry away with him. As for Allan-a-Dale, he found it but

slow work, and when he had seated himself in the elbow-chair, and lain himself down on the abbot's bed, and poked and pryed into every hole and corner, he fell to looking out of the window, and suddenly startled his companions by a low whistle.

"Gramercy!" he said. "Come hither! Here is some great noble with a goodly train of horsemen behind him!"

Guy and the harper rose from their knees, and, looking, saw the moonlight glittering on three-score mounted figures, who came sweeping over the bridge at a fast trot.

"Whoever they be," said Guy, "they are coming to rouse the brothers. We must instantly return to our rooms, or we shall be discovered."

They were as yet too far off for them to detect the armorial bearings on shield and surcoat; but their peril was great; and while Sweyne concealed as many of the papers as he could carry about his person, Guy tossed the remainder back into the coffer, and, locking it, replaced the keys in the secret recess.

Then they stole away into the church, where Peter, the sacristan, was still snoring, and gained their couches at the very moment that a mighty thundering sounded upon the abbey gateway, and a great uproar of voices clamoured for admission.

"Who be ye that disturb our slumbers at this hour of the night?" said Gregory, the porter, opening the little barred grill and peeping out.

"One who will brook no delay, thou saucy monk! Unbar the door, and send and tell the abbot that Prince John of England has come to sup with him."

Even stout Gregory's heart quailed when he heard the name of their visitor, for of all the atrocious tyrants who have sullied the pages of England's history, John was the worst.

In a few moments the whole abbey was afoot. Terrified monks issued from their cells and dormitories and gathered round the aged prior, who, in a troubled and trembling voice, bade Gregory unbar the gate.

"How much longer am I to be kept waiting?" thundered John, as the door finally swung back on its hinges, and the cavalcade rode in. "So the abbot has gone to York, has he? Well, it matters little. Lay the tables with the best you have, for I and my friends are hungry!"

John was a sour-visaged man, about the middle height, clad in a surcoat of crimson silk, embroidered with gold thread. About his under-tunic, which was of white damask, he wore a girdle set with precious stones, and his gloves were fastened with clasps of ruby and sapphire. His whole appearance, in spite of the richness of his dress, was brutal and ferocious, and his followers, although they numbered among them half a dozen powerful barons, were all men of the same stamp.

The frightened monks, knowing that expostulation would be useless, hurried to do the usurper's bidding, and soon the logs roared and the table groaned with good things.

"By the rood!" cried John, setting down a drinking-horn. "I had no thought that ye were so rich here at Merly, Master Prior!"

The prior, whose fat cheeks quivered with terror, made a low bow, and faltered out something about them being poor servants of the Church.

"Ye shall be poorer when I take my departure in the morning," said Prince John. "My chamberlain has just told me you have the finest service of church plate he has ever seen. Since your abbot is not here to speak for himself, I shall take the liberty of borrowing it."

"Allan," whispered Guy, who with his friend, had stolen into the far end of the hall, and stood in the shadow looking on, "the prince has only three-score men with him. How say you—shall we not tell Robin of this? 'Twould be fine sport to outwit yonder blusterer."

Without another word Allan drew Guy away, and they sought Brother Gregory, whom they found sitting upon his bench with the great veins swollen in his forehead, rocking himself to and fro.

"Brother," said Allan, "we did you one good turn to-day; wilt thou that we do you another, and rid you of this ribald company, even though they be princes and barons?"

"By Saint Benedict, if 'twere only possible!" replied the porter. "But the

AN UNEXPECTED ARRIVAL!



Allan-a-Dale, seated, looking out of the window, startled his companions by a low whistle. "Gramercy!" he said. "Come hither! Here is some great noble with a goodly train of horsemen behind him. We must get back!" Guy and the harper rose from their knees and, looking, saw three-score mounted figures come sweeping over the bridge towards the abbey. (See this page.)

villagers are poor folk at best, and John is master of England."

"Ask me no questions," said Allan-a-Dale, "but open the wicket and let us out. In half an hour I will tap thrice, and you shall see what you shall see!"

Brother Gregory rose like a man in a dream, and mechanically unlocked the little gate. Then, with the shouts of the revellers still ringing in their ears, Guy and his companions sped fleetly away in the moonlight, nor stayed until they had reached the bridge. There Allan drew his hunting-horn from the breast of his kirtle, and, placing it to his lips blew a shrill blast, which was intently answered from the underwood at the other side of the valley.

"Now," said Allan-a-Dale, "we shall see whether Prince John is master of England!"

There was high revel in the dining-hall of the monastery. By John's orders his men-at-arms had ransacked the treasure-chests, and piled their contents in a glittering heap on the table.

"Sir Prior," he cried, "I swear by the bones of my father thou hast more of these pretty trifles in some secret hiding-place! Bring them forth, or my men shall strip thee to the skin and whip thee round the hall!"

At this terrible threat, which he knew the prince to be quite capable of carrying into execution, the prior was seized with uncontrollable indignation.

"Impious man!" he exclaimed. "You rob the Church, and you would lay hands upon her members! Many a crowned king has suffered excommunication for less than thou hast done to-night!"

"Thou scurvy shaveling!" said John. "Darest thou address such words to me? Ho, there a rope—a rope, and hang me this fellow!"

Half a dozen men instantly threw themselves upon the prior, while others, running forth, returned with a rope, which one of their number proceeded to make fast to the gallery at one end of the hall.

One or two of the barons ventured to look askance at their leader; but never was John known to relent.

"Carry him into the gallery," cried the tyrant, "and at the word cast him off!"

"Now, charge your cups, good companions all!" said John. "We will drink to yonder dog!"

One of his servants poured out wine from a great stone jar, and, amid the flicker of the torches that fluttered in their sconces round the hall, John raised his drinking-horn.

"When I have drained the last drop," he cried to his myrmidons in the gallery, "fling him over!"

But that cruel signal was never given, for from the opening of the buttery-hatch came the musical twang of a bow-string, and, pierced by an arrow, the drinking-horn was dashed from John's hand.

A terrible yell burst from the tyrant's lips, and every man at the table sprang to his feet and laid his hand upon his weapon.

"Be seated, merry gentlemen!" said a ringing voice. "The first of ye that moves hand or foot shall die the death!"

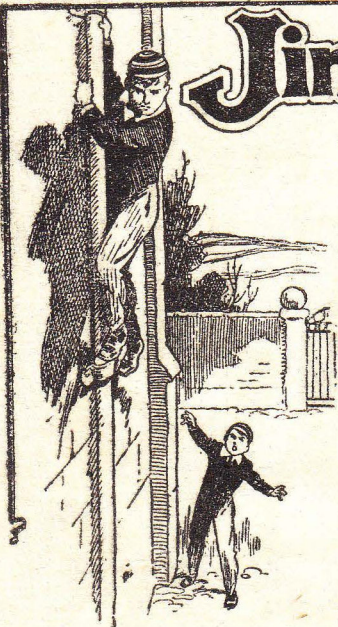
And, to their dismay, the tyrant and his friends found themselves surrounded on all sides. The gallery was thronged with archers; every door had its group of lads in Lincoln green, and the glittering points of nigh upon sixty arrows menaced the revellers.

So wide was the fame of these terrible archers that every man instinctively sank back into his place, Earl John alone remaining upon his feet, his face crimson, and the gnashing of his teeth distinctly heard in the silence that fell upon the dining-hall.

Robin Hood advanced into the centre of the apartment, his brow black as a thunder-cloud.

(Next week there will be another grand, long instalment of our powerful new Serial—keep your eyes open.)

AN AEROPLANE FLIGHT, A DRAMATIC ARRIVAL, AND A CRICKET MATCH, are some of the ingredients of this wonderful story. You will read how Jimmy Silver finds himself in an awkward position, and the novel way in which he gets out of it.



THE FIRST CHAPTER.  
Ready for the Fray.

**T**OPPING day for the match, chaps!" Jimmy Silver, the captain of the Fourth Form at Rookwood, made that announcement in a tone of great satisfaction, as he looked out of the dormitory window as soon as the rising-bell had ceased its strident clanging.

It was indeed a glorious morning, and the dew-soaked grass of the playing-fields was bathed in the early sunshine.

Jimmy Silver felt in high spirits. For to-day was Saturday, and the junior cricket eleven were booked to play one of their first "away" matches of the season against St. Jim's, the famous old school in Sussex.

The journey to St. Jim's was rather a long one, so the cricket team were to start soon after breakfast to catch the 9.9 train from Coombe Station. That meant no morning school, of course—a fact that noisily decreased the popularity of this particular fixture in the eyes of the junior cricketers.

Jimmy Silver and his chums, Raby, Lovell, and Newcome, proceeded to bathe and dress themselves with great cheerfulness.

"If we don't beat St. Jim's to-day, I'll eat my hat!" remarked Raby, as the chums went into the Hall for breakfast. "If you're in form, we'll lick them to a frazzle, Jimmy!"

"I feel in topping form," said Jimmy Silver confidently. "We've got a pretty good team all round, I think."

"It's your bowling we're relying on chiefly, and don't you forget it, old man," said Lovell. "How's your bowling arm feel?"

Jimmy Silver laughed. "Fine, thanks!" "Good!" said Newcome. "Then we ought to be all right, I think."

The junior eleven were desperately keen on winning the St. Jim's match. Tom Merry & Co. were doughty opponents, and the Rookwooders respected them as such. In the days when Smythe of the Shell had been junior captain of Rookwood, the St. Jim's eleven had simply walked over their opponents. But that was due chiefly to Adolphus Smythe's little habit of putting all his friends into the eleven, regardless of whether they could play cricket or not. Jimmy Silver had got the eleven on a different basis now, and the juniors of Rookwood were looking forward to knocking Tom Merry & Co. into a cocked hat.

But they did not underrate their task. Jimmy Silver was a mighty bowler, and it was to him chiefly that the Rookwood eleven looked to make skittles of the St. Jim's wickets.

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# Jimmy Wins Through!

This is one of the finest stories ever written, and records the most thrilling cricket match in which Jimmy Silver & Co. ever took part.

By OWEN CONQUEST.

## THE SECOND CHAPTER. Left Behind.

**C**OME on, Jimmy! The brake's at the door!"

Jimmy Silver grunted. "Plenty of time, old man! I must finish this letter first."

"Oh, rats!" said Lovell impatiently. "Don't want to miss the blessed brake, do you? Here's your bag!"

"Dry up a moment, old man, do!" said Jimmy Silver imploringly. "The brake won't go for five minutes yet, and I must just finish this letter home. I haven't written for ages, and I want to get it off to-day specially."

"Well, do buck up!" grumbled Lovell. "All the others are down there ready, and if you get left—"

"I sha'n't get left, old man, unless you stay here in the study jawing!" said Jimmy. "Buzz off and take my bag down to the brake, there's a good chap, and I'll be with you in a jiffy!"

"Right-ho! But—Hallo, Smythe! What do you want?"

The elegant figure of Adolphus Smythe of the Shell—and one-time captain of the Rookwood junior eleven—had suddenly appeared in the doorway.

"I want a word with Silver," said Smythe, with dignity. Adolphus was a haughty youth. "My last word, you know."

"Busy!" said Jimmy Silver tersely, writing away at his letter. "Some other time, Adolphus. We're just off to St. Jim's."

Smythe frowned. "It's about the St. Jim's match," he said sharply. "I'm not satisfied; I've told you so before."

"So good of you, dear boy!"

"You've got time to change the team still," went on Smythe, with a glare. "I'll come in now, if you like, at the last moment, and you can put Townsend in, too. You've left us out so far—"

"Go hon!"

"But we'll overlook your cheek for the sake of the team," went on Smythe warmly. "If you like to take us along now—"

"We don't, dear boy!"

"Oh, rats!" shouted Lovell, in a fever of impatience. "Blessed if I'm going to stay here jawing any longer! I'm off! Buck up, Jimmy, for goodness' sake, or you'll miss the blessed brake!"

And Lovell, taking Jimmy's bag and his own as well, stamped off down the Fourth Form passage to join the rest of the team in the brake.

Jimmy Silver only grunted. He was writing away for dear life at his letter, his tongue in his cheek, and his head on one side—quite heedless of the glares the incensed Smythe was directing at the back of his head.

"Then you won't put me in?" shouted Smythe.

"Exactly, dear boy! Travel along!"

"I tell you—"

"Some other time, old man."

"You—you cheeky young cad—"

"Good-bye-ee, Adolphus!"

Smythe glanced at the provoking Jimmy in a state of great exasperation. Suddenly a thought struck Adolphus, and his eyes gleamed.

He moved his hands behind him to the lock of the study door and stealthily withdrew the key. Jimmy Silver did not look up. "I'll go, then," said Smythe at last. "But, understand, Silver, you'll be sorry you didn't put me in the team!"

"Oh, rats!"

The door slammed, and Adolphus Smythe was gone.

Jimmy Silver, finishing off the last few words in a hasty scrawl, chuckled.

The lock of the study door clicked ever so faintly—so faintly that the junior, absorbed in his letter, did not hear it.

Smythe of the Shell stamped off down the passage, and ran down to the school gateway.

There was a crowd of fellows there surrounding the brake, which was packed with the members of the junior eleven, including Tubby Muffin, who was going to score. Knowles, the Modern prefect, who was going to St. Jim's in charge of the party, was standing by the box, ready to swing himself up beside the driver.

There was a chorus of voices demanding to know where Jimmy Silver was.

"Where's Silver?"

"Where's that ass, Jimmy?"

"The duffer'll be late!"

Smythe sidled up to Knowles and exchanged a few words with him in an undertone. The prefect gave him a peculiar look, and then nodded with a slight smile.

Knowles had had many a rub with Jimmy Silver, and had no reason at all to love him. Whatever it was that Smythe whispered, the prefect did not look at all displeased.

"We must be getting on," said Knowles, looking at his watch. "Everyone here?"

"No!" roared ten voices at once. "Silver isn't!"

"Then where is the young ass? We shall miss the train at Coombe if we don't get off!"

"He's just coming, Knowles!" called out Lovell. "I left him in the study a minute ago. He's just finishing a letter."

There was a howl from the whole brake. "Blow his letter! Why doesn't the ass come?"

"I'll run up and get him!" said Raby, scrambling up from his seat.

"Nonsense, Raby! Sit down!" said Knowles sharply. "We don't want to leave two of you behind! We must set off!"

"Shall I run up and tell him, Knowles?" called out Smythe. "He was just ready when I left him a moment ago."

"Yes, you go, Smythe," said Knowles, with a slight grin. "Tell him we'll give him one more minute! If he's not here by then, we start!"

"Look here, we can't go without Jimmy!" yelled Lovell. "The ass was ready—"

"We've cut it too fine as it is," said Knowles, with decision. "He'll have to come after us on a bike, that's all. Anyone got his bag?"

"Yes, I have," said Lovell. "Tell him to

Our Topping Tales of Rookwood Are Always Popular!



come on to the station on his bike, Smythe!" he yelled after Smythe.

"Right!" yelled Smythe.  
"We can't wait another second," said Knowles, swinging himself up beside the driver. "Drive on, there!"

"Very good, sir!"  
Amidst loud cheers from the school, the brake turned out of the gates and drove off towards Coombe at a spanking pace. There was barely time for it to get to the station to catch the nine o'clock.

Meanwhile, Smythe of the Shell had betaken himself, not to the end study in the Fourth Form passage, but to the cycle shed, where he was busy with a spanner and a screwdriver on Jimmy Silver's cycle.

### THE THIRD CHAPTER. A Race Against Time.

**J**IMMY SILVER scrawled the last word of his letter, jammed it in the envelope, already addressed, and stuck the stamp on. Then he seized his cap and coat and made a dash for the door.

He turned the handle—and the door did not budge.

Jimmy Silver stared.  
He wrenched at the handle, and gave a terrific pull; but still the door did not open. He understood in a flash. He was locked in—Smythe had done it, of course! Smythe, not being able to go himself, had intended him—Jimmy—to miss the brake.

Jimmy clenched his hands at the thought. There was no time to waste. He picked up a chair, and battered on the door with it, at the same time shouting for all he was worth. Then he listened. No one came.

The whole of the Fourth Form was doubtless down at the gate, seeing the team off. The passage was empty.

Surely someone would come up for him! Jimmy ran to the window, which looked out on to the school chapel and the playing-fields. The gate could not be seen from it. No one was in sight.

Jimmy yelled again—this time out of the window.

"Hi, hi, hi! Help! Murder!"  
Anything to attract attention!

A loud hurrah startled the junior.  
It was the crowd cheering the departing brake.

Jimmy took a deep breath. Every second was of value now.

He climbed out over the window-sill, and grasped a pipe that ran down from the gutter on the roof just at the side of the window.

The study was on the second floor of the school building, and the climb was a dangerous one. But he did not hesitate.

The pipe was somewhat flimsy, and cracked ominously as the full weight of the sturdy junior bore on it.

But Jimmy Silver did not flinch, and began to climb steadily down.

There was a sudden shrill shout from beneath.

"Silver! What—what are you doing?"

Jimmy stopped, and clung to the pipe, looking down.

It was young Higgs of the Third, looking up at him with a white face.

"Go back, Silver, you ass! You'll be killed!" shrilled Higgs.

"Rats!" roared back Jimmy. "I'm locked in the study! Buzz around and tell the fellows, and get the door open, Higgs, quick!"

Higgs stared up, open-mouthed.

"Buzz off, I tell you!" roared Jimmy. "I'll go back!"

Higgs pulled himself together, yelled "Right-ho!" and rushed off, while Jimmy Silver began to haul himself up the pipe again to the window.

As he clambered over the sill, a crowd of Fourth-Formers buried open the door and rushed into the end study.

"Silver!" gasped Peete. "Locked in! Why haven't you gone to St. Jim's?"

"Because I was locked in, ass!" hooted Jimmy Silver. "How did you open the door?"

"The—the key was in the lock outside," stammered Peete. "B-but why?"

"Oh, rats!" said Jimmy tersely. "Stand aside, there! I'm off! How long have they been gone?"

"About five minutes," said Higgs.  
"Good! I can catch them on my bike. Post that letter for me, Higgs, there's a good chap!"

And throwing that troublesome letter to

Higgs, Jimmy Silver dashed off down the Fourth Form passage, followed by the wondering glances of the amazed juniors.

Adolphus Smythe of the Shell was conspicuous by his absence.

Jimmy dashed to the cycle-shed and seized his cycle. The back tyre was flat, but he did not heed that. He jumped into the saddle and pedalled off towards the gates at furious speed.

"Seven minutes to nine! I shall just do it!" he muttered, glancing up at the clock in the old tower. "Have to buck up, though! I'll slay Smythe for this when I get back!"

The subject of this kind thought had just emerged from behind the cycle-shed, and was watching Jimmy Silver's furious flight at that moment.

There was a grin on the face of Adolphus Smythe as he watched the furiously pedalling junior turn out of the gates and take the road to Coombe.

"I don't think you'll catch the train after all, my bonnie boy!" he remarked to himself with a chuckle. "If I don't go to St. Jim's, you don't, either!"

Jimmy Silver, unconscious of Smythe's chuckles, pedalled furiously on.

"Both that tyre!" he muttered, as he bumped over the road. "This'll ruin the tube, but—"

Crack!

There was a grating sound, and the pedals suddenly spun round uselessly.

Jimmy Silver gave a groan of despair.

His chain had come off and was lying in the road. One glance at it was enough to show him that it was useless to try and repair it in a few moments. The nut had somehow come off the connecting-link bolt, and the bolt had fallen out. It was hopeless to start a hunt for a small bolt and a tiny nut on the dusty road.

Jimmy Silver was almost daunted, but not quite. The very fates seemed to be working against him, but he would not give in.

He glanced at his wrist watch.

"Two minutes to nine! Perhaps the blessed train will be late!"

Leaving the useless bicycle by the roadside, the junior raced off down the road as if on the cinder-path. He knew he could not get to the station by nine o'clock, but if the train were a few minutes late, he might catch it. Trains at the little station at Coombe often were late—more often than not, in fact.

And on this particular morning the nine o'clock train was no exception to the rule. It was late—some five or six minutes late—but not late enough for Jimmy Silver.

He rushed on to the platform, panting and breathless, at nine minutes past nine exactly—just as the last coach of the nine o'clock was disappearing round the curve in the line!

He had missed it!

The Rookwood junior cricket eleven would have to meet St. Jim's minus their captain.

The reflection was a bitter one to Jimmy Silver. He sat down on a seat on the platform, panting and furious. His thoughts about Smythe of the Shell were simply terrible—for he realised now that the accident that had happened to his bicycle was to be attributed to something more than mere bad luck.

And Jimmy Silver knew that there was not another train for hours.

The little station had already settled down, after the bustle the train had caused, into its usual state of sleepy calm. The sun streamed down upon a scene of undisturbed peace. A steady hum, which the junior recognised as the drone of an aeroplane engine, was almost the only sound to be heard.

Jimmy Silver got up wearily. He had remembered his cycle lying beside the road, and, angry and dispirited as he was, he did not want to lose it.

"No train up before the eleven-thirty, is there?" he inquired of the one porter, as he passed out of the station.

"No, sir. Sorry you missed the train. We kept it waiting a couple o' minutes for you, as the young gents said you was comin'."

"You're a good sort, Wiggs. I—I was delayed," said Jimmy Silver, with a clouded face. "It's rotten, but it can't be helped, I suppose. Now I shall have to go by the eleven-thirty."

And the disappointed junior tramped out of the station.

It was a cross-country journey to St. Jim's. By taking the eleven-thirty, he could not possibly get there in time to take part in the match. He would have to be a spectator only.

Brr! Brr! Brr!  
The drone of the aeroplane up above had increased in sound, and Jimmy Silver looked up with interest. The plane was approaching very fast, flying low, and it was now circling round the little station, as if uncertain of its bearings.

Lower and lower it came, till it was flying at barely a hundred feet.

"Coming down low to see the name of the station, I suppose," thought Jimmy Silver, was the plane roared over his head. "I wonder— My hat! It's going to land!"

It was true.

The aeroplane swept over the road leading to the school, and the roar of the engine suddenly ceasing as the pilot switched off, the plane dived straight down into a grass field just off the road, where it landed as lightly as a bird.

Jimmy Silver had a couple of hours to spare, and he was vastly interested in aeroplanes.

He set off at a run at once, making a bee-line for the grass field.

### THE FOURTH CHAPTER. A Sporting Offer.

**T**HE aeroplane bumped along the grass to a standstill, and the fluttering propeller ceased to revolve. A tall figure in flying kit jumped out of the after cockpit, while the pilot leaned out of his seat scanning his engine with a practised eye.

"There's an oil-pipe gone, that's why I landed here, old man," said the pilot. "She's lost a lot of oil, and made a bit of a mess. We'll have to fix it up before we set off again."

"Right-ho!" said the passenger.

"We're quite near the school here, as a matter of fact—that's Coombe station just across the road. It's only a walk down to the school!"

"Well, we'll just get the broken pipe down, and I can take it to the village and get it brazed while you walk along to the school."

"Roh, old man. I'm staying with you till we get things fixed up!"

"Don't be an ass, Neville! I can manage all right, and you'll be wanting to get along to see your brother at Rookwood."

The pilot turned to his engine, spanner in hand, when the airman addressed as Neville gave an exclamation.

"Hallo! Whom have we here? A Rookwood kid by his cap!"

It was Jimmy Silver.

"You are from Rookwood, kid?" asked Neville.

"Yes, sir."

"I'm an old Rookwood boy myself, and I have a brother there now—was just going to look him up, as a matter of fact. Do you know a fellow there called Neville?"

"Neville of the Sixth? Rather!" exclaimed Jimmy Silver. "He's a Classical prefect and a top-hole chap."

Jimmy looked at the airman with admiration. He had heard of Neville's brother in the Royal Air Force—a captain, and holder of the Distinguished Flying Cross.

Captain Neville laughed loudly.

"You're a Classical yourself, evidently."

"Yes, sir. I'm Jimmy Silver of the Classical Fourth."

"I see. And doesn't the Classical Fourth at Rookwood do any work on Saturday mornings?" said the airman slyly. "They did in my time."

Silver laughed.

"They do now, sir, but the junior eleven have an 'away' match to-day, and I ought to be playing—but I missed the train."

"Phew! That's bad luck, kid! Where's the match?"

"At St. Jim's, in Sussex."

"St. Jim's! Hear that, Conway?"

"What's that?" said the pilot, who was busy with the engine. He suspended his operations with the spanner for a moment.

"This kid, Silver, of the Fourth Form at Rookwood, ought to be playing in a junior cricket match at St. Jim's to-day, but he's missed the train."

"St. Jim's, eh? That's funny! I believe my young brother, Gussy, plays in the St. Jim's junior eleven. I used to play in it myself, once."

"You're an old St. Jim's boy, sir?" said Jimmy Silver respectfully.

"Rather! Perhaps you know my brother there—D'Arcy of the Fourth Form?"

"I know him, sir—chap with an eyeglass!" said Jimmy Silver at once.

The pilot grinned.

"That's him—regular young nut, he is!" Jimmy Silver had heard of D'Arcy's brother. The pilot was evidently Lord Conway, the eldest son of the Earl of Eastwood.

"Well, look here, young Silver, how do you stand?" said Captain Neville, laying his hand on Jimmy's shoulder. "Can you get over to St. Jim's by the next train in time for the match?"

"Afraid not, sir! They'll have to do without me."

"Will they beat St. Jim's all right without you?" went on Neville, with a sly glance at the smiling Conway.

Jimmy Silver laughed.

"I hope so, sir, but—I'm captain of our eleven, and St. Jim's juniors are a pretty hot lot."

"Oh, come, that's too bad!" said Neville seriously. "Rookwood can't do itself justice without its captain." He looked thoughtful for a moment. "I say, Conway!"

"Hallo, old man?"

Captain Neville stepped over to Lord Conway, and the two conversed together in low tones for a moment.

Then Lord Conway burst into a laugh.

"It would be a sporting effort, by gad!" he exclaimed. "How far's St. Jim's from here, I wonder?"

"Something under a hundred miles as the crow flies," answered Neville.

"Is there a garage in this village, kid?" was the pilot's next question.

"Yes," said Jimmy. "I can take you to it now. It's quite near."

"Good! Then I could get some more oil and get the pipe repaired in about half an hour."

"Then it's a go?" said Captain Neville.

"Yes, I'll do it—if the kid's game."

"I'm game for anything, sir," said Jimmy Silver stoutly.

"Then would you like to fly over to St. Jim's and be in time for the match, after all?" said Captain Neville, with a smile.

Jimmy Silver gasped.

"My hat! Fly over!"

"Yes! You can have my flying kit. I am going to walk over to the school and see my brother when we've fixed up the machine. Lord Conway will slip you over to St. Jim's and come back for me. What do you say? Are you on?"

Jimmy Silver gasped again.

"My—my only hat! It's ripping of you, sir—top-hole!"

"Then you're game, kid?" said Lord Conway, with a smile.

And Jimmy Silver promptly replied:

"What-ho!"

## THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

### In Full Flight.

"CONTACT!"

Captain Neville stood with his hands on the propeller, ready to swing it over. Lord Conway was in the pilot's seat, and in the seat behind him, enveloped in Captain Neville's flying-kit and wearing flying-cap and goggles, was Jimmy Silver, captain of the junior cricket team at Rookwood, en route to the St. Jim's match by aeroplane.

It was barely eleven o'clock. The match was due to start at twelve.

"Contact!" sang out Lord Conway, giving back the word according to R.A.F. custom.

Swing!

"Switch off!" came from Captain Neville.

"Switch off!" repeated the pilot.

"Contact!"

"Contact!"

This time the skilfully swung "prop" produced a healthy roar from the engine, and Jimmy Silver felt a great draught on the unprotected part of his face from the suck of the big "prop."

Lord Conway waved his hand, and the machine moved slowly off, "taxi-ing" across the field in order to get a good take-off into the eye of the wind. Captain Neville ran by

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the side of the machine, steadying her with a hand on the bottom plane.

She swept round in a wide circle, and came to rest, facing the wind, her big "prop" revolving slowly.

"All right, old man?" queried Neville. "Look out for those trees when you take off!"

"Right-ho!" shouted Conway cheerily.

"Shall be back in a couple of hours, all being well. I'll fly low over Rookwood before landing, to let you know I'm back. So-long!"

Neville stood aside, and waved his hand to Jimmy Silver as the engine quickened up to a roar.

The plane began to bump over the ground faster and faster as she neared the hedge at the far side of the field.

Just as Jimmy Silver began to think a collision with the hedge inevitable, the bumping suddenly ceased, and, looking over the side, the junior saw the ground apparently receding from him at a rapid pace.

They were off!

Up, up rose the plane, "banking" steeply to the right as it climbed, so that it circled the field a couple of times until the pilot was satisfied that his engine was running all right. Then away in a bee-line for the county of Sussex and St. Jim's College.

The exhilaration of flying made the blood dance in Jimmy Silver's veins. He looked over the side of the fuselage at the country below, spread out under his eyes exactly like a map, criss-crossed by hedges, roads, railways, and rivers till it looked like a huge, irregular chessboard. In the distance he caught a glimpse of the towers of Rookwood. He wondered what the fellows there would think if they knew that the aeroplane which they were doubtless watching was conveying a junior of the Fourth Form to a cricket match almost a hundred miles away.

Lord Conway turned his head and shouted. Jimmy Silver just caught his words above the roar of the engine and the whistle of the wind in his ears.

"Four thousand! See if you can follow the country on the map."

Jimmy nodded, and began to study the map mounted in front of his seat. Lord Conway was flying at four thousand feet, to give him a chance of viewing the country they were passing over, and recognising it on the map. The junior was sufficiently acquainted with the art of map-reading to know that rivers and railways were the easiest landmarks to pick up; and, going on this method, he very soon recognised the route they were following.

The engine seemed to be roaring away quite leisurely to the junior, who, in his well-protected seat, had soon got used to the sensation of flying. It was only when he began to follow their progress from the map that he realised the pace at which they must be rushing through the air.

At the end of half an hour's flying they were more than half-way there.

Lord Conway held on steadily, flying on a perfectly even keel, and keeping in a direct line for St. Jim's according to the map.

Jimmy Silver wondered whether he would do one or two "stunts" presently. But the pilot gave no sign that such a thing had ever entered his head. It was evident that Lord Conway considered that he was taking enough responsibility as it was by taking a junior up without the express permission of the school authorities.

Another twenty minutes passed, and the plane still buzzed through the air with the steadiness and more than the speed of a railway train.

Then Lord Conway turned round and pointed down ahead of them.

"Pretty near now!" he shouted. And Jimmy Silver nodded and smiled, and kept an eager watch on the country below.

The nose of the plane was pointing slightly downwards now, and the speed increased until the wind shrieked past the wires and struts. Then the roar of the engine stopped, and the plane began to glide downwards at an easy angle. The pilot had switched off.

"We'll get down a bit!" shouted Lord Conway. "There's Wayland ahead—quite near now!"

Jimmy Silver ran his eye along the main railway-line which the pilot had evidently been following. Yes; there was the little town of Wayland, whence the branch line ran to Rycomb, the station for St. Jim's.

The pilot switched on the engine again,

and the plane came out of the glide and resumed an even keel again. A couple of minutes' level flying, and Jimmy Silver could see below him the old turreted buildings of St. Jim's. And, yes, he could see white-clothed figures streaming out from the pavilion on to the wide green space of the cricket field. The players were evidently just coming on to the field to commence the match.

Jimmy Silver glanced at his watch. It was just twelve o'clock.

He was in time!

Lord Conway turned and smiled, pointing downwards. He was evidently thinking the same thing.

"All O.K.!" he shouted. "We'll get down now! Mind your eye!"

Jimmy Silver grinned and nodded.

"What-ho!" he shouted. But his voice was lost in the roar of the engine.

Now began the descent—the most thrilling part of that wonderful ride to Jimmy Silver.

Lord Conway settled himself in his seat. The height now was something under three thousand feet.

With the engine full on, the nose of the plane went down, down, until they were diving at a steep angle and at terrific speed.

Then suddenly the pilot leaned back in his seat and pulled the "joy-stick" right back.

"Hold on!" came his voice faintly above the roar of the engine.

The nose of the machine rose swiftly until it pointed directly upwards—up, up, the roar of the engine suddenly fading away as the pilot switched off at the crucial moment.

The bottom seemed to be falling out of Jimmy Silver's world. Although he was securely strapped in, he clutched the sides of the frail machine as though his life depended upon his grip. Earth and sky seemed to whirl round him in a fantastic dance.

The machine hung in the air, upside down, for what seemed an eternity, while the junior held his breath.

Then down she swooped, the engine cutting in with a roar as she regained her equilibrium. Then a series of steep "banks" and exhilarating swoops earthwards, and the playing-fields of St. Jim's seemed to rush up to meet them. A last turn into the wind, and then down in a long, gentle glide, with the propeller fluttering gently, and the wonderful machine landed on the level greensward as gracefully and lightly as a bird.

And almost before Jimmy Silver realised that he had actually been "looping the loop," the machine was at rest, and the cheers from a crowd of juniors racing over the grass towards the machine were ringing in his ears.

Lord Conway turned a laughing face towards the breathless junior as he pushed his goggles up on his forehead.

"How do you like looping, youngster? I thought you would like me to do just one 'stunt' before we landed."

"It—it was grand—simply grand!" gasped Jimmy. "I wouldn't have missed it for worlds!"

He unbuckled his belt and clambered lightly out of his seat, just as the crowd of St. Jim's boys came thronging up, full of eager excitement to see the airman who had performed that thrilling "loop" before descending.

There was a sudden yell of amazement from two or three of the Rookwood cricket team who had raced up with the crowd.

"Jimmy Silver! It's Silver!"

Jimmy Silver waved his hand and grinned. He did not wonder at their surprise.

"Yes; here I am, chaps! And in time, I hope!"

"Trust the end study to get there somehow!" chuckled Lovell. "Good old Jimmy!"

There was a roar from all the Rookwooders present.

"Good old Jimmy! Hurrah!"

Jimmy Silver was pouring out his thanks to Lord Conway, while the playing-fields of St. Jim's were ringing with cheers for the daring young airman.

"That's, all right, kid," said Lord Conway, his pleasant face glowing with good-nature. "You're a young sport, you know, anyway. Better run along and get changed for the match, hadn't you—what?"

"Yes, rather—and thanks awfully, sir! It was simply ripping!"

Lovell and Teddy Grace of Rookwood seized Jimmy Silver and rushed him off towards the pavilion.

Next Tuesday—"The Wheeze That Won!" Look Out For It!

"Just in time, old son!" said Lovell, almost hugging his chum. "Mornington and Tommy Dodd are just going to open the innings for us. St. Jim's are fielding."

"Good egg!"  
An elegant figure in spotless flannels, with an eyeglass screwed into his aristocratic eye, stopped the hurrying trio and shook hands warmly with Jimmy Silver.

It was Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, the swell of the Fourth Form at St. Jim's.

"Good work, Silver, old top!" he exclaimed heartily. "Vewy sportin' effort, your turnin' up by aeroplane like this—what?"

"Thanks!" grinned Jimmy. "It was your brother, Lord Conway, who did the trick. He's a sportsman, D'Arcy—a topper!"

"Bai Jove. My bwother Conway?"  
"Yes. He's over there by the 'plane!"  
"Bai Jove! That's wippin'! Excuse me, deah boy!"

And Arthur Augustus hurried on to greet his brother, who was now walking round his machine, the engine of which was still running gently.

"Hallo, Arthur!" sang out Lord Conway, as the swell of St. Jim's hurried up, his eyeglass gleaming in the sun.

"Hallo, Conway, deah boy! Fancy your turnin' up like this!"

"Yes; just flipped young Silver over from Rookwood, as he had missed the train."

"Vewy sportin' of you, old man!"

"Thanks!" said Lord Conway solemnly.

"You playing in the match, Arthur?"

"Yaas, wathah!"

Lord Conway eyed his brother's spotless flannels.

"Mind you don't spoil the crease in those bags, old chap!" he said gravely.

"Weally, deah boy—"

Lord Conway chuckled, and swung himself into the machine again.

"Must get off now, I'm afraid," he said, bucking the strap round him. "Got to go back to Rookwood and pick up Neville. Sorry I can't stay longer!"

"Weally, Conway, you aren't goin' yet, suahly?"

"Sorry, Arthur—must buzz off!" said Lord Conway. "Just keep those kids back while I taxi to the other end of the field, will you, Arthur?"

"So long, old man!"

There was a roar from the engine as the pilot accelerated, and the big plane began to move off slowly over the ground.

D'Arcy kept the crowd back while his brother manoeuvred the plane into position, facing up-wind.

Then, with a roar, the engine speeded up, the plane rushed over the smooth turf, and then rose gracefully from the earth.

Lord Conway waved his hand as he flew overhead, and Arthur Augustus waved gracefully back. There was a roar of cheering from the St. Jim's fellows.

Lord Conway's sportsmanship in bringing the captain of a junior eleven over to play in a cricket match had won the hearts of St. Jim's and Rookwood fellows alike, and the fellows cheered him with a will as he flew off.

"Hurrah! Hip-hip-hurrah!"

Then there was a rush back to the cricket-field by the juniors, greatly elated by this exciting preliminary to what bade fair to be an exciting match, now that the Rookwood side had been brought up to full strength by Jimmy Silver's timely arrival.

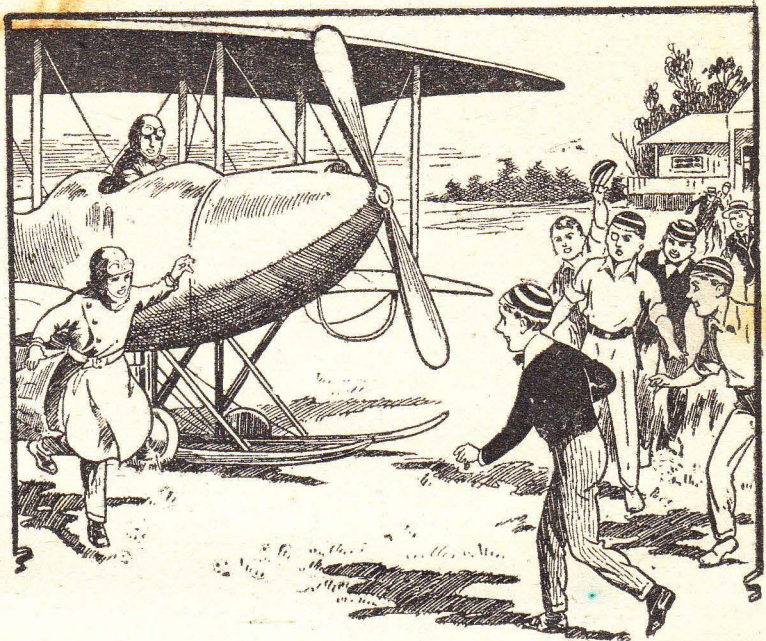
**THE SIXTH CHAPTER.**

**The Great Match.**

**T**HE Rookwood innings did not begin too well.

Mornington had only made four runs when he skied a ball from Jack Blake, which fell into the safe hands of Tom Merry, the St. Jim's skipper. Lovell, the next man in, was clean bowled by Fatty Wynn, the fat Welsh junior, for 2 runs. Van Ryn got 6 before the demon Welshman got him. Tommy Cook, who then joined his chum Tommy Dodd at the wicket, kept his end up for some time while his partner played some very pretty cricket, but finally succumbed to one of Jack Blake's tempting balls, which he put neatly into Noble's hands at mid-off. He retired with the score of 8 runs to his credit.

Tommy Dodd had taken 12 by this time, so that the score was four wickets down for 32.



**THE MAN FROM THE CLOUDS!** Jimmy Silver unbuckled his belt and clambered lightly out of the aeroplane, just as a crowd of St. Jim's and Rookwood juniors came up. There was a sudden yell of amazement from them. "Jimmy Silver! It's Silver!" (See Chapter 5.)

"Better go in yourself, old man, and get the score up a bit," said Lovell seriously to Jimmy Silver. "We're not doing too well. That chap Wynn's a corker!"

Jimmy Silver looked thoughtful. "I think I'll keep myself in reserve a bit longer, in case anything happens to Tommy Dodd," he said. "He seems well set in now; he's a hitter."

But Conroy had had luck. A deadly ball came down from Fatty Wynn, like a bullet from a gun, and wrecked his wicket.

Fatty Grace fared no better. The score was still 52 for six wickets.

Jimmy Silver delayed no longer. He joined Tommy Dodd at the wicket, and the two played merry cricket.

Runs now came freely, and the spirit of the Rookwooders revived greatly. The score was doubled by the time Tommy Dodd snicked a fast one into the hands of Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, at slip.

Sixty-four runs for seven wickets!

Tommy Dodd had run up the respectable score of 24, and was received with great applause on his return to the pavilion.

Jimmy Silver's score stood at 20.

Selwyn joined him, and hit a 2, but Fatty Wynn got his wicket two balls later.

Erroll then went in, and made a duck.

The demon bowler of St. Jim's was in his best form.

Tommy Doyle was the last man in, and the score was 66.

He survived an over from Redfern, but without scoring.

Jimmy Silver then had the bowling, and hit out merrily.

Two 4's and two 2's, and then a 3, which just failed to reach the boundary.

Tommy Doyle took a single from a fast ball from Wynn, which was brilliantly fielded by Figgins.

Then, facing Redfern from the other end, he skied a ball into the hands of Kerr, the Scottish junior of the New House at St. Jim's.

The Rookwood innings closed for a total of 85, of which 3 were byes.

Jimmy Silver's score was 35, not out.

"Not so dusty!" remarked Tommy Dodd, as the cricketers adjourned for the luncheon interval. "We'll see what St. Jim's can do after lunch."

When play was resumed the St. Jim's first innings produced the fine total of 105 runs, chiefly owing to a splendid second-wicket partnership by Tom Merry and Figgins, which produced upwards of 59 runs.

Noble, the Cornstalk junior, added another twenty from his own bat.

Jimmy Silver and Tommy Dodd opened the second innings for Rookwood. Rookwood were twenty runs behind on the first innings, and Jimmy wanted to leave nothing to chance this time.

But, alas! for his hopes of a long partnership with Tommy Dodd! Fatty Wynn, apparently revived by the lunch interval, was in more deadly form than ever, and whipped Tommy Dodd's middle stump out of the ground after 10 runs had been put up on the board.

Jimmy Silver made a gallant effort, but the only other batsmen to stand up to Fatty Wynn for any length of time were Conroy and Mornington, who made 15 and 12 respectively.

Jimmy Silver himself succumbed to the demon Welshman when he had notched 30, after a fine effort.

The total registered for the innings was 70 runs.

That left St. Jim's with 51 to get to win.

The St. Jim's crowd were jubilant, but Jimmy Silver's face was very serious as the Rookwooders streamed out to field for the second time.

"Fifty-one to win!" said Jimmy to his faithful ten. "It's not much, but we mustn't let 'em get it! We've got to play up, my sons. Gimme the ball!"

And Jimmy Silver grasped the ball with great determination, while his team went to their places with grim expressions on their faces.

And then the junior captain of Rookwood proceeded to do some wonderful things with the ball.

Tom Merry and Noble opened the St. Jim's innings; but after making 2 runs Noble miss-hit a ball from Jimmy, who ran up the pitch and caught it.

Caught and bowled, Silver!

D'Arcy's wicket fell to Conroy in the next over, and then Jimmy bowled Blake and Redfern in quick succession.

Four wickets down for 12 runs.

But Tom Merry was still in.

The junior captain of St. Jim's was a fine cricketer, and he was as determined to win the match for St. Jim's as Jimmy Silver was to win it for Rookwood. He played careful cricket and gave no chances.

But the wickets of his faithful followers went down like ninepins before the deadly bowling of Jimmy Silver.

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The eighth St. Jim's wicket went down before a deceptive ball from Teddy Grace, as the score of 35 was registered on the board.

Tom Merry was still in, and Figgins and Fatty Wynn had still to bat, and St. Jim's had 16 runs to make to win.

George Figgins, the long-legged junior captain of the New House, came striding to the wicket with a do-or-die expression on his rugged face.

Tom Merry gave him an anxious look. "Careful, Figgy, old boy!" Figgins nodded as he took centre. "What-ho!" he exclaimed briefly. "Click!"

The ball flew from Teddy Grace's hand, and Figgins stepped out of his ground and gave it a terrific swipe.

There was a roar from the St. Jim's crowd.

"Boundary!" "Good old Figgy!" "Bravo, New House!" Tom Merry grinned.

This was what Figgy called playing carefully! But it was undoubtedly the stuff to give them.

Jimmy Silver gave Grace an anxious look as that junior grasped the ball again. "Careful, Putty!"

Putty Grace grunted. "Right-ho! But this chap's a blessed lessop!"

He took a run, and turned himself into a sort of catharine-wheel.

There was a louder click, as Figgins' bat again met the ball with terrific force, and a still louder roar from the delighted St. Jim's crowd.

The ball flew between the flags, with Tommy Dodd vainly chasing it.

"Well hit, sir!" "Another four! Go it, Figgy!" "Hurrah!"

St. Jim's only wanted seven more runs for a tie, eight to win.

And Figgins seemed to be determined to hit every ball to the boundary.

There was a gleam in Grace's eye as he took the ball in his hand for the next delivery. He was called "Putty" at Rookwood, but, for all that, he was not quite so "soft" as he sometimes pretended to be, as a good many juniors at Roodwood had already discovered.

He took a run to the wicket, and just as he delivered the ball he slowed up almost to a walk.

The ball left his hand in an innocent-looking curve, and something like a groan came from Jimmy Silver's lips as he saw that harmless-looking lob dropping through the air.

Figgins almost chuckled as he saw it coming. To his eye, that easy-looking ball seemed hooked for the boundary.

He jumped out of his ground, and his bat swept through the air with a mighty sweep at the spot where the ball would pitch.

But the musical click of bat and ball did not reward that mighty stroke. There was a click, certainly; but it was made by that innocent-looking ball coming into contact with Figgy's middle stump!

George Figgins was out, and he started for the pavilion with a very surprised look on his honest face.

"You ass, Figgy!" growled Tom Merry, as he passed him. "That was a googlie!"

"Blessed if I know what happened!" muttered Figgins. "I thought I'd hit the thing; but—but it wasn't there!"

And Figgy strode to the pavilion. The Rookwooders crowded round Teddy Grace, and Jimmy Silver patted him on the back—hard.

"Absolutely topping, kid!" he grinned. "Fooled him all the way! You're a giddy genius!"

"Bravo, Grace!"

Jimmy Silver seized the ball as Fatty Wynn emerged from the pavilion—last man in!

"Get to your places, chaps—mind your eye! We'll do it or bust!"

Tom Merry faced the bowling. Jimmy Silver gripped the ball, and sent down a beautiful delivery, dead on the wicket, which the batsman played carefully.

At the next delivery the bowler was approaching the crease when his foot slipped, and the ball sailed from his hand in an easy curve.

There was a gasp of horror from the Rookwooders.

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The ball looked a dead easy one—and it was!

Tom Merry stepped coolly out to meet it, caught it full pitch on the drive of his bat, and lifted it to the boundary in front of the pavilion.

"Well hit, sir!" "Good old St. Jim's!" "That's the stuff to give 'em!" "Hurrah!"

The cheers were deafening, and the Rookwooders looked at one another and at their captain gloomily.

Jimmy Silver's face was set and desperate. It was sheer bad luck that his foot had slipped and caused him to send down that easy ball, just when every run was invaluable to the rival team.

"Three to draw," he muttered—"four to win! They sha'n't do it!"

He sent down a straight ball, which pitched a little short, and Tom Merry played forward and drove it past Jimmy Silver's outstretched fingers.

"Come on!" he called. Fatty Wynn rolled up the pitch just as a smart throw-in came from Erroll.

Another run for St. Jim's! Three more for a win!

Fatty Wynn faced the bowling now. He took a careful centre, and faced Jimmy confidently, but with many an inward tremor.

Jimmy Silver sent down a fast ball, and Fatty Wynn waved his bat in a panic—and just snicked it.

It passed just out of reach of Tommy Cook, and Conroy raced for it desperately.

"Come on!" yelled Tom Merry, dashing up the pitch.

Fatty Wynn flew for his life, and Conroy hurled the ball in desperation for Tom Merry's end.

The ball crashed into the wicket just as Tom Merry's bat clumped on the crease.

"How's that?" roared the Rookwood team with one voice.

"Not out!" came the calm voice of the umpire, and a roar of cheering sounded from every side of the ground.

"Well run, St. Jim's!" "Good old Tommy!" "Hurrah!"

Jimmy Silver picked up the ball and walked back to take his run.

The situation was desperate. He had two more balls to complete the over. Tom Merry was facing him, with one run to get to draw—two to win!

Jimmy Silver looked round his field desperately. His eye fell on Mornington, who was fielding out in the country behind the bowler. He motioned to Mornington to go out deeper. Mornington obeyed, with a gleam of understanding in his eye.

Jimmy Silver had decided on a desperate expedient. Tom Merry was now well set, and he had little hope of bowling the St. Jim's skipper before he had taken the two runs necessary to give St. Jim's the match.

But Jimmy Silver had noticed that Tom Merry's favourite stroke was a fine drive straight on the leg side. The boundary was a long way out in that direction, and that's what decided Jimmy Silver to try his stratagem.

He took a run, and bowled deliberately—a ball dead straight on the leg stump, but a half-volley—just the ball to drive.

And Tom Merry stepped out to it and drove it!

There was an audible groan from the Rookwood team, and a yell of exultation from St. Jim's as the ball flew swiftly into the air well on the way to the boundary.

But suddenly there came a hush! For the lithe figure of Valentine Mornington was flying towards the ball on the very edge of the boundary.

On flew the ball, and on raced Mornington, while cricketers and spectators alike watched with bated breath.

For on that ball hung the whole issue of the match.

There was just a chance that Mornington would get there in time, and Mornny strained every muscle and sinew to do it.

And he got there.

He sprang desperately at the ball as it was passing over his head, his outstretched palm came into contact with the flying leather, and the ball stuck there.

Mornington staggered on for some yards with his hand stretched high above his head, with the ball safely resting in the palm.

It was a magnificent catch, and it had won the great match for Rookwood.

St. Jim's had lost by one run.

The Rookwood team carried Val Mornington and Jimmy Silver shoulder-high to the pavilion, where the St. Jim's team were the first to congratulate them on their great victory, like the good sportsmen they were.

And great were the rejoicings at Rookwood when the victorious team returned with the news of their exploits! In his elation Jimmy Silver found it in his heart to forgive Smythe of the Shell for his treacherous attempt to keep him from the match. But the rest of the team thought differently, and a severe bumping was inflicted upon the shrinking Adolphus before bed-time that night.

Jimmy Silver's aerial trip to take part in the St. Jim's match, and the sensational result of the match itself, formed a nine days' wonder in the junior school at Rookwood.

And even the great George Bulkeley, the captain of Rookwood, and hero of the fags, sent for Jimmy Silver to hear the story at first-hand, and gave it as his opinion that it was "a very sporting effort."

Whereat the satisfaction of Jimmy Silver & Co. was complete.

THE END.

(Particulars of next week's fine Rookwood Story will be found in page 2.)

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Next Week's Rookwood Story Will Make You Roar!



Supplement No. 122.

Week Ending May 12th, 1923.

## MY CROOL MISFORTUNES!

By Sammy Bunter.  
(Sub-Editor.)

"As a last resource," said Dicky Nugent, "I'll give you a place in the Second Form team, Sammy. We're playing the Third on Saturday. But let me make it clear at the outset that if you get a duxegg you'll be publicly pulverised."

So my name went down on the list, and I biked over to Courfield to get a suit of flannels on the higher-purchase system.

When Saturday dawned I had high hopes of making a century, and being carried shoulder-high from the field.

But these things don't always work out as one anticipates.

The Third won the toss, and we had to take the field. I asked Dicky Nugent where we had to take it to, and he told me not to be funny.

"Where do you want me to field?" I asked.

"Oh, anywhere, so long as you keep out of the way of the game!" was the cutting reply.

I took up my position at deep-mid-off-cover-point-square-leg, and awaited developments. They soon came. Tubby, of the Third, was batting, and he skide the ball in my direck-shun.

"Catch, Saummy!" shouted everybody.

But I had more respect for my hands than to attempt to hold that ball. I knew it would brooze my nuckles if I tried to hold it, so I promptly scooted out of the way.

"Yah! Funk! Margerine-fingers!" shouted the crowd.

I was very unpoplar. But I was still more so when it came to my turn to bat.

Young Tubb was bowling. He only sends down one straight one in about fifty. But I happened to get the fiftlet!

The ball took my middle stump clean out of the ground, and one of the bails flew up, and hit the umpire on the nose.

"There was a howl of skorn and derission.

"Out!"

"Clean bowled for a duxegg!"

"Mob him!"

I fell into the hands of the Millistines, with a vengeance! They punched me and plucked me and poked me and prodded me; and they wouldn't listen to my remark that even the best batsmen get a duxegg sumtimes.

I sha'n't play for the Second any more. I shall offer my services to the Remove. They are hard up, I here, for a really brilliyunt batsman!

## IN YOUR EDITOR'S DEN!

By Billy Bunter.

MY DEAR READERS,—Now that Harry Wharton has published a Special Cricket Number of the "Greyfriars Herald," does he think for one moment I am going to hold my piece? Does he think I shall refrain from following in his footsteps?

I have just as much right to perduce a Special Cricket Number as Wharton has, and I can perduce such a clever one that his will appear the work of a novvis by komparison.

If you have already read Wharton's Cricket Number, don't be alarmed, and think you're going to have the same thing over again. I never copy or cribb. This number of mine is as different from Wharton's as chalk from cheese.

Wharton got a duxegg the other day. And yet he has the ordassity to air his views on cricket! This is, as Euclid would say, absurd. If you want to learn goff, you don't go to a fellow who can't swing a clubb. If you want to learn swimming, you don't go to a chap who sinks like a stoan. And on that same prinpsile, if you want to know anything about cricket, you don't go to a fellow who makes a duxegg. You want somebody who knows how to make senturies—and I'm your man!

I shall make a grate hit—not only on the cricket-field, but with this number. I feel it in my boans that it's a real "gem." It will attract you like a "magnet"; it will be "popular"; and there will be many "chuckles" about it; and you will say, "Billy Bunter's Weekly" is indeed the 'boys' friend'! There! Isn't that jolly clever?

Pass this number on to all your kricket-ing pals. You had better take some sergical bandages with you, bekwase they are bound to split their sides!

A-dew until next week, dear readers! And don't, for goodness' sake, write and tell me that my Cricket Number's a frost!

Your pluzip pal,

YOUR EDITOR.

## DETENTION!

By Teddy Grace.  
(The Humorist of Rookwood.)

When your chums are at the wicket, playing grand, exciting cricket, And the sun is blazing brightly over-head;

When that porpoise, Tubby Muffin, in the tuckshop sits a-stuffin', Till the worthy sergeant says, "You've overfed!"

When there's many a sturdy figure rowing strongly and with vigour

On a certain peaceful river I could mention;

When the afternoon is topping, it's appalling to be stopping

In the Form-room, serving sentence of Detention!

When you hear the crash and clatter of the enterprising batter

As he hits the ball for 6 to the pavilion;

When he means to go on smiting till the scorer's tired of writing,

And the runs that he has made exceed a million;

When the bowler's arm is tiring, and the fieldsmen are perspiring,

And they're longing for a stoppage or suspension—

Why, it makes you groan in anguish, as you have to pine and languish

And endure the beastly ordeal of Detention!

Though the world is bright and jolly, yet to you it's melancholy

As you sit and grind out yards and yards of Latin;

While the fountain-pen that lingers in your cramped, reluctant fingers

You would dearly love to change, and grasp a bat in.

It's an absolute disaster, and you're furious with the master

Who punished you that day for inattention;

There's a better way to punish than the absolutely Hunnish

And intolerable sentence of Detention!

**AN AMAZING CRICKET MATCH!**



Billy Bunter's Weekly.

V.

The Greyfriars Herald.

Described by FATTY WYNN.

I WISH I had never consented to play for Billy Bunter's ragtime eleven. But it is now too late for regrets.

The match between the WEEKLY and the HERALD took place at Greyfriars. I know it will sound like boasting, but I was the only fellow in the WEEKLY team who knew the first thing about cricket. Bunter & Co. were hopeless.

It wasn't really a match that we played. It was a howling farce. I managed to make a dozen runs, but got no support whatever from the others.

The HERALD team batted first. They didn't seem quite at their ease with my bowling, but Billy Bunter, who bowled at the other end, had scores of runs hit off him. Moreover, he bowled no less than thirty "wides," and so many "no-balls" that the scorer lost count.

The HERALD made 250 with only three wickets down, and both Wharton and Vernon-Smith hit up a century. Then they declared, and I told Bunter we were in for the licking of our lives. But he would have none of it. "We shall win hands down," he said confidently. "You come in first with me, Fatty, and I'll set you an example in century-making." Needless to add, the very first ball that was bowled sent Bunter's middle stump careering into space.

I want to forget that ludicrous match as quickly as possible. But I will show you how many runs we made, just to give you an idea of the team Bunter had got together.

W. G. Bunter, b. Singh	0
D. L. Wynn, not out	22
B. Trimble, b. Singh	0
R. Muffin, b. Singh	0
S. Bunter, run out	0
Wap Lung, c. and b. Cherry	0
A. Todd, b. Cherry	0
F. T. Fish, c. Nugent b. Cherry	0
H. Skinner, lbw. b. Cherry	1
S. Snoop, b. Singh	0
Dicky Nugent, b. Cherry	0

Total - 13

There was only one run scored, apart from my own contribution, and it was Skinner who made it. He flukily nicked the ball through the slips, and we just managed a single.

Next time Billy Bunter asks me to play cricket for his WEEKLY, I shall decline without thanks! I want to forget all about that wretched farce as quickly as possible.

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**CRICKET TERMS EXPLAINED!**

By Monty Lowther.  
(of the Shell, St. Jim's.)

"Cover point" is what a fellow does when he sits down on an inverted tin-tack.

"Caught in the deep." You often hear this expression. It refers to a fellow who is bathing out of his depth, and a shark catches him!

"A long hop." This is what Percy Mellish gives when he is being caned!

The term "l.b.w." means, "Luck becomes woeful."

"The middle stump was uprooted." This obviously refers to a visit to the dentist!

"Fifty went up on the board." Mr. Latham putting his pupils through a course of arithmetic, evidently!

"Tom Merry made a lovely drive." Either in the station hack or in Taggles' wheelbarrow!

"The ball got up awkwardly." I expect it felt a bit confused at being knocked down!

"The pitch was in good condition, because it had been under the roller." Yet when we put Baggy Trimble under the roller he complained that he felt quite ill!

"No ball." So I suppose they used a piece of rag tied round with string!

"Talbot passed his century." And we were always under the impression that he was only fifteen!

"The field began to spread out." First time we knew that a cricket-field was a contortionist!

"The umpire's hand went up." Evidently a sign of surrender, when he saw that the batsman was about to brain him with the bat!

**THE ENEMY OF GLOOM AND THE DUMPS—**

"Billy Bunter's Weekly."

**A GIANT OF THE PAST!**



By Eric Kildare.

(Captain of St. Jim's.)

TURN up the records of St. Jim's cricket—burrow into them until you get as far back as the year 1895—and you will come upon the name of Terry O'Connor.

This fellow was captain of cricket, and to smash all existing records seemed to be his vision, his aim, and his creed. Anyway, he put up some truly amazing performances.

The record for schoolboy cricket is the gigantic one of 617 not out, made by A. E. J. Collins, who afterwards fell in the Great War.

Terry O'Connor did not nearly approach this feat, but he scored 220 runs in one day, and that's "going some," as our American friends would say.

Collins, I believe, took three days to compile his runs, so that O'Connor's feat compares very favourably with it.

Have you ever heard of seven centuries being scored in seven successive matches? Well, this is what Terry O'Connor managed to do. And in that season—the season of 1895—St. Jim's won every single match. There wasn't even a drawn game.

But O'Connor's brilliance did not begin and end with his batting. He was a great all-rounder. He was at home in any position on the field, but his greatest success was at cover-point. It was fatal to put a ball in the air anywhere near O'Connor. High or low, he would snap it up with one hand, and toss it coolly back to the bowler, quite impervious to the frenzied shouts of "Well held, sir!"

At fielding, too, O'Connor was great. He would stop the ball when it was travelling at a velocity which would have scared most fellows. And his returns to the wicket were models of deadly accuracy.

O'Connor could also keep wicket very commendably, and whenever his side was in a tight corner he went on to bowl. But this was seldom necessary.

Some cricket scribe has said: "The success of a cricket team depends on its captain." I do not wholly subscribe to this view, because you might have an ideal captain and an indifferent set of players. But I will say that Terry O'Connor was one of the most popular captains the school ever had.

I wonder why it is that so many of these brilliant super-cricketers fizzle out after they leave school? When O'Connor left, he was never heard of again. One can only conclude that he took up a profession which did not allow him any time off for cricket.

It would be very nice if O'Connor were to pay us a surprise visit one of these days. Perhaps he will. If so, he will see that the high traditions of St. Jim's cricket are being worthily upheld by the fellows of the present generation.



BY  
**DICKY NUGENT,**  
Of the Second, Greyfriars.

**A** CRICKET match was in progress between St. Sam's School and Clarendon College.

Clarendon had batted first, and made 200.

St. Sam's were now batting, and their score was 101 for nine wickets. So if you are any good at mathematicks, you will see that St. Sam's required egg-sactly 100 runs to win, and there was only one more man to go in.

This was Slogger of the Sixth. Let us focuss our attention on Slogger for a moment, for he is the sentral figger in the grate drama.

You will behold a big, beefy, brawny, beely fellow, with a little mistosh, about seventeen years of age. (I mean, Slogger was about seventeen—not his mistosh!)

St. Sam's had never yet lost a match. And I'll tell you why. Slogger had a magic bat—a bat with which he could do nothing wrong.

It didn't matter weather St. Sam's wanted a duzen to win, or a hundred, or five hundred. Slogger always nocked off the runs. The ball, directly it hit the magic bat, would go sailing over the pavilion roof.

So the St. Sam's fellows were not dismayed on this occasion. They knew they would win.

Slogger always went in last, and he always did the needful.

"Man in!" said Billy Blythe, the skipper of St. Sam's. "Go along, Slogger! You'll soon nock off that hundred!"

Slogger grinned as he buckled on his pads.

"My magic bat will do the trick," he said. And he hastily picked up the bat, which lay alongside him, and hurried out on to the playing-pitch.

The specked taters cheered him to the echo.

"Good old Slogger!"

"Only a hundred wanted!"

"Let's see some fireworks!"

Slogger took his stand at the wicket. He was carelessly confident. He knew he wouldn't have to worry about making any strokes. The magic bat would do all the work for him.

The bowler took a swift run and screwed himself up like a catherine-wheel.

The ball came wizzing along the turf, and then, to everybody's dismay, it nocked the middle stump clean out of the ground!

"How's that, umpire?"

"Ha, ha! I rather think it's out!" chuckled the umpire.

There was a look of blank bewilderment on the face of Slogger of the Sixth.

This was the first time the magic bat had ever let him down. He couldn't understand it.

On his way to the pavilion he inspected the bat very closely, only to find that it wasn't the magic bat at all.

Somebody had removed the magic bat, and substituted a common or garden one!

Slogger was simply furious.

"I have been duped, diddled, dished, and done!" he shouted.

"What's the trouble, old man?" asked Billy Blythe.

"Somebody has taken away my magic bat and put this retched lump of wood in its place. No wonder I got a duxegg! No wonder I was bowled first ball!"

There was quite a sensation among the crowd. The question, "Who done it?" passed from lip to lip.

Then up spake Prior of the Fourth, a fellow who was always poking his nose into everything.

"I say, Slogger, I think I know who changed the bats!"

Slogger seized the speaker by the collar and shook him like a rat.

"Speak up!" he hist.

"Yow-ow-ow! Don't shake me up like a blessed dice-box!" wailed Prior.

"While you were fielding, Slogger, I saw the Head sneak up to the pavilion—"

"The Head!"

"Yes. He had a bat in his hand, and he walked very fertively, as if he didn't want to be seen. When he came away from the pavilion, a few minnits later, he had another bat in his hand, but it was a different one."

Slogger released the skwirring Fourth-former.

"Thanks for your information, Prior," he said. "I'll go and tackle the Head at once!"

And he rushed away to the Head's study.

Dr. Benjamin Birchington, Bachelor

of Hearts, was seated at his desk, reading the Works of Thewsiddydees. He looked up with a start as Slogger burst into the room.

"Where's my magic bat, you rotter?" hooted Slogger.

"The Head turned pail.

"I—I—I—" he stammered.

"You've taken it!" roared Slogger.

"Don't dare to deny it! I can tell by the guilty look on your face."

The Head burst into tears.

"I—I own up!" he sobbed. "It was me what done it."

A paneful silence rained in the Head's study.

"Why did you do it, you mizzerable sneek-theef?" demanded Slogger.

"Well, it was like this," wimpered the Head. "I was fed-up with your magic bat. Three times this sezoon you've hit the ball on to my glass summer-house, and busted it. I couldn't stick it any longer. So I decided to swop your bat for another, so that you wouldn't be able to make any more big hits."

"And my bat—my magic bat?"

With a drammatick jesture, the Head pointed to the fireplace.

"Behold the last dying embers!" he said.

Slogger fairly choked with rage.

"You mean to say you've had the awful cheek to burn my magic bat?" he roared.

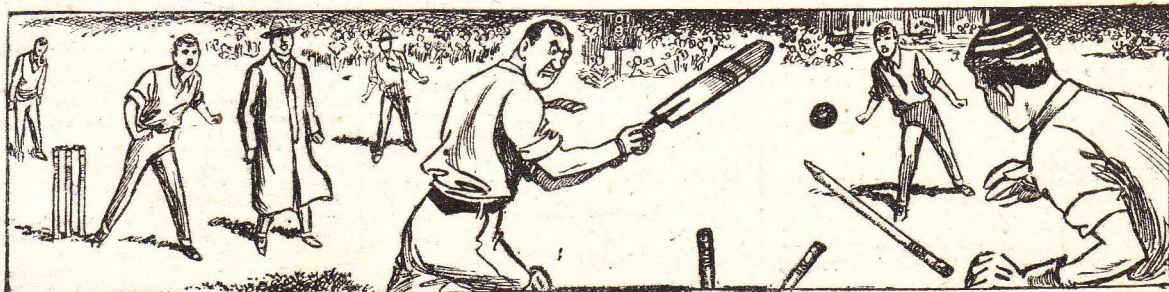
Slogger danced to and fro like a cat on hot brix.

"I hardly know how to deal with you, you rotter!" he said. "It's only your gray hares that protect you from a jolly good hiding. We were licked this afternoon by Clarendon—and all through you! When I tell the fellows what you've done, I eggsect they'll make you run the gortlet!"

"Don't—don't tell them!" pleaded the Head. "Keep mum about it, Slogger, and I'll eggscuse you from lessons for the rest of the term!"

Slogger fell in with this arrangement. He kontented himself with tweeking the Head's nose, and then he marched out of the study. But it will be a long, long time before he recovers from the loss of his magic bat.

THE END.



**BOB KENRICK** made a great sensation when he arrived so dramatically at St. Jim's, but his strange refusal to play for his school, for the first match of the season, made him the most unpopular fellow in the form. He is made an outcast by all but one fellow. That fellow is Reginald Talbot, who befriends the boy who is under a cloud!

# SHUNNED BY THE SCHOOL!



By  
**MARTIN CLIFFORD.**

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

## THE FIRST CHAPTER. The House Match.

**D**UCK'S-EGGS are cheap to-day!"

George Figgins, the captain of the New House eleven, chuckled as he gazed after the retreating figure of Bob Kenrick, the new boy.

The first House match of the season had just started. Tom Merry, winning the toss, had opened the School House innings with Kenrick. And the new boy's stumps had been spreadeagled by Fatty Wynn.

"So that's the marvellous cricketer—the fellow whose name and photo were in all the papers—the brilliant boy batsman who was lionised by the British public?" said Dick Redfern. "Well, I don't think much of him."

Tom Merry, gripping his bat-handle fiercely, glared after the new boy as the latter walked slowly back, amid hoots and hisses, to the pavilion.

"The cad deliberately let us down!" he growled. "He could have made fifty, even off Fatty Wynn's bowling, if he had cared."

"Then why didn't he?" asked Figgins. "Because he wanted to go off and play for a professional team this afternoon, and we wouldn't let him. We insisted on him turning out for the School House. And this is how he takes his revenge! He deliberately goes and gets a duck!"

"Traitor to his side—what?" said Kerr. "Yes. I've just called him a traitor to his face, and he resented it, and wants to fight me," said Tom Merry. "Well, he shall have his opportunity. If he hadn't challenged me to fight, I should have challenged him!"

Tom Merry was very angry, and he looked it. His handsome face was clouded over. He was furious with Bob Kenrick for having given such a wretched exhibition at the wicket. A fag in the Second would have put up a better show.

Bob Kenrick had come to St. Jim's with the reputation of being the most brilliant boy batsman in the land. Much to the disgust of his schoolfellows, he showed no desire to play for St. Jim's. Instead, Kenrick had joined Wayland Wanderers, a team of paid players. He seemed to prefer playing cricket for money rather than for sheer love of the game.

That very afternoon the new boy had tried to escape to Wayland, to play for the Wanderers. But Tom Merry & Co. had forced him to come back and take part in the House match. A bat had been thrust into Kenrick's hand, and he had been hustled on to the pitch.

Great things were expected of this youthful prodigy. Had he made a century nobody would have been surprised. But he had not taken a single run.

It looked for all the world as if this was Kenrick's revenge for being forced to play. "Man in!" said Figgins.

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Talbot took the new boy's place at the wicket. He played out the rest of the over very cautiously. Steady batting was essential now if the School House were to redeem their bad start.

It was now Tom Merry's turn to take the bowling. He was up against Koumi Rao, and the dusky Indian knew a thing or two about bowling.

Tom Merry was in no mood to play careful cricket. He could not bring his thoughts to bear on the game. He was thinking of Bob Kenrick and of the forthcoming fight, and he was flustered and nervy.

Koumi Rao took a short, swift run, and sent down a scorcher. The batsman mistimed it badly, and the ball just shaved his off stump.

"Narrow squeak, that!" said Lawrence, who was keeping wicket.

Tom Merry tried to pull himself together. But his gaze persistently wandered to the pavilion, and to Bob Kenrick, who had now thrown himself into a deck-chair—a solitary figure, remote from his schoolfellows.

Down came Koumi Rao's second delivery, sure and swift and deadly. Tom Merry failed to get the full face of the bat to it, and he sliced the ball on to his wicket.

"How's that?"  
It was a superfluous question. The middle stump lay flat, with the other two sprawling over it.

Loud cheers from the New House supporters! Deep groans from the School House Partisans!

Tom Merry, with anything but an angelic expression on his face, strode back to the pavilion. He blamed Kenrick for his downfall. If the new boy had played the game, Tom would have had no cause to be flustered.

Jack Blake followed on, and he and Talbot began to put a better complexion on things.

The New House bowling was very good, and the fielding was keen and clean. But the score crept up slowly, and twenty runs were on the board before the Talbot-Blake partnership was dissolved.

Blake, trying to snatch a single, was smartly thrown out by Dick Redfern. "Three wickets down!" chortled Figgins. "If we can only shift Talbot, we shall have the whole side out for under fifty."

Dick Redfern glanced towards the pavilion, shading his eyes with his hand.

"Who is this coming forth to the sacrifice?" he said. "Unless my aged eyes deceive me, 'tis the noble Gussy. Shatter his stumps, Fatty!"

"I'll do my best," said the Falstaff of the New House.

Arthur Augustus came across from the pavilion, took his stand determinedly before the wicket, and faced the bowler.

No historian likes to record painful scenes. But he has to stick to facts. And the melancholy fact was that Arthur Augustus

was clean bowled by the very first ball he received.

Gussy could hardly be blamed for his failure. That particular ball of Fatty Wynn's was unplayable. It broke clean into the wicket from an unexpected angle, and sent the bails dancing in the air.

Arthur Augustus surveyed the wreckage with a look of blank amazement.

"Oh, bal Jove!" he gasped. "This is weally remarkable! I—I suppose I'm out?" "I suppose so!" assented the umpire, with a grin.

"Ha, ha, ha!"  
With a dazed expression on his noble countenance, Arthur Augustus beat a retreat to the pavilion.

The New House were tasting the sweets of success. But their appetites were not yet appeased.

Talbot refused to be shifted, but in spite of this the School House were dismissed for less than fifty. The total was 46, and Talbot had made half the runs off his own bat.

"Well, if we can't pass that paltry total," said Figgins, "I'll give up cricket, and start keeping white mice!"

Now came the tea interval. Bob Kenrick did not join the rest of the cricketers as they sat down at the tables under the trees. Like Eugene Aram in the poem, the new boy sat remote from all. He was looking very dejected. As in the case of all sensitive fellows, scorn and contempt stung him. And there could be no doubt that the St. Jim's fellows regarded him as a traitor to his side.

"If we lose this match, Tom Merry will blame me!" he muttered. "But we sha'n't lose it—not if I can help it! If only I can take a turn at bowling—"

But when the School House players took the field, Tom Merry did not ask Kenrick to bowl. He didn't dream of doing so. He was afraid that Kenrick would bowl as badly as he had batted—that he would continue to let his own side down.

Bob Kenrick was detailed to field on the boundary line. He hoped that some catches might come his way, so that he could show these fellows that he was really trying.

But the New House batsmen kept the ball on the carpet. They sent up no "skiers."

Figgins and Redfern opened the innings. And they batted briskly and with confidence. Indeed, it seemed as if they would win the match on their own, without the help of their Housemates.

Dick Redfern was in great form. Three times in succession he banded the ball to the boundary, and the New House supporters went wild with delight.

The score rose by leaps and bounds. When it reached 40 Figgins was cleverly caught by Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, in the slips. But Kerr came in, and he and Redfern soon hit off the requisite number of runs to give the New House the victory.

To All Clouds There's a Silver Lining! Read About Kenrick Next Week!



When Redfern made the winning hit, there was a roar of applause.

"Bravo, Reddy!"  
 "Good old New House!"  
 "Which is cock house now, Merry?"  
 Tom Merry frowned.  
 "It's all the fault of that beastly traitor Kenrick!" he remarked. "If he had chosen to play the game, the New House would never have got us out so cheaply."

"That's so!" said Manners. "The fellow wants a hiding!"  
 "And he's going to get one, too!" said Tom Merry grinning.

"You'll have it out this evening, in the gym, I suppose?" said Jack Blake, as the School House players came off.

"No— Here and now!" was the reply.  
 "A scrap with bare fists, Tommy?" said Monty Lowther, a trifle breathlessly.  
 "Yes—unless Kenrick would prefer kid gloves!"

Quite a crowd had collected in front of the pavilion. Bob Kenrick was there, and Tom Merry strode up to him.

"Now, you cad!" he said fiercely. "You challenged me to a scrap, and I'm ready for you right away!"

**THE SECOND CHAPTER.  
 The Fight in the Pavilion.**

**B**OB KENRICK flushed.  
 "If you'd like to apologise for calling me a traitor——" he began.

Tom Merry's lip curled scornfully.  
 "Trying to wriggle out of it already," he said. "I've no intention of apologising. What is there to apologise for? You are a traitor, and you know it!"

"Hear, hear!" said Manners. "And now he's trying to back out of the fight!"

"Nothing of the sort!" said Kenrick hotly. "But just because a fellow happens to get a duck's-egg——"

"You did it deliberately!" shouted Jack Blake.

"That's a lie!"

"My hat! If you accuse me of lying, I'll knock your head off!" said Blake wrathfully.

"Stand back, deah boy!" said D'Arcy, drawing Blake back by his cricked belt. "You mustn't queeah Tom Mewwy's pitch, you know!"

"Wish I had the handling of the cad instead of Merry!" growled Blake.

Tom Merry was still glaring at the new boy.

"Have you anything else to say, before we get to business?" he demanded.

"Only this. I didn't deliberately let the team down. The reason I got a duck was that I played with a strange bat. I wanted my own, which I'm thoroughly used to, but you wouldn't let me go and get it. I'm like a fish out of water when I'm without my bat. Consequently I came a cropper!"

Tom Merry gave a snort.

"Do you expect me to believe that?" he said. "Because I don't! It's just an excuse. You're supposed to be the best cricketer in the land for your age and yet you can't score in an ordinary House match!"

"I don't think that's anything to go by," interposed Talbot quietly. "Even Jack Hobbs gets a duck sometimes!"

Tom Merry turned on the speaker almost fiercely.

"Are you sticking up for this cad?" he exclaimed.

"Not exactly!" said Talbot. "I don't approve of him going off to play for a team of pro's. It's rank disloyalty to the school. But I think he's telling the truth about the duck he got this afternoon. I don't believe it was done intentionally, out of revenge for being forced to play."

"Thank you for that, Talbot," said Bob Kenrick.

But in all that throng he found no one else who had a good word to say for him. In every face he read scorn and accusation.

"Are you ready, Kenrick?" growled the Leader of the Shell.

"Quite!" said the new boy, throwing himself into a fighting attitude.

"Wait a minute!" called Manners, in alarm. "You can't scrap here, Tommy! You're right in the public eye. Better come inside the pavilion."

It was a sensible suggestion, and the juniors crowded into the building.

Tom Merry and Bob Kenrick faced each other in their flannels. It was to be a bare-

first bout, reminiscent of the days of the Corinthians.

There seemed little to choose between the two juniors. Kenrick was slightly taller, but he was less sturdy.

The crowd looked on with eager interest, wondering what was going to happen. Tom Merry's reputation as a fighting-man was well known to them. Bob Kenrick was an unknown quantity. The newspapers had been full of his prowess as a cricketer, but no mention had been made of his boxing abilities.

Monty Lowther appointed himself master of the ceremonies.

"Better split it into rounds," he said. "Each round three minutes, with a minute rest in between."

"Oh, cut out the formalities, and let's start!" said Tom Merry impatiently.

"All serene, Tommy. Time!"

Tom Merry led off with his left. He forced the fighting at the outset, and Bob Kenrick retreated step by step, warding off a shower of blows.

For a full minute Tom Merry attacked, and the new boy successfully covered up. But Tom Merry broke through his guard at last, and got home a real "pile-driver" to the jaw.

"Hurrah!"

"That's the stuff, Tommy!"

"Let him have it hot!"

There was nobody to cheer the new boy on. Talbot was partially sympathetic. He was a study-mate of Bob Kenrick, and he felt drawn towards him, in that strange fashion in which people like one another without quite knowing why. But even Talbot had to admit that the new boy's conduct was not sportsmanlike. He had no right to play for a professional team when his own school had need of his services.

Another smashing blow from Tom Merry knocked his opponent into the spectators, who had formed a human ring.

The fellows jumped clear, expecting to see the new boy land on the floor in a heap.

But Kenrick made a wonderful recovery, and returned to the fray.

"Bai Jove! The boundah's got plenty of pluck!" exclaimed Arthur Augustus D'Arcy half-admiringly. "He may be a twaitah, but he isn't a coward."

"Time!" called Lowther.

Tom Merry, his face unmarked, dropped into the chair which Manners held ready for him.

Bob Kenrick was not unscathed. A dark bruise was forming over his cheek-bone. And his left eye was half-closed. He tottered rather unsteadily on his feet, and would have remained standing, had not Talbot found him a chair, and pushed him into it.

"I believe Talbot's hand in glove with the rotter!" said Aubrey Racke, with a sneer.

Talbot faced round upon the speaker.

"Another word from you, Racke, and you'll go out of this pavilion on your neck!" he said.

Racke, knowing Talbot to be a hard hitter, wisely subsided.

Tom Merry, fidgetting in his chair, chafed and fumed at the minute rest which Monty Lowther had ordered. He was eager to finish off the job which he had started so well.

Kenrick, on the other hand, badly needed the respite.

Talbot fetched a damp sponge, and applied it to the new boy's face. He knew he was making himself unpopular by performing these ministrations. But Talbot had a strong sense of fair play. He didn't see why Bob Kenrick should be denied the attentions he so badly needed.

The minute's rest seemed like five to Tom Merry, and like a few seconds to his opponent.

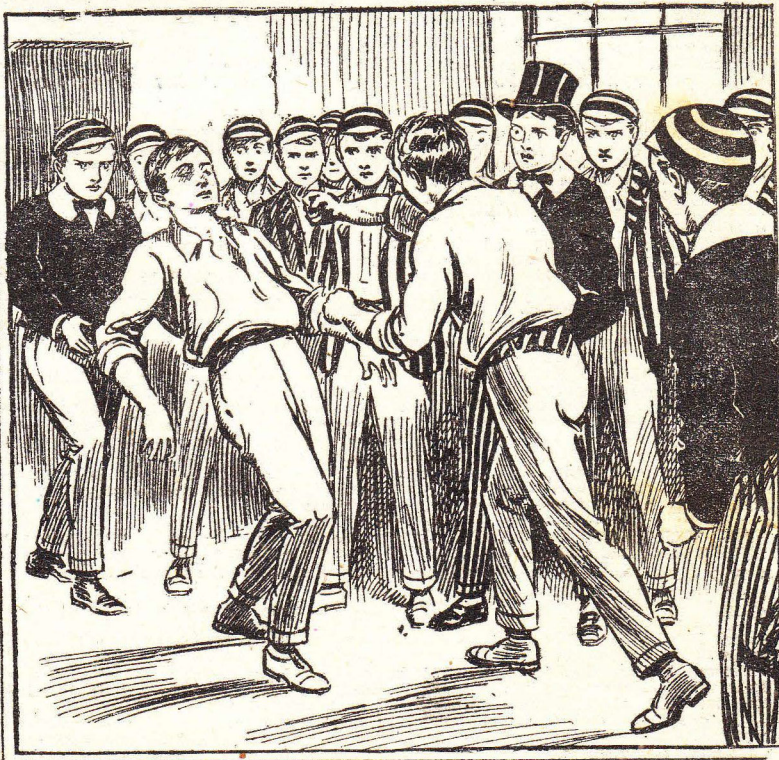
Monty Lowther called "Time!" and they were at it again, hammer-and-tongs.

Kenrick stood his ground this time. There was no retreating round the ring. For the first time, he started to attack, and there was plenty of ginger in his blows. Tom Merry parried some of them.

Others he was unable to dodge, and they landed on his face and chest with terrific force. Tom was more surprised than hurt. He had not expected this sudden revival on the part of his opponent.

Three minutes of hard fighting, with no quarter asked or given—that summed up the second round.

Honours had been pretty even in this round. But Tom Merry showed fewer signs of wear and tear than Kenrick. The latter



**THE FIGHT IN THE PAVILION!** The long and bitter struggle was brought to an end in the fifth round. Tom Merry landed a smashing blow to the temple which utterly dazed Bob Kenrick. He staggered, and, as he retreated backwards, groping feebly with his hands, Tom followed up with a straight left which sent the new boy reeling to the floor. (See Chapter 2.)

**The Secret of Bob Kenrick is Brought to Light Next Week!**

had received heavy punishment, for he had almost entirely neglected his defence. And when Tom Merry hit, he hit hard.

"Buck up, Tommy!" said Manners, as he fanned his chum's face. "Time you put him on his back, you know!"

"He's putting up a better show than I expected," panted Tom Merry.

"But you've got him beat," said Manners. "He won't last another round!"

But Manners was wrong.

For two further rounds of hammer-and-tongs fighting, Bob Kenrick kept going. Physically, the fellow was all but "whacked," and it was his fighting spirit that kept him on his feet. Kenrick's will-power was wonderful. It was a glowing example of the triumph of mind over matter.

At the end of the fourth round, the spectators began to look anxious. Not that they thought Tom Merry to be in danger of defeat. It was the battered appearance of the fighters that made them anxious. Both were in a sorry plight.

"Look here, this ought to stop!" said Talbot.

"I'm going to lick him!" muttered Tom Merry, between his set teeth.

"But your face, dear boy!" protested Arthur Augustus.

"Eh? What's the matter with my face?"

"It looks as if it had been undah a steam-wallah!"

"Does Kenrick's look any better?"

"Gweat Scott, no! If this swap goes on much longer, we sha'n't be able to recog-nise him!"

Tom Merry insisted upon going on. And Kenrick showed no desire to throw up the sponge, though by this time he was a wreck.

But the long and bitter struggle was brought to an end in the fifth round.

Tom Merry landed a smashing blow to the temple which utterly dazed Bob Kenrick. He staggered, and as he retreated backwards, groping feebly with his hands, Tom Merry followed up with the knock-out blow. It was a straight left, which took Kenrick full in the chest, and sent him reeling into the arms of Talbot.

"All over!" said Monty Lowther, in tones of great relief. "You couldn't have gone on hammering at each other much longer, you know!"

There were cheers for Tom Merry, but they were subdued. The fellows had become awed by the ferocity of the encounter. Fights with bare fists were the exception, rather than the rule, at St. Jim's. And seldom had the fellows seen such heavy punishment given and received as in this bout.

But Tom Merry had been determined to punish the fellow whom he believed to be a traitor; and now that it was over, he put on his blazer and walked rather groggily from the pavilion.

Bob Kenrick lay limp and inert in Talbot's arms. He had fought with great pluck, though everyone had foreseen what the end would be.

The new boy's lips moved.

"Licked!" he muttered.

"But you were game to the last," said Talbot. "And, anyway, there's no disgrace in being licked by Tom Merry. He's the best fighting-man in the Shell. Better come along with me to the bath-room. You'll need to take things quietly for a bit after this."

With a great effort Bob Kenrick pulled himself together, and tottered from the pavilion, leaning heavily on Talbot's arm. They passed through a throng of their schoolfellows amid a frozen silence.

### THE THIRD CHAPTER. The Outcast of St. Jim's!

"YOU'RE a queer beggar, Kenrick!"

It was Talbot who spoke.

Twenty-four hours had elapsed since the fight in the pavilion, though Bob Kenrick's face still bore obvious traces of the encounter.

The new boy was deep in the armchair in Study No. 9, reading a book, when Talbot came in. Talbot regarded him curiously.

"As I say, you're a queer beggar!" he repeated.

"Don't!" said Kenrick.

"Eh?"

"Don't you know that I've been sent to Coventry? You'll share my own fate if you're caught speaking to me—you'll be boycotted by all the fellows."

Talbot smiled.

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"I'll risk that," he said. "Look here, Kenrick, I can't quite make you out. I don't believe you're half so black as you are painted—in fact, I don't believe you're black at all. You're a stunning cricketer, I know, and a good cricketer is generally a good sportsman, in the broader sense. But there's some mystery about you—a few things that want explaining. I don't want to pry into your private affairs, but—"

"Go ahead!" said Kenrick. "I sha'n't be offended. You're the only fellow here who has gone out of his way to be decent to me; and anyway, it's a treat to have someone to talk to."

Talbot dropped into a chair opposite the new boy.

"You've behaved jolly curiously from the start," he said. "Instead of coming to St. Jim's by train, you walked—walked all the way from Winchester! We asked you why you did it, and you said it was to save the railway fare. So everybody jumped to the conclusion that you were mean."

Kenrick nodded.

"Then you happened to break Taggles' window, when we were playing cricket in the quad," Talbot went on. "And you didn't offer to pay for a new pane of glass. That incident was taken as further evidence of your meanness."

"That's so."

"And then, to crown everything, you go and join a team of paid professionals, rather than play for your school," said Talbot. "Of course, the fellows can't get over that. They think it's the absolute limit—downright disloyal—and you can hardly blame them."

"I'm not blaming them," said Kenrick quietly.

There was a long pause. It was Talbot who broke the silence.

"Dash it all, I can't bring myself to believe that you're really mean and disloyal, Kenrick!" he said. "There's something behind all this that we don't know—something you're keeping to yourself. Am I right?"

"Yes."

"Well, I wish you'd explain what it is. I'm your friend—at least, I want to be. And if I can be of any help—"

"You've been a real brick to me already," said Kenrick, with feeling. "But I don't see why I should burden you with all my troubles. My pater used to say that a fellow who couldn't fight his own battles wasn't worth that much!" And Kenrick flicked his fingers.

Talbot smiled.

"That's all very well," he said. "But very few of us are so strong that we can always stand alone, without need of the help of others. Besides, if we're going to be pals—and I think we're pals already—it's only right that we should have no secrets from each other."

Bob Kenrick sat for some time in deep reflection.

"Very well, Talbot," he said, at length. "I'll tell you the whole story, on one condition."

"And that is?"

"That you give me your word of honour not to pass it on to anybody."

"I promise you, honour bright, that I'll keep it to myself," said Talbot.

"Good enough! Well, I'll tell you the reason why I walked from Winchester—why I didn't offer to pay for the broken window—why I joined a professional cricket club rather than play for St. Jim's. It isn't meanness—it's a much simpler explanation."

"Namely?"

"Poverty."

Talbot gave a start. Why hadn't he thought of this before? He could have kicked himself for not tumbling to it at the outset.

"I'll speak to you quite frankly," said Kenrick, "because I know it will go no farther. To begin with, I have neither mater nor pater. Strictly speaking, I suppose I ought to be at a charity school. But I was ambitious—I wanted to get to St. Jim's. So I swotted like the very dickens, and eventually managed to win a scholarship. It carried no money award with it—it simply provided for an education at St. Jim's."

"Go on!" said Talbot quietly.

"Well, when the time came for me to come here, I hadn't a penny in my pocket. My guardian is an old skintif. I managed to squeeze enough out of him to buy my Etons and my cricket flannels, and that was all. He didn't approve of my buying the flannels

—he meant that money to go towards my railway-fare. So I had to sacrifice either the flannels or the train journey, and I decided to buy the flannels and walk to St. Jim's."

"My hat!"

"As for Taggles' window," Kenrick went on, "I wanted to pay for it, but—"

The new boy turned out his empty pockets with a rueful gesture.

"And I joined the professional team," said Kenrick, "because it was my only means of making money. Not for myself. I'd be quite ready to struggle along here without a cent. But I happen to have a brother, a good many years older than myself, and he's out of a job."

"Oh!"

Talbot understood the situation quite clearly.

Here was no mean-souled fellow, but a very generous-hearted one. Talbot had himself experienced the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune in his time.

"My brother has tramped the country in search of a job," said Kenrick. "It has worn out his patience and his shoe-leather. You've no idea of the rebuffs he has met with! Poor? Why, he's been absolutely down and out! And he's only one of thousands!"

Talbot nodded.

"They talk of the poor being dishonest!" said Kenrick bitterly. "Many's the time my brother has been tempted to take a loaf off a baker's cart when he's been ravenously hungry. But he never did; he knew it would land him in prison. They talk of the poor being slovenly. How can a fellow keep his togs clean and neat when they are exposed to all weathers? Oh, my brother's been through it—hard! And he's going through it now. And while I can make a little money to help him, I mean to do it! They stopped me once—they stopped me from going over to Wayland yesterday to play cricket—but they sha'n't stop me again!"

Kenrick was on his feet. His eyes were gleaming.

"So now you know why I choose to be a paid professional, and why I do a lot of things that are accounted mean," he concluded.

Talbot went forward, and took the new boy's hand.

"I understand perfectly," he said. "But look here, Kenrick. It's not right that you should remain under a cloud. Let me explain all the circumstances to the fellows, and—"

"No, no!"

"But why not?"

"Poverty isn't a thing to be paraded before everybody."

"But it's nothing to be ashamed of."

"True. But I don't want to pose before all the fellows as being a Good Samaritan to an unemployed brother. I've told you, Talbot, and that's as far as it will go."

"But you'll have a rotten time of it here unless you explain."

Kenrick shrugged his shoulders.

"I can face it," he said. "I'm not soft."

"Then you'll carry on playing for Wayland Wanderers?"

"Yes. I don't suppose Tom Merry will ask me to turn out for St. Jim's on Saturday after the duck I got yesterday. By the way, what I said about the strange bat was true. I'm quite attached to my own bat, and I can't use any other."

"I knew you didn't deliberately let the side down," said Talbot. "Well, I suppose we must start our prep."

Gore and Skimpole came into the study at that moment, and nothing more was said on the subject of Bob Kenrick's private affairs.

When Saturday came, Kenrick's name did not appear on the list of St. Jim's players—for which he was thankful. It would leave him free to go over to Wayland.

Those were dark days for Bob Kenrick. But for the warm friendship of Talbot, life would have been impossible.

St. Jim's could not understand Talbot's attitude. It was all very well, they said, for a fellow to be a champion of the under-dog; but when the under-dog had proved himself a hopeless outsider, all decent fellows ought to wash their hands of him.

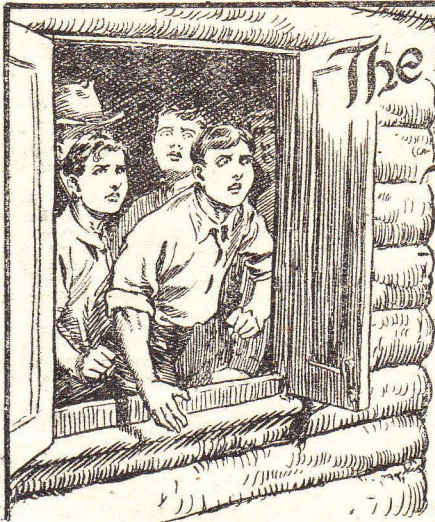
But the cloud which hung over Bob Kenrick was shortly to be lifted. And there was a big surprise in store for St. Jim's.

THE END.

(You simply must not miss next week's first-class tale of the chums of St. Jim's.)

"Kenrick for St. Jim's!"—a Story of a Great Cricket Match—Next Week!

There has been a GRIM STRUGGLE at the Backwoods School between the CEDAR CREEK CHUMS and the tyrannical MR. GUNTEN for many weeks, and still Frank Richards & Co. are holding out! OLD MAN GUNTEN makes another DESPERATE MOVE to bring about a surrender—but—!



# The Trick That Failed!

Further exciting scenes at The Cedar Creek Lumber School this week.



## THE FIRST CHAPTER. No Grub for Yen Chin!

"POOR lill' Chinee velly hungry, oh, yes!"

Thus Yen Chin, the Chow of Cedar Creek, in piteous tones. The Chinee was sprawled on the floor of the lumber schoolhouse.

Frank Richards & Co. were in deep conversation by the window, and did not hear Yen Chin's remark.

There were serious expressions on the faces of the three chums.

The present state of affairs at the school in the backwoods gave them plenty of food for thought.

The lumber school had gone "on strike" against the dismissal of Miss Meadows.

Mr. Gunten and Mr. Peckover—the master who was to take the place of the school-mistress—had endeavoured to force the juniors into surrender, without success.

Frank Richards & Co. had held the fort against all comers, and were prepared to do so in future, providing they could obtain sufficient food to satisfy their appetites.

Had Chunky Todgers been there the situation would have been far more serious, for Chunky always ate enough for four or five.

It was Chunky who had created the food shortage.

The fat junior had succeeded in spending a short time alone in the kitchen.

But, however short the time had been, it had been sufficient for Chunky to "polish off" pretty nearly all the remaining stock of food.

With wrathful indignation some of the juniors had suggested lynching Chunky Todgers.

Yen Chin proposed killing him, and, for the sake of a little humour, the other juniors had backed him up.

Needless to say, Chunky had become terror-stricken at such a suggestion.

In fear of his life, he dashed away from the school, and streaked for home as fast as his fat legs could carry him.

He had left the juniors roaring with laughter, but the smiles soon disappeared from their faces as they discussed the present food situation.

If they were to carry on with the siege, and force Old Man Gunten to accede to their demands, then food must be obtained—and quickly, too.

During the previous night Frank Richards & Co. had made an effort to get away from the school for the purpose of replenishing the larder.

They had had the misfortune, however, to fall foul of two rascals named Four Kings and Dave Dunn, and had been forced to return.

Now day had dawned once again, and the fear of being captured by Old Man Gunten made it risky to make another attempt to get away before nightfall.

Meanwhile, there were aching pains in the juniors' stomachs, and not-enough food to pacify them.

Small wonder, therefore, that Frank Richards and his chums were looking very serious.

Suddenly Frank Richards felt a clutch at his arm, and turned round, to find Yen Chin standing beside him.

"Chinee hungry," said Yen Chin meekly.

"Well, you're not the only one!" replied Frank Richards shortly.

"Poor lill' Chinee velly, velly hungry!" said Yen Chin.

"Wantee foodee velly badee! Bob gettee me some, oh, yes?"

"Look here, kid," said Bob Lawless firmly, "it can't be did! We've got just about enough for one meal. We shall have to hold on to that till we get some more."

"I guess that's hoss sense!" said Eben Hacke.

"If we eat up all our grub, how the merry dickens are we going to hold out?" said Bob Lawless grimly.

"We're going to do nothing of the kind, Lawless!" said Eben Hacke.

"If you suggest—"

"I don't," broke in Bob Lawless, "I'm merely telling the Chink what will happen if he starts scoffing the grub."

"Pool lill' Chinee fallee ill if no eatee!" whined Yen Chin.

"Gittee velly badee—perhaps die!"

"We shall have to risk that!"

"Poor lill' Chinee helpee himself to glub, then!" said Yen Chin.

"Lill' Chinee know where glub keppee. Chinee goee and—"

Bob Lawless made a grab at the Chinee's shoulder and dragged him back.

"I guess you'll do nothing of the kind!" he said emphatically.

"Lettee me go!"

"You're staying with us!"

Yen Chin turned a pleading look in Frank Richards' direction.

"Handsome Flankee gettee me glub?" he asked.

"Sorry, kid; grub's too short!"

"Handsome Beau," said the Chinee, smiling affably at Vere Beauclere, "you gettee pool lill' Chinee glub?"

Vere Beauclere grinned and shook his head.

"Better ask Bob," he replied.

"Ugly Bob velly obstinate," said Yen Chin.

"No gettee—"

"There's somebody coming along the trail!" exclaimed Frank Richards suddenly.

"It looks like—"

"Jerusalem crickets!" said Eben Hacke, in surprise.

"It's an Indian!"

"It is, by gum!" ejaculated Bob Lawless.

"It's Injun Dick! What the merry dickens does he want?"

"I wonder," said Vere Beauclere.

The juniors waited eagerly by the window, whilst Injun Dick jumped off his horse and strolled towards the schoolhouse.

## THE SECOND CHAPTER. A Fateful Message!

"GREAT Jophers!" exclaimed Eben Hacke, as the Indian, drawing his tattered blanket round him, neared the window. "He's got a note."

Injun Dick waved a letter in his hand. "Perhaps Old Man Gunter's given in, and sent us a note to say so," suggested Vere Beauclere.

"Cheer-ho, Injun Dick!" sang out Frank Richards.

"What's the game?"

"Injun thirsty," said the Redskin, moistening his dry lips with his tongue.

"Oh, rats!" exclaimed Frank Richards.

"You're never otherwise. What's that note you've got in your hand?"

"Letter for young white chief," said Injun Dick, pointing a grubby forefinger at Bob Lawless.

"For me?" exclaimed Bob.

"Co-rect!" said Bob.

"Hand it over, then."

Injun Dick made no attempt to do so.

"Injun thirsty," he said.

"Plenty of water in the creek," said Bob Lawless shortly.

"If that note is for me, you'd better hand it over."

"Give Injun twenty-five cents," said the Redskin.

"Injun bully boy with glass eye. Hide like the wind to bring note to young white chief."

"I don't think!" said Bob Lawless disbelievingly.

"Injun hire horse in Purville," went on the Redskin, still holding the note firmly in his hand.

"What the dickens were you doing in Purville?" demanded Frank Richards.

"That's twenty miles away, isn't it, Bob?"

"Nearly," said Bob.

"I guess Injun Dick's pulling our legs. He doesn't usually get much farther than the Red Dog, at Thompson."

"Injun work," said the Redskin.

"Injun meet white chief's father."

"You met my father?" demanded Bob incredulously.

"Co-rect," said the Redskin.

"Great white chief's father meet with accident. Bully boy with glass eye try save him. Injun too late."

"What?" ejaculated Bob Lawless, his face turning pale.

"Injun too late to save great white chief," went on the Redskin.

"Fell off horse. Horse kick great white chief in stomach. White chief bad—write note for Injun."

"By gum!" exclaimed Bob Lawless.

"You're dreaming—you're—"

"Injun tell frozen truth," said the Redskin.

"Young white chief read note. See Injun speak truth."

Bob Lawless' face was deathly pale now.

"Well, hand the note over," he said impatiently.

"Injun thirsty," said the Redskin.

"Hang your blessed thirst!" exclaimed Bob Lawless irritably. "If you don't give me that note I'll jolly well come out and take it from you."

"Injun want drink," insisted the Redskin.

"Injun dry."

"By gum!" cried Bob Lawless. "I'm not going to put up with any more of this!"

Bob slid his leg over the window-ledge. Injun Dick backed away.

"Injun take twenty cents," he said.

"Come here, you coyote!" roared Bob, slipping to the ground.

"Injun take fifteen cents."

"You'll take a thump on the cabeza if you're not careful!" exclaimed Bob, making a grab at the Redskin. "Give me that note! D'you hear?"

"Young white chief welcome to note," said Injun Dick, realising that further argument would avail him little. "Injun still thirsty!"

"Oh, rats!" growled Bob Lawless, snatching the note from the Redskin's hand, and commencing to read the words it contained.

Next moment he staggered back, dropping the note from his hand.

"Bob!" muttered Frank Richards. "What—what's the matter?"

Bob Lawless pulled himself together quickly.

"My popper!" he muttered.

"It's true, then, Bob, what Injun Dick said?" murmured Frank Richards.

"Every word," said Bob Lawless, in broken tones. "He's been kicked in the stomach by his horse at Purville. He's not expected to live, and—"

"Bob!"

"I—I must go to him at once," said Bob Lawless quickly. "My mother!" he added, turning to Injun Dick. "Have you told her? Have—"

"Injun tell young white chief's mother," said the Redskin solemnly. "She go see great white chief."

"Oh dear!" moaned Bob Lawless. "I shall have to go home for my horse, and—"

"Injun lend young white chief horse," said the Redskin, with unusual willingness.

Bob Lawless brightened up at once.

"Good!" he said. "Where is it?"

"Injun want ten dollars," said the Redskin craftily. "Injun poor man. Lose work if no horse."

"Ten dollars," said Bob Lawless, feeling in his pockets. "I—I've only got five. Will you take those?"

"No take less," said the Redskin, shaking his head. "Injun poor, but Injun generous."

"Oh dear!" groaned Bob Lawless. "How the dickens—"

"Here you are, Bob!" sang out Frank Richards, holding out a handful of money to his chum. "Take this, old son."

Bob Lawless took the money eagerly, and gave his cousin a grateful look as he did so.

"I—I don't know when I shall get back, you fellows," he said, in broken tones. "But whatever you do, stick it out. Don't give in to that galoot Gunten."

"No fear!" sang out the juniors.

Frank Richards reached out of the window and gripped his chum's hand.

"Good luck, Bob, old son!" he said as cheerfully as possible. "I—I hope you won't find uncle so bad as Injun Dick says."

"I hope not," said Bob Lawless.

But as he followed Injun Dick to the gate there was no doubt that Bob's hopes were feeble ones.

All thoughts of the barring-out were dismissed from Bob Lawless' mind.

His one aim was to get to his father as soon as possible, and very soon he was cantering down the trail at a quick speed, hoping against hope that he would find his father still alive when he reached Purville.

Meanwhile, there were anxious faces in the lumber schoolhouse at Cedar Creek.

Bob Lawless' trouble was shared by all the juniors.

Rancher Lawless was a favourite with them all, and the thought that Bob's father was ill—might even die—weighed heavily on their minds.

"Oh Jerusalem!" said Eben Hacke. "I guess I didn't expect this!"

"It's rotten—jolly rotten!" said Frank Richards dismally. "I do hope Bob's popper will pull through."

"So do I," said Vere Beauclerc.

"It ain't much good going on with the strike," said Eben Hacke miserably. "There ain't many of us left, and—"

"We're going on with it," said Frank Richards determinedly. "D'you think we're

going to knuckle under to that rotter Gunten just because we've lost old Bob?"

"No; but—"

"If you've had enough, Hacke," said Frank Richards, "you can buzz off!"

"I guess I ain't vamoosing the ranch yet awhile," said Eben Hacke at once. "If you galoots are banging on, Eben Hacke don't intend to light out."

"Good!"

"Anybody else want to throw up the sponge?" asked Frank Richards.

"Me wantee glub," whined Yen Chin. "Me velly hungry. Handsome Flanky, get me glub, and—"

"Well, I think we may as well have a little," said Frank Richards. "We shan't be able to fight Gunten and his gang on empty stomachs."

"That's true."

"It won't be much of a feed," said Frank Richards. "It'll fill a corner, though, and help us to carry on for a while."

The juniors trooped into the kitchen, and partook of a little of the stock of food remaining.

It could hardly be called a meal, but, nevertheless, it helped to appease the rebels' pangs of hunger.

The spirits of the schoolboy strikers were at very low ebb, but under Frank Richards' cheery influence they improved wonderfully.

And when at length the "meal" concluded, the juniors were resolved to carry on the strike until their demands were acceded to, and Miss Meadows was reinstated as schoolmistress at Cedar Creek.

### THE THIRD CHAPTER.

#### Surrender!

"JERUSALEM crickets! Here's that Injun again!"

Eben Hacke made the remark as the juniors arrived at the window of the schoolhouse once again.

Injun Dick was not walking as straight as before.

There was a decided lurch in his gait, which told the juniors only too plainly that he had been imbibing in firewater with the money he had received from Bob Lawless.

He pulled up before the window, and gave the juniors a sickly grin.

"Injun come again," he said.

"Well, what the dickens do you want this time?" asked Frank Richards sharply.

"Injun walk 'long trail," said the Redskin, swaying unsteadily on his feet. "Injun meet beautiful missy. Beautiful missy call Injun."

"Oh, stop that rot!" growled Frank Richards. "Come to the point!"

"Injun coming," said the Redskin. "Injun tell frozen truth. Beautiful missy give Injun note. Injun take note—"

"Who the merry dickens are you referring to?" demanded Frank Richards.

"Missy Meadows," said Injun Dick. "She wait for buggy take her to Thompson. She in great hurry—going long journey. Wah! I have spoken!"

"You've spoken a lot of rot, if that's anything!" said Frank Richards.

"Injun speak words of wisdom. Injun bring note for young white chiefs."

"A note from Miss Meadows?"

Injun Dick nodded his head in assent.

"Well, hand it over, then," said Frank Richards firmly.

"Injun thirsty—Injun want twenty-five cents," said Injun Dick determinedly.

"Missy Meadows say young white chiefs give Injun twenty-five cents. Injun wait. Injun Dick bully rook!"

"Oh, rats!" said Frank Richards disdainfully. "Miss Meadows wouldn't ask us to give you money."

"I guess not," said Eben Hacke.

"Beautiful missy write down on paper," said the Redman. "All O. K. Injun tell truth, you bet!"

"Well, show us the note, then," said Frank Richards. "If Miss Meadows says you're to have the money, we'll give it you. If not—"

Frank Richards paused as Injun Dick drew a piece of paper from the folds of his blanket, and proceeded to double it in half.

Then he held the folded note in front of the juniors.

Frank Richards read the words on the paper, words which had been scrawled in pencil, and which were hardly legible.

A serious frown came over his face as he

at length deciphered the last word in the note, for this is how the message ran:

"Give Injun Dick twenty-five cents. Injun thirsty."

"My hat!" exclaimed Frank Richards, giving the Redskin a hard look. "Miss Meadows didn't write those words."

"Missy write," said Injun Dick. "Missy in hurry—write quickly."

"Bosh!" exclaimed Frank Richards. "Miss Meadows could write better than that with her eyes shut. You've written those words yourself."

"Injun no can," said the Redskin, backing away slightly. He did not quite like the angry gleam in Frank Richards' eyes.

"Well, you won't get a penny out of us," said Frank Richards. "You're a scheming rascal, Injun Dick, and I guess you'll find yourself in the calaboose one of these days if you aren't careful!"

"Injun honest. Injun bully boy with glass eye," said the Redskin.

"Don't talk such utter rot!" snapped Frank Richards. "Give me that note you've got there, or—"

"Injun wait for twenty-five cents," said the Redskin. "Young white chief give—

Wow! Yooooooop!"

Before Injun Dick could move Frank Richards had shot through the window, and hurled himself at the Redskin.

With a thud the two landed on the ground, Frank Richards uppermost.

Frank made a snatch at the note in Injun Dick's hand, and, rising to his feet, commenced to read the message it contained.

Next instant his face changed colour, and he uttered an exclamation of surprise.

"What's the matter, Frank?" asked Vere Beauclerc.

"My hat!" exclaimed Frank Richards. "This note's from Miss Meadows, and she says—"

"Miss Meadows," said Eben Hacke. "Then that thar Injun was tellin' the truth, after all."

"Well, about the first part of the letter," said Frank Richards slowly. "That's in Miss Meadows' handwriting. The bit about the money Injun Dick wrote himself."

"Injun Dick no write," said the red man.

"Injun no can."

"I guess you'd better vamoose the ranch, Injun Dick," said Eben Hacke. "You ain't exactly welcome hyer. Read out the note, Richards!"

"Right-ho!" said Frank. "This is how it runs:

"My dear boys,—Whilst I very much appreciate your loyalty to me, I must say how much I resent the means you are adopting to get me reinstated as schoolmistress at Cedar Creek. In fact, were you successful in your efforts, I could not think of returning to the school after the way you have behaved. I have accepted a post at Montreal, and, therefore, am leaving Cedar Creek for good. I should advise you to cease your disgraceful behaviour, and accept Mr. Peckover as your headmaster. Otherwise, your actions may have most unpleasant results.—Yours sincerely,

"E. MEADOWS."

For a few moments none of the juniors spoke, so thunderstruck were they at the tone of the letter Frank Richards read out.

"Surely Miss Meadows didn't write that?" asked Vere Beauclerc, at length.

"Can't be much doubt about that," said Frank Richards dolorously. "Have a look at it. It's her writing, right enough."

The juniors at the window took charge of the note and inspected it closely.

They shook their heads sadly, for there was no doubt in their minds that the note had been written by Miss Meadows.

"Young white chiefs no like letter," remarked Injun Dick.

"Jerusalem crickets!" exclaimed Eben Hacke, looking up. "Why ain't you vamoosed to the ranch, Injun Dick?"

"Injun stony," said the Redskin. "Injun wait for twenty-five cents."

Eben Hacke grabbed at a broom which rested against the wall, and held it in front of the red man in a threatening manner.

"Now, are you going to absquatulate?" he demanded.

"Injun absquatulate if young white chiefs give Injun twenty-five cents. Injun—Ow! Wow! Yooooooop!"

The broom caught the red man full in the chest, bowling him over.

Injun Dick did not stop to press his claims any further. He drew his tattered blanket round him, and darted towards the gate.

"Now that gopher's gone, we'll discuss things," said Eben Hacke. "Hev you decided what to do, Richards?"

"Don't see what we can do," said Frank Richards dimly. "If Miss Meadows refuses to come back, it ain't much good carrying on the strike."

"I guess that's so," said Eben Hacke. "We shall have to put up with that rotter, Peckover!" said Frank Richards. "I suggest that we give him a trial, and if he comes it too much we might chuck him out, and strike for a new master."

"Not a bad notion!" agreed Eben Hacke. "I guess— Jerusalem! If I ain't blind that's Kern Gunten coming in at the gate!"

The juniors looked in the direction of the gate, and observed a boy of their own age crossing the quadrangle.

"It is Gunten," said Frank Richards. "I wonder what he wants? Perhaps he thinks he's coming back to school."

"We won't have him!"

"No fear!"

Gunten, the fellow Miss Meadows had expelled from the school for blackguardism, came striding towards the rebels, quite unperturbed by the angry expressions on the juniors' faces.

"I've come back, you see!" he said, with a confident air.

"You can jolly well buzz off!" said Frank Richards firmly. "We've done with you, you cad, and we refuse to have you here!"

"I guess you haven't much choice in the matter," said Gunten triumphantly. "Mr. Peckover is coming along now to take charge. He— Here he comes!"

At that moment there was a clatter of a horse's feet outside, and an instant later Mr. Peckover and his horse entered the playground.

**THE FOURTH CHAPTER.**

**Mr. Peckover Surprises the Juniors.**

"GOOD-MORNING, boys!" Mr. Peckover jumped off his horse and greeted the juniors in a most affable manner.

On the previous occasion on which he had spoken to the juniors he had addressed them most abruptly. The change in his manner, therefore, came as a great surprise to Frank Richards & Co.

"I understand that Miss Meadows has departed from the district," said Mr. Peckover, in kindly tones.

"We knew that already!" said Frank Richards brusquely.

"Quite so—quite so!" said Mr. Peckover. "No doubt you boys are very disappointed."

"We are!" said the juniors.

"I quite appreciate your disappointment," said Mr. Peckover, in his polite manner. "At first I was inclined to blame you for taking the course you did, but now I understand how annoyed you must have been at the dismissal of your school-mistress."

"We were!"

"I must say I disapproved of the way in which you treated me," said the new master, smiling genially. "But I will forgive all that, under the circumstances, and I hope you will accept me as your new head-master."

"Oh, Jerusalem!" muttered Eben Hacke, astounded by Mr. Peckover's affability.

"I trust that you will not bear me any malice," said the new master, "and that we shall always remain on the best of terms. If one of you boys will open the door we will prepare the school for afternoon lessons."

Frank Richards hesitated.

"There's one thing we've got to settle first," he said. "Is that cad there going to return to the school?"

Frank Richards pointed to Kern Gunten, whose face still bore a cynical smile.

"Don't you wish him to return?" asked Mr. Peckover.

"I guess not!" said Eben Hacke. "He ain't the sort of galoot we want here! The calaboose is the place for him, and—"

"Very well, any boys," said Mr. Peckover condescendingly. "I will grant your wishes. Gunten shall leave the school at once, and not be allowed to return."

"I say—" began Gunten, giving the new master a savage look.

"That is sufficient, Gunten," said Mr. Peckover, turning to the cad of Cedar Creek. "I must uphold these boys in this matter. If they do not want you here I cannot allow you to remain."

"But my father—"

"Your father has nothing to do with this matter!" said Mr. Peckover sharply. "Take your departure at once, my boy!"

Mr. Peckover pointed towards the gate, and at the same time he gave Gunten a meaning glance.

The juniors did not observe the look. Had they done so their suspicions might possibly have been aroused.

The look was sufficient for Gunten, however. He understood what it meant, and,

"you have no need to be concerned on that score. I do not think Mr. Gunten will give the matter further thought."

"He will when he learns that you won't have his son in the school," said Frank.

"You must not worry about that, my boy!" said the new master.

"We're not worrying about it," said Frank Richards grimly. "We're quite capable of dealing with Mr. Gunten if he starts browbeating us again. All the same, we don't want to give him an advantage."

"An advantage?" said Mr. Peckover slowly. "I don't understand what—"

"I mean that if we shift away the things from the door we sha'n't be able to defend ourselves against Mr. Gunten," explained Frank Richards.

"My dear boy, you have no need to feel



**THE NEW HEAD IS NOT WANTED!** Out of the door of the schoolhouse shot Mr. Peckover, closely followed by the excited juniors, who armed themselves with brooms and sticks and any other weapon they could lay their hands on. "Hurry up, you swindling galoot!" exclaimed Bob Lawless. "And don't you show your nose in here again!" (See Chapter 5.)

after giving the juniors a savage glare, he turned on his heels and strolled disconsolately towards the gates.

Mr. Peckover beamed on the juniors.

"Bad boy, that!" he said. "It isn't right that he should mix with boys like you. He sha'n't come here whilst I'm master!"

"But—but supposing his father kicks up a row?" remarked Frank Richards.

"My dear boy, I'm quite capable of dealing with Mr. Gunten!" said the new master firmly. "He is a braggart and a bully, and I shall certainly not allow myself to be dictated to by him. Would one of you boys mind opening the door so that I may enter the school?"

The juniors did not move.

Mr. Peckover gave Frank Richards a beaming smile.

"Why do you hesitate, my boy?" he asked.

"I'm wondering what will happen, supposing Old Man Gunten comes along, and—"

Frank Richards paused.

"You're afraid that Mr. Gunten will want his revenge for the manner in which you have handled him?"

"Y-y-yes!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" Mr. Peckover broke into a hearty laugh. "My dear boy," he said,

anxious about that," said the new master, patting the junior on the shoulder. "We can soon barricade the door again if Mr. Gunten makes an attempt to attack."

"We!" ejaculated Frank Richards.

"Yes, we!" said Mr. Peckover promptly.

"I shall be only too pleased to assist you in dealing with Mr. Gunten. I am standing by you, boys, no matter what happens!"

"Jerusalem crickets!" exclaimed Eben Hacke. "I guess that's straight talk. Open the door, Richards!"

"Right-ho!" said Frank Richards, moving towards the window. "Will you lend me a hand, Beau?"

"Certainly!" said Vere Beauclerc. And he and Frank Richards climbed through the window of the lumber schoolhouse.

The rest of the juniors remained in the playground conversing with Mr. Peckover.

Frank Richards and Vere Beauclerc did not find it an easy job to remove the barricade in front of the door.

That barricade had been built to withstand any form of attack.

Forms and desks and chairs were piled one on top of the other, but Frank Richards and Vere Beauclerc set about clearing a path to the door in an earnest manner.

"This is a nice finish to our barring out!"

THE POPULAR.—No. 225.

**Do You Like Yarns with a Thrill in Them? Well, Try Next Week's Backwoods Tale!**

remarked Frank Richards regretfully. "Can't be helped!" said Vere Beauclerc. "I had no idea Miss Meadows would give in like that!"

"Neither had I," said Frank Richards. "Neither did I think that old Peckover was such a decent sort."

"You think he's decent, Frank?"

"Well, he seems all right," said Frank Richards. "Far different from when he came up with Old Man Gunten. We must have been mistaken, Beau."

"I don't know," said Vere Beauclerc thoughtfully.

Frank Richards looked at his chum in surprise.

"Surely you don't think that Peckover's taken us in?" he said.

"I shouldn't like to say," said Vere slowly. "He seems all right, but—but I can't forget what a brute he seemed when we wouldn't let him and Old Man Gunten enter this school."

"Well, the chap might have been a bit wild, you know," said Frank Richards. "We weren't exactly kind to him, and we—"

"Are you ready, boys?"

The two chums looked up, and observed Mr. Peckover looking at them through a broken panel in the door.

"Sha'n't be a minute, sir!" said Frank Richards; and he proceeded to clear away the remaining articles of furniture.

At length the door was opened and Mr. Peckover and the rest of the juniors entered.

The new master was looking as affable and cheerful as he possibly could.

"Lend a hand boys!" he said. "If you have no objection we will tidy up the class-room and place the forms in position for afternoon school. I understand that most of the boys and girls will be returning then."

The juniors lent their assistance and very soon the schoolhouse was perfectly tidy.

This task finished the juniors partook of the remaining stock of food in the kitchen, and at Mr. Peckover's suggestion they went out into the playground to wait for their schoolfellows to arrive for afternoon school.

Although they were disappointed at the result of the barring-out, the juniors were considerably comforted by Mr. Peckover's affable manner.

The new master was by no means the far more they had thought him to be.

## THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

### No Luck for Mr. Peckover.

"HERE!" Vere Beauclerc looked round as he heard his name called to him and Frank Richards strolling towards him.

Vere was standing at the gate, a thoughtful look upon his brow.

"I wondered where you'd got to, old son!" said Frank Richards cheerfully. "What the dickens—"

Frank Richards paused as he heard the sound of a horse's feet on the trail.

He looked out of the gate, and next instant he uttered an exclamation.

"My hat!" he cried. "It's Bob Lawless! I wonder—"

Frank Richards did not have time to say anything more, for Bob Lawless came tearing up, and jumped off his horse in front of his chums.

There was a set and anxious expression on Bob's usually sunny face.

"What the dickens are you galoots doing here?" he said breathlessly.

"How's your father, Bob?" asked Vere Beauclerc, feeling that this matter was far more important than their being outside the school.

"Popper's right as rain!" said Bob Lawless quickly. "It was all a put-up job. I'll lynch that galoot of an Injun when I see him again!"

"A—a put-up job!" stammered Frank Richards in perplexity.

"I guess so," said Bob Lawless. "I shouldn't be surprised if that galoot Gunten wrote that note, and paid Injun Dick to bring it here, so as to get me away. Has Gunten made an attack?"

Frank Richards shook his head.

"No," he said. "The barring-out is over, old son."

"Over?" gasped Bob incredulously.

THE POPULAR.—No. 225.

"We had a note from Miss Meadows, saying that she had gone to take a job at Montreal," explained Frank Richards. "She advised us to give in, and we thought it best to do so. Old Peckover's arrived, and— What's the matter, Bob?"

Bob Lawless' face was a study.

"You dunderheaded galoots!" he roared.

"Who's in there?"

Bob Lawless pointed towards the schoolhouse.

"Mr. Peckover," said Frank. "The school's ready for afternoon lessons, and we—"

"Great gophers!" broke in Bob Lawless. "I never met such a lot of simple galoots in my life! You've been taken in, and now—"

"Taken in?" gasped Frank Richards.

"Yes, taken in!" said Bob Lawless.

"Miss Meadows hasn't gone away. I met her on the trail, and she said that she hoped to be back at the school soon."

"But—but we had a note from her saying—"

"Great pip!" roared Bob. "That must have been a forgery, like the one I received! It's Gunten's work, and—"

"Bob!"

"Old Man Gunten's done this, I'll bet!" said Bob Lawless. "I saw a lot of those Red Dog scoundrels in Thompson talking to Gunten. I'll bet you anything you like that they're coming here to take charge of the school, and force us to give in!"

Frank Richards was flabbergasted by Bob's statements.

"But Bob," he said. "Peckover's a pretty decent chap, really. He says that if we have any trouble with Old Man Gunten he'll take our part!"

"What!" roared Bob. "Peckover—that chap who behaved like a blessed tyrant when he came here with Gunten?"

"Yes; but—"

"You simple jay!" exclaimed Bob Lawless. "That galoot has taken you in! He's put on his best manners in order to get into the school. I suppose you've moved all the desks and forms?"

"Yes."

"Well, we've jolly well got to put them back again!"

"But—but what about Mr. Peckover?"

"You leave that galoot to me!" said Bob Lawless. "I'm going to put a few questions to him. You get all the fellows together, and come in after me. There may be a bit of a dust-up."

Next instant Bob Lawless darted towards the lumber schoolhouse, leaving Frank Richards bewildered and thoughtful.

Meanwhile, Bob had entered the school. He walked in quietly, and found Mr. Peckover, a grim, set expression on his face, standing by the window.

Bob coughed as the master did not hear him approach.

Mr. Peckover turned round at once, and gave Bob a savage glare.

"Well, what do you want?" he exclaimed sharply.

"I want to have a chat with you," said Bob Lawless. "I understand you're the new headmaster."

"I am!" snapped Mr. Peckover angrily. "I'll trouble you to speak to me a little more politely, boy!"

"Who told you to come here as headmaster?" asked Bob coolly.

"Boy!" thundered Mr. Peckover. "How dare you—"

"And who told you that Miss Meadows had gone to Montreal?"

"You disgraceful young hooligan!" cried the new master. "Miss Meadows told me so herself, and—"

"Great gophers!" exclaimed Bob, darting towards Mr. Peckover. "That's enough! Come on, you galoots!"

Next instant Frank Richards and the other juniors came rushing into the schoolhouse.

Mr. Peckover had bowed himself out by stating that Miss Meadows had acquainted him with her intention to take up a post in Montreal.

This was a deliberate untruth, and the juniors realised now that Mr. Peckover had tricked them.

"Stand back!" roared the new master, as the juniors dashed at him. "I— Ow! Yow! Yooooop!"

With a thud Mr. Peckover landed on the floor, with half a dozen juniors on top of him.

"A rope—quick!" cried Bob.

"Let me go, you young scoundrels!" roared Mr. Peckover fiercely. "I'll—I'll—"

"Tara him over!" cried Bob. And Mr. Peckover was promptly turned over.

It was the work of an instant to tie the new master's hands behind him.

"Now, give me that dunce's hat," said Bob Lawless.

Eben Hacke procured the hat and handed it to Bob.

"Don't you dare to put that thing on my head!" thundered Mr. Peckover.

"Kim up!" exclaimed Bob cheerfully. "You haven't got any choice in this. Hold your cabeza still! That's O.K. Now lift him up, you galoots!"

The new master was promptly raised.

"Now run him out to the trail!" shouted Bob, giving Mr. Peckover a kick to start him on his way.

Out of the door shot the new master, closely followed by the excited juniors, who armed themselves with brooms and rulers and sticks, and any other weapons that they could lay their hands on.

"Hurry up, you swindling galoot!" exclaimed Bob. "And don't you show your chivvy here again, Savvy?"

Mr. Peckover made no reply, except to shriek and roar.

But he understood, and when he reached the gate he tore down the trail as fast as his legs could carry him.

Suddenly Bob Lawless uttered a warning cry. To their ears came the sound of horses' feet on the trail.

"That's Old Man Gunten and his gang for a cert!" said Bob Lawless. "Back to the schoolhouse, you galoots, and get those barricades up again!"

"What ho!"

The juniors tore back to the lumber school, and were soon busily engaged in getting the barricades into place once more.

They had just finished their task when a number of horse-men dashed into the playground.

Thump! Somebody was banging on the barred window of the schoolhouse.

"Open this window, d'you hear!" roared Old Man Gunten furiously.

"No fear!" chortled Frank Richards. "We've done you brown this time, Gunten! Your forged letters haven't exactly worked out all right for you. Better try some other dodge!"

"I—I—I—"

Mr. Gunten faltered and spluttered. He was too overcome by the failure of his cunning scheme to make a coherent remark. He had been beaten all along the line, and when at length, thoroughly discomfited at not being able to gain entrance to the schoolhouse, he moved away from the barred window, it was with the knowledge that the rebels of Cedar Creek were still holding out.

(A Full-of-Dash Tale of Frank Richards and Co. next week, chaps! Keep a watch out for it!)

## THE "MAGNET" LIMERICK COMPETITION!

Full particulars of this Topping Competition will be found in this week's issue of The "Magnet": Buy a Copy and Enter To-day!

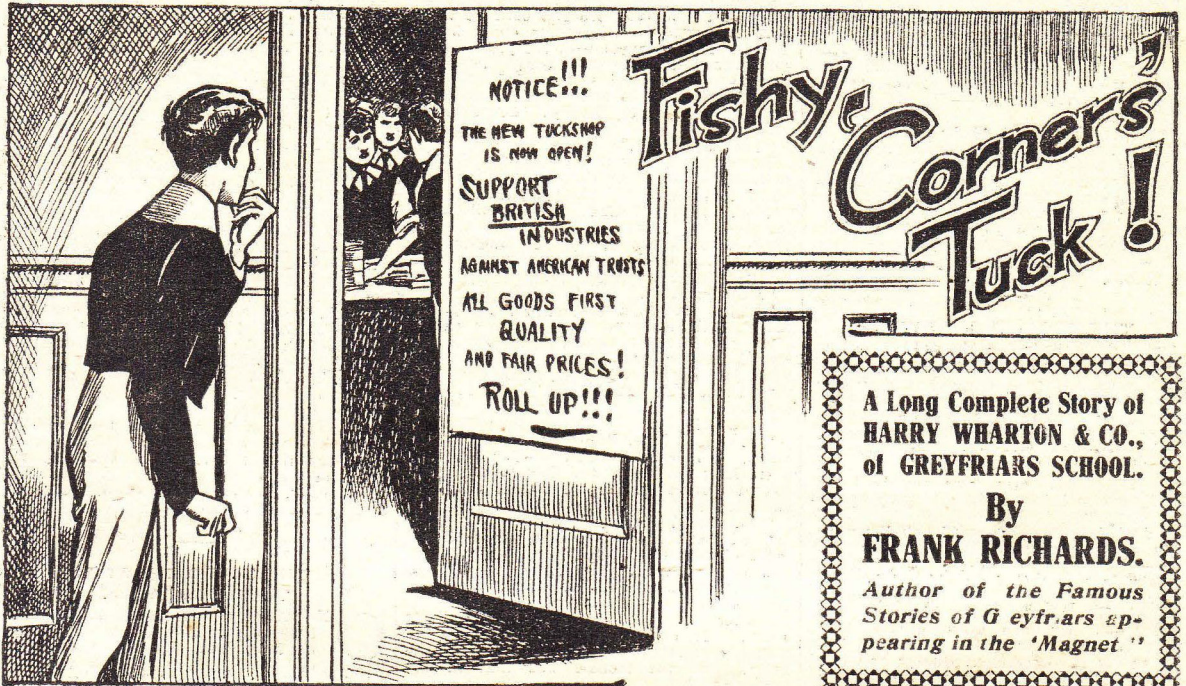
## THE "MAGNET" LIMERICK COUPON, No. 5.

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"Short cut to the bottom," he said.  
Then he gave a wild yell  
As he toppled and fell

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 By  
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*Stories of Guy Fawkes ap-*  
*pearing in the 'Magnet'*

**THE FIRST CHAPTER.**  
**Todd to the Rescue!**

**F**ISHY, Quelch wants you! And I hope it's a licking!"

With that kindly remark, William George Bunter of the Remove Form at Greyfriars, slammed the door of Fisher Tarleton Fish's study, and stamped down the corridor.

Fishy looked annoyed. It was the second remark of that nature Billy Bunter had delivered that morning.

The fact was that Fishy was not popular in the Remove at that moment. Fishy, with what he called his business acumen, had "cornered tuck" at Greyfriars, and the fellows were paying through the nose for every little tart they consumed.

Mrs. Mimble, the usual custodian of the tuckshop had been called away to attend to a sick relative, and Fisher T. Fish had obtained permission from Mr. Quelch to run the tuckshop in her absence.

Unfortunately for the Removeites, Fishy had promptly doubled all prices. A threat to open a rival tuckshop, coupled with a guaranteed order for ten shillingworth of tuck a day, had driven Uncle Clegg, the village tuckshop proprietor, to double his prices in accordance with Fishy's demands.

That was very well, from Fishy's point of view. But it annoyed Harry Wharton & Co. and everybody else who wanted to buy such necessities as jam and tarts and cakes.

Fish hurried along to Mr. Quelch's study, and found that gentleman frowning heavily.

"I hear you have doubled prices in the tuckshop, Fish," said the Form master abruptly. "Why? I understood that you wished to take over the tuckshop during Mrs. Mimble's absence solely to save her from pecuniary loss."

"I guess that's so, sir," said Fish calmly. "But prices all round are going up—even Uncle Clegg's goods are double prices now, sir," he added, as an afterthought.

"Oh, indeed?"

Mr. Quelch raised his brows. He had not heard of that. Fortunately for Fisher T. Fish, Mr. Quelch did not press the matter of Mr. Clegg's prices.

"I've got to get a little profit, sir, to pay me the losses against such bickers, as Bunter, sir," explained Fish. "I'm being imposed upon, sir, by the guys—I mean, the fellows in the Remove."

Mr. Quelch frowned again. He took that with a pinch of salt, as it were, though he

was quite willing to believe that Billy Bunter received tuck and failed to pay for it.

"As soon as you have got back your money, let me know, and the shop can be closed," he said; and Fish nodded and left the study rather hurriedly.

Exasperation was growing, especially in the Remove. To be "done" by Fisher T. Fish was extremely irritating, for all the fellows knew that Fish, with all his boasted cuteness, was really a duffer of the first water. And as Bob Cherry said, in a most aggravated tone, it was intensely annoying to be done by a duffer.

Yet what was to be done was hard to guess.

Fisher T. Fish had carried out his plan. He had "cornered" the tuck, and the corner in tuck was a great success. The junior was making money hand over fist. His stock was selling off—and he was renewing it at the rate of ten shillingworth a day from Uncle Clegg's establishment. He bought at shop prices, it is true; but he sold at double shop prices, so his profit was handsome, and he was keeping a rival out of the field. And even without that cute stroke of business with Uncle Clegg, the fellows would soon have grown tired of going a mile to Uncle Clegg's shop for their supplies. As for going to Courtfield town, that was altogether too much of a good thing. Some of the fellows took the trouble to inquire of Mr. Mimble, the Head's gardener, when Mrs. Mimble was likely to return; but they received no comfort. Not for weeks, probably.

"It's simply rotten!" Harry Wharton exclaimed at tea in Study No. 1 one evening, at the end of the week. "We're right in the claws of the blessed Trust—might as well be living in America, and have done with it!"

"Something's got to be done!" growled Frank Nugent. "We've only got a little spread here, but it's run into four bob!"

"Instead of two," said Harry.

"And that howling cad is pocketing our dubs, and laughing up his sleeve," said Nugent, exasperated. "He's making a fortune out of Mauly, too. Mauly never counts his money, and he pays all that Fishy asks. I saw him handing two pound-notes over the counter this afternoon."

"It's too rotten!"

Peter Todd looked into the study. He gave the chums a genial nod and a grin.

"Discussing Fishy and his fishy methods, what?" he asked.

"Yes. How can we give that spoofing rotter one in the eye?" demanded Nugent.

"You've always claimed that the ideas all

came from Study No. 7, Toddy. Haven't you an idea now? It's simply disgraceful for the whole Form to be done in by that spoofer with his blessed corner in tuck!"

"Just what I called in to see you about," said Peter Todd cheerfully. "I've thought it out, and I've got an idea for nipping him in the bud."

"Hurrah!"

"Let's hear the scheme first," said Harry Wharton, less enthusiastically.

"It's a ripper," said Todd, "only, like Fishy's schemes, it will need money. I've spoken to Smithy about it, and I want you fellows to get Lord Mauleverer into it. It will cost money, but all the money will come back again, every red cent of it, and Fishy will be done blue and green."

"Pile in! What's the wheeze?"

"A rival tuckshop!"

"Wha-a-at!"

"Rather takes your breath away—what?" said Peter, evidently very pleased at the impression his scheme made in Study No. 1.

"But it's perfectly simple, and I wonder we didn't think of it before. We put up a certain sum of money—say, twenty quid. We can raise that from giddy millionaires like Mauly and Smithy and Inky, the rest of us putting up what we can raise. Then we can give an order to a wholesale house in Courtfield, and get a whole giddy consignment of tuck at wholesale prices. We set it out in the Rag, and open shop, and sell to all who want to buy. Our stuff will be as good as Fishy's, and we sell at Mrs. Mimble's old prices. There will be a profit, and after working expenses are paid, and the original capital returned to the investors, any surplus will be devoted to the Remove Cricket Club. How does that strike you?"

"My only hat!"

"I'm willing to manage the concern," said Peter modestly. "It will require brains, of course. It will be a lot of trouble, and some of you fellows will have to put in time, minding the shop, and so on. But it's worth the trouble. The money will all come back, and most likely there will be a surplus for the cricket club. Of course, nobody in the concern is to make a profit personally, that's understood. We're not on the make like Fishy."

"Good egg!" exclaimed Harry Wharton heartily. "It's a ripping idea."

"And we'll keep it dark from Fishy, and spring it on him on Saturday afternoon, opening the shop suddenly without warning!"

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**"Sir 'Arry of Greyfriars!"—Next Week's Top-hole Tale of Greyfriars!**

chuckled Peter Todd. "We'll let all the fellows into the secret who can be trusted to keep it from Fishy—see? I want to see Fishy's face when the rival shop opens."

"Ha, ha, ha!"  
"Nobody will deal with him, of course, after we've opened a shop to sell things at fair prices. He'll be left with all his stuff on his hands. His tarts and buns and cakes will go stale, and he won't be able to sell them at a farthing each—"

"Hurrah!"  
"In fact, I think he'll be jolly glad. In the long run, to crawl out of his speculation with less money than when he started it," said Peter Todd, with great satisfaction. "It will be a lesson to him—what?"

"It's a go! Hurrah!"  
And that evening the Co. were busy in discussing the details of Peter Todd's scheme, and raising the necessary capital for carrying it out.

## THE SECOND CHAPTER. Not in the Know!

FISHER T. FISH was suspicious. That Friday there was something going on in the Remove that he could not fathom. Fellows talked in whispers, with many chuckles, and ceased the moment the American junior was seen hovering near.

There was evidently some secret—it was equally evidently it was something up against the enterprising junior.

But what it was Fish could not discover. He tried pumping Billy Bunter; but Bunter was unable to reveal the secret, for the simple reason that he did not know it. Peter Todd knew better than to take the Owl of the Remove into his confidence. Bunter was very much exasperated at being left out of the secret; but Todd had been deaf to his importunities. Bunter had tried his usual system of keyhole investigation without success. The fellows who were "in the know" were too careful to give him a chance of playing the eavesdropper.

But when Fish tackled him, Bunter was far from admitting that he didn't know. He shook his head, and looked mysterious. Fish became keener than ever. That it was some plot to dish his corner he was certain, and he wanted to be put on his guard.

"Look here, Bunter, you know jolly well that the fellows are planning something!" he exclaimed angrily.

Bunter nodded, and chuckled.

"Tell me what it is."  
"Don't you wish I would!" said Bunter, with another fat chuckle. "I warn you you'd better look out, Fishy, that's all. They're going to dish you. He, he, he!"

"I say, Bunter, old man, I guess you might tell an old pal," said Fish persuasively. "Come into the tuckshop when I open it, and I'll stand you some tarts."

"Not good enough," said Bunter, with a shake of the head. Fish's eagerness was so evident that the Owl of the Remove could afford to be coy.

"I guess I'll make it a dozen tarts," said Fish.

"Well, I'll see," said Bunter loftily.  
When Fisher T. Fish opened shop that afternoon not a single solitary customer appeared. By common agreement, the fellows who had no supplies on hand were going to have tea in Hall that day—so far as the juniors were concerned. Coker & Co. of the Fifth had been taken into the new wheeze, and they were so exasperated against Fish—especially Coker—that they entered into it heartily.

A few fags came into the shop later to fetch things for members of the Sixth, and that was all the business Fish did that afternoon. He was very perturbed and uneasy. He had his fresh consignment from Uncle Clegg untouched, and much of it was perishable. He was very glad when Bunter rolled into the shop, grinning.

"Hallo! Walk right in, Bunter, old man!" said Fish, with an affability he was far from feeling. "Glad to see you!"

"He, he, he!" cackled Bunter. "Look out, Fishy! You're going to be done brown!"

"Is it a boycott?" asked Fish. "They tried that before, but it didn't last the first day. I guess I'm not afraid of a boycott. That cuts no ice with me."

"Worse than that!" said Bunter.

"Well, what is it?"

"A dead secret, Fishy!"

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Fish turned away to serve Tubb of the Third, who came in with an order from Loder. Four shillings' worth of tuck vanished, to be put down to Loder's expanding account. Fish scowled as he made the entry in the ledger. He felt that he would have to refuse Loder's orders soon; but it would not do to break with the prefect while this unknown plot was being developed against him and his "corner." He was keener than ever to know what it was.

"Try these tarts, Bunter!" he said invitingly.

"Thanks; I will!"

Bunter tried the tarts, and found them so much to his taste that he polished off a dozen of them with hardly a pause to take breath. Fish watched that demolition of his stock with dismay, but he felt that he must have that secret out of Bunter.

"I say, I'm thirsty!" Bunter remarked.

"Any ginger-beer going, Fishy?"

"Help yourself!" growled Fish.

"You're really awfully good," Fishy. I really don't know why the fellows always think you a mean skunk, upon my word," said Bunter affably, as he helped himself. "Did you say I was to try that cake?"

"I guess you can try it!" said Fish reluctantly.

"Thanks!"  
"Now, look here, Bunter, what's the little game. I know you know it—you listen to everything that goes on. You're never left out of a secret so long as there's a keyhole to listen at."

"Oh, really, Fish—"

"Tell me what it is before you scoff any more of that cake!" said Fish. "I've stood you quite enough, you guzzling jay! You can finish the cake if you tell me what the fellows have got on against me."

Bunter cudgelled his brains for a likely story. If he had known the secret, he would certainly have let it out for that bribe. But the trouble was that he did not know it.

"Well, pile in!" growled Fish.

"Ahem! You—you won't mention that I've told you?" hesitated Bunter.

"Sure!"

"And I can have the cake—and a few more tarts?"

"Yep!"

"Well"—Bunter sank his voice to a mysterious whisper—"they're going to set fire to the tuckshop, Fishy!"

Fisher T. Fish jumped.

"Waal, I swear!" he ejaculated. "Honest Injun?"

"Yes; hand over the cake!"

"You let that cake alone!" snapped Fish, recovering himself. "You lying mugwump; you're trying to stuff me! I don't believe you know the secret at all!"

"I—I—mean they're going to raid the tuckshop!" said Bunter. "They're going to put on masks one night, and—and—"

"Ring off! I guess you don't know, after all!" grunted Fish. "Let that cake alone, or I'll come over the counter to you!"

Bunter snorted angrily.

"Well, you're a rotten swindling spoofer, and you're going to be done in! I know that much, anyway!" he said. "And you can go and eat coke! Yah!"

And the Owl of the Remove rolled out of the tuckshop, leaving Fisher T. Fish no wiser, but the poorer by a dozen jam-tarts, a pound of cake, and a bottle of ginger-beer. The amateur speculator growled discontentedly.

"Might have known the fat galoot was talking out of his neck!" he grunted. "He doesn't know. They've kept it awfully dark if he can't spot it, the spying cad. What the dooce is it the silly jays are planning? I guess I've got to know! And why don't the customers come in, blow them?"

But the customers did not come in, and Fish closed his shop earlier than usual, in a very bad temper. When he returned to the School House chuckles and grins met him on all sides. The juniors were enjoying the joke, whatever it was.

In the common-room that evening Fisher T. Fish noticed the whispering and grinning more than ever. He had kept his eyes open, and observed that Peter Todd had been out on his bicycle. When Todd came in, he was surrounded by the juniors, and Fish heard his announcement:

"It's all serene!"

"Good egg!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Fish strode angrily towards the group.

"What's all serene, Toddy," he demanded.

"It!" replied Peter calmly.

"You jays have got some scheme on!" said Fish. "I guess it's something up against me. Well, you won't find it easy to touch F. T. Fish when it comes to cold business! F. T. Fish never gets left!"

"You'll see to-morrow!" grinned Bob Cherry.

And there was another roar of laughter.

"Oh, rather!" chuckled Dabney of the Fourth. "You'll see to-morrow, Fishy!"

"You'll see to-morrow, you swindler!" squeaked Tubb.

Fish glared at the hilarious juniors. He was convinced of his own unusual cuteness and business abilities, and had no doubt that he could keep his end up. Yet he was vaguely uneasy. There was a surprise preparing for him on the morrow, and all the juniors evidently believed that it would be a knock-down blow for the schoolboy speculator. But what could it be? Fisher T. Fish, in spite of his self-confidence, was on tenterhooks of anxiety by this time.

"What am I going to see to-morrow, then?" he demanded.

"You'll see what you will see!" said Bob Cherry oracularly.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

And that was all the information Fisher T. Fish could obtain. He went to the dormitory that night in a decidedly uneasy frame of mind, with many misgivings about the morrow, in spite of the eminent success, so far, of the "corner in tuck."

## THE THIRD CHAPTER. Turning the Tables.

ON Saturday morning it might have been observed—and, as a matter of fact, was observed—that many of the Remove fellows were in hilarious spirits. Fisher T. Fish observed it.

It worried him.

So far as he could see, there was no flaw in his armour. He had placated Mr. Quelch, he was backed up by a prefect—at rather a high price, certainly—he had made terms with his only possible rival in business. Mrs. Mumble's return was still very far off. All was serene; there was no cloud on the horizon—so far as Fisher T. Fish could see; and he prided himself upon being able to see as far as most people, if not a little further. And yet—

Was it possible that he was going to be "left," after all? What did that general hilarity on the part of the juniors mean? Why that whispering and chuckling? What was it that he was to "see" to-day?

Fisher T. Fish wore a worried look during morning lessons. He was making money hand-over-fist, true. He already had half the amount put by that he had agreed to pay Mrs. Mumble for her business. In another week or two he would have all that sum in hand, without the need of using his popper's cheque; and after that sum was laid aside, all that came in would be sheer, clear profit, for his sole use. It was a beautiful prospect if—but there was an "if."

What was it that Harry Wharton & Co. were plotting?

And it wasn't only Harry Wharton & Co.—Peter Todd was in it, and Vernon-Smith, and Lord Mauleverer—in fact, nearly all the Remove. Temple, Dabney, & Co. of the Fifth, Hobson of the Shell and his friends were in it, and so were Tubb and his fags in the Third. Even Nugent minor of the Second was in the scheme. It seemed to embrace the whole Lower School, with the exception of a few fellows like Bunter and Snoop, who could not have been trusted to keep the secret. What was the little game?

What, indeed? All Fish's efforts at discovery had been in vain. After morning lessons he went, in a worried frame of mind, to open his shop. It being a half-holiday, the tuck-shop was to be open all the afternoon, and Fishy had hoped to do a roaring trade. But he was beginning to have his doubts now. That afternoon, according to the plotters, he was to "see." What was he to see?

After dinner Peter Todd walked down to the porter's lodge, with a knowing grin on his face. Fish spotted him, and followed him there. Todd was asking Gosling about a box he was expecting.

"Taint arrived yet, sir," said Gosling.

"It's coming by the carrier," said Peter.



"It will be a jolly big box—a packing-case, in fact. I want it put into the Rag."

"Yessir."

"Hallo, Fishy!" said Peter, as he turned away from the porter's lodge. "Haven't you got your shop open yet?"

"I guess I'm just going there."

"Then go!" advised Peter. "By strict attention to business, you know, you will please your customers, and assure a continuance of past favours!"

"Oh, come off!" growled Fish. "What's this hyer packing-case you're expecting?"

"A wooden one," said Peter affably.

"I mean, what's in it?"

"The contents, of course!"

"But what are the contents?" howled Fish.

"They're what's inside the packing-case, Fishy!"

"You mean, you won't tell me, you jay!"

"Have you guessed that already?" asked Peter admiringly.

"That shows what a really keen American intellect can do, when it gets fairly going, Fishy."

"I guess I know you've got some rotten scheme on!" growled Fish. "Are you sending for tuck to stand a feed, or something like that?"

"Time your shop was open, Fishy."

"Will you answer me, you mugwump?"

"Your hungry customers will be hammering on the door, Fishy," said Peter imperturbably.

"Better buzz off and attend to business. Business is your motto, you know—cold business from the word 'go.' I think that's how you put it in your native language."

Fish snorted and walked away. There was no getting anything out of Peter Todd.

Todd could be as close as an oyster when he chose, and he chose now. Peter looked after him with a grin. Fish's state of mind afforded him considerable amusement. The tables were being turned at last upon the cute business man of the Remove.

The American junior opened his shop, but few customers came in. Bunter rolled in to make another attempt to open an account, to be settled at some future date when a postal-order should arrive. He foiled, and he rolled out again discontentedly. Tubbs came with an order from Loder, to be put down to the account, and Fish simply snarled as he handed over the goods. He was fed-up with Loder.

After that Fish was left alone in his glory. He was ready, in apron and shirt-sleeves, but the customers did not come. Was it a boycott? Boycott or not, the fellows would want tuck for their tea, and he was sure of a rush of custom then. Only he did not feel so sure now.

Where were all the fellows? He sternal out of the shop. The Close was almost deserted. He glanced towards the playing-fields. There were no juniors there. Some of the Sixth were at practice, and that was all.

Where were the Remove, where were the Fourth, and the fags?

What little game was on?

Fish thought of that packing-case Todd had been expecting, and felt more uneasy than ever. He slipped off his apron, and put on his jacket, and ran down to the porter's lodge.

"That packing-case come for Todd?" he asked.

"Yessir," said Gosling.

"Do you know what was in it?"

"Which I don't, Master Fish," said Gosling.

"Master Todd says it's full of breakables, so a man was to be very careful with it. That's all I know. It was took into the 'Onse hoyer a hoyer ago."

Fish went disconsolately back to his shop.

No customers had arrived. He caught sight of Skinner and Hazeldene in the Close. They were eating apples. Fish stared at them. Unless they had purloined those apples from his shop during his brief absence, where had they obtained them?

"Hallo!" called out Fish. "You been pinching my stock?"

The two juniors chuckled.

"Where did you get those apples?" demanded Fish angrily.

"Bought 'em and paid for 'em," said Skinner.

"At a fair price," said Hazeldene. "None of your new double prices for us, Fishy."

"Then where did you buy them?" howled Fish.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Hazel and Skinner walked away without satisfying Fish's curiosity. The American junior hastily locked up his shop, and started for the School House. It was not of much

use keeping the shop open, as no customers were coming; and he felt that he must penetrate this mystery.

There was a buzz of merry voices in the direction of the Rag. Fish turned his steps towards that apartment. Then he jumped. The Rag was crowded with fellows, and on the half-open door was a large notice, in capital letters, daubed with a brush. Fish read it, and simply gasped. He understood now.

"NOTICE!"

THE NEW TUCKSHOP IS NOW OPEN!

SUPPORT BRITISH INDUSTRIES AGAINST AMERICAN TRUSTS!

ALL GOODS FIRST QUALITY AND FAIR PRICES!

ROLL UP!"

"M-m-my only hat!" stammered Fisher T. Fish. "M-m-my Uncle Jonathan! So that's what was in the packing-case? It's a rival show! Where did the jays get the money from? Where did they get the brains from? Oh, by gum! I'm left this time!"

He strode furiously into the Rag.

An animated scene met his gaze.

The big table was arranged as a counter, and it was piled from end to end with all sorts and conditions of good things.

Behind the improvised counter stood Peter Todd, Nugent, Bob Cherry, and Tom Brown, in their shirtsleeves, acting as shopmen.

The Rag was crowded with fellows of all forms.

Evidently the new establishment was doing a roaring trade. Fisher T. Fish could see now where his customers had gone to.

There was a yell at the sight of the American junior.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" shouted Bob Cherry.

"Here's Fishy! Walk up, Fishy! Are you going to be a customer?"

"Down with the Trusts!"

"Down with corners 'n' tuck!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Jever get left, Fishy?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Fisher T. Fish strode up to the counter. He was in so great a rage that he could hardly stammer. He was simply overwhelmed at seeing his own little game turned against him in this manner. He shook a bony fist in Bob's face, and Bob roared with laughter.

"I guess this is a plant!" shrieked Fisher T. Fish. "Look hyer, I'm not going to stand this! You hear me?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I don't see how you're going to stop it!"

grinned Harry Wharton. "If we have any of your cheek, we'll chuck you out! You bribe a prefect to keep order in your shop! We'll keep order ourselves!"

"Yes, rather!"

"The rafterfulness is terrific, my esteemed swindling Fish! This is business!"

"Yaas; begad!" drawled Lord Maulverer.

"We've out-businessed you this time, my dear fellow! Take it smiling!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Fisher T. Fish did not take it smiling. He choked with rage. But his rage only made the juniors howl the louder with merriment.

Fisher T. Fish had had his innings, but he had come out at the little end of the horn at last, as he would have put it in his own expressive language. He had had the fellows on the hip, and now they had him by the short hairs.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

Climbing Down!

**J**EVER get left, Fishy!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Walk up, gentlemen!" said Peter Todd, rubbing his hands in imitation of Fisher T. Fish's manner behind the counter. "All goods best quality and fair prices! No double prices in this establishment! All American methods barred!"



**NOTHING DOING!** Fisher T. Fish looked out of the shop. He was in apron and shirt-sleeves again, ready for business—for business that was not likely to come. "Walk in gentlemen!" he said invitingly. "I guess you're not going to leave me in the lurch now. All the old prices again!" "I guess we are!" chortled Tom Brown. "Just a few!" (See Chapter 4.)

"Look hyer, you guvs!" shouted Fisher T. Fish, finding his voice at last. "You're jolly well not going to open a rival shop hyer!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Kinder guess and reckon that it is open—just a few!" chuckled Johnny Bull. "This is where you get it in the neck, Fishy!"

"Right in the neck, I calculate," said Peter Todd. "Are you wanting anything, Fishy? We'll serve you at the same price as the others. None of your methods here, you know! I can supply you with penny tarts at one penny each—"

"I guess—"

"Tuppenny tarts tuppence, not fourpence! None of your nippence for fourpence here!" said Peter. "Will you have one of our special iced drinks? You look rather warm?"

"You—your slab-sided mugwump—"

"If you are not a customer, Fishy, you will kindly step aside, and make room for customers. This isn't a fashionable lounge, you know!"

"I allow I'm not going to stand this!"

"Must! No seats provided in this shop—too big a rush of customers!" said Todd. "Kindly step aside, and make room! What can I do for you, Temple?"

"Tarts and ginger-pop!" grinned Temple.

"Certainly!"

Fisher T. Fish brandished his bony fists.

"I tell you I won't have it!" he roared.

"It's a swindle—"

"No, no!" said Peter soothingly. "You're thinking of your own business now! That's a swindle, Fishy!"

"You have no right to start a rival show after I've started a tuckshop hyer at heavy loss!" stuttered Fish.

"Heavy loss to your customers, you mean!"

grinned Coker of the Fifth.

"Push that fellow out, if he isn't going to buy anything!" said Peter. "He's keeping custom away!"

Fisher T. Fish had lost all his coolness now. His temper was at boiling-point, as he realised that this was the ruin of his new enterprise—that his "corner" in tuck was knocked completely on the head. He made a sprawling jump across the counter at Peter Todd, and clasped him round the neck.

"You jay!" gasped Fish. "You mugwump! You slab-sided galoot from Galootsville! I guess I'll make skyrocketts of you some!"

Peter Todd grinned, and grasped the American junior in turn. The thin and far from athletic Fish was a child in Peter's powerful grasp. Todd whirled him over the counter, head first, and then whirled him back again, and he rolled on the floor of the Rag amid innumerable feet.

"Kick that hooligan out!" said Peter calmly. "We can't have rows kicked up in this shop. This is an orderly establishment."

"Hear, hear!"

"Boot him out!"

"Shove that swindler out!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Corner him!"

Fisher T. Fish tried to spring up and run—but he hadn't a chance. Every fellow in the Rag was anxious to lend a hand at kicking him out or, rather, a foot. Innumerable feet helped in the process—and the unfortunate cornerer of tuck was propelled towards the door at a great rate. He arrived there in a dusty and dishevelled and dazed condition, and a final application of a crowd of boots hurled him into the passage. A roar of laughter followed him.

"I guess that kinder settles Fishy's hash, some!" chuckled Bob Cherry.

"I guess it does," said Harry Wharton, laughing. "Poor old Fishy! Always trying some new swindle, and always getting done. Ha, ha, ha!"

Fisher T. Fish picked himself up, feeling that life was hardly worth living. He crawled away down the passage, gasping.

"Waal, I swear!" he murmured, in dismay.

"I guess this does me—right in the eye! The awful mugwumps—to plant a game like that on me—and I never saw it—never guessed it, by gum! That's what they were keeping dark. Oh, crumbs!"

Fisher T. Fish went back disconsolately to his shop.

He looked over his stock and groaned.

So long as Peter Todd & Co. kept shop in the Rag it was pretty certain that no customers would come to Fisher's establishment and pay his prices. And what was to become of the perishable part of his stock? The tarts and cakes and buns would be

hopelessly stale in a few days—eggs would become unsaleable—all sorts of things would be left useless on his hands.

His loss would be tremendous.

The corner was "done in" with a vengeance now.

That great financial operation of the American junior was a hopeless, horrible failure.

The schoolboy speculator had once more "run up against a snag," and "come out at the little end of the horn." He groaned as he realised it.

There was evidently only one thing to be done. It was no use crying over spilt milk. Unless his stock was to be left on his hands, he had to lower his prices. And, with many groans, he prepared a notice to that effect to post up outside the tuckshop.

During the afternoon a good many fellows looked in at the school shop—not to buy anything, but to ask Fishy, with many chuckles, how business was getting on.

It was not getting on at all, as a matter of fact.

There was a roar of laughter outside the tuckshop when Fish came out to post up his new notice. Harry Wharton & Co., when they came away from cricket practice, found the notice up, and they joined in the roar of merriment. Fisher T. Fish was "climbing down" now, with a vengeance. The notice ran:

#### NOTICE!

#### OLD PRICES!

"Notice is hereby given that from this date goods will be supplied by this establishment at the old prices.

"Signed,  
"FISHER TARLETON FISH."

"Climbed down, and no mistake," grinned Bob Cherry. "Oh, what a falling-off was there, my countrymen!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Fisher T. Fish looked out of the shop. He was in apron and shirt-sleeves again, ready for business—for the business that was not likely to come.

"Walk in, gentlemen!" he said invitingly.

"You want to do your shopping for tea now, I guess! Walk right in!"

"Will you walk into my parlour?" said the spider to the fly!" quoted Frank Nugent; and there was another roar.

"Gentlemen, I guess you can't do better than patronise the old firm. You will notice that old prices rule now—same as in Mrs. Mumble's time."

"Too late!" chuckled Bob Cherry. "Nobody's going to deal with you any more, Fishy. All the fellows have agreed to support the new show."

"I guess you're not going to leave me in the lurch now," said Fisher T. Fish, persuasively.

"I guess we are!"

"Just a few!" chortled Tom Brown.

"Some!" grinned Johnny Bull.

"You're up a tree, Fishy," said Harry Wharton. "You'd better let this be a warning to you, that honesty's the best policy."

"Let it be a lesson to you, my dear Fish!" said Alonzo Todd solemnly. "If you are put to some loss by this transaction, you may count it as a profit, if it impresses upon your mind the fact that dishonesty is never profitable in the long run."

"It wasn't dishonesty!" shrieked Fish. "It was business, you silly jay! And I guess that if you don't want to deal with me, you can go and eat coke!"

"We've got plenty of other things to eat now," grinned Bob Cherry. "Fishy, old man, you'd better start operations on your stock yourself. No need to let it go to rack and ruin. Bunter will help you to get rid of it."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Fisher T. Fish retired into his shop and slammed the door.

The laughing juniors cleared off, in a state of great enjoyment. All the fellows who required supplies for tea purchased them in the Rag. From the Second to the Sixth, the whole of Greyfriars dealt at the new establishment. Only one customer came along to Fisher's shop at tea-time. It was Tubb of the Third, with a written order from Loder. But Tubb found the shop closed. Under the circumstances, Loder's protection was no longer required by the unfortunate speculator, and he did not mean to supply the prefect for nothing any more. Tubb returned to Loder to report, and the prefect came down to the shop in an extremely bad

temper. But the door was locked. He looked for Fisher T. Fish, and found him moodily walking in the Close, with his hands in his pockets, and a deep wrinkle in his brow.

"Why isn't your shop open, Fish?" the prefect demanded.

Fish groaned.

"I guess it's no good opening it. There's a rival show, and all my customers have given me the go-by."

"Serve you right for swindling them," said Loder unfeelingly. "I thought you were carrying it too far. You should have put up prices five or ten per cent., not a hundred per cent., and then you might have kept going."

"I guess I don't want teaching how to run a business, Loder," said Fish tartly.

"Well, you don't seem to have made much of a success of it," sneered Loder.

Fish grunted. He could not deny that.

"Anyway, you can serve me—any price you like," said Loder. "Go and open the shop at once, and give Tubb the things on his order."

Fisher T. Fish shook his head.

"I'm not running any more accounts," he said. "Can't afford it. You can have what you like for cash; old prices, too, Loder. Nothing more on the nod, I guess."

Loder clenched his hand.

"Are you asking for a licking?" he demanded.

"I guess if you touch me I'll speak to the Head, and tell him you're bullying me into supplying you with tuck for nothing," said Fish coolly. "It was some solace for him, in his downfall, to disappoint Loder, and tell him what he thought of him."

Loder unclenched his hand. He felt that that would not do.

"You young rotter!" he said. "I've a good mind to knock you into the middle of next week! You've only got what you deserved for your swindling!"

"It wasn't swindling, I tell you; it was business—latest American style. Look hyer, Loder, if you like to pay cash, I'll serve you at once—"

"If I'm going to pay cash, I'll get the stuff at the other show," said Loder, with a grin. "I don't believe in supporting swindlers."

And he walked away to the Rag. Fish's last chance of a customer disappeared. The enterprising American frowned darkly.

"Fairly done—done right in!" he murmured.

"And how am I going to pay Mrs. Mumble, eh? Oh, my hat! I wish I'd never thought of making a corner in tuck—I do! Oh, thunder!"

### THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

#### Not a Success!

FOR a couple of days Fisher T. Fish still hoped against hope, as it were. But it was in vain. Not a single customer came to the school shop.

Peter Todd's establishment in the Rag was well patronised. It had been a great success from the start. Assured of the support of the whole school, there had been no risk about it. In two or three days most of the stock was sold, and the capital provided by the founders of the concern was repaid. The profits were expended in ordering a new supply of tuck. The enterprise took up a great deal of the time of the juniors; but they were prepared to make that sacrifice, till Fish's business was fairly knocked out. Their usual occupations could be put aside for a time.

And there was no doubt that the schoolboy speculator was getting it "in the neck."

On Monday he had put up a notice that goods of a perishable nature could be had at half-price, and then for a few hours he did some business. The offer was too good to be refused. But although that clearance saved Fishy from a dead loss on his perishable commodities, his loss was substantial, all the same. He was selling tarts and cakes and buns, and other things at less than he had paid for them, and he was glad to do even that. Normal prices ruled for the other articles; but the other articles, at normal prices, the fellows refused to touch.

On Wednesday Fish did not trouble to open his shop at all. He knew that it would be useless—nobody would come there.

His glum face caused shouts of laughter wherever it was seen. All Greyfriars was enjoying the joke. The keen and enterprising American had bitten off more than he

could chew once more. Meanwhile, Fish's other rival in Friardale had reduced his prices once more. Fish had promptly stopped his order at Uncle Clegg's; he could not afford to buy goods that he could not sell. And Uncle Clegg, no longer bribed with that daily order, put his prices down to the old level. But the juniors did not bother about Uncle Clegg—Todd & Co., in the Rag, supplied them with all they needed.

Fisher T. Fish's position was more serious than the juniors knew. It was not only the loss of his golden dreams that worried him; he had more apprehensions on his mind than they were aware of. He kept it to himself, hoping for a turn of fortune, but that turn of fortune did not come. He had not the slightest chance of attracting a single customer, unless he offered his goods at cost price, and the "corner" in tuck was as dead as a doornail. And then came the news that Mrs. Mimble was returning at the end of the week, and Fish was in a panic.

His first intention had been to make some terms with Mrs. Mimble, so as to keep possession of the school shop. Now he would have been glad to get rid of it on almost any terms. But Mrs. Mimble's return meant more than that to him, and Fisher T. Fish's face was utterly woebegone. In his extremity he made up his mind to appeal to the Co.

Peter Todd was in No. 1 Study, with the Famous Five, making up the tuckshop accounts that evening, when the woebegone speculator dropped in. There was a general grin from the juniors at the sight of Fish's face.

"How's business?" asked Bob Cherry affably.

Fish groaned, and sank into a chair. "I guess you know I'm not doing any business," he said. "I own up. You've knocked me out, you jays! It was a ripping scheme, but—"

"But it was like all your giddy schemes—no good!" said Harry Wharton, laughing.

"I guess I'm going to appeal to you chaps," said Fish. "I'm in a hole."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You've got me by the short hairs," said Fish. "I give in."

"I don't quite see it's so bad as all that," said Peter Todd. "You lose your money, but it serves you jolly well right! You gave Mrs. Mimble fifteen pounds eight shillings and sixpence for her stock. You must have made something, and the stock will fetch something if you sell it off at half-price. You don't stand to lose more than five quid, I should say. It seems to me that you're getting off cheaply."

"I haven't got it to lose."

"But you paid Mrs. Mimble."

"I haven't paid her!" groaned Fish.

"What! But that cheque—"

"She couldn't change a cheque for twenty pounds; of course I knew that," said Fish. "I guess I showed her the cheque to show her I had plenty of money to pay. See. Then I was going to pay her out of the profits, after cornering the tuck. Mrs. Mimble thought I gave the cheque to Quelchly to cash for me, but I was really going to pay her out of the profits of the bizney. So I could have, if you fellows hadn't—"

"Well, all you've got to do now is to get the cheque changed, then," said Harry Wharton, puzzled. "I don't see the difficulty."

"But I can't! It wasn't to be changed!" explained Fish. "The popper wouldn't give me such a sum as a hundred dollars; and I never could have changed the cheque. He sent it to me to show, that's all, to use as capital, with instructions that it was to be sent back to him unchanged. After I'd used it, you see—to show, I mean—I sent it back to popper. It wasn't really mine."

The faces of the juniors became very grim. Fisher T. Fish's ideas of business, they knew, approached perilously near to swindling; but, well as they knew him, they had not expected this.

"You mean to say that when you bought Mrs. Mimble's stock you hadn't the money to pay for it?" said Wharton very quietly.

"Waal, you see, I should have had the money by the time she came back, if—"

"Did you tell her that?"

"Of course not!" said Fish testily. "She wouldn't have sold me the business on terms like that. She supposed the cheque was in Quelchly's hands, to be passed through his bank, and that the money's

waiting for her. I'd have had the money all right, if—"

"You awful rascal!"

"Oh, draw it mild! I guess it would have been all OK if—"

"People have been sent to prison for that kind of thing," said Peter Todd.

"I guess it was business," said Fish feebly. "If the corner had been a success, I'd have had plenty of the durocks to pay her, and some over for myself. You fellows are to blame. You wrecked my corner!"

"I suppose it's no good talking to you," said Wharton. "We thought you were only swindling us, and you were swindling a poor old woman as well. I suppose you haven't the cheek to ask us to find the money to pay your debt, after the way you've welshed and rooked us right and left."

"I—I guess there'll be trouble for me!" groaned the unhappy speculator. "Mrs. Mimble won't see that it was business. She'll complain to the Head if I don't pay her. And the Head won't understand business. He'll think—"

"He'll think you're a blessed thief, as you jolly well are!" said Bob Cherry indignantly. "Now, don't say it's business again, or I'll punch your head! I'm fed up with your rot!"

"What am I going to do?" gasped Fish. "You fellows might help me out of a hole. There's the stock in the tuck-shop, that's worth something; only I've had heavy losses, you see. I was paying Uncle Clegg ten bob a day for stuff to keep his prices up."

"Oh! So that was one of your dodges, was it?"

"It was business, you know. Corners are always worked like that. But it cost me money. And I paid him shop prices, and haven't sold all the stuff. What I've sold of it mostly went for half of what I gave, thanks to you jays! Then Loder was squeezing me for tuck for nothing, and—"

"How much have you got towards Mrs. Mimble's money?"

"I guess I've got eight quid."

"Then you want seven pounds eight and six," said Peter Todd. "Well, this firm will give you five quid for what's left of your stock, and you can raise the rest yourself. That's the best we can do."

"Then I lose two pounds eight and six in cash, after all my trouble!" said Fisher T. Fish indignantly.

"Better than that getting sacked by the Head for swindling Mrs. Mimble," said Todd drily.

Fisher T. Fish rose with a groan.

"I guess it's the best I can do," he said. "Come along to the shop, and I'll hand over the stock. That will be under cost price for it."

"Serve you right!"

"And I guess this will use up my allowance for the rest of the term!"

"Just what you deserve!"

And so it was arranged. Fisher T. Fish had a narrow escape of getting into serious trouble over his latest wheeze but the assistance of the Co. enabled him to settle with Mrs. Mimble when she returned, and he was only too glad to hand over the school shop to that good lady, and have done with it. Peter Todd & Co., too, were glad to be relieved from the necessity of keeping shop in the Rag. So everybody was satisfied.

Only Fisher T. Fish's satisfaction at getting out of the affair so cheaply was mingled with painful regrets. To make up the required sum he had had to borrow, and his allowance for the rest of the term was mortgaged in advance, and the enterprising Junior, who had ruled the roost in the tuckshop, found himself reduced to such a state financially that he could not even order a ginger-pop in that same tuckshop!

And Fisher T. Fish realised dolefully that there was something wanting in his business methods, after all. And though he had certainly succeeded for a short time in the "corner in tuck," in the long run it was Fisher T. Fish himself who was cornered!

THE END.

(There will be a splendid, long, complete tale of Harry Wharton & Co., entitled "Sir Arvy of Greyfriars" in next week's issue of the POPULAR. Order your copy right now.)

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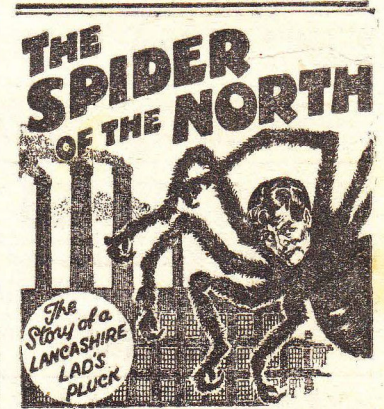
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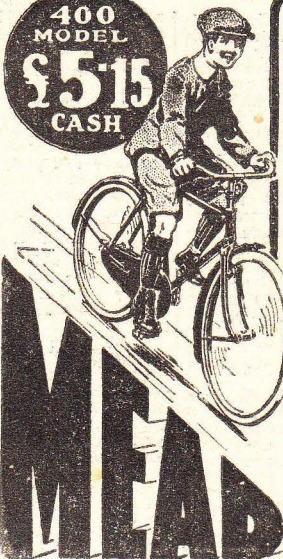
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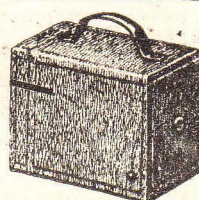
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